

EAST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER AUDITORIUM

March 21, 2023

PRESENT Chair Richard F. Kehoe, Vice Chair Donald Bell, Jr., Majority Leader
Sebrina Wilson, Minority Leader John Morrison, Councillors Angela
Parkinson, Awet Tsegai, Travis Simpson, Thomas Rup and
Harry Amadasun, Jr.

ABSENT

ALSO Mayor Michael P. Walsh
PRESENT Melissa McCaw, Finance Director
Connor Martin, Chief of Staff
Eileen Buckheit, Development Director
Rich Gentile, Assistant Corporation Counsel
Laurence Burnsed, Director of Health and Human Services
Kevin Munson, Fire Chief
Stephen Alsup, Assistant Fire Chief

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kehoe called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm. The Chair stated that this meeting was also available to the public through the “Teams” platform.

The Chair announced the exit locations in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §29-381, after which the Council joined him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL ON AGENDA ITEMS

Eduardo Cruz Mazzini, 1615 Main Street East Hartford, owner of Malibu Sports Bar & Lounge, located at 808 Silver Lane, spoke with concerns over potential changes to his lease agreement on the property now that the Town has acquired it through eminent domain.

Colin Haughtin, 43 Piper Lane, spoke in favor of providing funding for a sports complex through bond referendum in November so that East Hartford youth have more options for entertainment and skill development

Stephan Thompson, owner of Last Rep Fitness, 1288 Main Street also spoke in favor of the proposal of a sports complex as an investment into youth programming.

Mayor Walsh

- wished all a good evening
- Governor Lamont has declared March 22 – 29 as Climate Action Week and will be reading a proclamation on March 22nd at DEEP’s air quality monitoring site in McAuliffe Park at 11:30 AM

- The Town has begun the process of awarding funds to local eligible businesses who applied to the Small Business Assistance Program in 2022.
- Parks and Recreation has announced Teen & Adult Social Club scheduled hang outs. There are a variety of activities to be held from March 24 to May 12. The club is for participants with special needs, ages 13 & up.
- The Department of Youth Services and the East Hartford Local Prevention Council are launching a survey to understand residents' perception of the risk of harm to youth (ages 12-18) from marijuana & vaping. The anonymous survey will help to design local substance abuse prevention strategies.
- The Town is collaborating with community partners to host a "Men's Health is Community Health" event on Saturday, March 25 at the Community Cultural Center (50 Chapman Place). The free event will offer various health screenings for men and brief seminars by physicians on their respective specialties.
- Administration invites residents to participate in the Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program (SYELP). The application for Summer Youth Employment closes May 31. The program runs in July and August. Participants are eligible for up to 120 hours of paid work across a variety of fields.
- Alexander Trujillo has been appointed as the new Public Works Director.
- A public information session to present the Town's Draft Affordable Housing Plan will be held on Wednesday, March 22 at 6:00 PM in the Community Cultural Center Conference Room #111 (50 Chapman Place).
- A number of April vacation programs will be held at East Hartford Public Library during the week of April 12-16.
- Japan Week 2023 events will take place at the two libraries in East Hartford as well as at the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford. Opening ceremonies will be held on Friday, April 21 at 4:30 PM at the newly renovated Wickham Memorial Library (656 Burnside Avenue) with the dedication of two cherry trees to be planted on site.
- The second annual East Hartford's Memorial Day parade and series of events will take place Monday, May 29, 2023 at 10 AM.
- The Town Registrar of Voters Office has begun a state-mandated canvassing of the town's voting process.

The Mayor also provided updates on the following items currently in process with Administration:

- 8 residents of Church Corners Inn are still in need of relocation services that are in process. *The Council confirmed that all residents have been moved out of Church Corners Inn to temporary housing, but some still do not have permanent residences established as of yet.*
- Negotiations with 860 Lounge are in process with Corporation Counsel. The building is secured and an RFP for development is ready once interior demolition and relocation of the personal items of the residents is complete.
- Ownership of Silver Lane Plaza was transferred to the Town on March 1st. The Town is currently reviewing lease agreements of tenants some of whom are in arrears with the previous owner.
- Administration anticipates the YMCA moving out McCartin School by the end of March or mid-April. A demolition RFP has been created with the goal of selling the property for single family homes.
- Simon Konover's proposal for a possible apartment complex along East River Drive is still under evaluation.
- Concrete is being poured at the National Development site and a portion of permit and inspection fees has been received by the Town.

- The Town remains in contact with the U.S. Postal Service over the potential sale of the Post Office building on Main Street.
- Hoffman Porsche (630 Connecticut Boulevard), is building a \$12-14 million Porsche distributorship on site and will be reaching out regarding a reduction of permit fees.
- Town Hall renovations are moving smoothly.
- The RFP for a 3-season porch at East Hartford Golf Course has been written and will go out for bid in the near future.
- The Town is partnering with the Town of Manchester regarding redevelopment and repair for Hockanum Trail.
- Wickham Library's soft re-opening will be April 10.
- The Town's American Heritage designation is moving forward.
- Faro Lounge (212 Burnside Avenue) has had their liquor license revoked by the State Liquor Control Commission due to continued violations.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 27, 2023 Budget Workshop

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **approve** the minutes of the February 27, 2023 Budget Workshop

Motion carried 9/0

March 1, 2023 Budget Workshop

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the minutes of the March 1, 2023 Budget Workshop

Motion carried 9/0

March 4, 2023 Budget Workshop

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the minutes of the March 4, 2023 Budget Workshop

Motion carried 9/0

March 6, 2023 Budget Workshop

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Don Bell

to **approve** the minutes of the March 6, 2023 Budget Workshop

Motion carried 9/0

March 7, 2023 Executive Session

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Angie Parkinson

to **approve** the minutes of the March 7, 2023 Executive Session

Motion carried 9/0

March 7, 2023 Public Hearing re: Showcase Cinema Properties

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Awet Tsegai

to **approve** the minutes of the March 7, 2023 Public Hearing re: Showcase Cinema Properties

Motion carried 9/0

March 7, 2023 Regular Meeting

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Harry Amadasun

to **approve** the minutes of the March 7, 2023 Regular Meeting

Motion carried 9/0

March 8, 2023 Public Hearing re: 2023-24 Budget

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **approve** the minutes of the March 8, 2023 Public Hearing re: 2023-24 Budget

Motion carried 9/0

March 13, 2023 Special Meeting

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the minutes of the March 13, 2023 Special Meeting

Motion carried 9/0

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Update from Health and Human Services re: Relocation of Residents of 860 Main Street (Church Corners Inn)

Mayor Walsh presented a document that details the status of relocation efforts of Church Corners Inn residents. Of the thirty residents at time of takeover by the Town, twenty-two have been relocated or are in the process of moving to new residences, while eight residents remain looking for housing with assistance from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Discussion of Possible Bond Referendum Questions for 2023 Ballot

Mayor Walsh provided the Council with detailed comments regarding three possible bond referendum questions for the November, 2023 election.

The Mayor feels that the current level of debt service is unsustainable given current market conditions and the historic level of deferred maintenance with Town buildings.

The Council acknowledged the challenge of prioritizing resources and services to meet resident need while maintaining an affordable property tax rate.

The proposed bond questions that were presented for discussion were as follows:

\$9 million for a Youth Sports Facility and Winter Ice Skating Rink:

Administration is in discussions with Pratt and Whitney on the use of the 18 acre Aircraft Club as a possible location for a Youth Sports Facility. The Mayor stated that possible parcels around Prestige Park could also serve as a suitable site for the facility. The Mayor feels the youth of East Hartford are underserved and need more after school, weekend, and winter sports programs that a facility like this can provide. Using a Public Private Partnership model, the Town would own the facility and an outside entity will operate the facility.

The Mayor presented three plans of action for development of a Youth Sports Facility: Plan A would be to approach the State Department of Education for existing bond funds set aside to provide sports facilities for students at the Greater Hartford magnet schools. Plan B would be to use the impact payment the Town received from the National Development project with a Public/Private Partnership contribution of a similar amount; with the remainder financed traditionally by a local bank. Leveraging a bond referendum question if approved serves as a last resort. The Mayor stated that an additional option for consideration would be revenue bonds, where revenue generated from the project would be used to pay off the bonds.

The Council acknowledged the positive impact an investment in such a complex would have on local youth. The Council discussed proposed potential location options for the project that would accommodate adequate parking and proper traffic flow without negatively impacting residents. The Council discussed the various types of amenities that could be provided by such a facility and that the priority audience for services be the Town's residents while also being self-sustaining financially.

The Mayor offered to provide a more detailed economic presentation in May to further assist in determining whether to proceed.

\$2.4-2.6 Million for Phase 1 of Public Works Facility Renovations

A presentation on the current Public Works Facility and proposed renovation projects was provided to the Town Council in February, 2023. The Mayor feels the Town needs to provide a safer operating environment for all employees. Using the Public Works Facility upgrade

plan that was presented, a phased approach over the next decade will complete a full renovation of the facility. This proposed bond would pay for initial phases of a multi-phase project.

[\\$2.0 Million for the Veteran's Memorial Clubhouse Renovation and Capital Seed For Unplanned Building Issues Beyond Budgeted Maintenance](#)

Additional funding beyond the \$4 million of State grants in place for the VMC renovation is being requested as the scheduled work is estimated to now cost \$6.3 million. The Mayor stated that value engineering of the project was completed, but the final cost is still in excess of the available budget (roughly \$5.3 million). The Mayor feels the facility has substantial deferred maintenance needs and provided an analysis of the facility to detail the scope of the renovations and need to retrofit the kitchen area in order to make the facility more marketable for social events.

The Mayor envisions a partnership with a private hospitality or catering business that would rent the facility and run day to day operations in a similar manner to the current partnership in place at the East Hartford Golf Course.

Property/Casualty Insurance Update from USI Insurance

The Mayor summarized a report from USI Insurance that stated given recent market developments, the importance of protecting the Town in the most effective way with its redevelopment projects, and maintaining good value with its current carrier (CIRMA), it has been recommended that the Town remain with CIRMA for an additional year.

Resignation/s from Boards and Commissions

Chair Kehoe stated that David Holmes has resigned from the Historic District Commission after serving for over 30 years. The Council commended Mr. Holmes for his service.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Silver Lane Plaza

Update from Administration

Mayor Walsh stated that because the Plaza is now town owned property, the Town Council must set the rental fees for the commercial leases with current business tenants. Administration feels that providing financial incentives will serve to encourage current tenants to relocate to other locations in Town in order to facilitate redevelopment of the Plaza property. The Mayor also indicated that current tenants' security deposits have not been returned by the previous owner and many tenants were in arrears on rent. The resolution that follows will allow the Town to keep the lease payments at the same rate that the tenants were previously paying, forego any security deposit and establish a month to month lease arrangement providing the town will give tenants 90 days notice before termination.

Resolution re: Lease Between the Town and Current Tenants and Relocation Process

MOTION By Harry Amadasun
seconded by Awet Tsegai

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS, On July 20, 2022, the Town of East Hartford Redevelopment Agency, acting as the Town's designated redevelopment agent duly approved and adopted the Silver Lane Redevelopment Plan;

WHEREAS, On August 25, 2022 and October 27, 2022 public hearings were held on the topic of East Hartford's acquisition of the Silver Lane Plaza;

WHEREAS, On November 1, 2022, this Council met to consider the acquisition of the Silver Lane Plaza by eminent domain and voted to approve the same;

WHEREAS, An action for eminent domain was filed in the superior court known as, TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY Et Al v. EAST HARTFORD VENTURE, LLC;

WHEREAS, On February 21, 2023, the superior court issued two executed amended certificates of taking;

WHEREAS, On March 1, 2023, the executed amended certificates of taking were recorded on the land records for the Town of East Hartford finalizing transfer of the Silver Lane Plaza to the Town;

WHEREAS, portions of the Silver Lane Plaza, at the time of acquisition, were leased by various business entities;

WHEREAS, the council desires to continue furthering the Silver Lane Redevelopment Plan and to support existing businesses in the plaza;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the East Hartford Town Council does hereby approve the following items:

1. This Council waives the requirements of Town Ordinance 10-19, acting as a committee of the whole for the Fees Committee to permit the Town to enter into lease agreements in amounts equal to the same per square foot rate that tenants of Silver Lane Plaza paid immediately prior to the Town's acquisition of the property;
2. Such leases shall be in substantially the same form as prepared by the Office of Corporation Counsel and presented to this Council as may be modified as deemed necessary by Mayor, Michael P. Walsh, to best meet the facts of each tenant and space leased;
3. This Council waives the requirement of rent for Bare Bones Boxing EH L.L.C. and JE MART, LLC for the months of March, April, and May, 2023 in consideration of these entities willingness to vacate the premises during or before June, 2023.
4. That Mayor, Michael P. Walsh, is hereby authorized to make, execute and deliver all lease agreements, additional and supplemental documents, and to do and perform such acts and to take such actions as may be necessary or required for the consummation of the transactions provided for and contemplated by this Resolution.

On call of the vote, the motion carried 9/0

Bid Waivers re: Fire Department Training

Vehicle Rescue

MOTION By Don Bell
 seconded by John Morrison

that in accordance with Section 10-7(c) of the Town of East Hartford Code of Ordinances, the Town Council **waive** the bidding procedures required by Section 10-7(b) and allow the Fire Department to purchase an NFPA 1006 Compliant Vehicle Rescue class from Spec. Rescue International, Inc. at a purchase price of \$82,347.28 as detailed in a memo from Kevin Munson, Fire Chief to Mayor Michael P. Walsh dated March 6, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

On-Site Fire Behavior

MOTION By Don Bell
 seconded by Tom Rup

that in accordance with Section 10-7(c) of the Town of East Hartford Code of Ordinances, the Town Council **waive** the bidding procedures required by Section 10-7(b) and allow the Fire Department to purchase on-site fire behavior training from Flash Fire Industries, LLC for \$16,500 as requested in a memo from Kevin Munson, Fire Chief to Mayor Michael P. Walsh dated March 6, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

Machine Rescue

MOTION By Don Bell
 seconded by John Morrison

that in accordance with Section 10-7(c) of the Town of East Hartford Code of Ordinances, the Town Council **waive** the bidding procedures required by Section 10-7(b) and allow the Fire Department to purchase an NFPA 1670/1006 Compliant Machine Rescue class from P.L. Vulcan Fire Training Concepts, Inc. at a purchase price of \$27,600 as detailed in a memo from Kevin Munson, Fire Chief to Mayor Michael P. Walsh dated March 6, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

Referral to Ordinance Committee re: Review of Reserve Fund Requirements

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Tom Rup

to refer to the Town Ordinance Committee a review of Town Ordinance sections 10-34 through 10-44 and 10-51 through 10-52

regarding Reserve Fund Requirements and report back to the full Council with its recommendations, if any.

Motion carried 9/0

Recommendations from Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee re: Job Descriptions

Chief Administrative Officer and Finance Director

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the revised Job Description for the position of “Chief Administrative Officer and Finance Director” dated January 3, 2023 as provided by the Department of Human Resources and presented at the Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee meeting held on March 2, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

Deputy Development Director

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the Job Description for the position of “Deputy Development Director” dated February 6, 2023 as provided by the Department of Human Resources and presented at the Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee meeting held on March 2, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

Director, East Hartford Works

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the Job Description for the position of “Director, East Hartford Works” dated February 6, 2023 as provided by the Department of Human Resources and presented at the Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee meeting held on March 2, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

Career Coach

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the Job Description for the position of “Career Coach” dated February 6, 2023 as provided by the Department of Human

Resources and presented at the Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee meeting held on March 2, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

Referral to Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee re: Job Descriptions for Human Resources & Chief Diversity Officer, Deputy Director of Health and Human Services, Youth Outreach Coordinator, Custodian I- Public Works, Custodian I- Library, and Custodian I- Police Department

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **refer** to the Personnel & Pensions Subcommittee the proposed job descriptions for the positions of Human Resources & Chief Diversity Officer, Deputy Director of Health and Human Services, Youth Outreach Coordinator, Custodian I- Public Works, Custodian I- Library, and Custodian I- Police Department as provided in a memo from Mayor Michael P. Walsh to Richard Kehoe, Town Council Chair dated March 14, 2023 with instructions to review the position and report back to the full Council with its recommendations, if any.

Motion carried 9/0

Referral to Tax Policy Committee re: Tax Lien Sales

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Don Bell

to **refer** to the Tax Policy Committee the list of 97 properties recommended for the town's annual tax lien sale, totaling \$1,477,585.76 in delinquent taxes as recorded on a list attached to a memorandum dated March 16, 2023 from Finance Director Melissa McCaw to Mayor Mike Walsh, with instructions to review the proposed lists of properties and the criteria used by the town to implement a tax lien sale and to report back to the Town Council with its recommendations, if any.

Motion carried 9/0

Appointment/s to Boards and Commissions

MOTION By Harry Amadasun
 seconded by Awet Tsegai

to **approve** the following appointments to Boards and Commissions:

Commission on Aging

- (D) Lorraine H. Kraft— 242 Hollister Drive—term to expire 12/23

Veterans Commission

- (D) Candis B. Guastamachio — 1386 Silver Lane —term to expire 12/23

Motion carried 9/0

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCILLORS TO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO THE
ADMINISTRATION

Councillor Morrison as liaison for the East Hartford Housing Authority received a 100 score on the annual Public Housing Assessment by the US. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which is a rare but outstanding occurrence. The Councillor commended the Housing Authority staff for their efforts.

COUNCIL ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTERS

Settlement of all opioid related claims against Teva Pharmaceuticals Industries, Ltd.: City of Waterbury, et. al. v. Purdue Pharma L.P., d/b/a/ Purdue Pharma (Delaware), et. al., No. X07-HHD-CV-18-60884602-S (Conn. Jan. 8, 2018), appeal docketed S.C. 20312 (Conn. Jun. 11, 2019)

MOTION By Don Bell
 seconded by John Morrison

to: (i) approve participation in the proposed Teva Global Opioid Settlement Agreement (the "Settlement") with the opioid manufacturer, Teva Pharmaceuticals Industries, Ltd. ("Teva"), which Settlement will require Teva to pay a maximum of approximately \$3.5 billion over 13 years, approximately \$2.9 billion of which is earmarked for use by participating states, political subdivisions, and special districts to remediate and abate the impacts of the opioid crisis;

(ii) cease all litigation activity related to the Settlement, and request dismissal with prejudice of its lawsuit, City of Waterbury, et. al. v. Purdue Pharma L.P., d/b/a/ Purdue Pharma (Delaware), et. al., No. X07-HHD-CV-18-60884602-S (Conn. Jan. 8, 2018), appeal docketed S.C. 20312 (Conn. Jun. 11, 2019), as it relates to Teva Pharmaceuticals Industries, Ltd;

(iii) release all past, present, and future opioid related claims against Teva;
and

(iv) authorize the Mayor or his designee to execute all documents and take all steps necessary to ensure the Town's participation in the Settlement.

Motion carried 9/0

Settlement of all opioid related claims against CVS Health Corporation and CVS Pharmacy, Inc.: City of Waterbury, et. al. v. Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc., et. al., No. 3:22-CV-01184-VAB (D. Conn. filed Sept. 20, 2022)

MOTION By Don Bell
 seconded by John Morrison

to : (i) approve the Town's participation in the proposed nationwide CVS Settlement Agreement (the "Settlement") with the pharmacy chain, CVS Health Corporation and CVS Pharmacy, Inc. (collectively, "CVS"), which

Settlement will require CVS to pay a maximum of approximately \$5 billion over 10 years, approximately \$4.2 billion of which is earmarked for use by participating states, political subdivisions, and special districts to remediate and abate the impacts of the opioid crisis;

(ii) cease all litigation activity related to the Settlement, and request dismissal with prejudice of its lawsuit, City of Waterbury, et. al. v. Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc., et. al., No. 3:22-CV-01184-VAB (D. Conn. filed Sept. 20, 2022), in which CVS is a named defendant;

(iii) release all past, present, and future opioid related claims against CVS; and

(iv) authorize the Mayor or his designee to execute all documents and take all steps necessary to ensure the Town's participation in the Settlement.

Motion carried 9/0

Settlement of all opioid related claims against Walgreens Co.: City of Waterbury, et. al. v. Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc., et. al., No. 3:22-CV-01184-VAB (D. Conn. filed Sept. 20, 2022)

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by John Morrison

to: (i) approve participation in the proposed nationwide Walgreens Settlement Agreement (the "Settlement") against the pharmacy chain, Walgreens Co. ("Walgreens"), which Settlement will require Walgreens to pay a maximum of approximately \$5.5 billion over 15 years, approximately \$4.7 billion of which is earmarked for use by participating states, political subdivisions and special districts to remediate and abate the impacts of the opioid crisis;

(ii) cease all litigation activity related to the Settlement, and request dismissal with prejudice of its lawsuit, City of Waterbury, et. al. v. Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc., et. al., No. 3:22-CV-01184-VAB (D. Conn. filed Sept. 20, 2022), in which Walgreens is a named defendant;

(iii) release all past, present, and future opioid related claims against Walgreens; and

(iv) authorize the Mayor or his designee to execute all documents and take all steps necessary to ensure the Town's participation in the Settlement.

Motion carried 9/0

Settlement of all opioid related claims against Walmart, Inc.: City of Waterbury, et. al. v. Walmart, Inc., et. al., No. 3:22-CV-01184-VAB (D. Conn. filed Sept. 20, 2022)

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by John Morrison

The Chair wished all a good evening and announced that the next regular meeting of the Town Council would be on April 4, 2023.

Attest _____
Jason Marshall
TOWN COUNCIL CLERK