

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2020**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson, in attendance, held a Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing. The video was broadcast in real time and via a live video stream.

**1. Roll Call.**

***Council Members***

Mr. Thomas P. Gullotta, Chairman  
Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman  
Dr. Stewart Beckett III  
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll  
Ms. Mary LaChance  
Mr. Jacob McChesney  
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh  
Mr. Whit C. Osgood  
Ms. Lillian Tanski

**a. Pledge of Allegiance**

***Led by Superintendent of Sanitation Mike Bisi***

**2. Public Comment.**

Ms. Carroll summarized the written public comments, noting that they are available to view on the Town website. She explained that they received four communications in favor of mail-in balloting, one in opposition to the removal of Slocomb Dam, and three comments concerning the Town's acquisition of the Cotton Hollow property.

**3. Special Reports.**

**4. Old Business.**

**a. Discussion concerning proposed amendment to Building Zone Regulations – Building Heights.**

Mr. Johnson explained the history behind this discussion, which concerned the following question: was the proposed height increase in the Planned Business and Development (PBD) zone appropriate for smaller parcels? He explained that the Town Plan and Zoning Commission addressed this concern by creating an overlay zone, meaning that those increased heights would not include the smaller parcels.

**5. New Business.**

**a. Action on fees and charges for Refuse Operation effective July 1, 2020.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves amendments to the Schedule of Fees and Charges for Refuse Disposal Operations effective July 1, 2020, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated May 8, 2020.*

**Disc:** Mr. Johnson provided an overview, noting that they look at this every year or two. This year, there is a 10% increase in the tipping fee, and the unit cost for non-processables also increased. He noted that the fee structure was increased last year, and they are finding that they cannot keep up with their costs. There is a proposal to increase those revenue fees and to finish up on the recommendation of the closure fund for the bulky waste facility.

Mr. Gullotta asked if they are trending up or down on refuse, since people are home nowadays. Mike Bisi, Superintendent of Sanitation, stated that they may be trending up, and they make efforts to recycle as much as possible. Mr. Gullotta noted that on Thursdays from 11 A.M. to 7 P.M., they are now accepting metals again. Mr. Bisi stated that is correct. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if the proposal to raise the fees for stickers includes both the transfer station and the bulky waste facility. Mr. Bisi replied yes, it is the same permit. The recycling permit is not being changed, but the unlimited permit is being adjusted to coincide with the increased tipping fee for MIRA.

Dr. Beckett thanked Mr. Johnson and Mr. Bisi for their efforts in creating an efficient solution that people appreciate.

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

**b. Action on Main Street sidewalk project (refer to Town Plan and Zoning; set public hearing).**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public hearing on proposed construction of new sidewalks along Main Street/Route 17 extending southerly from Mallard Drive and northerly from Stockade Road for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9, 2020, the meeting to be held through the Zoom meeting format, and refers the proposed sidewalk project to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for a report and recommendation per CGS Section 8-24, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated May 8, 2020.*

**Disc:** Mr. Johnson explained the three different phases of sidewalk construction for this project, noting that when constructing a new sidewalk, it requires a public hearing and a report/recommendation from the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. This proposal is to set the

public hearing. Mr. Niland asked if there are any time constraints on the \$300,000 state grant. Mr. Johnson stated that, generally, they like to see it allocated within 3-5 years of the original approval, which was in 2018. Mr. Gullotta asked how much it costs. Mr. Johnson replied, about \$1 million after grant funding for the whole project. Mr. Gullotta requested information from the police department regarding pedestrian accidents, especially in this particular stretch. Dr. Beckett also added bicycle accidents. Mr. Johnson stated yes, that information can be provided at the public hearing.

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

- c. Action on proposed land acquisition (refer to Town Plan and Zoning Commission; refer to Board of Finance; set public hearing).**

**Action was tabled.** Mr. Gullotta announced that there are no updates to the Cotton Hollow property discussion, but conversations continue.

- d. Action on proposed amendment to Town Code - Council appointees to Board of Assessment Appeals (set public hearing).**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9, 2020 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street (by Zoom Video Conferencing meeting format) to consider proposed amendment to Article XVIII Town Code now entitled "Appointment of Additional Members to the Board of Assessment Appeal", as described in a report by the Town Manager dated May 8, 2020.*

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

**6. Consent Calendar.**

- a. Action on residential lease renewal of town-owned property at 35 Bell Street (lease expires June 20, 2020).**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves a one (1) year extension of the residential lease for town-owned property at 35 Bell Street, effective June 22, 2020 through June 21, 2021, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated May 8, 2020.*

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

**7. Town Manager's Report.**

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of the COVID-19 pandemic in Glastonbury, noting that, as of this past weekend, there have been 217 reported cases and 58 deaths, with 14 deaths below the age of 80. He explained that, in terms of planning, they continue to look at programs, services, activities, and facilities, and are proceeding very carefully, given the May 20 reopen date for the state. He also noted that they have secured PPE to distribute to 50 local businesses in town. Mr. Osgood asked for an update on the revenue expenses for the Town on the ongoing virus. Mr. Johnson stated that he will try to have that ready to present at the Council's May 26, but if not, it will be discussed at their June 9 meeting.

Mr. Johnson explained that virtual online bingo was held last night and received great reviews. A group of volunteers are making cloth masks. Soon, the library will be offering an option to order books, which will be placed in car trunks, similar to the carry-out orders of restaurants. Ms. LaChance thanked library staff for finding a way to provide books for people, then asked when books that are checked out have to be returned. Mr. Johnson stated that he will check with library staff on the process and get back to Council. Regarding the mail-in balloting questions posed during the public comment session, Mr. Johnson explained that he provided a copy of a memo from Secretary Merrill, addressing voting in the primary and presidential elections.

In terms of projects, Mr. Johnson also noted that the Gideon Welles air conditioning project is going through the final punch list. The library design is proceeding through its final phases. The kitchen renovation underway, as well. The high school athletic field will be lighting up for a couple hours in honor of the graduating class of 2020. Mr. Johnson explained that the new communication tower on Woodland Street will be activated by the end of September.

Mr. Osgood asked whether any actions were required on the tax deferrals. Mr. Johnson replied no, with two exceptions: commercial landlords have to submit a record, and residential landlords must send an email to the collector, saying that they complied with the tax deferral. Mr. Osgood stated that he is pleased to hear that the multi-use path is under construction, then inquired as to how long it will take. Mr. Johnson replied, well into the fall. Mr. Niland sent compliments to their road crew. Mr. Cavanaugh stated that his tech issues regarding Zoom were resolved, so he would like to pass along thanks to IT staff.

Mr. Gullotta stated that the State has released some guidelines in terms of summer activities for children. What is Glastonbury's plan? Mr. Johnson explained that they are looking at options. He will know more in a week. Mr. Gullotta asked if that could be put on the agenda as soon as Mr. Johnson has the information. Mr. Johnson agreed. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that the Glastonbury Food Bank donations topped \$55,000. Mr. Johnson added that yes, it is a record, and a reflection of the unbelievable amount of support that they have received.

**8. Committee Reports.**  
**a. Chairman's Report.**

Mr. Gullotta showcased his Sycamore Moon Tree and explained that the tree will be donated to the Town in the fall.

**b. MDC.           None**

**c. CRCOG.       None**

**9.       Communications.       None**

**10.     Minutes.**

**a. Minutes of April 28, 2020 Regular Meeting.**

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the minutes as submitted for the meeting held April 28, 2020.

*Result:* Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

**b. Minutes of April 21, 2020 Special Meeting.**

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the minutes as submitted for the meeting held April 21, 2020.

*Result:* Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

**11.     Appointments and Resignations.       None**

**12.     Executive Session.       None**

The Council took a recess until 8:00 P.M.

**13.     Public Hearing and Action on Public Hearing - 8:00 P.M.**

NO 1: ACTION ON \$50,000 APPROPRIATION AND TRANSFER FROM THE CAPITAL RESERVE-UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE TO CAPITAL PROJECTS-PUBLIC WATER SERVICE.

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves a \$50,000 appropriation and transfer from the Capital Reserve-Unassigned Fund Balance to Capital Projects-Public Water Service for a concept plan and cost estimating of potential new public water service in Glastonbury, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated May 8, 2020 and as recommended by the Board of Finance.*

**Disc:** Mr. Johnson explained that this is a continuing discussion on the topic of high levels of uranium in private residential wells serving properties throughout Glastonbury. Test results have been reported, but they are not comprehensive. He explained that, generally, levels of 30 parts should not be used for drinking or cooking purposes and should have a treatment system, and levels over 900 should not be used for any purpose. There are properties in Town that fall into both camps. A couple of clusters in Town have treatment systems.

He explained that the proposal is to hire an independent consultant who will work with both Manchester Water and MDC to gather information on whether or not public water service can be extended and, if so, what the cost estimates would be and the funding options. He noted that the cost for this service is estimated at \$35,000 but he made a recommendation of \$50,000, in the event that, as this moves forward and should the Town like additional information, funding would be there to generate that additional information.

Mr. Niland explained the protocol for the public joining in to participate in the Zoom meeting. He then opened up the public comment session.

Ms. Carroll read the comments received prior to the meeting:

**Mr. Chip Geer at 86 Sunset Drive**, asked why the Town thinks that an outside engineer is crucial, and how will they help. Is the Town testing for possible kidney disease, and will the overall uranium results ever be released publicly?

**Ms. Beverly McGraw of 68 Sulky Lane**, stated that she is against spending \$50,000 on this issue.

**Mr. John Michalik of 69 Sunset Drive**, asked if it is possible to install community wells in the affected areas.

**Mr. Miles Ingram of 61 Boulder Circle**, opposes the public water system, stating that most residents do not want to incur the cost increases for something that will only affect a select number of residents.

**Mr. Charles Hewes of 72 Sunset Drive**, stated that this is fiscally irresponsible because any extension of public water will incur a significant cost.

**Mr. Daniel Horvath of 17 Sunset Drive**, struggles to see how a consultant will have added value to residents. Is this a justifiable expense?

**Mr. Rob Hale of 832 Hopewell Road**, asked how many properties are affected by uranium well water. Why isn't MDC footing the bill for the study, and why is the cost so high? He is opposed to this proposal.

At the conclusion of the written public comments, the floor was then opened for attendees to speak on Zoom.

**Ms. Jennifer Siskind of 101 Fairview Terrace**, thanked the Council and Mr. Johnson for all of their work on this issue. She thinks that it is prudent to spend upwards of \$50,000 to do an engineering study because the information provided is outside the scope of what Town Council and staff can do. This is needed and the cost is relatively low. She suggested perhaps a public-private partnership to foot the bill. She expressed hope that all of the comments tonight will also be posed to the engineer.

**Mr. Charles Hewes of 72 Sunset Drive**, thanked the Council and staff and researchers. He stated that it is the private residents' responsibility to care for their drinking water and also the responsibility of the Town to care for its residents. The Town should look at other options, which might even be cheaper, and also look at what other towns have done.

**Ms. Pamela McKeever of 460 Chestnut Hill Road**, stated that it is really important to have experts on this case looking into the engineering aspects because there are a lot of misconceptions about a community well. She has exceedingly high levels of uranium, which is a public health issue. It can be expensive for some, but will Sunset Drive get this public water? If not, why are there so many comments coming from that particular road? She supports this project and hopes that others see it as a public health risk that needs to be addressed.

With no further comments, Mr. Niland closed the public comment session.

Mr. Johnson addressed the comments and questions posed by the public. He explained that the timetable for installation, the estimated cost of the project, and its scope would all be determined based on data collected by the independent consultant. How many homes will the public water system target? They will look to develop a plan with options to respond to the greatest number of homes in the most cost-efficient manner. Will the overall test results be disclosed? Per health regulations, specific results on specific properties cannot be released. The Town is not testing for possible kidney disease. Mr. Johnson explained that, generally, the goal is to eliminate community wells. How many dwellings/businesses are affected by uranium? He stated about 272 reports, of anywhere from 30 parts up to thousands of parts.

Mr. Gullotta explained that there seems to be an inference from many people in the public that this money will help the Chestnut Hill area and assist the MDC, but what they are really doing is looking at Manchester Water Company, which does not have capacity to do what MDC does, and trying to even the field. Mr. Johnson stated yes, the scope would include services provided by both

companies. Dr. Beckett stressed that they have 13,000 homes in Glastonbury, about 6,000 of which are on community well water. To focus on a particular parcel is a misstatement of the intent.

Mr. Osgood stated that they now have three MDC projects that provide good information on the cost on these types of projects. He wonders whether they would need as much technical information here. Mr. Johnson stated that they do not have a lot of data. Mr. Osgood asked if they should go forward, considering how many people object to being charged a fee. Mr. Johnson explained that the most important issue is to provide safe water to residents. How that is funded is a separate issue. Mr. Osgood suggested they start off with the \$35,000 they have already allocated, so he would not support the \$50,000 proposal.

Ms. Carroll expressed her concern, which is that they do not know what their options are or what the costs will be. Therefore, it is impossible for the Council to make decisions to best help people in Town. It is far better to over-budget for this than under-budget because it will be more difficult down the road to come back and ask for more funding. Ms. LaChance agreed, adding that one of the main purposes of the Council is to ensure the health and safety of Town residents. She will support this measure so that they do not have any more delays because people have already waited a really long time to get safe drinking water.

Ms. Tanski asked if this is the only solution. Have any other ideas been identified as not workable, and is public water identified as the strategic plan? Mr. Johnson explained that there are treatment systems one can install, depending on the level of uranium on their property. But there is a concern of the long-term influence of that back wash. He also noted that this is a public health issue, and perhaps there should be a broader response to a fairly widespread public health issue. Ms. Tanski asked if they are looking at environmental concerns. Mr. Johnson stated that they are considering what the long-term effect on groundwater would be, but they do not have an answer. A couple of scientists have been working on it in a cooperative project, which was put on hold because of COVID-19. Mr. Osgood asked if they could specifically find out about the back washes and the volume that is pumped weekly. Mr. Johnson stated that they can evaluate that.

Ms. Tanski asked if this plan would be helpful in the grant application process. Mr. Johnson explained that the better information one has, the better application they can put together. Mr. Niland supports this proposal. He is confident that Mr. Johnson is not going to overspend. He also noted that the Council is committing to only spend the \$35,000, not \$50,000. If they end up needing more money and only approve the \$35,000 today, it would extend the process by another month or so.

**Result:** Motion passed {8-1-0}. Mr. Osgood voted against the motion.

#### **14. Adjournment.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett



BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby adjourns their regular meeting of May 12, 2020, at 8:45 P.M.

**Result:** Motion passes unanimously {9-0-0}.

Respectfully submitted,

**Lilly Torosyan**

**Lilly Torosyan**  
**Recording Clerk**

**Thomas Gullotta**  
**Chairman**