

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2023**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Jonathan Luiz, 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 {arrived at 8:00 P.M.}
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh
Mr. John Cavanna
Ms. Mary LaChance
Mr. Jacob McChesney
Mr. Whit Osgood
Ms. Jennifer Wang

a. Pledge of Allegiance. *Led by Alex Wood*

2. Public Comment.

Pieter Friedrich of 1654 Main Street, stated that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Shangh (RSS) paramilitary organization, which has orchestrated violence against India's Muslim minority, has a direct connection to Glastonbury. He said the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) is their international wing, which serves as a propaganda piece for the RSS in India. Glastonbury has repeatedly platformed and praised the HSS, with the Glastonbury Police Department hosting HSS celebrations. He provided an informational packet on the RSS, its ties to the HSS, and asked to reevaluate the Town's relationship to the HSS.

Seema Watwe of 15 Heywood Drive, has been a resident since 2013. She explained that the HSS serves the Indian American community while advocating for values of Dharma, and that they organize various community outreach projects and support local initiatives. She invited council members to their May 20 event at the Welles Turner library.

3. Special Reports. *None*

4. Old Business. *None*

5. New Business.

a. Action on State of CT DEEP STEAP Grant PSA – Street Tree Management Software & Site Renovations.

Motion by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, Richard J. Johnson, has retired from the position of Town Manager on March 31, 2023, and has been succeeded by Jonathan Luiz as of April 3, 2023; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Council had previously authorized Richard J. Johnson to make, execute and approve, on behalf of the Town, any and all contracts or amendments thereof with the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection as related to the Street Tree Management Software and Site Renovations grant; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Council wishes to extend that same authority to Jonathan Luiz, as Town Manager and on behalf of the Town, as it relates to approved projects eligible for grants, loans and other subsidies from the State and its agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Jonathan Luiz, Town Manager, is authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Glastonbury, any and all contracts, or amendments, supplements or extensions thereof, with the State of Connecticut and its agencies, including, but not limited to, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Office of Policy and Management, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, and the Department of Transportation, as related to projects eligible for State grants, loans and other subsidies, and approved by the Town Council and/or qualified voters of the Town at referendum.

Disc: Mr. Luiz stated that this is paperwork that needs to get squared away for the Town to receive grant funding. Mr. Cavanaugh asked to clarify what is meant by “the work is underway”. Mr. Luiz explained that staff expects all the work specified in this grant will be accomplished by June 30.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

6. Consent Calendar.

- a.** Action on appointment of auditors for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Motion by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

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 ending June 30, 2023, in accordance with applicable Town policies, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated April 21, 2023, and as recommended by the Board of Finance.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

7. Town Manager’s Report.

Mr. Luiz explained that the Memorial Day parade will be held on May 29. Twenty-three small businesses have received the ARPA small business assistance grant. Twenty roads are scheduled

to be improved this summer using the reclamation method. Construction for the Main Street rehabilitation project will be funded by a state LOTCIP grant. Town Engineering staff will keep an eye on a feasibility study. Mr. Cavanaugh thought that the project was going to be delayed for as long as possible. There has not been a formal application, but from this report, it sounds like it could happen. Mr. Luiz will return to staff and provide a clearer update. Mr. Osgood asked for an update on the status of the Route 17 sidewalk design.

Mr. Luiz explained that he has met with Dr. Bookman to introduce himself. He has also met at least once with each staff member who reports directly to him and has participated in several community events. Mr. Gullotta noted that Mr. Friedrich raised questions about the police department's relationship with a particular organization in town. He asked to investigate that relationship. Mr. Luiz agreed to do so. Ms. Wang also attended the Earth Day Fair and was glad that Mr. Luiz could make it. It was a great outreach event, and she is proud of Town Staff for acting on various initiatives.

8. Committee Reports.

- a. **Chairman's Report.** *None*
- b. **MDC.** *None*
- c. **CRCOG.** *None*

9. Communications. *None*

10. Minutes.

a. Minutes of March 28, 2023 Special Meeting.

Motion by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Minutes were accepted unanimously, as presented {8-0-0}.

b. Minutes of March 28, 2023 Regular Meeting.

Motion by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Minutes were accepted unanimously, as presented {8-0-0}.

c. Minutes of April 6, 2023 Special Meeting.

Motion by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Minutes were accepted {7-0-1}, with one abstention from Mr. Osgood since he was not present at the meeting.

11. Appointments and Resignations.

a. Reappointment of Carl Stenman to the Housing Authority (R-2028).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Reappointment was accepted unanimously {8-0-0}.

12. Executive Session.

- a. Discussion concerning the appointment of a Fire Marshal.**
- b. Discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale, or purchase of real estate**
- c. Pending litigation - Vessel RE Holdings, LLC v. Town Plan and Zoning Commission of the Town of Glastonbury.**
- d. Pending litigation - Sakon v. Town of Glastonbury.**
- e. Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining.**

Motion by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby enters into executive session for discussion concerning the appointment of a Fire Marshal; discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale, or purchase of real estate; pending litigation - Vessel RE Holdings, LLC v. Town Plan and Zoning Commission of the Town of Glastonbury; pending litigation - Sakon v. Town of Glastonbury; and strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining, at 7:27 P.M.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

Present for the Executive Session item were council members, Mr. Tom Gullotta, Chairman, Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman, Mr. Kurt Cavanaugh, Mr. John Cavanna, Ms. Mary LaChance, Mr. Jake McChesney, Mr. Whit Osgood, and Ms. Jennifer Wang, with Town Manager, Jonathan Luiz present and the Personnel Director Sherri Tanguay.

The Executive Session ended at 8:00 P.M. No votes were taken following the Executive Session.

The Council returned to commence the public hearings. Ms. Carroll joined the meeting at 8:00 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

NO. 1 ACTION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO SECTION 4.13 OF THE BUILDING ZONE REGULATIONS REGARDING COMMERCIAL SPACE RETENTION/REPLACEMENT FOR MIXED USE PROJECTS IN THE TOWN CENTER ZONE. *Tabled*

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby tables the public hearing to a future meeting.

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

NO. 2 ACTION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO SECTION 3.27 OF THE BUILDING ZONE REGULATIONS – CANNABIS.

The following people spoke in Council Chambers:

Kim Hughey of 57 Shipman Drive, spoke on behalf of Glastonbury Community Action Partnership (GCAP), which is the Town’s designated local prevention council. GCAP supports the prohibition of all cannabis establishments. Legalization will increase the potential for access and illegal sales to minors, and THC is harmful for developing brains. Connecticut’s rates for marijuana usage have been consistently higher than the national average. Any cannabis establishment in town is contrary to the prevention efforts, initiatives, and messaging being promoted to youth, and would be detrimental to the health and wellness of their community.

Isabella Martas-Mayer of 696 Chestnut Hill Road and Alexa Wolf of 259 Neipsic Road, are two students who oppose recreational marijuana dispensaries opening in town. They cited a CT Insider article, which reported that seven vendors sold marijuana to minors. The more dispersed marijuana is, the easier it can be for teens to use, and its use is harmful to developing brains. They asked to not let marijuana vendors operate in town.

The following comment was made via Zoom:

Thomas Burr of 33 Mark Drive, is the public policy manager for the Connecticut chapter of NAMI. He testified against allowing retail marijuana in town. NAMI CT supports prevention measures because for about 5% of the population, marijuana use triggers psychosis. He directed all to check out a recent presentation by the CT Clearinghouse.

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

Allyson Nadeau-Schmeizl of 178 Oakwood Drive, is the Executive Director of Amplify, which is the state-appointed regional behavioral health action organization serving 37 towns, including Glastonbury. Amplify has monitored and supported initiatives sponsored by GCAP for many years. Coalitions across the region have echoed concerns regarding the rise in vaping and marijuana use among youth. Amplify strongly supports GCAP’s recommendation to prohibit the establishment of any type of cannabis facility within Glastonbury. It will send a strong message to residents that the health and future well-being of youth is far more important than any potential tax revenue.

Lesley Mroz of 121 Heywood Drive Glastonbury, asked to prohibit the sale of cannabis in Glastonbury. As leading health organizations stress, cannabis use can seriously impair driving. It also has adverse effects on adolescent brains. A cannabis store does not belong in Glastonbury, where people are trying to raise their children in a safe, family-friendly environment. Taxes from such stores will not offset the suffering that may result from impaired driving.

Mr. Niland has no interest in making it easier for youth in town to have access to cannabis. If people wish to purchase it legally, they can go to surrounding towns. He also does not know what the effect will be on property values, so Glastonbury does not need to be a guinea pig. Their community is healthy enough to not need to sell their souls for a few quick bucks. He also noted that this action is not irreversible, as a future council can choose to change this decision. Mr. Cavanaugh and Ms. Wang offered compliments to Ms. Caltagirone, the Director of Planning and Land Use. Ms. Wang also thanked the public for voicing their concerns, especially the youth who spoke tonight. Ms. Carroll is a parent of three school-aged children. Her priority is to keep her children safe and allowing marijuana retailers into town undermines that fundamental goal.

Mr. Osgood thinks that the state should decide this, rather than drug cartels. To allow cannabis establishments in Connecticut, but not in Glastonbury, makes no sense. Cannabis should be regulated, like tobacco and alcohol, so that it can be consumed safely and legally. He will not support the motion. Mr. McChesney did not support the state legalization of marijuana, but he did not have a say in that. However, he has a say in what happens in Glastonbury. As a father of two young children, he seeks to make it harder for youth to get marijuana in town.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves an amendment to the Building Zone Regulations, Section 3.27 – Regulation of Cannabis Establishments to prohibit Cannabis Establishments, as recommended by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, and as described in a report by the Town Manager dated April 21, 2023, with said amendment effective June 1, 2023.

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

NO. 3 ACTION ON PROPOSED SALE OF THE TOWN-OWNED 6.5± ACRE PARCEL AT 232 EASTERN BOULEVARD.

Mr. Luiz stated that this proposal sale does not have to go to a referendum, due to a previous referendum from years ago, which authorized the Council to sell the property. Mr. Osgood stated that they have been marking this parcel for some time as part of the Gateway area. He looks forward to the development.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the sale of the Town-owned land at 232 Eastern Boulevard, Parcel E11, in accordance with the Purchase and Sale Agreement dated March 30, 2023, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated April 21, 2023.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-1}. Ms. LaChance abstained because she knows the people involved.

The Council returned to Executive Session at 8:20 P.M. No votes were taken following the Executive Session.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan

Recording Clerk

Thomas Gullotta

Chairman