

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 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, following an Executive Session held at 6:30 p.m. 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. Kurt P. Cavanaugh
Mr. Jacob McChesney
Ms. Lillian Tanski

a. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Jake McChesney

2. Public Comment.

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

Ken Dorros of 241 Shoddy Mill Road, addressed the use of ATVs on private property, which sometimes infringes on the rights of others to sleep peacefully. He understands that the Town has no noise ordinance, but these ATVs are operated with impunity. He spoke to other Connecticut towns who have addressed this concern in various ways. He proposed that the Council form a committee to explore reasonable regulation of the use of ATVs on private property.

Steven Becker at 611 Chestnut Hill Road, raised a public safety concern regarding motor vehicle tailgating and aggressive driving. There are many road advisories in Glastonbury and Connecticut in general, but none about tailgating, which is a direct cause of leading accidents. He requested a study be conducted with several objectives in mind to counter the problem of tailgating. He also volunteered to serve on a task force dedicated to this study.

Shawn Googins of 74 Forest Lane, requested that the wastewater testing for COVID-19 be terminated immediately because the study did not provide any actionable data.

John Sakon of 28 Fenwick Drive, stated that the Glastonbury administration has blocked his communications to the Council. He would like someone to reach out to him to deal with this ‘cancel culture’.

John Michalik of 69 Sunset Drive, stated that the map included on page 37 of today’s Council meeting packet is incorrect. It depicts two clusters of households that petitioned MDC for public water. His house is included in one of these clusters, but he did not petition MDC for water in 2018, nor did he ever petition MDC for water in the nearly 10 years that he has lived at this address. He also found it suspicious that all 16 households in his cluster petitioned MDC, according to the map. This seems far-fetched since he knows at least two homeowners who oppose public water.

Mr. Niland opened the floor for attendees to comment. With no comments, he closed the public comment session.

3. Special Reports.

a. Report on potential extension of public water service (Manchester Water and Metropolitan District) uranium in residential wells – Tighe & Bond.

Mr. Gullotta stated that this issue has no simple solutions, and they will not be taking action tonight. They will listen to what the Town Manager has to say, and he hopes that the Council will refer this action to the committee that was formed for this.

Mr. Johnson concurred that this is a preliminary report/feasibility analysis. Residential property owners have experienced uranium in residential wells that exceed both thresholds, for drinking and for bathing. The question they are tackling is, could MDC and Manchester Water service be extended to these subject areas, and if so, what challenges would that process present?

Peter Galant, Vice President from the Shelton, CT office of Tighe and Bond, presented a conceptual plan, not a proposed plan, for providing public water supply to homes with elevated uranium concentrations. This plan considers strictly the engineering factors for pursuing this service. The EPA drinking water standard is that public water supplies with more than 30 micrograms per liter of uranium would require treatment. The CTDPH recommends that wells greater than 900 micrograms per liter should not be used at all for either drinking or bathing. Mr. Galant noted that not all wells have been tested, so there may be other homeowners in Town who have elevated uranium concentrations.

Mr. Gallant noted that the MDC in the Chestnut Hill road area is served by three pressure zones. He addressed the public comment by Mr. Michalik, clarifying that the map shows historical service petitions from homeowners, not current petitions. The Minnechaug Mountain area is

Manchester Water's main service area. There could be a potential new tank to serve the expanded service area. He then reviewed a conceptual cost of the project, using the high unit cost of \$500 per square foot, which totals around \$46 million for the conceptual expansion area, to put water mains in the street. With 900 lots in the area, it comes out to roughly an average of \$50,000 per lot.

Dr. Beckett asked what abandoning existing wells would entail. Mr. Gallant explained that, with a contaminated high-uranium well, it would need to be disconnected to prevent cross-contamination. It is possible that wells could be maintained for irrigation use, but that would need health department approval. Mr. Niland asked about the \$500 per foot price, stating that the Minnechaug Mountain project came in at around \$400 per foot. Mr. Gallant stated that \$350 per foot is the number he would more accurately estimate, but they shot higher in the conceptual projection.

Mr. Gallant noted that MDC has two processes for expanding service: the petition process, which is a unique, lengthy process where the petition is initiated by homeowners and the actual cost reconciliation is paid by existing Glastonbury customers. The other process is the more traditional developers permit agreement, where the design, construction, and payment are footed by the developer. He then reviewed a new proposed Senate bill, which if passed, would require the state health department to study the issue of uranium and prepare a report to address issues like financing. In the interest of transparency, Ms. LaChance and Ms. Tanski both disclosed that they live in areas under concern.

Wendy Mis, Director of the Town Health Department, clarified that their data on the parcels is incomplete because there are property owners who have not submitted their results to the Town. She then made a call to people who have tested their water to share that information with the Town. This way, it could be included in the public health study and would be represented on their maps. Ms. Tanski asked that, at the next Council meeting, the Town Manager present information on the interplay between sewer and water because it seems that the areas for the water proposal are in areas that are not currently served by sewer. Therefore, there may be interplay between sewer projects and water projects. Mr. Johnson agreed to do so.

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

5. **New Business.**
 - a. **Action on amendment to Parks and Recreation Fee Schedule effective July 1, 2021.**

Mr. Johnson explained that they adjust the fees as their costs change, in order to retain the cost neutral basis. He noted that Ms. Zerio put together a nice report on the fee changes. He thinks that this is a very fair and reasonable adjustment, consistent with prior years.

Mr. Niland asked for an explanation on the reduction for softball. Lisa Zerio, Director of Parks and Recreation, explained that they lowered the softball fees because their numbers went down. They did not have a men's division or a women's league, so they wanted to be competitive with other programs across the state.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the Parks & Recreation Department Schedule of Fees and Charges – General Fund and Special Revenue Fund, as amended, for fiscal year 2021-2022, as detailed in a report by the Town Manager dated April 23, 2021 and as recommended by the Recreation Commission.

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

8:00 P.M. PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING

NO 1: REVIEW OF PROPOSED COMMUNICATION TOWER – SEQUIN DRIVE.

Mr. Johnson stated that this is a proposal by ARX Wireless for a 115-foot monopole tower at an 11-acre site located off of Sequin Drive. They have forwarded notice of this hearing to 80 property owners located off of the proposed site.

Keith Coppins, Managing Director of ARX Wireless, which owns, manages, and develops cell phone towers, reviewed the access points on the site. ARX Wireless is a nationwide firm and currently has four carriers in the Connecticut market. AT&T would be located at the top of the tower, and Verizon, T Mobile, and Dish would collocate on the tower. The site is outside of the wetlands of the area, and it passes the FAA. He also noted that the site is neither lit, nor marked with red and white stripes, and it does not affect any of the historic area of Glastonbury.

Mr. Niland opened the public hearing. Ms. Carroll read the written comments received, as listed on the Town website.

Vignesh Nagarajan Manickavasagam of 4 Dutton Place Way, stated that, as residents, they will not support the tower because of lower property values, adverse health effects, and the ecological impact on important species.

Vidya Chandran of 4 Dutton Place Way, strongly discourages the tower construction because it is the home for many birds, and the radiations from the cell tower may bring major impact on the bird population, depreciation of their land value, and also put their kids and health at great risk.

Mr. Niland opened the floor for attendees to comment.

Kristin Masood of 12 Dutton Place Way, asked three questions: why this site was chosen in particular, what was the purpose/need driving the tower, and to provide any history on the assessment/value of properties once the tower has gone up.

Mr. Coppins stated that letters were sent to several properties in the area. The need was developed by AT&T, not ARX Wireless. They picked this particular site because they had a willing property owner and it worked as far as constructability, and it had the least impact on the environment from a construction and development point of view. They do not conduct property value assessments, and it is not required by the Connecticut Siting Council. However, based on his 20-year experience, anecdotally, a tower in an industrial area of town does not influence property values. He does not feel comfortable, though, answering the question without doing more research because a lot of factors go into property value assessments.

Mr. Coppins noted that they are in a commercial area, and their goal is to meet the requirements of the Connecticut Siting Council, the FCC, and the FAA. They will meet the radiation standard and the power density standards. David Ball, attorney at Cohen and Wolf, P.C., representing the applicant, clarified that a bird study was conducted, which concluded that there would be no impact on the birds.

With no further comments, Mr. Niland closed the public hearing.

b. Action on amendments to fees and charges for Transfer Station operations effective July 1, 2021.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves amendments to the fees and charges for disposal of municipal solid waste at the Town Transfer Station effective July 1, 2021 and confirms the \$107 per ton rate for landfilled items at the Bulky Waste Facility effective July 1, 2021, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated April 23, 2021.

Disc: Mr. Niland proposed that they give their seniors a break at the transfer station because seniors consume far less in services than families do. The more they raise prices on people with limited income, the more likely they are to search elsewhere for those services. He would like to propose an amendment to the motion to increase the senior discount at the transfer station from 10% to 25% effective July 1, 2021.

Amendment by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Ms. Carroll

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby increases the senior discount from 10% to 25%.

Disc: Mr. Gullotta noted that he will abstain from voting on this because he would qualify for the potential reduction, as would Mr. Osgood. Ms. Carroll requested that Mr. Gullotta continue leading the discussion. Ms. Tanski agreed that both members should continue to be involved in the discussion. Mr. Osgood asked Mr. Niland to go over the economic impact of his proposed action.

Ms. Tanski asked how the \$16,000 reduction would impact their ongoing policy goal to have revenues make up 75% of costs. Mr. Niland explained his process for staying neutral, with \$101.25 for seniors and \$142.50 on the pickups. He noted that about 42% of the users who purchased passes are seniors. Mr. Osgood countered that they would have to offset the cost by increasing the fees on non-senior users, which he does not support. Mr. Niland explained that the modest increase in the tipping fees on the bulky waste facility, from \$105 to \$110, would eliminate the difference in the loss of revenue. Ms. Carroll agrees that seniors in Town use up less resources and she disagreed with the suggestion from Mr. Osgood and Dr. Beckett that reducing the fee for them would result in increased use of the facility. She supports this amendment. Mr. Johnson explained his calculations to close the \$18,000 gap that would arise from this action.

Mr. Osgood motioned to table the discussion until all of the calculations are squared away.

Motion by: Mr. Osgood

Seconded by: Ms. Tanski

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby tables the discussion.

Result: Motion failed {4-5-0}, with Ms. Carroll, Ms. LaChance, Mr. McChesney, Mr. Niland, and Mr. Gullotta voting against.

Disc: Mr. Johnson stated that, as originally proposed, they would reimburse 71% of the cost at the transfer station. If they pull out \$18,000, they would be at about 68% reimbursement. Mr. Osgood and Dr. Beckett believe that they are moving in the wrong direction on this. Ms. Tanski asked how the offset would work on paper. Mr. Johnson explained that the fee would be \$107 for everything that is landfilled effective this July. The base difference between the \$72 and the \$107 goes into the closure fund. They would keep that relationship of the difference but with new numbers, \$80 and \$115 respectively. This means that, in a way, the bulky waste facility would be reimbursing part of the cost of the transfer station.

Ms. Tanski believes that this would make it harder to track year-to-year what the true costs of operating these two entities are. She would rather they had clear numbers on their stated goals. Mr. Gullotta countered that the transfer station and bulky waste are interchangeable, and the differences are arbitrary. He supports Mr. Niland's amendment. Mr. Johnson noted that, in order to come up with the pay-as-you-throw concept mentioned by Dr. Beckett, they would have to take a closer look at the revenue projections. Ms. Carroll added, they cannot put together those calculations by July 1, but in the meantime, they can agree on some numbers to propose for a discount on seniors and a new tipping fee.

Amendment by: Mr. Osgood

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby increases the senior discount from 10% to 15%.

Disc: Mr. Cavanaugh asked what the average senior discount is for other towns in Connecticut. Mr. Johnson stated that he does not know off the top of his head, but he cannot think of any examples that go beyond 10%. Mr. Cavanaugh stated that the Town was sued by trash haulers because their fees were a lot cheaper than others. The Council's goal at that time was for revenues to make up 50% of the cost, which they raised to 75%, with the eventual goal to reach 100%. He does not support moving backwards. He also stated that their residents cannot go to other towns' bulky waste facilities, so the comparison to other towns is not fair.

Ms. Tanski supports this amendment because it creates a much smaller distortion in their budgeting. If they pass a 25% discount for seniors on permits, it will make it nearly impossible to pursue a pay-as-you-throw process in the future because no one will pay more for pay-as-you-throw if they could purchase a permit. They are wrong to rush through this action tonight. Mr. Niland does not believe that this would preclude them from pay-as-you-throw, and he is open to hearing what Dr. Beckett will report on that option.

Result: Amendment for 15% senior reduction failed {3-6-0}, with Ms. Carroll, Mr. Cavanaugh, Ms. LaChance, Mr. McChesney, Mr. Niland, and Mr. Gullotta voting against.

Result: Amendment for 25% senior reduction passed {5-4-0}, with Dr. Beckett, Mr. Cavanaugh, Mr. Osgood, and Ms. Tanski voting against.

Motion by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Ms. Carroll

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby increases the tipping fees at bulky waste by \$8.

Result: Motion passed {5-4-0}, with Dr. Beckett, Mr. Cavanaugh, Mr. Osgood, and Ms. Tanski voting against.

c. Action on waiver of competitive bid process – road resurfacing program.

Mr. Johnson explained that, this year, the state did not include pavement reclamation in their contract, and the notice to towns and municipalities was short. He noted that they very rarely pursue bid waivers, unless a recommendation is made that it is in the best interest of the town. In this case, it is in the Town's best interest because there would be an estimated \$120,000 savings, and it is better to have one company do both the overlay and the paving, rather than two disparate firms. He noted that the Board of Finance unanimously approved a favorable recommendation last week.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves a waiver of the competitive bidding process for pavement reclamation services over the 2021 construction season, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated April 23, 2021 and as recommended by the Board of Finance.

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

d. Action on proposed Town purchase of State-owned land – .2 acres off Birch Mountain Road (refer to Town Plan and Zoning Commission per CGS Section 8-24).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby refers Town acquisition of the .2-acre parcel located off Birch Mountain Road 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 April 23, 2021.

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

e. Action on general wage adjustment – non-affiliated full-time staff – July 1, 2021. *Tabled*

f. Action on amendment to Pension Plan.

Mr. Johnson explained that this was an oversight that they needed to correct.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves Pension Amendment 20 to correct the effective date previously incorrectly stated in Pension Amendment 20, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated April 23, 2020.

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

6. Consent Calendar.

a. Action to Appoint of Auditors for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council appoints the firm of RSM US LLP to audit the books and accounts of the Town of Glastonbury for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021, in accordance with applicable Town policies, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated April 23, 2021 and as recommended by the Board of Finance.

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

7. Town Manager’s Report.

Mr. Johnson explained that the state would not consider traffic calming along Route 17 but will work with the Town to construct two crosswalks. The pickleball courts were approved during the budget process. He addressed a prior Council concern that the courts will not negatively affect the Apple Harvest Festival. In fact, they would actually provide benefits by increasing advertising and integrating the courts into the festival. They would like to move forward with the design to have the courts in place this fall. In regard to a concern that was posed during the public comment session, Mr. Johnson explained that they will discontinue the wastewater testing process at this time and resume it on an as-needed basis. The Manchester Land Trust has asked if

Glastonbury would contribute two acres to the Lombardo Farm. He can schedule that discussion for an upcoming Council meeting.

Mr. Johnson noted that when the Council considered new sidewalks along Spring Street, they also thought about extending the design to Bantle Road. The estimated cost to complete both preliminary designs next year is \$160,000. Mr. Cavanaugh asked why Spring Street and Bantle Road are the same cost. Mr. Johnson stated that they are relatively comparable in length, so the estimates are pretty close to each other. Mr. Cavanaugh believes that if they are to pursue Spring Street, they should do Bantle Road, as well. Mr. Gullotta stated that the approach to close the Putnam Bridge with the first snowstorm and reopen it in the spring makes sense. Mr. Cavanaugh agreed. Mr. Johnson then spoke to the extension of the 50% reduction in rental to Emmy Lou's Ltd. and the second tenant through the month of August, in order to give them an opportunity to build back their business. No one on the Council objected to that action.

Mr. Niland asked for data on tailgating. Mr. Johnson agreed to look into it. Ms. Tanski asked if any progress has been made in the request for proposals on an open space management plan and whether or not they had any criteria in mind. Mr. Johnson stated that it is in the queue to be addressed. They would provide an outline to the Council about what such an analysis would entail. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about updates on the fundraising efforts for the property at the Cotton Hollow Mill. Mr. Johnson stated that the Historical Society has partnered with the Land Heritage Coalition and fundraising efforts are in progress and will hopefully pick up speed shortly. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about the Memorial Day Parade. Mr. Johnson stated that it is currently cancelled, with the ceremony to be held at the Green. However, they may resume the parade. He will know more information soon.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked about the possibility of continuing virtual meetings after the Governor's Executive Order expires next month. Mr. Johnson stated that he does not know yet, but the interpretation he has heard is that they will return to in-person hearings. He will provide clarification at their next Council meeting. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about updates on Dairy Queen. Mr. Johnson stated that the TPZ signed off on the special permit for Dairy Queen, and the escrow arrangement has been executed. All approvals are in place for that project to go forward. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that there was an article in the Hartford Courant, stating that cities will be given more leniency than towns in how to spend their recovery money. Mr. Johnson has not heard that there will be differences based on population size.

Motion by: Dr. Beckett

Seconded by: Ms. Carroll

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council accepts the Town Manager's Expense Report for January-March 2021.

Result: Expense report was accepted unanimously {9-0-0}.

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

Mr. Gullotta stated that business in town is beginning to reopen. He encouraged everyone to patron River Run Book Shop and buy a book.

b. MDC.

There is no MDC update. However, Dr. Beckett noted that he has changed to the independent party, so this is his last meeting as Minority Leader. Mr. Osgood will be the new Republican representative.

c. CRCOG. None

9. Communications. None

10. Minutes.

a. Minutes of March 23, 2021 Regular Meeting and Final Budget Hearing.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

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

11. Appointments and Resignations. None

12. Executive Session. None

13. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk

Thomas Gullotta
Chairman