

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (AMENDED)
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021**

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. Mary LaChance
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll
Mr. Whit C. Osgood
Mr. Jacob McChesney
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh
Ms. Lillian Tanski

a. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Ms. LaChance

2. Public Comment.

Ms. Carroll read the written comments received, as listed on the Town website:

Kelly Hogan of 45 Lindsay Lane, stated that she and many other residents are increasingly concerned about motor vehicle crime, which increased significantly in 2020. Without meaningful consequences for the actions of the individuals at fault, this will continue and make Glastonbury an undesirable area to live. She asked what is being done at the local level to address this.

Jeff Wihbey of 1125 Chestnut Hill Road, wrote as a follow-up to his comment in November regarding sidewalks in town. He stated that they need to continue sidewalk developments, especially in the areas of New London Turnpike and Chestnut Hill Road connecting to the Main Street sidewalks. There should be one contiguous sidewalk all the way up New London to Country Club Road because many people walk up that dangerous hill. Similarly, there should be a sidewalk from Hopewell School to Hopewell Road, also for safety reasons.

Mr. Niland opened the floor for comments from attendees.

Anne Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive, commented on why it is important that Glastonbury continue the process to construct an affordable housing plan. She explained that her parents qualified for a VA mortgage which black veterans were denied. Black Americans have not been afforded the same choices for housing as white Americans. Therefore, more affordable housing

in town will enable more Americans to be able to afford living in Glastonbury with the same benefits that her family has enjoyed.

Tobias Cushing of 123 Farm Cliff Drive, is concerned about the car thefts now going into houses. Many of his neighbors are especially worried about the two recent home break-ins. Mr. Cushing has spoken with councilwoman Tanski and Town police, but he believes that there is an opportunity to open up discussion with the Council around theft.

3. Special Reports.

a. Presentation and status report concerning car thefts and related crimes.

Mr. Johnson explained that communities from Greater Hartford have been experiencing a greater frequency of car thefts. Chief Porter presented a report with the steps in place for tackling this very difficult problem.

Chief Porter explained that, in 2020, car thefts went up all across the country, not just in Glastonbury or Connecticut. In most cases, cars were left unlocked; sometimes, they were burglaries. Juveniles are responsible for the majority of these motor vehicle crimes. While he noted that COVID-19 may have played a role, with teens not in school, in large part, it is the changes in laws that have limited the ability to prosecute and incarcerate juveniles, without the necessary systems put in place to address the reasons for this behavior. But because motor vehicle crimes have such a low solvability rate, it is difficult to draw solid conclusions. Chief Porter also noted that they do not do a good job of sharing information on cases across state agencies, especially regarding juveniles.

Chairman Gullotta clarified that most of the juvenile crime in this country is committed by a very small percentage of juveniles. Chief Porter stated that that is correct. The majority of these crimes are committed by juveniles but by a very small number of juveniles. Ms. LaChance asked why thefts and larcenies dipped in 2019. Chief Porter stated that he does not know, but that was seen all across the country. Dr. Beckett asked if they treat all of these cases the same and, if so, what are the Chief's suggestions for how to do them differently. Chief Porter explained that they do not treat them the same, but it is very challenging to take a juvenile into custody. He noted that Glastonbury's police department is very proactive. They have conducted a number of educational incentives, such as ensuring that they notify their aging population and that officers remind citizens to secure their vehicles and homes.

Ms. Carroll stated that someone attempted to break into her car in her garage a month and a half ago, but thankfully, the effort was thwarted by her husband. She asked what people should do in those scenarios. The Chief replied, safety is paramount, so do not approach the offender(s); go to a safe and secure place. Mr. Cavanaugh asked what the change in the statute was. Chief Porter explained that there have been incremental changes in raising the age. Mr. Niland asked what the Chief of Police has done with the legislature regarding the Raise the Age law change and if there has been any progress. Chief Porter explained that it is very difficult to get solid data because of the low solvability rate and the sheer difficulty in sharing data among agencies when it comes to juvenile arrests. It is very difficult to acquire data from the courts on how many vehicles were stolen from juveniles because there is no 'car theft'; it is 'larceny.' He noted that he has

presented data to the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee, in the hopes that they could take Glastonbury's model, which involves a data mining program, and push it out to other police departments, who would then acquire similar data which would, hopefully, lead to better analysis all around.

Mr. Cavanaugh suggested engaging other towns to try to increase the patrols. The Chief explained that Glastonbury's police department is staffed, and they are capable of increasing the patrols. However, the challenge is that Glastonbury is huge, area-wise, and the thefts are all over the place, not contained in any one area at any one time. Mr. Cavanaugh asked what the motivation is behind these crimes. The Chief explained that there isn't evidence to suggest that it is a chop shop, so likely, the main reasons are boredom and thrill-seeking, and possibly, in some cases, to make a quick buck. Mr. Cavanaugh requested information on arrests from Glastonbury residents, which the Chief agreed to provide.

Mr. McChesney asked if the not reporting issue is due to privacy concerns. Mr. Porter stated that, sometimes it is, but other times, they simply lack an easy way to capture the data that they need. Mr. McChesney asked if they are exploring ways with other departments to get better at sharing information and possibly teach them what they know. The Chief explained that the program they use is free, to an extent, and they have provided their data to the working group, in the hopes that they share it with everyone else in the system. Mr. McChesney asked where in the justice system is the breakdown which result in recidivism. Chief Porter stated that the limitations in the juvenile system does not deter these offenders, leading to recidivism.

Ms. Tanski asked, if a juvenile thief is caught and arrested breaking into a home to steal a car, is there a greater likelihood that they will be able to be detained? Chief Porter explained that, in order for an officer to detain a juvenile, a number of things need to fall into place. The more serious the offense, the greater the likelihood of an officer getting an order to detain. Each situation is unique and will be reviewed by a judge, if an officer decides that they want to go that route. Ms. Tanski asked how often stolen cars are recovered, and if/when so, are they returned in a decent condition? The Chief agreed to get that information to the Council, but he did note that vehicles are returned much more frequently than they used to be.

Ms. Tanski asked what Town residents can do to proactively partner with the police department. Mr. Porter stated that protecting yourself is key. Everybody should lock their doors and turn on their alarms. If they see any suspicious cars, they should call the police. They should also send them descriptions or videos, if they have any. Furthermore, the Chief explained that very seldomly do officers chase stolen vehicles now because it poses a great public safety risk. However, in certain situations, it is justifiable and necessary to do so, such as a shooting incident.

Ms. Tanski requested scheduling a follow-up when they have data on what effect these efforts have had so that the community can be informed. Mr. Johnson agreed, adding that they will keep data on all items, including those they would prefer not to commit on publicly. Mr. Gullotta explained that this is an opportunity for the Council to put together a letter to state representatives about a revision to the Raise the Age law. He stated that because it is a very small number of juveniles committing these crimes, it should lead to a drop in crimes. He suggested having that item on their next meeting agenda. Dr. Beckett agreed and added that, if the Chief

recommends some changes, the Council should consider including those in the letter, as well.

PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING:

NO 1: PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING – REVIEW OF PROPOSED COMMUNICATION TOWER – 311 OAKWOOD DRIVE.

Mr. Johnson explained that the Town was approached by a communication tower constructor to lease land near the school bus yard. At this point, there is no specific proposal, only an interest. He explained that if the Council opts to arrange to hold a public hearing, the next step would be a request for proposal process. Tonight’s plan is to gather comments to guide the Council with respect to next steps.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager to conduct a Request for Proposal process to determine interest and specifics for use of the Town-owned land off Oakwood Drive as a potential site for a communication tower, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated January 8, 2021.

Result: Motion passed with one abstention from Dr. Beckett {8-0-1}, who recused himself because of his prior dealings with the applicant.

NO 2: PUBLIC HEARING – ACTION ON GENERAL FUND TRANSFER – \$53,000 TO REGISTRAR OF VOTERS AND TOWN CLERK.

Mr. Johnson explained that the recent presidential election presented unprecedented activity, largely through absentee ballots, which was not contemplated when the budget was created. Therefore, the corresponding line item was exceeded. However, he noted that the \$53,000 will be partially offset by a \$38,000 grant.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves a \$53,000 transfer from the General Fund-Unassigned Fund Balance to Registrar of Voters and Town Clerk line item accounts including wages, office supplies, printing and reproduction, and others, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated January 8, 2021.

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

4. Old Business. None

5. New Business.

a. Action on renewal of lease for Board of Education Administrative Offices — 628 Hebron Avenue.

Mr. Johnson explained that the typical process of facilities operated by a school system is that the Town approves the facility and then assigns the property to the BOE for school uses. This particular lease is a longer-term commitment of 5 years. To err on the side of caution, they decided to treat this like a facility that is assigned to the BOE and the Council would take action to recognize that this agreement is in place. He summarized that this is a conservative reading of the statutes.

Mr. Foyle said that they have been at the site for about 10 years, and it has served them very well. Dr. Bookman stated that they negotiated this lease for a while, resulting in a lower price for square footage. While they looked at other properties for purchase and for leasing, they found nothing appropriate. However, they are pleased with the negotiations, and with the new lease, which will save them \$4 per square foot with a 50-cent increase in square feet each year. Mr. Osgood asked if there are any expenses other than rent. Dr. Bookman said yes, the real estate taxes and operating expenses. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if there is a provision that, should the BOE find an appropriate property in under 5 years, they can exit the lease. Dr. Bookman replied no, there is no provision for that. They decided instead to go with the savings and commit to looking seriously at purchasing property during years 4 and 5.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager, on behalf of the Town, to enter into a lease agreement together with the Board of Education, as the tenant, with Grunberg Realty, as the landlord, for administrative offices located at 628 Hebron Avenue. Such lease shall provide that (i) the Town is a party to the lease solely for the purposes of compliance with Section 10-241 of the Connecticut General Statutes, (ii) the Board of Education shall have all obligations and responsibilities as tenant under the lease and the Town shall have no obligations or responsibilities under the lease, and (iii) all lease payments and other payments under the lease shall be made solely by the Board of Education from the Board of Education's budget."

RESOLVED, that upon execution of the lease, the leased property is hereby dedicated by the Town for use for school purposes.

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

b. Discussion concerning Sidewalk Matrix.

Mr. Johnson explained that the sidewalk matrix was developed a few years ago to serve as a guide to new sidewalk construction in town. It has been very successful. A few grants are pending for a section on Bell Street and within the Gateway Corporate Park. Mr. Osgood asked about the Phase III Main Street section. Mr. Johnson stated that they thought to send a letter to residents on both sides who would be influenced, then hold a public hearing, and proceed accordingly. Mr. Osgood inquired about the estimated cost of \$900,000. Mr. Johnson stated that

the estimate is the best that they can get right now. Mr. Pennington agreed. Mr. Osgood remarked that this is a good connection that needs to be made and widening the road to make it safer is a great idea, but the cost is a lot to swallow. He then asked about the Buttonball Main and 17 pedestrian access. Mr. Johnson explained that he and Mr. Pennington had a conversation with the DOT on that crosswalk. They indicated that they would not support a roundabout there, but they would support enhancing the crosswalk and signalized system. In short, they would help fund those improvements.

Ms. LaChance is happy to see a bunch of the projects at Gateway Park and Bell Street, which will create a nice connection with the bike paths going over to House Street. She stated that people tend to drive fast on Bell Street, so having a sidewalk there is great. Mr. Cavanaugh stated that he would like to see the sidewalk connected at Neipsic Road completed soon. Mr. Niland stated that Manchester Road should be scored more because of its access to Buckingham Park and safety there would go a long way. Mr. Johnson explained that the heavy recreational use area got added but not the Town park.

Ms. Tanski asked how members of the community can submit an area to be added to the sidewalk matrix. Mr. Johnson stated that they can send an email to his office who will review the suggestion to put it on the list. Ms. Tanski is pleased to see the additions in Chestnut Hill Road. She then asked how the points of heavy pedestrian traffic areas are determined. Mr. Johnson explained that, generally, they look at areas where there is pedestrian use, irrespective of sidewalks.

c. Action to schedule public information — Main Street Sidewalks Phase III (Cider Mill to Red Hill).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public information hearing on Tuesday, January 26, 2021 through Zoom Video Conferencing to consider options for the Phase III project to construct new sidewalks along Main Street/Route 17 between the Cider Mill and Red Hill Drive, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated January 8, 2021.

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

d. Action proposed land acquisition — ± 30 acres Hill Street (refer to Board of Finance and TP&Z; set public hearing).

Mr. Johnson explained that the subject property is comprised of three parcels. The proposal is for the Town to purchase the 30 acres. It is a typical purchase and sale agreement. The adjacent property owned by Manchester Water and Kongscut Land Trust totals approximately 115 acres. He noted that the dates have been modified to hold the public hearing and action on February 9 and the closing by February 25. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if the public could access the property on its own. Mr. Johnson explained that there could be access off of Hill Street and/or from Birch Mountain Road through the Kongscut Land Trust property.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the following concerning proposed Town purchase of the 30±-acre Wright Property, Hill Street:

1. *Referral to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for a report and recommendation under CGS Section 8-24;*
2. *Referral of a \$390,000 appropriation and transfer under the Reserve for Land Acquisition and Preservation to the Board of Finance for a funding report and recommendation;*
3. *Schedules a public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 26, 2021 through Zoom Video Conferencing to consider proposed Town acquisition of the 30±-acre Wright Property, Hill Street Road and a \$390,000 appropriation per the Reserve for Land Acquisition;*

all as described in a report by the Town Manager dated January 8, 2021.

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

e. Action on proposed sale of Town-owned land at 210 Griswold Street.

Mr. Johnson explained that this is located at the intersection of Griswold Street, House Street, and Harris Street. The Town had purchased 210 Griswold Street to allow for the realignment of the intersection, which was successfully completed. The Chabad Jewish Center driveway enters and exits almost at the interaction, so they are interested in purchasing the Town-owned property. The TPZ has provided a unanimous recommendation. The sale price is \$8,000. The agreement provides for a deed restriction that the property can only be used for the driveway and as access to land at 200 Griswold Street. The document is fully executed.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves sale of the Town-owned land at 210 Griswold Street in accordance with the Agreement for Sale and Purchase of Real Estate dated January 11, 2021, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated January 8, 2021 and as recommended by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and Council Land Appraisal Subcommittee.

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

6. Consent Calendar.

7. Town Manager's Report.

Mr. Johnson explained that the Cedar Ridge water project is now complete and expecting the final invoice from the Town of Manchester. They expect to close that matter over the next several weeks. In regard to affordable housing, the members of the commission are in place. 11

residents expressed interest in participating. Mr. Johnson explained that they are still in talks with the DOT for the walkway and paths to Putnam Bridge. Glastonbury and Wethersfield will work together. One of the discussions was that the winter storm snow/ice removal from the six-foot walkway will present some challenges. He will circle back to the Council with that proposal when it is finalized. He will also send out a reminder for the Capital Workshop next week. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if the state would pay for the connection to both communities, for the Putnam Bridge Project. Mr. Johnson replied yes, the state will construct the approach ways, place the benches, fencing, lighting, and ask the town to maintain those. Mr. Cavanaugh then thanked Mr. Ashton for all of his tech help in setting up the virtual meetings over the past year.

Mr. Osgood asked about the grant for the Cedar Ridge Water project. Mr. Johnson explained that because Manchester was able to coordinate the project, there was a 25% cost forgiveness, which is reflected in the net cost. Mr. Osgood asked how long of a pipe they used and what size it was. Mr. Johnson stated that he will look that up and report back. Mr. Osgood then questioned the efficacy of the testing of the COVID-19 wastewater, wondering whether or not they should continue with that initiative. Dr. Beckett stated that the infection rates for Glastonbury went up considerably, so they need to press people to wear masks and to not go out. Mr. Johnson explained that the rates in North Glastonbury and South Manchester had gone up, and they are working to interpret that data.

Mr. Niland asked how they are getting their data out to the public. Mr. Johnson explained that they are using all of the ways that they can, but if anyone has other suggestions for ways to get the word out, to please let him know. Dr. Becket asked how they are going to appoint a public representative on the affordable housing committee. Mr. Gullotta stated that they can ask the agenda setting committee to take a look at the 11 names with a sentence of biography for each person and make a recommendation to the Council. There were no objections to this suggestion.

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

Mr. Gullotta urged everyone to practice social distancing, to wear masks, and to exercise caution, in the fight against the recent surge of COVID-19. Mr. Cavanaugh requested from the Town Manager that, at their next Executive Session, pending litigation, he provides an update on the issue in North Glastonbury.

b. MDC.

Ms. LaChance explained that MDC passed their budget in December. There will be a less than 2% increase in the water rate.

c. CRCOG. *None*

d. Commission on Racial Justice and Equity.

Ms. Carroll explained that there are names and biography profiles for the members that they would like to appoint to the commission. They will also interview two research firms over the

coming weeks to see who they can work with, as far as gathering data. The point is to see where their timeline benchmarks are. She then explained what the Commission hopes to accomplish each quarter of the year. Ms. Tanski echoed that the intention behind all of the components that Ms. Carroll outlined is that they are data-driven and actionable within one year of the commission's creation.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby appoints the following people to the Commission on Racial Justice and Equality: Tracey-Ann Johnson, Sue Oppenheimer, Alina Bricklin, Xabian Alarcon, Jennifer Wang, Barret Katuna, Dave Peniston.

Disc: Mr. Osgood asked about funding for the potential firm. Ms. Carroll stated that they would prefer to wait to interview potential firms before they ask the Council for funding because they need to figure out their budget and the market rates.

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

9. Communications.

- a. Letter from CT Siting Council regarding modifications to existing telecommunications facility located at 175 Dickinson Road.**

10. Minutes.

- a. Minutes of December 1, 2020 Regular Meeting.**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

Result: Minutes were accepted unanimously {9-0-0}.

- b. Minutes of December 21, 2020 Special Meeting.**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

Result: Minutes were accepted unanimously {9-0-0}.

11. Appointments and Resignations.

- a. Appointment of Isabel Rolfe to the Human Relations Commission (R-2025).**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

Result: Appointment was accepted unanimously {9-0-0}.

12. Executive Session.

- a. Potential land acquisition.**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Osgood

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby enters into executive session to discuss a potential land acquisition at 9:35 P.M.

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

Present for the Executive Session item were council members, Mr. Tom Gullotta, Chairman, Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman, Dr. Beckett, Ms. Deb Carroll, Ms. Mary LaChance, Mr. Jake McChesney, Mr. Kurt Cavanaugh, Ms. Lillian Tanski, and Mr. Whit Osgood, with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson.

No votes were taken during the Executive Session, which ended at 10:05 P.M.

Meeting adjourned at 10:06 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk

Thomas Gullotta
Chairman