

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 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. Carroll*

**2. Public Comment.**

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

***Jeffrey Stein of 142 Olde Stage Road***, wrote on behalf of Bike Walk Glastonbury regarding the sidewalk matrix. He noted that the projects currently in place will provide improved connections and improve safety, and he urged the Council to prioritize efforts to make Glastonbury a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly community.

***Anne Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive***, spoke in regard to the discussion on motor vehicle thefts that the Council held with Chief Porter two weeks ago. She stated that teenagers' brains are still developing, so prosecuting underage car thieves as adults is inappropriate. The solution, instead, is to equip them with psychosocial tools to help rehabilitate them, not send them to prison.

***Bruce Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive***, thanked the Council for listening to his suggestion for more civic engagement in Town. He suggested the Council and Town Manager place a greater emphasis on recruiting new appointees to all non-elected Town boards, commissions, and committees because they should not rely only on party nominations. Many residents who are not due-paying party members are disenfranchised from this process and this action would help rectify that.

**3. Special Reports.**

*None*

4. **Old Business.** *None*

5. **New Business.**

- a. **Action on 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program – preliminary priorities for July 2021 funding (refer to Board of Finance).**

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby refers the 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program to the Board of Finance for a funding report and recommendation, including the following preliminary project recommendations for fiscal year 2021-2022.*

**Disc:** Mr. McChesney thanked Mr. Johnson for forwarding the new map of the pickle ball court configuration, but he still has some concerns about that area. He is curious to see alternative locations in Town that might fit which would not cut off the largest area they have for open, outdoor events. Mr. Niland suggested the courts be located directly south of the southern parking lot, instead of behind the building. Mr. Osgood agreed with Mr. McChesney's suggestion and stated that he had asked about the pickle ball court being orientated on two tennis courts. Mr. Johnson explained that they looked at several suggestions. The general thought was that it should either be a pickle ball court or a tennis court, but they will come back with a cost estimate and options at their next meeting.

Dr. Beckett is still stunned by the cost for the locker room facility at the high school. He suggests that they put a caveat in that it becomes bonded in November and then repay the CIP. Mr. Cavanaugh requested for the BOF to opine on bonding authorization on several projects; he then posed three questions:

- Would the BOF recommend bonding certain projects and sending them out to referendum?
- Could they pay cash for the field house and then bond it to replenish the Capital Reserve?
- Could they create an ordinance such that each time a project becomes apparent, they hold a public hearing where action passes with 7 favorable votes (more than a 2/3 majority), instead of a simple majority on the Council, allaying the fears of some councilmembers?

Ms. LaChance stated that she does not see why they are changing the way they do things to kick the can for future taxpayers. She does not like the idea of having an open checkbook where they can bond whenever they want. They have set aside almost all of the money for this field house project, so she does not understand why they would go to borrowing. Mr. McChesney recalls that the issue of bonding came up with the field house last year, and even some BOF members were uneasy with that route because it is a liability issue. Ms. Tanski stated that his recollection is correct, in terms of waiting until there is a bond referendum. She also would like to hear the BOF's thoughts about the idea of bonding a certain class of projects and then reducing their cash spending on capital improvements for a number of years.

Ms. Carroll asked what kind of effect bonding capital improvement projects would have on their bond rating. Mr. Johnson stated that a judicious use of borrowing, along with a commitment to pay as you go, is considered favorably by bond rating agencies. Mr. Gullotta remarked that he would like to keep the bonding option available for what he knows will be a massive demand put on the taxpayer by the BOE in a few years, in certain areas.

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

**b. Action on letter to State Legislators concerning car thefts and related crimes.**

Mr. Johnson stated that this letter, written on behalf of the Council, asks the state legislature to take a look at this issue in a participatory way.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby supports the letter to be sent to our state legislators concerning car thefts and related crime, as drafted by the Town Manager dated January 25, 2021.*

**Disc:** Mr. Niland thanked the Town Manager for a well-crafted letter. He addressed Ms. Bowman's comment from the public comment session, clarifying that this letter does not advocate for incarceration, but simply for better solutions, which will be the decision of the legislature. Ms. Tanski agrees very strongly that the problem is that there have been no other efforts by the state to address these crimes and take corrective action, which she hopes this letter will do.

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

**c. Action to appoint community member to Steering Committee for Affordable Housing Plan.**

Ms. Carroll stated that 11 members of the public self-nominated for the steering committee. Due to avid interest, they decided to add two members instead of one.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the appointment of Nick Paindiris and Patricia Parent to the Steering Committee for Affordable Housing.*

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

**d. Discussion concerning testing of wastewater – COVID-19.**

Mr. Johnson explained that they have been working with UConn to test wastewater for COVID-19. 45 tests have been done at \$75 each. The suggestion is to continue for another month or two, in order to assist the university in collecting and interpreting data. Mr. Niland asked if this information will be shared with Glastonbury's local papers. Mr. Johnson stated that this data will be integrated into his weekly report and the website, which they may email to each of the newspapers that cover Glastonbury. Mr. McChesney asked if this testing might alert them as to whether any of the various strains have come into Glastonbury. Mr. Johnson stated that he does not know, but he will ask. Mr. Gullotta explained that when he and Dr. Beckett initially came up with the idea to test the Town's wastewater, they had hoped that the data would be published and shared with the public.

- e. **Discussion and possible action concerning \$360,000 appropriation and transfer from Capital Reserve – Unassigned Fund Balance to Capital Projects – GHS locker and restroom (refer to Board of Finance; set public hearing).**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby refers to the Board of Finance the request for a \$360,000 appropriation and transfer from the Capital Reserve – Unassigned Fund Balance to Capital Projects – GHS Locker and Restroom Facility and schedules a public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 through Zoom Video Conferencing to consider the proposed appropriation and transfer, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated January 22, 2021.*

**Disc:** Mr. Cavanaugh asked if this is to make up for the shortfall. Mr. Johnson explained this is the shortfall plus a 5% contingency. Mr. Cavanaugh stated that this is becoming a \$3 million project instead of the \$2 million project that it was intended to be. Mr. Osgood agreed, stating that he is going to vote against this, on that reason alone. Dr. Beckett will vote for this but with great reservations. Mr. Gullotta stated that if they had pursued this project through a nonprofit, it would have been much cheaper because the government must follow certain rules which make the project more expensive, such as union costs. Ms. Tanski will support this project because it is nearly funded through previous CIPs. She stressed that this project needed to be done because, otherwise, they would not have had a football team at the high school in the fall.

**Result:** Motion passed {7-2-0}, with Mr. Cavanaugh and Mr. Osgood voting against.

6. **Consent Calendar.** *None*

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

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby accepts the Town Manager's expense report.

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

Mr. Johnson asked the Council to designate two members to the Audit Exit interview group. The Council appointed Mr. Niland and Ms. Tanski to serve.

Mr. Johnson explained that the Police Officer of the Year honoree will be honored soon. He also noted that a state working group, which Glastonbury is a part of, is looking at solid waste disposal through a pay as you go option. Mr. Osgood asked for an update on that at their next meeting, to see what the savings will be. Mr. Johnson agreed to provide it. He then continued with his report, explaining that the state decided that the request for a roundabout at Buttonball Main and Route 17 did not meet their requirements. However, they are prepared to work with the Town to provide funds for improved sidewalks at that intersection. Mr. Johnson received a note from the DOT stating that the trail system linking to the Putnam Bridge will be delayed to construction in 2022.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING AND PUBLIC HEARING:**

### **NO 1: PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING – MAIN STREET/ROUTE 17 SIDEWALKS PHASE III.**

Mr. Johnson explained that this is for the completion of the Phase III sidewalk project. Mr. Pennington reviewed a series of slides which explained the basics of the program. He explained the constraints that make constructing a retaining wall using traditional methods of bottom-up methodology impossible. He then reviewed two types of top-down methodologies they have considered instead: a soldier pile wall or a soil nail wall and shifting the road. Mr. Pennington explained that they looked at another option that was proposed by Mr. Osgood at the CIP workshop, which would entail constructing the wall on the east side, thereby eliminating the need to create a wall on the west side or a road shift. While the option is feasible, cost-wise, one would have to cross Route 17 twice, in order to make the existing walks viable.

Mr. Niland opened the floor for public comment.

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

**Tara Doyle of 24 Chestnut Hill Road**, asked if any consideration was given to placing a crosswalk at the Cider Mill and completing the sidewalk on the eastern side of Route 17, which is a relatively flat and unobstructed area, and it is the path that pedestrians currently take when walking in the area. It seems the cost would be significantly less than building a retaining wall or moving Route 17.

**Eugene Hickey of 1200 Main Street**, asked what the total cost for the Town is for both options. He also asked if the road will be widened and if the telephone/power poles that will be removed in option 2 will be moved straight back or re-sited. Regarding option 2, he asked if trees will be

removed or cut back, and what the location and workspace is for construction crews and equipment. He also asked if there is a policy or consideration regarding construction near historic homes.

**Raven Cauthon of 1212 Main Street**, is concerned about safety on such a busy road. She feels that having the retaining wall on the west side of the roadway makes more sense because it would cause fewer traffic problems during construction if only one side of the street is impacted. She asked that the Council take option 1 to this phase 3 of construction.

**Jeffrey Stein of 142 Olde Stage Road**, stated that Bike Walk Glastonbury does not have a preference for either of the proposed options, but urged the Council to choose one option for construction in the coming year.

**Daniel Horvath of 17 Sunset Drive**, supports the addition of sidewalks on Main Street. Regardless of the alternative chosen to allow construction of a sidewalk between the Old Cider Mill and Red Hill Drive, he suggests that the Town use the construction as an opportunity to also add a dedicated left turn lane from Main Street southbound to Chestnut Hill Road eastbound to improve safety and reduce congestion.

**Christopher Kirby of 1246 Main Street**, looks forward to a reduction of litter and cigarettes on his property, which is on the east side of Main Street. As a trade-off for this benefit, he is being asked to consider two options, where the second option would shift the street up to 9 feet toward his home. In general, if an option saves the Town time, effort, and money he is willing to consider it. However, prior to a decision, he asked to be shown how the Town plans to grade and otherwise reconstruct the front yards of properties impacted by the road shift.

Mr. Niland opened up the floor for attendees to comment.

**Raven Cauthon of 1212 Main Street**, stated that she did not realize that putting the sidewalk on the other side of the street is another option, which she would prefer. She noted that she has lived on Main Street for only 18 months but has already had to replace her mailbox twice. If the roadway is shifted from 48 feet to 39 feet away from her property, she is concerned about safety and the overall resale cost and ability of her home because it is not a very good curb appeal.

**James Jarvis of 1270 Main Street**, wondered why there aren't more than just two options proposed by the Town. In the 12 years that he has lived at his address, more than six cars have gone off the road, through his lawn, and taken out his mailbox. He is concerned that the old maple tree in his front yard will become the end point for people who are not paying attention while driving. He implored the Council to consider a crosswalk because it will save money on this project, property, and possibly even lives.

**Andrew Miller of 1245 Hebron Avenue**, who also owns 1235 Main Street, is really concerned that the street presence of the house will be affected by the sidewalk. He noted that he reached out to Mr. Pennington with particular questions on how this will impact his house but has not heard back yet. His main concern is what will happen to the 250-year-old maple tree in his front yard. He is also not too keen on the wire mesh idea. Another concern is the sidewalk going

across a common drive which serves five houses. He asked what the height of the retaining wall is and how long utilities will be cut off. He also asked if the snow shelf could not have grass on it.

Mr. Gullotta clarified that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to hear the public's worries, concerns, and suggestions. No decisions will be made tonight. The Town will try to find a solution that does the least harm.

**Eugene Hickey of 1200 Main Street**, expressed concern about moving Route 17 closer to his house. His property and resale value would be negatively impacted. His concern about putting in sidewalks is that Route 17 is a state highway, so the traffic flow is insane. Putting the sidewalk on the east side seems like it would involve taking down even more land and trees. He asked if this work would be done by the town, the state, or private contractors.

**Nancy Caruso of 1238 Main Street**, agrees with her neighbors that this sidewalk will be a nightmare. It will not even be used because of the speed that the traffic goes at that section of Main Street. She also added that the money could instead be used to create sidewalks in more useful places in Town.

**Richard Schlenger of 1197 Main Street**, commented that he has lived at the stated address for just two years, but has been rear-ended while exiting his driveway and has witnessed many near-accidents. The traffic on Route 17 is very bad, and the western side is probably the safer side.

Mr. Pennington expressed that they are not at a final design stage with any of the options discussed. Therefore, they are not prepared to answer specific questions, such as grading and tree removal, until they choose to pursue a specific design option. He then answered some of the questions posed by the public. The work would be designed and administered by Town staff but constructed by a private contractor. Utility service lines will follow their routine procedure. If the road were shifted, the curb width would not be widened. The snow shelf could be something other than grass. He also noted that a fence on top of the retaining wall, if they build one on the west side, would likely be required. The staging of the equipment would be worked out as part of a detailed design, should they proceed in that manner.

Dr. Beckett asked if this would widen the shoulders for bicycling, when the road is shifted to the east. Mr. Pennington explained that the shoulder width would be the same as it is now, but they could do widen the width for that purpose. Dr. Beckett asked about a fence on the east side, to prevent unwarranted traffic onto neighbors' properties. Mr. Pennington suggested they install a metal guard rail as protection.

Mr. Niland asked for assurances that consideration will be given to the trees that are very close to the road on the east. Mr. Pennington agreed, stating that they could conduct a detailed survey to identify the size of the trees versus the curb lines. Mr. Osgood asked about the cost estimates of the two options. Mr. Pennington stated that they both run roughly in the \$750,000 range, but because the Town does not have great experience with these types of retaining wall projects, they are not as confident with the cost estimates. Mr. Osgood then asked if the Council could be

provided with detailed design plans for both options, with better cost estimates. Mr. Pennington stated yes, but it would take more time to provide.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked if houses will be inspected prior to and after construction and what liability the Town would have. Mr. Pennington replied, in this case, they would treat the project similar to one in which there would be blasting, which he clarified there will not be here. The houses would be inspected before, during, and after construction. Mr. Cavanaugh then asked about worker safety. Mr. Pennington explained that they typically require that the contractor submits a safety plan for the Town's review and approval, and then, the Town would have an inspector on the site for that purpose.

Mr. McChesney noted that the option of putting the sidewalk on the other side would run around \$100,000 cheaper than the two options discussed. Mr. Pennington stated that is correct, with the caveat that the Town has not yet discussed that option with the DOT, so they would have to look at the liability of that. Mr. McChesney remarked that it seems surprising that doing the least impact option would be only a little cheaper than the other options. He is hesitant to completely write off the least-impact option, and would like to see it developed more, to become a possible third option.

Ms. Tanski asked, if they were to pursue the third option, that the Town provide the Council with information on the effect on traffic and any comparable safety information about crosswalks over Route 17. Mr. Osgood echoed Ms. Tanski's comment, remarking that the safest thing is to keep the sidewalk on one side, so he is inclined to go with maintaining the sidewalk on the west side. Mr. Gullotta stated that, before proceeding with any option, he would need to know what the traffic calming measures will be.

With no further comments or questions, Mr. Gullotta closed the public hearing.

**NO 2: PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED TOWN ACQUISITION OF THE 30± ACRE WRIGHT PROPERTY, HILL STREET, AND A \$390,000 APPROPRIATION PER THE RESERVE FOR LAND ACQUISITION.**

Mr. Johnson explained the site location and public access points. The Town would own about 50 feet or so heading out to Birch Mountain Road. The acquisition has been reviewed favorably by the TPZ and BOF. The closing, subject to the Council's approval, would be honored by February 26, 2021, and the purchase price would be funded through the Reserve for Land Acquisition and Preservation.

Mr. Niland opened the floor for attendees to comment.

***Doug Brown of 38 Hill Street***, stated that he voted in favor of this. He supports the Town's initiative to buy this land. One of his concerns was the right of way and that snow removal would be impeded if there were people parking on the street.



**Bill Kelly of 50 Hill Street**, would like the Town to strongly encourage entry through Birch Mountain Road and strongly discourage entry through Hill Street.

**Mike McCafferty of 3181 Hebron Avenue**, is a huge proponent of open space. He remarked that there should be an inexpensive way for people to park that will not impact the neighbors. Coop Road has turned into a parking lot and the neighbors there are not happy about that. He does not want to turn this bucolic road into a parking lot, too.

**Victoria Miorelli of 43 Hill Street**, stated that the street can become a parking lot at certain times of the year and there has been an issue with litter. She loves the fact that there is open space back there, and she hopes that the Town takes into consideration their quality of life.

**Katherine Kennedy of 38 Hill Street**, stated that this purchase is great for the Town. She loves the trails and open space and appreciates the Town taking into consideration the comments about putting parking on Birch Mountain Road.

**Virginia Brown of 62 Hill Street**, commented that the street is so narrow, that her children's school bus had to stop at Hebron Avenue. It is probably more feasible to have parking off of Ridge Road. She, too, agreed with her neighbors that the open space is great.

**Bob Miorelli of 43 Hill Street**, echoed his neighbors' comments, stating that Hill Street is a quiet street. He explained that the proposed access from Birch Mountain Road, at one point, was Hill Street.

With no further comments or questions, Mr. Gullotta closed the public hearing.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves Town purchase of the 30± acre Wright Property located off Hill Street in accordance with the Agreement for Sale and Purchase of Real Estate dated January 12, 2021 with a \$390,000 appropriation and transfer per the Reserve for Land Acquisition and Preservation, as recommended by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and Board of Finance, and as described in a report by the Town Manager dated January 22, 2021, with such Council approval subject to full satisfaction with the Boundary Survey and Environmental Analysis.*

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

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

Mr. Gullotta stated that, two weeks ago, Attorney Mark Branse wrote a letter offering his services as a volunteer. Mr. Gullotta explained that the Council has a subcommittee which assesses development projects that are appropriate for the Council to be involved with. Mr. Branse should be used as a resource. Mr. Cavanaugh agreed. The Council voiced no objections.

**b. MDC.           None**

**c. CRCOG.       None**

**d. Historic District – report and recommendation.**

Mr. Gullotta stated that Glastonbury has a lot of history that needs to be preserved. He and Mr. Cavanaugh had a long discussion, looking at maps, to select certain locations in Town for consideration as a Historic District. Mr. Gullotta asked that discussion on the matter be placed on their next agenda. Mr. Cavanaugh requested that, at that meeting, Mr. Johnson provides a statute for Historic Districts and a statute for Village Districts. Mr. Osgood asked if any homeowners requested the designation. Mr. Gullotta is not sure if they are even aware of the process to do so, but once they learn that such an opportunity exists, they will likely approach the Council.

**9.       Communications.       None**

**10.     Minutes.**

**a. Minutes of January 12, 2021 Regular Meeting.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

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

**11.     Appointments and Resignations.       None**

**12.     Executive Session.**

**a. Pending litigation – Glastonbury v. Sakon.**

**b. 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 pending litigation and a potential land acquisition at 9:45 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 10:15 P.M.

Meeting adjourned at 10:16 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

**Lilly Torosyan**

**Lilly Torosyan  
Recording Clerk**

**Thomas Gullotta  
Chairman**