

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2024**

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

Ms. Jennifer Wang, Vice Chairman

Ms. Deborah A. Carroll

Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh

Mr. John Cavanna

Mr. Larry Niland

Ms. Mary LaChance

Mr. Jacob McChesney {participated via Zoom video conferencing}

Mr. Whit Osgood {participated via Zoom video conferencing}

a. Pledge of Allegiance. *Led by Tom Gullotta*

2. Public Comment.

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

Amy Korber of 18 Old Musket Road, expressed support for an increase to the budget for the Welles Turner Library. Her family enjoys the library, but laments the lack of resources for the Teen Department and the Maker Space. Now that her oldest child is a teen, they spend more time in the Teen Department, which is often vacant. The Maker Space is also often vacant. The library remains a shell of its potential without additional staff.

Nicole DiCicco of 84 Ridgewood Road, expressed strong support of a budget increase for a full-time employee at the library. Glastonbury is severely underfunded compared to surrounding towns' libraries. The entire community would reap the benefits of additional staff, with more opportunities for programming and fuller use of the new maker space. With a minuscule budget increase, the entire town could benefit.

3. Special Reports.

a. Report on October 1, 2023 Grand List.

Town Assessor Nicole Lintereur explained that the net taxable value of \$5.4 billion dollars is an increase of 0.66% over the revalued 2022 list. Mr. Gullotta asked how much that is in dollars. Ms. Lintereur stated that it is a \$35.5 million increase in assessed value. Ms. Lintereur noted that the real estate market continued its upward march, and the motor vehicle list decreased by 2.26%, which was driven by an overall decline in used car values from 2021's historic highs.

Mr. Luiz asked if there is any new legislation regarding how motor vehicles will be assessed. Ms. Lintereur stated that, in 2022, the State signed legislation that will change the way cars are assessed. This will take the actual MSRP and have a set depreciation schedule, at 5% per year. She noted that the legislation was pushed off in 2022 and 2023, but will be effective for the 2024 motor vehicle list. Mr. Gullotta asked if this would be a better system. Ms. Lintereur replied that it will make it easier to value cars, so fewer people will be contesting their assessments, but it is a mixed bag.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked how long it takes to get to a resolution from assessment disputes. Ms. Lintereur stated that it used to take 2.5-3 years to get through 40 or 50 appeals. However, two years ago, the legislature changed the rules, so progress takes significantly longer. Mr. Luiz noted that Ms. Lintereur is retiring in June after 12 years with the Town. The Council thanked her for her service and wished her well in retirement.

4. Old Business.

a. Discussion and possible action on amendment to the Building Zone Regulations – Commercial and Recreational Vehicle Parking in Residential Zones (refer to Town Plan and Zoning Commission; set public hearing).

Mr. Cavanna is excited to roll this out, which will bring relief to blue collar folks in town. Mr. Osgood asked how this changes the way they will handle recreational vehicles. Director of Community and Development Shelley Caltagirone stated that the TPZ did not seek to change the restrictions on recreational vehicle parking in residential zones. There is a slight change in the draft, which would allow for recreational vehicles to be parked in the side or rear yards, as long as they are screened from public view.

Mr. Osgood asked about the proposed regulation vis-a-vis commercial vehicles. Ms. Caltagirone stated that one could park their commercial vehicle outdoors, but the TPZ did not seek to restrict the number of vehicles that could be parked in a garage or in a barn. Mr. Osgood is opposed to changing the regulations regarding recreational vehicles. He believes that residents are not interested in changing it, so he will vote against this. Mr. Cavanaugh has previously expressed his opposition to changing the current regulation. He thinks that the current regulation has a relief factor, such that if an issue were to arise, a neighbor could have an opportunity to speak, whereas this proposed change would remove that opportunity.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby refers to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission proposed amendment to the Building Zone Regulations concerning Commercial and Recreational Vehicle Parking in Residential Zones and schedules a public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, to consider the proposed amendment, as described in a report by the Director of Community Development dated February 9, 2024.

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

5. New Business. None.

6. Consent Calendar.

a. Action to schedule public information meeting – Main Street/Route 17 sidewalks.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public information meeting for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall with the option for Zoom Video Conferencing, to consider proposed construction of new sidewalks along Route 17/Main Street generally extending between the Cider Mill and Red Hill Drive, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated February 9, 2024.

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

7. Town Manager's Report.

Mr. Luiz presented his report. Ms. Carroll thought that the teen center was considered part of the Academy building, not Williams Memorial. Mr. Gullotta stated that, last year, former Town Manager Richard Johnson originally focused on one room (the former library) in Williams Memorial, but by the end of his tenure, he had taken a larger view on the project, incorporating the whole building. Mr. Luiz believed that Williams Memorial included the entire building, not just the former library. He noted that the idea was to connect Williams Memorial to the teen center and to the room above it. His focus has been on three levels, for design and cleanup.

Mr. Gullotta pointed out that Town Staff is not very enthusiastic about the idea of renovating the kitchen, but they have creative ideas on how to use the additional space for programming and storage. There are issues that need to be abated, and this is an opportunity to get the building ready for re-envisioning. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if there is asbestos in the teen center. Mr. Luiz explained there is caulking in the sink with potential hazardous material, which would be removed, and the sink would be replaced. He noted that there are crumbling tiles in the other rooms, and abatement needs to happen in the main area.

Mr. McChesney asked about the windows to be replaced. Mr. Luiz stated that they are in the main floor in the hall and in the rooms off of that, which is proposed to be the new council chambers. Mr. McChesney has concerns with this proposal, which has gone beyond the scope of what was discussed by the Council. He feels uncomfortable spending over \$2 million of ARPA funding on abatement and window replacement for a room, which is currently being used for storage, without a clear plan in sight. Ms. LaChance agreed. She would like to see an official sketch of what that room might look like, before moving forward.

Mr. Niland does not doubt the validity or need for the work being discussed. His concern is that, when they first took a walk on this, the old library was the only thing they saw; anything outside of that is a change in the assignment of these funds. He, too, would like to have another discussion on this. Mr. Osgood asked for a cost estimate. Mr. Luiz stated that they are in the process of putting a bid out to hire an engineering firm to review the work and the scope. He noted that there are other non-ARPA funds to do some of this work. Mr. Osgood would like to have a full scope of the project before spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to replace windows and do abatement.

Mr. Cavanaugh does not understand why they cannot proceed with this tonight. The money was allocated, and they know why the money was allocated. He stated that the Town Manager is simply picking up where his predecessor left off. Mr. Cavanna is in favor of moving forward, but would like to know what the cost of certain things will be. Mr. Cavanaugh asked when they expect to receive bid responses for the asbestos removal and the price for replacing the windows. Mr. Luiz will report back on that information. Mr. Gullotta clarified that they have not appropriated \$2 million for this project; the figure is \$1 million. Additionally, they are talking about the entire building, so focusing on only one room is not reflective of what the Town Manager has been discussing.

Mr. McChesney countered that there was another \$1 million on the table this budget season for this item. His concern is that they were initially talking about the teen center, but now, there is discussion about abatement and windows in this room. Before paying for all that work, he would like to understand what they envision for this space overall. Mr. Osgood added that, when they originally passed the \$1.25 million, it was intended to be phase one of a two-phase funding project, so he needs to know what the total project is before spending that \$1.25 million. Mr. Cavanna would like to see a definitive number on the room they are looking to move forward with, not just a blanket quote for abating the whole building.

Mr. Cavanaugh commented that when they spent nearly \$1 million to shore up the Cotton Hollow mills ruins, he was in favor of preserving the walls, not just placing a fence around them and telling people to stay away. As much as he seeks to save the ruins, he finds that it has cost too much to just shore them up. Mr. Osgood asked if there is any additional cost with using the former Town Manager as legal counsel to review the Town Charter. Mr. Luiz is awaiting a response on that.

8. Committee Reports.

a. Chairman's Report.

Mr. Gullotta stated that he and Ms. Wang received an email from the BOE that teacher negotiations will be starting soon. They asked if the Council would be interested in appointing an individual to sit in on those discussions as an observer. Mr. Niland volunteered to do so.

Mr. Gullotta stated that Mr. Luiz has offered to show council members around the Village District expansion area. He asked all to come prepared with questions. He also noted that division directors will be present at the budget hearings. He asked council members to send questions in advance to the Town Manager, and to direct questions to him, rather than specific employees.

Mr. Gullotta explained that East Hartford is considering a marijuana facility, which will be very close to the Glastonbury line. Their proposal includes a drive-through window, which he has concerns about. Ms. Carroll would like to draft a letter, requesting that East Hartford reconsider the drive-through idea. Ms. LaChance concurred. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that, because this is a zoning issue, it has to be on East Hartford's public record. He asked if someone could attend their council meeting to speak on the Town's behalf. Mr. Luiz agreed to attend East Hartford's public meeting tomorrow.

There was consensus for the Town Manager to send a letter, acknowledging that East Hartford has the right to do as it wishes, but expressing that Glastonbury does not believe that a drive-through is a good idea.

PUBLIC HEARING:

NO. 1 ACTION ON A NEW LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF GLASTONBURY AND GUILMETTE GOLF LLC FOR THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE MINNECHAUG GOLF COURSE AT 16 FAIRWAY CROSSING.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager to execute the new five-year Lease Agreement between the Town and Guilmette Golf LLC, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated February 9, 2024.

Disc: Mr. Luiz stated that the TPZ has issued a favorable recommendation on this new lease and the Town Attorney advised that a public hearing is required. The most significant change from the existing lease is that the charge for the play of the course would increase from \$1 to \$1.50, which would increase the Town's rent revenue from \$38,000 to \$46,000 a year.

Mr. Gullotta opened the floor for public comment:

Chris Guilmette of 117 Knollwood Drive, co-owns Guilmette Golf with his brother. They have leased Minnechaug for five years. During that time, the golf course has grown, and runs a lot of programs which give back to the community. He hopes that they can continue to improve the golf course for another five years.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked where they run their clinics on the golf course. Mr. Guilmette replied, right on the first tee. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if there is a PGA professional on staff. Mr. Guilmette stated, no, but there is a golf professional. Mr. Niland asked about the new rate schedule. Parks and Recreation Director Lisa Zerio explained that rounds will go up \$1 on their end, and costs are \$1 more per round for non-residents. Ms. Carroll lives in the neighborhood. She thanked Mr. Guilmette for doing a great job with maintenance.

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

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

b. MDC.

Ms. LaChance stated that MDC is making improvements at the Orchard Street pump station.

c. CRCOG.

Mr. Luiz is working with CRCOG on the State of Connecticut Recreational Trails grant. He has pitched the idea of communities buying trail equipment which could be shared for maintenance. He awaits responses at CRCOG's next meeting.

9. Communications.

- a. Letter from CT Siting Council regarding receipt of the Town of Glastonbury's correspondence concerning Glastonbury Solar One, LLC and Verogy, LLC petition for a declaratory ruling – solar photovoltaic electric generating facility – 17 Wickham Road.**
- b. Letter from CT Siting Council regarding CGS Sec 4-176 – Deadline for Action/Set Date for Decision for a declaratory ruling no later than June 12, 2024 concerning Glastonbury Solar One, LLC and Verogy, LLC petition for a declaratory ruling – solar photovoltaic electric generating facility – 17 Wickham Road.**

10. Minutes.

- a. Minutes of January 17, 2024 Special Meeting (CIP Workshop).**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the minutes of the January 17, 2024, Special Meeting (Capital Improvement Program Workshop).

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

- b. Minutes of January 22, 2024 Special Meeting.**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the minutes of the January 22, 2024, Special Meeting.

Result: Minutes accepted {8-1-0}, with Mr. Osgood abstaining.

- c. Minutes of January 23, 2024 Regular Meeting.**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the minutes of the January 23, 2024, Regular Meeting.

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

- d. Minutes (Amended) of January 23, 2024 Special Meeting (Annual Town Meeting).**

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the amended minutes of the January 23, 2024, Special Meeting (Annual Town Meeting).

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

11. Appointments and Resignations.

a. Reappointment of Marion Terry to the Board of Assessment Appeals (R-2027).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the reappointment of Marion Terry to the Board of Assessment Appeals (R-2027).

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

12. Executive Session.

a. Discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby enters into Executive Session at 8:17 p.m. for the purpose of:

a. Discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate.

Attendees to include Council Members and the Town Manager.

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

The Council came out of Executive Session at 8:22 p.m.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby adjourns the Town Council meeting of February 13, 2024 at 8:23 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk

Thomas Gullotta
Chairman