

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 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 (excused)
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll
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 Mr. Osgood

2. Public Comment

Mr. Nick Korns of 73 Shagbark Road noted that he is the Chairman of the Glastonbury Republican Committee and was told that there was opposition from the majority party regarding Ms. Heather Simon's appointment to the Welles Turner Library Board. Mr. Korns noted that he was told that the opposition was based on Ms. Simon's comments to the Board of Education, written comments in *The Citizen* and/or social media. Mr. Korns stated that he is very concerned for two reasons: first, it sounds like the importation of cancel culture to Glastonbury, if the opinions are not liked, they are canceled. Mr. Korns added that it is a bad precedent to set. Mr. Korns noted that the second reason is the actual content issue. He remarked that the concerns of Ms. Simon and many others is that some of the books identified in the Glastonbury schools have pornographic content. Mr. Korns noted that these people are not book banners or book burners. He stated that the content is inappropriate for minors, and noted that it might even be illegal to promote pornographic material to minors. Mr. Korns explained that the library is a different thing, and Ms. Simon will not object to the books in the library. He noted that the issue is not just the content of the books in the schools but other issues that came up at the Board of Education meetings. Mr. Korns urged the Council not to reject Ms. Simon's nomination and added that it sets a bad precedent.

Ms. Carroll read out the written comments.

Mr. Matthew Staebner of 589 Hopewell Rd submitted the following: I am asking the town council to please vote in favor of the right to farm ordinance. Recognizing a "Right to Farm" allows the towns farmers to practice good agricultural practices recommended by both the CT Department of Agriculture & UCONN Cooperative Extension Service in collaboration with the CT Agricultural Experiment Stations.

Anna Pokora of 20 Sachem Drive submitted the following: I am opposed to funding a weight room addition for Glastonbury High School with hard earned tax payer funds, at any cost. Who comes up with these ideas? My children grew up to be successful adults without a weight room. High Schoolers do not need a weight room to succeed. It's a desire, not a need. Give the students a membership in a local gym. Support the local economy. Glastonbury can put this money to better use with improvements in the town. Some examples include:

- reducing property taxes
- eliminate fee for Transfer Station for Glastonbury citizens
- provide curbside rubbish pickup 2 times a year, as other neighboring towns do.
- reduce Senior Citizen fee for Town Transfer Station use
- funding more programs for Glastonbury citizens at the Riverfront Community Center
- funding programs at the 3 libraries in Glastonbury (East Glastonbury, South Glastonbury and Gideon Welles). Local libraries are important for residents who cannot drive to the Main Street Gideon Welles
- help finance moderate housing that is required by CT State law.
- Affordable Housing initiatives. Quit the haggling.
- pre-school programs and after school programs for children at a reasonable cost.
- sidewalks on Manchester Rd near the new 5 story Hayes development to improve safety for people who would like to walk in their neighborhood.
- have you seen the muddy kayak "launch" at Riverfront? Definitely needs improvement to increase use.

This weight room is like another Riverfront Boathouse Banquet Hall fiasco.

3. Special Reports. None

4. Old Business. None

5. New Business

(a) Discussion and possible action on Right-to-Farm Ordinance (refer to Policy & Ordinance Review Subcommittee).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby refers the proposed ordinance concerning Right-to-Farm to the Policy & Ordinance Review Subcommittee for a report and recommendation, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated June 9, 2023.

Discussion:

Mr. Osgood noted that the opinion from the Town attorney explains that the State statute preempts the Town and added that an ordinance is just a policy statement. He suggested coming up with a resolution which will save the Town staff time and accomplish the same objective. Mr. Osgood explained that the proposed measure does not add anything to the State ordinance and added that it is far better to come up with a policy statement or resolution. He noted that he will vote against. Mr. Cavanna noted that he is interested in saving taxpayer money and added that he is fine with this approach. He explained that the first step is to recognize and acknowledge the need to save farms. Mr. Cavanna stated that farms built this town and noted that the question is where to go from here.

Mr. McChesney suggested the subcommittee can work on the ordinance language to save staff time and added that they represent the interest and sentiment of the Council. Mr. McChesney asked if Mr. Cavanna was on the subcommittee. Chairman Gullotta noted that the subcommittee consists of himself, Ms. Carroll and Mr. Cavanaugh. Ms. Carroll explained that the subcommittee receives the language from the Town Manager and/or Town Staff. She remarked that she is in favor of streamlining the process and added that they do not craft the language. Chairman Gullotta noted that 12 communities in Connecticut passed a Right-to-Farm ordinance and added that the process does not have to require extensive research. The Chairman suggested finding something that gets to the point, does so succinctly, is agreed on by his two colleagues, and then brought back to the Council.

Motion by: Mr. Osgood

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

An amendment to the motion, deleting the word “ordinance” and moving forward with “policy statement” or “resolution” and sent to the subcommittee.

Discussion:

Mr. Cavanaugh asked Mr. Cavanna if a resolution, passed by the Council and assigned by all the Council members resulting in a formal document, would be sufficient for the farming community. Mr. Cavanna replied yes and explained that passing an ordinance would overlay state statute. He noted that this might be redundant if everyone already acknowledges that farms are important to the community. Mr. Cavanna explained that the first step is to establish a foundation which will save farms and added that he does not want to be in a position where nothing was done and there are no farms left. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that he supports the amendment based on Mr. Cavanna’s comments. Ms. LaChance noted that she was going to defer to Mr. Cavanna and remarked that she has seen Right-to-Farm signs before and added that she is pretty sure there is one on a major road in Colchester. She explained that these signs are beneficial because not everyone watches Town Council meetings and added that it gets the word out. Ms. LaChance stated that she is in support.

Ms. Wang explained that ordinances are long-lasting and resolutions are statements made by current councils. She stated that she would not support the amendment and added that she will

propose a different amendment that would ensure keeping the option of an ordinance on table for consideration. Several council members noted that this was a good approach. Mr. McChesney remarked that he does not know if Connecticut will ever revoke its own policies and added that, if it is revoked, there is a Town ordinance. Mr. McChesney stated that he is in favor of Ms. Wang's suggestion. Chairman Gullotta noted that a motion is on the floor with a second and asked the Council members to vote.

Result: Motion fails. (2-6; Chairman Gullotta, Ms. Carroll, Mr. Cavanna, Ms. LaChance, Mr. McChesney, Ms. Wang voting No.)

Motion by: Ms. Wang

Seconded by: Ms. Carroll

Adding "resolution" or "policy statement" to the language.

Result: Motion passes (7-1; Mr. Osgood voting NO.)

Chairman Gullotta directed the Council back to the main motion.

Result: Motion passes unanimously (8-0).

(b) Action on Farmland Ground Leases with Littel Acres Farm Market and BHO Enterprises LLC d/b/a Belltown Hill Orchards – 297 Matson Hill Road.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager to execute a Farmland Ground Lease with Littel Acres Farm Market LLC and a Farmland Ground Lease with BHO Enterprises LLC d/b/a Belltown Hill Orchards for use of the Town-owned land located at 297 Matson Hill Road as presented, and as described in a report by the Town Manager dated June 9, 2023.

Discussion:

Mr. Osgood asked Mr. Luiz to provide a summary. Mr. Luiz noted that they did go out to RFP to see if anyone in the general public wanted to submit a proposal to farm the land. He noted that they received 3 proposals, and added that these leases reflect 2 of the proposals that were submitted, which allows BHO, farmed by the Preli's, to farm 6 acres east of the pond. The Preli's would also use water from the pond for the 6 acres they would be farming, as well as using the water for their land to the east. Mr. Luiz explained that all of the other land at the property that is referred to as Rose's Berry Farm will be farmed by Littel Acres or the Draghi family. He noted that the farmers would also be using the buildings on site, farming plants that

exist, blueberries, and storing some equipment on site. Mr. Luiz noted that it is not a great season for farming and remarked that Mr. Cavanna can speak on that. He noted that it would be a dollar lease with the term starting immediately upon execution to the remainder of this calendar year. Mr. Luiz remarked that the dollar is fair considering the tough year for farming. He noted that the farmers will take great care of the land. Mr. Luiz explained that Littel Acres agreed to pay for the utilities that they would use and the Preli's would only pay for the utilities in the pump house. Mr. Luiz explained that he has checked the leases and wanted to get it on the record that the farmers agreed to pay the utilities and noted that this condition will be included in the leases. Mr. Luiz noted that, additionally, an agreement was reached regarding the construction of a separate driveway, if necessary. The farmers agreed, as long as the design plans and materials are provided by the Town. Mr. Luiz explained that the Highway Department cannot help with this because they are busy with road improvements. Mr. Luiz noted that the farmers would like to have the driveway built by July 1 and added, if the conditions permit, pick-your-own will be part of the plans. Mr. Luiz noted that there are old boats and other items that need to be cleared out and added that the farmers agreed to help with this.

Mr. Osgood wanted to point out that it is a short-term lease which runs through December and can be renewed if both parties agree. He remarked that boats were mentioned and asked about the sand pile. Mr. Luiz noted that it could be sold or used for other purposes. Mr. Osgood remarked that he noticed a tractor trailer on site and asked if there was any consideration to creating a road along the south edge of the property. Mr. Luiz explained that Mr. Pennington came up with the plans and the driveway would be across from Foote Road. Mr. Osgood noted that 2 lanes would take up more of the current blueberry production and pointed out that the homeowner is still using the driveway that is now Town property. Mr. Osgood noted that this is something to look into. Mr. Luiz agreed to look into the situation. Mr. Cavanna noted that the electrical will not be an issue and added that, in his discussions with Mr. Draghi, he was told that they would be using PTO pump off tractors. Mr. Cavanna remarked that, if the driveway is found to be necessary and is constructed, it will get done with a fiscal note of zero to the Town.

Mr. Cavanaugh wanted to confirm that the Town staff will design the driveway and provide materials and the farmers will use their own equipment. Mr. Luiz replied yes and added that the Town Engineer will come out to make sure everything is in accordance with the design plans. Mr. Cavanaugh remarked that this is the second time Mr. Preli stepped up to preserve land for the Town, farming community and residents. He also wanted to acknowledge the work Mr. Draghi has done to preserve land for farms. Mr. Cavanaugh thanked the two gentlemen for their contribution to the Town and added that the public should be pleased. Mr. Luiz noted that Town staff, including the Town building official, went out to the Rose's Berry Farm site and found that the porch used for "Breakfast with a View" was deemed unsafe for the public. Mr. Luiz added that the porch area was sectioned off. Mr. McChesney noted that he agrees with Mr. Cavanaugh's sentiments on the farmers' contribution to the Town and added that he sincerely appreciates their efforts. Mr. McChesney noted that Rose's Berry Farm is a gem in Town and added that the work of the farmers ensures that the land is preserved as a working farm. Mr. McChesney remarked that the deck has been unsafe for a while and suggested looking into ways to continue the tradition of "Breakfast with a View" or consider other options that involve public engagement. Chairman Gullotta explained that the Council has decided to go with an

agricultural first approach, instead of the entertainment first approach. He noted that he will certainly support the motion.

Result: Motion passes unanimously (8-0).

6. Consent Calendar

(a) Action on lease renewal of Town-owned building at 2112 Main Street with Glastonbury Emergency Medical Services (lease expires June 30, 2023).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager to renew the lease of the Town-owned Building at 2112 Main Street between the Town of Glastonbury and GEMS for a one-year term July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated June 9, 2023.

Result: Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

(b) Action on FY 2024 Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant – \$ 21,753.94.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT 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 thereof with the Capitol Region Council of Government for the FY 2024 Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated June 9, 2023.

Result: Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

(c) Action on road acceptance – Fairway Crossing (Station 28+00 to Station 39+16 – Minnechaug Village PAD, Phase II), Pembroke Terrace (Station 1+00 to Station 28+00 – Tyler Open Space Subdivision, Phases II and III), Penwood Crossing (Station 28+01 to Station 44+34 – Tyler Open Space Subdivision, Phases II and III), and Welles Street (Station 0+23 to Station 28+37 between Naubuc Avenue and Main Street).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council (Zoning Authority) approves the following as Town roads, as recommended by the Town Plan & Zoning Commission at its May 16, 2023 meeting:

- *Fairway Crossing from Station 28+00 to Station 39+16, within the Minnechaug Village PAD, Phase II;*
- *Pembroke Terrace from Station 1+00 to Station 28+00, within the Tyler Open Space Subdivision, Phases II and III;*
- *Penwood Crossing from Station 28+01 to Station 44+34, within the Tyler Open Space Subdivision, Phases II and III; and*
- *Welles Street from Station 0+23 to Station 28+37 between Naubuc Avenue and Main Street;*

as described in a report by the Town Manager dated June 9, 2023.

Result: Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

7. Town Manager's Report.

Mr. Luiz noted that he has attached thank you notes written by the public for the purpose of recognizing Town staff for their excellent work. Mr. Luiz stated that another way Town Staff are shown appreciation is through the Town's annual employee recognition program. The event is scheduled to be held tomorrow at the Riverfront Community Center from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. It will feature a catered breakfast and award ceremony recognizing certain employees who performed exceptionally. Mr. Luiz noted that Town Hall will be closed during the event and added that they issued a press release notifying the public of the closure. The press release provides suggested alternatives for items that are of a timely nature, such as paying taxes or renewing dog licenses. Mr. Luiz noted that a prominent notice was put up on the Town website and physical signs were put up at the various Town facilities.

Mr. Luiz provided information on the Public, Educational and Governmental Programming and Educational Technology Investment Account (PEGPETIA) grant program which aims to promote and improve public educational and governmental programming and to support educational technology initiatives. Mr. Luiz noted that Glastonbury was recently awarded \$95,804, which will be used to update the RCC's PA and sound system. The upgrade allows the Town to conduct remote and hybrid meetings, as well as share equipment between council chambers, meeting Room A and the RCC. Mr. Luiz noted that this 100 percent grant-funded project is targeted for Fall 2023 completion and added that this is the third grant the Town has been awarded since 2019.

Mr. Luiz noted that *The League of American Bicyclists* has renewed Glastonbury's designation as a bronze level bicycle friendly community. The award is presented to communities with

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strong commitments to bicycling. He noted that the national press release is available on the organization's website www.bikeleague.org and added that the designation is valid for 4 years.

Mr. Luiz noted that the Glastonbury Police Department's marine patrol boat has been serviced and stationed indoors at the Boat House. He explained that, as staffing and weather permit, the boat will be deployed to monitor recreational boat traffic along the Connecticut River. Mr. Luiz noted that Police Chief Porter will continue to reach out to the police chiefs of surrounding river towns in an effort to coordinate patrol efforts on a regional basis. Mr. Luiz briefed the Council on the plans of bringing in an engineer to evaluate the silt build up at the Boat House dock. The project is scheduled for July and funds were allocated in the new budget.

Mr. Luiz noted that the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Protection has provided the Glastonbury Police Department with \$35,000 in funding for the purpose of reducing auto theft and other crimes associated with auto theft. Mr. Luiz explained that the funding will pay for increased police patrols to help deter these criminal acts. Glastonbury is one of 58 communities in the State to have been awarded grant funding.

Mr. Luiz noted that the majority of permits necessary to install the automated license plate readers (ALPR units) have been received by the Town. He added that outstanding permits should be received by the end of this month. Mr. Luiz stated that, once all permitting is in place, the installations will begin. He noted that the installations will take place in a few weeks, after which training and testing will occur. Mr. Luiz stated that he has attached a list of 17 unit locations where the ALPR units will be installed.

Mr. Luiz updated the Council on the Welles Village playground. He noted that 197 surveys were sent out and 24 surveys were received. The deadline for the survey was May 15th. Mr. Luiz explained that the Director of Parks and Recreation went through the surveys, which provided information on the improvements the residents would like to see. Mr. Luiz stated that the Director will meet with the playground consultant, who will provide design options. Mr. Luiz noted that the Town is awaiting quotes from companies for the renovation and repair of the Welles Village Park basketball courts.

Mr. Luiz noted that a question came up about Salmon Brook Park at the last meeting. He explained that Town engineer, Dan Pennington, went out to the site and provided a report included in the packet. Mr. Luiz pointed out the two important observations. The first is that the pond appears to have been constructed in the 1970s, an inlet structure allows entry of water flow to the pond from Salmon Brook, which is located east of the pond, with a corresponding outlet structure on the west side of the pond to allow for pond overflow to flow back into Salmon Brook. Second, the realignment of the inlet structure coupled with alteration of stream bottom or water level elevations have resulted in difficulty in brook flow to enter the pond during high intensity rain events. This resulted in citizens expressing concerns about the pond level being low. Mr. Luiz explained that, presently, there are three options: the first is to pursue a capital project aimed at keeping the pond full of water throughout the year, which will likely require federal and local regulatory permits, which could take a year or more to obtain. The second option is to pursue a capital project aimed at eliminating the pond and restoring the site to the former natural condition, without making significant modifications to Salmon Brook. The third

option is take no action. Mr. Luiz noted that he will provide more information as part of the fall budget process.

Mr. Luiz noted that the DOT is in the process of designing wrong way detection systems to be installed at 42 limited access highway off ramps that are considered high risk for wrong way drivers. The Route 3 Eastbound exit at Glastonbury Boulevard and the Route 3 Westbound exit at Putnam Boulevard would be included in this project. Mr. Luiz explained that these types of systems consist of radar, video, and/or thermal cameras deployed along off ramps as primary detection for wrong way vehicles. Flashing red circular lights on the signs will alert drivers that they are traveling in the wrong direction, prompting them to take corrective action. Mr. Luiz noted that the State police and the Connecticut DOT will be alerted if a driver continues to go the wrong way. The designs are scheduled for completion this month with the project tentatively advertised to contractors this summer.

Mr. Luiz noted that the Connecticut General assembly adopted a two-year budget, assuming Governor Lamont signs it. A chart was provided in the packet that compares what Glastonbury budgeted for State aid in Fiscal Year 2024 versus what the State budgeted. The net result is approximately \$149,000 more than what the Town budgeted. Mr. Luiz said that he has received news from Representative Barry that the State's adopted budget contains no grant funding for specific municipal capital projects in Glastonbury. Mr. Luiz noted that Representative Barry did say that she will be going through the adopted budget in depth, as monies were earmarked for several initiatives, including affordable housing initiatives, via a grant process.

Mr. Luiz noted that the Director of Land Use and Planning Services is drafting text amendments to Section 7 of the Building Zone Regulations with respect to the parking of larger vehicles in residential driveways. Mr. Luiz stated that he will bring it forward to the agenda/leadership team once it is ready.

Mr. Luiz noted that, following a publicly advertised competitive bid process, Glastonbury Public Schools awarded the contract for the Naubuc School alteration project to BRD Builders, LLC of Hartford. BRD's base bid was \$3,211,800. Mr. Luiz noted that the Town's capital budget contains 3.2 million dollars. He explained that any expenditure associated with the project that exceeds \$3.2 million will be paid for by the School District. Mr. Luiz noted that a summary of the bids, as well as an award letter from the school district to BRD Builders, was included in the packet.

Mr. Luiz noted that the 2023 Riverfront Music Series presented by the Town and the Chamber of Commerce kicks off June 21st at 6:30 pm at the Riverfront Community Center. The information on the eight upcoming concerts is attached in the packet.

Mr. Luiz noted that, lastly, tomorrow night the *Tip a Cop* fundraiser to benefit Special Olympics Connecticut will be held from 5 pm to 9 pm at Giovanni's Brick Oven Pizzeria.

Discussion:

Mr. Cavanna noted that he is thrilled to hear that they are still working on the ordinances for parking for residents in Town with work related trucks and asked if there was any way to stop the letters that residents are getting until the situation is resolved. He explained that residents are getting fined and their vehicles are towed and reiterated that this should stop until the situation is figured out. Mr. Cavanna noted that a few months ago he asked about a panhandling ordinance and explained that he recently received an email from an individual who owns a business on the northern side of Town who had to start locking the doors of the business to prevent panhandlers from coming into the establishment and asking patrons for money. Mr. Cavanna stated that this has to stop and added that Wethersfield just enacted a new ordinance that has been successful. Mr. Cavanna asked about the number of out of town agencies that are using the police range. He noted that the range was expensive to build and has cost the tax payers several hundreds of thousands of dollars. Mr. Cavanna explained that the police range is not a standard range and has a life span based on the number of round counts. He asked how these round counts are tracked and asked what they are receiving from other towns for using this range and also asked about the plans to pay for a new range in the future. Mr. Cavanna remarked that he is thrilled to hear that the police boat will be in use and asked if there was anything further about other towns partnering with the Glastonbury Police Department.

Mr. Luiz explained that he spoke with the Police Chief and was told that it was not high on the list of desires. He explained that it would require police officers working overtime and added that getting the boat out there is a process. Mr. Cavanna suggested for the Rocky Hill police boat to pick up Glastonbury police officers. Mr. Luiz noted that he can provide an update and added that the Police Chief has mentioned that there will be continued collaboration with other Towns. Mr. Osgood thanked Mr. Luiz for looking into Salmon Brook Park and noted that handling it through the capital improvement project would be the way to go. Mr. Osgood noted that the School budget is about \$11,000 over the estimate and added that there is an amount of \$600,000 that would be paid for by other funds. Mr. Osgood asked Mr. Luiz to get clarification from the superintendent. Mr. McChesney noted that vehicle crimes are still an issue and added that it has been a while since the Council has received an update from the Police Chief. He remarked that he does not mind an in-person update or a written update and added that he would like to get some statistics from the Police Chief. Mr. McChesney noted that the Police Chief can provide updates without mentioning the specifics of ongoing investigations. Mr. Luiz noted that he will work on producing something and update the Council.

Mr. Cavanna remarked that he is in support of Mr. McChesney's idea. Mr. Cavanna explained that the police chief in Wethersfield does a quick monthly update on the crime trends and added that the specifics of investigations are not discussed. Mr. Cavanna noted that the Council and residents need to be informed of what and where things are happening. He explained that some areas are targeted. Mr. Cavanna remarked that the Town needs to take action and be more preventative. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that public communications funding was mentioned and asked if it was supposed to include wireless mics for council members speaking at the podium. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about the timeline of the technology upgrades. Mr. Luiz explained that IT has completed some of the work and noted that IT is in the process of putting in wireless mics. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if Council members were looking for action on a panhandling ordinance.

Mr. Cavanna explained that he recalls that it was tabled, and added that they went with a wait-and-see approach. Chairman Gullotta explained that the Town Attorney advised that the ordinance is problematic and added that the sentiment of the Council was to wait and see the experience of other Towns. Chairman Gullotta suggested speaking to the Town Manager during agenda setting for the purpose of speaking to the Town Attorney about what other towns have done.

8. Committee Reports.

(a) Chairman's Report

Chairman Gullotta noted that he received a call from Alex, the Town Reporter, and was told that he will be on a new investigative unit that JI is developing. The Chairman wished him the best of luck. Chairman Gullotta noted that Mark Branse brought up an interesting idea about reconfiguring the intersection near Monaco. The Chairman explained that Mr. Branse mentioned that in certain parts of Massachusetts overpasses are not taken down and are creatively redesigned with the addition of shrubbery and flowers. Chairman Gullotta suggested for the Town to consider this creative approach to overpasses. He explained that the DOT is dramatically reshaping the area and added that this is something to take into consideration.

Mr. Cavanaugh noted that he has read the thank you letters that were included in the packet and wanted to mention Officer Sergey Sharov who was thanked for his service in three different letters. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that one of the letters detailed that Officer Sharov's Russian background was instrumental in assisting a victim who required a translator. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that Officer Sharov was also thanked for recovering stolen jewelry. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that he reads each and every one of the letters and wanted to commend Officer Sharov for the great work. Mr. Osgood noted that concrete bridges require netting and pointed out that it is costly to recondition a bridge and mentioned an example where one bridge had to be removed due to the high maintenance costs. Mr. Osgood asked the Council members to keep this in mind. Mr. Cavanna suggested having a traffic engineer look at the plans and noted that there are businesses there as well as the high school and added that he does not want to see an increase in traffic collisions.

(b) MDC None

(c) CRCOG. None

9. Communications.

(a) Letter from Smartlink regarding modifications to an existing telecommunications facility located at 58 Montano Road. Ms. Carroll read the letter.

10. Minutes

(a) Minutes of May 23, 2023 Regular Meeting.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Minutes were accepted unanimously (8-0).

11. Appointments and Resignations.

(a) Appointment of Dennis Desmarais to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (Alternate, D-2023).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

(b) Appointment of Sharon Jagel to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (Alternate, R-2023).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

(c) Appointment of Isabel Rolfe to the Youth and Family Services Commission (R-2025).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

(d) Appointment of Heather Simon to the Welles Turner Library Board (R-2025).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Discussion:

Mr. Cavanna noted that he does not know Ms. Simon well and remarked that he believes in a fair shake. He explained that Ms. Simon was concerned about some of the books in the school library and has provided pictures and passages of those books. Mr. Cavanna explained that Ms. Simon took a stand and voiced her opinion at the school board meeting and added that it was done respectfully and done in the way the law dictates. He noted that he has a problem with Ms. Simon not being able to volunteer her time because she expressed concern. Mr. Cavanna stated

that he asked Ms. Simon if she would take books out of the public library and was told absolutely not. Mr. Cavanna noted that he looked into the books and agreed that the books are not appropriate for children aged 12 and 13. Mr. Cavanna put up the images from the books Ms. Simon identified as concerning. Mr. Cavanna stated that a person should not be stopped from volunteering before speaking to them and reiterated that she should get a fair shake.

Ms. Carroll explained that, as a Council, they rely on the community at large to serve on their boards and commissions. She noted that she is grateful for the work they do. Ms. Carroll explained that appointees support the mission and work of the body they are appointed to. Ms. Carroll read out the mission statement of the Welles Turner Library and noted that Ms. Simon has made comments in public meetings, social media and written comments in *The Citizen* that are antithetical to the mission of Welles Turner Library. She stated that she will not vote in support.

Ms. LaChance noted that appointments are not a rubberstamping process. She stated that she has heard from several constituents voicing their opposition to this appointment. Ms. LaChance noted that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. She explained that Ms. Simon worked to remove a reading app from school iPads that would essentially take away 40,000 books from students. Ms. LaChance stated that Ms. Simon is opposed to 2 books: *An ABC of Equality* and *Jack (Not Jackie)*. Ms. LaChance reiterated that Ms. Simon's opposition toward two books would take away 40,000 books from kids. Ms. LaChance noted that children under 18 must have parental permission to get a library card. She explained that not everyone has the luxury to buy books and explained that, growing up, the only place she was able to get books was from the library. Ms. LaChance stated that she will not vote in support.

Mr. Cavanna read out sexually explicit excerpts from a book identified as concerning by Ms. Simon. Ms. Carroll explained that it is important to clarify that these are not classroom books. She noted that these are high school books and added that parents are allowed to give the library a list of books their child cannot take out. Ms. Carroll noted these books are not handed out to young children and added that the argument made is incorrect and added that she agrees with Ms. LaChance's point on past behavior as an indicator of future behavior.

Mr. Cavanaugh noted that he does not know Ms. Simon and was told by the Chairman that there might be an issue with her appointment. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that the word "rubberstamped" was used earlier by another member and explained that, for the most part, these are rubberstamped. He explained that each party submits a form to the Town Manager's office, and unless there is a blatant conflict of interest, an example being a developer joining the TPZ, it is handled before anything is in print. Mr. Cavanaugh explained that the current Chairman of the Library Board is a democrat who called him about the 2 republican openings. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that it is not easy finding people willing to serve in local government and deal with issues like tonight. He remarked that the comment about past behavior being a predicate for future behavior is unbelievable and added that it has come to the point of turning down ordinary citizens that want to serve the community. Mr. Cavanaugh remarked that the democrats will not always be in the majority and added that turnout will be fair play.

Mr. McChesney remarked that he does not appreciate veiled threats and noted that he recognizes that there will be other parties in power. He also noted that he recognizes that a party has the right to put in their choice. Mr. McChesney explained that they have a fiduciary duty to carry out the values and interests of the Council. He explained that the recently hired fire marshal was not a unanimous vote. Mr. McChesney stated that he does not know Ms. Simon. He noted that he has two children and urges anyone concerned with this matter to foster a relationship with their children. He explained that his approach is to be open and to be able to communicate and answer questions. Mr. McChesney remarked that he does not know why Ms. Simon is not here tonight and pointed out that there is a public comment session and added that they only heard from the Chairman of the party. He explained that his concern is that someone who strenuously objected to school books might object to something in library. Mr. McChesney remarked that he has been on the fence and added that he is concerned about setting precedent. He explained that there is a concern about what this individual is going to do and added that she may be opposed to ideas expressed in books and start challenging things in the public library. Mr. McChesney noted that there are 2 republican openings and there will still be 2 republican openings. He remarked that there are concerns and explained that they have an obligation to determine who is appropriate on committees. Mr. McChesney remarked that he has no judgment and added that he does not know Ms. Simon. He noted that he only knows what has been shared and stated that he is likely to vote not to approve the nomination.

Mr. Osgood remarked that Mr. Cavanaugh made a great point, that it is difficult to get people to contribute their time and energy. Mr. Osgood noted that he will make a motion to table the vote to give Ms. Simon the opportunity to speak to the Council.

Motion by: Mr. Osgood

Seconded by: Mr. McChesney

Table the vote to give Ms. Simon the opportunity to speak to the Council.

Result: Motion failed (3-5; Mr. Cavanaugh, Chairman Gullotta, Ms. Carroll, Ms. LaChance, Ms. Wang voting No)

The Chairman directed the Council to the main motion.

Result: Motion failed (3-5; Mr. McChesney, Chairman Gullotta, Ms. Carroll, Ms. LaChance, Ms. Wang voting No)

NO. 1 ACTION ON PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY THE SOUTH GLASTONBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, INC. AND TOWN OF GLASTONBURY – OPEN SPACE LAND ACQUISITION FUND UNDER THE 2023 NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE ACT PROGRAM.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the proposals submitted by (1) South Glastonbury Public Library Association, Inc., and (2) Town of Glastonbury – Open Space Land Acquisition per the 2023 Neighborhood Assistance Act Program, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated June 9, 2023.

Chairman Gullotta asked Mr. Luiz if there was anything he would like to add. Mr. Luiz summed up that the initiative encourages businesses to receive tax benefits for donating to the items laid out in the report.

Ms. Susan Vasellina of 58 High Street noted that she is the President of the Board of Directors of the South Glastonbury Library and added that she is here to answer questions about the application they put in. She explained that they are an independent library and not connected to Welles Turner Library or the library in East Glastonbury. Ms. Vasellina explained that they raise their own funds and own the building at 80 High Street, which is a former Methodist church. She noted that the Library Association has been operating for almost 100 years with all volunteers. Ms. Vasellina noted that they have an annual fundraising event with the Town giving an annual grant of \$7,500 last summer, which was raised to \$10,000. She remarked that they are very grateful and added that the Neighborhood Assistance Act Program grant will be used to update the children's books and added that they are striving for diversity. She noted that they will also continue with the post-pandemic programs that include author events, poetry readings, an African folklore storytelling event, and others events.

Mr. McChesney remarked that the Council loves the library and added that he will not be surprised if the motion passes. Ms. Wang commended the work of the South Glastonbury Library and added that it is a valuable effort to increase the diversity of the books which would mean a great deal to her daughter. Ms. Wang noted that she thinks the programming will be great and reiterated that it is important to have books that are representative and remarked that the South Glastonbury Library is a wonderful community resource.

Result: Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

12. Executive Session

- (a) Discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate.**
- (b) Pending litigation – Sakon matter.**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby enters into executive session to discuss the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate and pending litigation (Sakon matter). Following the Executive Session, the Council will discuss, in private, collective bargaining negotiations and such discussions are not treated as a meeting under the applicable sections of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Attendees for the private session include the Town Council members and the Town Manager.

Result: Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

Went into Executive Session at 8:18 p.m. with Town Manager Jonathan Luiz, Town Engineer/ Manager of Physical Services Daniel Pennington, and Fire Chief Michael Thurz in attendance. Came out of Executive Session at 9:04 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Following Executive Session and Meeting Adjournment, Council, with Town Manager, Jonathan Luiz in attendance, entered a non-meeting format -discussion. Came out of non-meeting format discussion at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev

Nadya Yuskaev

Recording Secretary

Thomas Gullotta

Chairman