

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2022**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson, in attendance, held a Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street with the option for 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  
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll  
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh  
Mr. John Cavanna  
Ms. Mary LaChance  
Mr. Jacob McChesney  
Mr. Whit Osgood {participated via Zoom video conferencing}  
Ms. Jennifer Wang

**a. Pledge of Allegiance.                    *Led by Charlie Murray***

**2. Public Comment.**

The following comments were made in-person, at Council Chambers:

***Dennis McBride of 263 Spring Street Extension***, supports Agenda Item 5b concerning the Town’s plan to purchase property for affordable housing on Nye Road and Western Boulevard. Instead of apartments, he suggests that the properties be townhouses. This blend of home ownership and equity is key to building wealth. It will also allow the Town to recoup most or all its investment. He suggests investing in all the property between Nye Road and Western Boulevard, which would generate about \$2 million per year in tax revenue. He asked to compare at least two other areas in town to see which would be the most cost-effective option. He also suggested keeping both office buildings on Nye Road, as it is cheaper to renovate than to rebuild.

***Nicholas Korns of 73 Shagbark Road***, spoke about Agenda Item 3. He noted that any mural regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion is inherently political and divisive, and the Town should not support it. He then spoke to Item 5b regarding a potential land acquisition. If the Town is considering purchasing land for affordable housing, then it needs to go to a referendum.

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

***John Moore of Hampshire Drive***, commented on the new proposed animal shelter. While he understands the need to have an outdoor area for the dogs to exercise, having kennels outside would create a nuisance for the neighborhood. He asked the Town to consider having all kennels be indoor only. He also recommends having the animal shelter be built where the two sheds are, in front of the current shelter, as it will provide more buffer to Hampshire Drive with the woods.

**Robyn Guimont of 62 Chimney Sweep Hill Road**, supports the MLK Mural Project in Glastonbury. Philadelphia has a wonderful mural project which has helped reduce the incidences of graffiti, and brightens the darker spaces in the city, making them more inviting to visitors and residents alike. Underpasses are not the most pleasant spaces, but they can be the perfect canvas to allow Glastonbury to offer up a surprising bit of inspiration to all who venture down the road.

### **3. Special Reports.**

#### **a. Presentation concerning proposal by MLK39 Racial Equity Mural Tour.**

Matt Conway is the Executive Director of a statewide nonprofit called RiseUp for the Arts. In 2021, their organization initiated the MLK39 Racial Equity Mural Tour to bring public art to 39 communities across Connecticut. The purpose of the project is to represent the diversity of communities while linking communities together through art. Thus far, the murals have received very positive feedback through press and public support. Typically, each project costs around \$15,000 and takes about 6-12 months to complete. RiseUp covers all the costs, so towns do not pay anything. They would like to bring the tour to Glastonbury and have identified a few potential sites for such a mural.

Artist Micaela Levesque from East Hartford has completed several RiseUp projects across the states, such as the Ruth Bader Ginsburg mural in downtown Hartford and the Maya Angelou mural in Bristol. She shared a few examples of positive feedback she has received from the community, especially from people she otherwise would have never met. She noted that months of research goes into choosing who to paint for each community.

Leslie Ohta of 2273 Hebron Avenue, has been on the board of the Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative (GMLKCI) for many years. The GMLKCI was approved by the Council over 20 years ago, and falls under the auspices of the Human Relations Commission, of which she is also a member. She has also been a board member of the ABC House, which is another example of Glastonbury's commitment to equity, racial diversity, and fairness. She urged interested residents to join the GMLKCI, which plays a supporting role to RiseUp. Their role is to educate the community about this MLK mural project. If the mural is successful, they intend to put up other murals throughout town. She reiterated that the project will not cost the Town a dime. She has forwarded the contract indicating that RiseUp will assume liability for five years. After which, the Town can choose what to do with the mural.

Ms. Carroll finds the mural project to be an exciting possibility for the Glastonbury community. She looks forward to the conversations that will follow. Ms. LaChance agreed. Her mother was an art teacher, so she welcomes art going up around the state and in town. Mr. Osgood asked if the mural would be focused on Martin Luther King Jr. Mr. Conway clarified that MLK is the name of the mural tour, but Mr. King does not have to be physically represented in the mural. The Town will decide who it would like to portray the history of Glastonbury.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked to list the locations identified for a mural site. Mr. Conway stated that the most viable option they have identified is the underpass of New London Turnpike. Because it is a state bridge, it requires Town Manager approval. Mr. Johnson advised that they present before the Council. They have already conversed with the State, and there is no reason not to approve of the project. Mr. Cavanaugh asked where the funding comes from. Mr. Conway explained that the majority comes from grassroots activism and is matched by corporate donations. Some money also comes from private foundations. Everything is listed on their website. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if there is a reason why

President Obama has a mural, but Secretary Rice, Justice Thomas, or Secretary Powell do not. Mr. Conway stated that all selections are based on feedback received from community surveys.

Ms. Wang has previously mentioned supporting public art through ARPA funds. She is glad to see this opportunity because it will not cost the Town money. She commended RiseUp’s professionalism and challenged all to not think about this as a political project because diversity and inclusion go beyond politics. She shared that one of her friends is nearing retirement age and lives in a town with an MLK mural. The representation meant a lot to her, so such a mural will mean a lot to the young people of Glastonbury. She suggested the Smith sisters, known for their abolitionism and women’s suffrage activism, as the possible subject(s) for the mural.

Ms. Wang asked what other communities have done before and after approving the mural project. Mr. Conway stated that this is the second time they have gone to a town council. All other towns have unanimously wanted the mural. After accepting the process, they will invite more people to their steering committee. A community survey will be released to acquire input on who should be in the mural and why. The artist will make a design out of that, which will be shown to the steering committee for approval. The Council can have final say on the design.

Mr. Cavanna asked if other areas have been identified which might be easier viewed and safer. Ms. Ohta explained that they chose this location because it is a busy street and has extended sidewalks on both sides of the street. While they are open to suggestions for other underpasses, they need to identify a site quickly because documentation must be submitted to the DOT to authorize the work. Mr. Conway noted that the building does not have to be a state-owned underpass. It could be a private building or a library or something else entirely. Ms. Ohta remarked that, a year ago, she was looking at buildings, not underpasses, but she could not find a suitable large area, even if it was privately owned.

Mr. Cavanna asked how long a mural takes to paint. Mr. Conway stated that Ms. Levesque could paint it in a month. Mr. Cavanna asked what happens after the insurance liability expires in five years. Mr. Conway explained that public art is fairly new in Connecticut. He does not know how much it will cost, but their organization is working with the State to build a maintenance fund. The murals are their brand, so it is in their best interests to ensure that they do not tarnish.

Chairman Gullotta stated that the Glastonbury Historical Society, the Glastonbury Art Guild, and the Glastonbury Human Relations Commission are three groups to reach out to. Ms. Ohta noted that she is the head of the Human Relations Commission, and the other two organizations are interested but have not joined the commission yet. Mr. Gullotta also suggested the Smith sisters as possible subjects, while pointing out that Glastonbury has a history as a station on the Underground Railroad, which may open interesting possibilities for a mural.

**4. Old Business.           None**

**5. New Business.**

**a. Action on Right of First Offer – Rose parcel – Matson Hill Road.**

Mr. Osgood asked about the access to this property. Mr. Johnson explained that it is still part of the discussion, but access will likely be off 295/297 Matson Hill Road because of a driveway there. Mr. Osgood asked what will happen if that is not achieved. Mr. Johnson does not think that will be an issue.

He hopes that they can continue to maintain the access on the primary driveway. In the absence of that, the 23 acres has frontage on Matson Hill Road.

Mr. Osgood asked about the purchase price per acre. Mr. Johnson stated that it is around \$45,000 per acre. Mr. Osgood finds that to be a large sum for purposes of farmland preservation. He has reservations about this acquisition. Mr. Cavanaugh asked what is meant by exercising the right of first offer. Mr. Johnson explained that, in 2018, the Town partnered with Belltown Orchards, which purchased 52 acres of Rose's Berry Farm. That is located on the easterly side of the property. When the Town worked with Belltown Orchards to preserve the 52 acres, they requested a right of first offer to purchase the additional 23 acres that is under action tonight.

Mr. Cavanna supports preserving land, especially in the farming community in South Glastonbury. He is thrilled to continue open space acquisition. Mr. Niland agreed, seeking to preserve that land as is. Mr. McChesney finds this to be an important property to preserve in town. Ms. LaChance echoed Mr. Cavanna's sentiment that more land is not being built, so farmland must be preserved. Mr. Osgood asked, if the Town acquires this land and would like to sell one of the buildings, would they have to go to referendum. Mr. Johnson explained that yes, anything over \$20,000 will require voter approval.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby elects to exercise the Right of First Offer for the 23.18± acre Rose parcel at 297 Matson Hill Road and authorizes the Town Manager to prepare a Purchase and Sale Agreement for purchase of the subject property, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated October 7, 2022.*

**Result:** Motion passed {8-1-0}, with one vote against by Mr. Osgood.

## **PUBLIC HEARING:**

### **NO 1: ACTION ON A \$1.2M APPROPRIATION AND TRANSFER FROM THE GENERAL FUND-UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE TO CAPITAL PROJECTS-GIDEON WELLES HVAC PROJECT. (CONTINUED FROM SEPTEMBER 27, 2022).**

Mr. Johnson explained that there was a potential state grant to fund the HVAC project at Gideon Welles. At the time, a \$1.2 million budget was established and reviewed with the BOF, with the understanding that the number could change. When additional information became available, it was apparent that the \$1.2 million would be reduced to \$500,000. This would be an appropriation from the General Fund and costs would be included in the capital budget. The Council can budget it as part of the Capital Program and repay it as part of the General Fund.

**Sara Bass of 5 Knollwood Drive**, asked if the work at the Gideon Welles school is necessary right now because that is a lot of money.

Mr. Johnson explained that the replacement of the air handling units at Gideon Welles was in the BOE's capital program. At the time, they thought that grant monies would be available, so the project was delayed a year to ensure the 33.57% grant reimbursement revenue. Over the short term, the air handling

units need to be replaced, and this is the most cost-effective way to do it. If the project is pursued in three years, they may forgo the 33.57% grant.

*Due to technical difficulties, the Council recessed for five minutes, returning at 8:17 P.M.*

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves a \$500,000 appropriation and transfer from the General Fund-Unassigned Fund Balance to Capital Projects-Gideon Welles HVAC Project, authorizes the Board of Education to submit a grant application with DAS/OSC, authorizes preparation of design and construction documents, and refers the project to the Public Buildings Commission for approval of final design plans, as recommended by the Board of Finance, Board of Education, and as described in a report by the Town Manager dated October 7, 2022.*

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

**b. Action to schedule public information hearing – potential land acquisition.**

Mr. Gullotta stated that this motion has a long history behind it. Many residents have asked to use ARPA monies for affordable housing. In particular, individuals have suggested purchasing property on the corner of Hebron Avenue and Manchester Road. This action will move forward on affordable housing so that the Town can reach the threshold to acquire a moratorium on CGS 8-30g applications. The Town Attorney has stated that taking significant efforts to increase the Town's affordable housing stock is a factor that the courts will take into consideration during an 8-30g appeal.

Mr. Johnson explained that the subject property is 10.86 acres located on House Street, off the cul de sac of Nye Road. Another 4-6 acres, located just east of the subject property, is landlocked and cannot be accessed but for Nye Road. The Town intends to purchase the 10.86 acres and provide access to that 4-6 acres, to have 11 or 12 acres for an affordable housing project. The Town has an understanding and agreement with the owner of the property to purchase the 11 acres. It requires a decision of the Council by early December. The purchase price is \$3.4 million, inclusive of the 11 acres and the two structures. The thought is to proceed with a public hearing to see if it can move forward as an affordable housing development.

Mr. Osgood asked if there is access off Spring Street. Mr. Johnson explained that the Old Village Trail is not a public access point but a private road. Mr. Cavanaugh is leery about this acquisition without public input, so he hopes a lot of people show up in two weeks. He is also concerned about the leases of the building which could delay any possible construction of affordable housing. He asked, what is the state's definition of "added" affordable housing? He does not like CGS 8-30g and hopes that the upcoming legislature amends it so that it does not take away Glastonbury's zoning regulations. He would also like to make the Council packet information available to the media now that it has been made available to the public.

Mr. Niland also does not like the law as written and hopes that it is reworked by the legislature. He agreed with Mr. Gullotta that this is an opportunity to stop the influx of 8-30g developments. The Town has the potential to use ARPA money, as well as potential revenue from tenants in the building. Glastonbury has not acted on 8-30g over many years, and this is their chance to do what is right. Mr. McChesney also hopes that many people show up with public input. He asked how paying for this with

ARPA funds will be impacted by the fact that some businesses are currently renting space in that building for municipal uses. Ms. Wang asked either Mr. Johnson or the GHA to provide visual examples of existing affordable housing in town or other communities. She has heard concerns about “100% affordable” limiting all units to certain incomes. She supports mixed income development.

Mr. Osgood takes issue with the fact that this proposal has not been deliberated at length. The Town does not know what it is going to do with the property. Having a 100% affordable project runs counter to what most towns have been trying to do, which is to move towards decentralizing affordable housing. If this does not get the Town a moratorium, then they should reevaluate whether the acquisition should be built at all. Acquiring property to tear down buildings to build affordable housing when other sites have not been evaluated is a poor use of resources.

Mr. Gullotta asked whether the Council can make the decision to use ARPA funds alone, or if the BOF needs to sign off, as well. If the latter, then he would like to hear from the Town Attorney as to what criteria the BOF would use to make that determination. This is an opportunity to do something significant to address Glastonbury’s affordable housing needs. If they do not move forward on it, he warned that 8-30g developments will flood into town. Purchasing those properties, as suggested by the Chairman of Glastonbury Republicans, does not make sense. \$3.4 million is a large sum, but a lot has been spent on other projects in town. This will help to reinstate local control of zoning.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public information hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 25, 2022, in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury and/or through Zoom Video Conferencing to consider proposed Town acquisition of the 10.86± acre parcel located off Nye Road, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated October 7, 2022.*

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

**c. Action on amendment to Town Code and Building Zone Regulations concerning technical assistance for land use proposals (set public hearing).**

Mr. Johnson explained that this action is to amend the regulations to allow the Town to require an applicant to reimburse testimony or reports from third-party experts.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules public hearings for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 25, 2022, in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury and/or through Zoom Video Conferencing the following:*

- 1. New Town Code Section 15-38(15); and*
- 2. Amendment to the Building Zone Regulation to establish a new Section 3-28;*

*all as described in a report by the Town Manager dated October 7, 2022, and as recommended by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.*

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

**d. Action on Public Act 21-29 – opt out of accessory apartment and parking requirements (set public hearing).**

Mr. Johnson explained that the Town can either opt out or revise their regulations to meet the state standard, as set forth by Public Act 21-29. He noted that the ADUs component requires action by January 1, 2023. At which point, the state law will take into effect. However, that time limit does not apply to the parking regulations. The action is to set a public hearing to either opt out or to amend the town regulations. Mr. Niland pointed out that this does not mean that the Town is doing away with ADUs or parking requirements. It simply gives them local control. Mr. Cavanaugh agreed, noting that he took issue with a headline in the Hartford Courant, which incorrectly stated that Glastonbury is doing away with accessory apartments.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public hearing concerning Public Act 21-29 – Opt Out of Accessory Apartment and Parking Requirements for 8 p.m. on Tuesday, October 25, 2022, in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury and/or through Zoom Video Conferencing, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated October 7, 2022, and as recommended by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.*

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

**e. Action on employment agreement and general wage adjustment – Town Manager.**

Mr. Gullotta remarked that the recruitment process is ongoing for a new town manager. He thanked Mr. Johnson for agreeing to stay on for one more budget season as the search continues.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves Extension to the Employment Agreement with the Town Manager dated October 11, 2022, effective January 1, 2023 through March 31, 2023 in accordance with the formal Agreement attached hereto.*

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

**6. Consent Calendar.**

**a. Action on appropriation and transfer – police grant funding and removal of PFAS from fire apparatus – \$95,000.00 – General Fund-Unassigned Fund Balance to Police and Fire Operating Accounts (refer to Board of Finance; set public hearing).**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby refers to the Board of Finance the request for a \$95,000 appropriation and transfer from the General Fund-Unassigned Fund Balance to Police and Fire Operating Accounts and schedules a public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 25, 2022 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury and/or through Zoom Video Conferencing, as described by a report from the Town Manager dated October 7, 2022.*

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

**b. Action on STEAP Grant – authorize Town Manager to accept grant funds (\$500,000) and execute agreement, contract and documents related thereto.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*WHEREAS, pursuant to CGS Section 4-66g, the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development is authorized to extend financial assistance for economic development projects; and*

*WHEREAS, it is desirable and in the public interest that the Town of Glastonbury make an application to the State for \$500,000 in order to undertake the Glastonbury Age Friendly Community Outdoor Space Improvements Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement.*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Glastonbury Town Council*

- 1. That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the state financial assistance imposed by CGS Section 4-66g.*
- 2. That the filing of an application for State financial assistance by the Town of Glastonbury in an amount not to exceed \$500,000 is hereby approved and that the Town Manager is directed to execute and file such application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decisions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of the Town of Glastonbury.*

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

**7. Town Manager’s Report.**

Mr. Johnson highlighted the September edition of the Fall newsletter. He shared the year end results for FY22, noting that there was about a \$3 million gain to the Unassigned Fund Balance. There are questions as to how the assets in the fund balance might be allocated. He will walk through it with the Council before the budget process begins. 50 applications have been received for the ARPA small business grant. There is enough funding for 30 applications. Applications are being reviewed on a first come, first served basis. He will provide a report on that, as well as on the sidewalk matrix, at a later date. He provided a list of winter activities being planned by various town departments. The annual program at the boathouse will resume this year. Regarding the fund balance, Mr. Cavanaugh asked if a joint meeting with the BOF would be beneficial. He also asked what is in place to help the Fire Commission hire a new Fire Marshal and Fire Chief. Mr. Johnson stated that recruitment is underway for the Fire Marshal position and applications have been received. He will be speaking with the Fire Commission about this next week.

Ms. Wang asked to advise on the next steps regarding the mural presentation. Mr. Johnson will review and confirm the insurance contract. He would like the Council to vet possible locations for the mural, and to understand how the community survey will be conducted. After all that, he will return to the

Council to discuss next steps. Mr. Gullotta would like to have a public informational session, as well as for the Glastonbury Historical Society, the Glastonbury Art Guild, and the Glastonbury Human Relations Commission to get involved. Mr. Cavanna asked Mr. Johnson to speak to the police department traffic supervisor about sending a lift to paint the area. He asked what it would cost to have two police officers at the location to handle traffic. Mr. McChesney noted that the holiday fair at the boathouse and the lighting at the Town Center will be taking place on the same day. He asked that there be some coordination to connect the events.

**8. Committee Reports.**

**a. Chairman's Report.** *None*

**b. MDC.**

Ms. LaChance stated that MDC is in the middle of their budget season. They are decreasing the pension assumptions because the mortality rates show that people are not living as long.

**c. CRCOG.**

Mr. Niland was unable to attend the most recent meeting. He will go over the minutes and report back at the next Council meeting.

**9. Communications.**

**a. Letter from Centerline Communications regarding Notice of Exempt Modification of communication tower located at 2108 Main Street.**

**10. Minutes.**

**a. Minutes of September 27, 2022 Regular Meeting.**

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the minutes of the September 27, 2022 Regular Meeting.

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

**11. Appointments and Resignations.** *None*

**12. Executive Session.**

**a. Potential land acquisition.**

**b. Draft terms and conditions – sale of land – Eastern Boulevard.**

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby enters into executive session to discuss a potential land acquisition and draft terms and conditions for sale of Town-owned land – Eastern Boulevard at 9:00 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, Mr. Kurt Cavanaugh, Ms. Deborah Carroll, Mr. John Cavanna, Ms. Mary LaChance, Mr. Jake McChesney, Mr. Whit Osgood, and Ms. Jennifer Wang, with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson.*

No votes were taken following the Executive Session, which ended at 9:10 P.M.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 P.M.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Lilly Torosyan**

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

**Thomas Gullotta**  
**Chairman**