

EAST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER AUDITORIUM

December 12, 2023

PRESENT Vice Chair Don Bell, Majority Leader Sebrina Wilson (via Teams, arrived in person at 7:41 pm), Minority Leader John Morrison, Councilors Angie Parkinson, Travis Simpson, Thomas Rup, Awet Tsegai and Harry Amadasun, Jr.

ABSENT Chair Richard F. Kehoe

ALSO Mayor Connor S. Martin

PRESENT Melissa McCaw, Chief Administrative Officer and Finance Director
Lt. Paul Neves, East Hartford Police Department
Kevin Munson, Fire Chief
Laurence Burnsed, Director of Health and Human Services
Eileen Buckheit, Director of Development
James Rovezzi, Director of Facilities, East Hartford Public Schools

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 7:35 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

Mayor Martin

- Wished all a good evening and happy and healthy holiday season.
- The second round Leaf Pickup will conclude on Saturday, December 16th.
- All town offices, including the East Hartford Transfer Station will be closed Monday, December 25, 2023 in observance of Christmas Day and Monday, January 1, 2024, in observance of New Year’s Day. There will be no Sunday hours at Raymond Library on Sundays December 24, and December 31. Curbside trash pickup and recycling will be delayed by one day during these weeks.
- The East Hartford Senior Center invites residents to a French Toast Casserole Breakfast at 15 Milbrook Drive, East Hartford on Saturday December 16 at 9:00 am.
- Bridge 05796 (Route 15) over Silver Lane will be inspected on Monday December 18, 2023 by CT Department of Transportation’s Division of Bridge Safety and Evaluation. Lane closures will be implemented between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm.

- The Brian A. Aselton Memorial Snow Dash 5K Road Race, sponsored by the East Hartford Parks and Recreation Department and the East Hartford Police Department will be held on Sunday, January 7, 2024 at 1:30 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 21, 2023 Executive Session

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the minutes of the November 21, 2023 Executive Session

Motion carried 8/0

November 21, 2023 Regular Meeting

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the minutes of the November 21, 2023 Regular Meeting

Motion carried 8/0

November 27, 2023 Board of Education Budget Workshop

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the minutes of the November 27, 2023 Board of Education Budget Workshop

Motion carried 8/0

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Disposition of Obsolete or Broken Town-Owned Equipment by Fire Department

The Vice Chair shared that the Fire Department is removing a number of tables and a bookshelf that are no longer of use. The Town assessed that the items are not of value and will be disposed of.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Board of Education Construction Projects: Amendment of 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan, Appropriation of Funds, Authorization for State Grant Applications and Referral to the Public Building Commission

East Hartford High School Media Center Roof Top Units Replacement Project

MOTION By Harry Amadasun
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Town of East Hartford Board of Education has identified that the Media Center Roof Top Units replacement project at the East Hartford High School is a priority of the school district and qualifies for State School Construction reimbursement; and

WHEREAS, the cost of removal and replacement of the Media Center Roof Top Units including design and construction is anticipated to total \$236,635 with the State reimbursing 76.43% of eligible costs or \$180,860 leaving the School District to pay 23.57% of eligible costs or approximately \$64,000, which includes an amount for unforeseen ineligible costs; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has reserved \$64,000 for local share costs in the capital reserve fund.

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

1. The addition by resolution to the Town's 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan, the East Hartford High School Media Center Roof Top Units Replacement Project in the amount of \$236,635.
2. The authorization of a total project cost of \$236,635 for the East Hartford High School Media Center Roof Top Units Replacement Project;
3. The authorization of the East Hartford Board of Education to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for the East Hartford High School Media Center Roof Top Units Replacement Project;
4. That the Town's Public Building Commission is hereby charged with the oversight and approval of the East Hartford High School Media Center Roof Top Units Replacement Project;
5. That the local share of \$64,000 for this project will be funded through funds previously appropriated by the Town Council from the Board of Education Capital Reserve Fund; and
6. That the Town of East Hartford hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the East Hartford High School Media Center Roof Top Units Replacement Project

On call of the vote, the motion carried 8/0

Pitkin Elementary School Classroom Indoor Air Quality Improvements Project

MOTION By Harry Amadasun

seconded by Tom Rup

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Town of East Hartford Board of Education has identified that the Classroom Indoor Air Quality Improvements project at the Pitkin Elementary School is a priority of the school district and qualifies for State School Construction reimbursement; and

WHEREAS, the cost of the Classroom Indoor Air Quality Improvements including design and construction is anticipated to total \$775,000 with the State reimbursing 76.43% of eligible costs or \$592,333 leaving the School District to pay 23.57% of eligible costs or approximately \$210,000, which includes an amount for unforeseen ineligible costs; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has reserved \$210,000 for local share costs in the Capital Reserve Fund.

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

1. The addition by resolution to the Town's 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan, the Pitkin Elementary School Classroom Indoor Air Quality Improvements Project in the amount of \$775,000.
2. The authorization of a total project cost of \$775,000 for the Pitkin Elementary School Classroom Indoor Air Quality Improvements Project;
3. The authorization of the East Hartford Board of Education to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for the Pitkin Elementary School Classroom Indoor Air Quality Improvements Project;
4. That the Town's Public Building Commission is hereby charged with the oversight and approval of the Pitkin Elementary School Classroom Indoor Air Quality Improvements Project;
5. That the local share of \$210,000 for this project will be funded through funds previously appropriated by the Town Council from the Board of Education Capital Reserve Fund; and
6. That the Town of East Hartford hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the Pitkin Elementary School Classroom Indoor Air Quality Improvements Project

On call of the vote, the motion carried 8/0

Council Acting as a Committee of the Whole: Real Estate Acquisition and Disposition
Committee re: Dedication and conveyance of possession and control of real property
located at 17 Leonard Dr. Rear, East Hartford to the East Hartford Board of Education

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Town of East Hartford owns the real property located at 17 Leonard Dr. Rear, East Hartford, CT ("Premises");

WHEREAS, the Premises abuts East Hartford High School and contains 8 tennis courts open to the public and East Hartford High School Students and a 2,640 square foot storage shed. The shed is presently utilized by the Town's Department of Public Works and Department of Parks and Recreation;

WHEREAS, the Tennis Courts are in need of maintenance and are likely to need periodic maintenance and upkeep in the future;

WHEREAS, The East Hartford Board of Education has expressed a willingness to repair the courts and has inquired as to whether the Town would be willing to dedicate and vest the possession and control of the Premises to it;

WHEREAS, The East Hartford Board of Education has reported that it will initiate and finance the repair of the front 4 tennis courts and continue to maintain the tennis courts in a state of good repair. Further the Board of Education will make efforts to upgrade the tennis courts.

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

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of Town Ordinance Section 10-19, the Town Council does hereby dedicate and vest the possession and control of the Premises located at 17 Leonard Dr. Rear, East Hartford, CT to the Board of Education for the limited purposes of maintaining and improving the Premises and so long as the public is permitted to continue use the tennis courts located on the Premises within the discretion of the Board of Education and pursuant to any applicable Town ordinances.
2. The Board of Education is permitted to make use of the shed located on the Premises.
3. The Board of Education shall possess, maintain, and control the Premises in accordance with all applicable law and within the terms of the instrument conveying the Premises to the Town recorded at Vol 499/ Page 37 of the East Hartford Town Land records.
4. This dedication may be modified or revoked by future resolution of this Council.
5. That Mayor, Connor S. Martin, is hereby authorized to make, execute and deliver all 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 8/0

Section 10-7(b) and **allow** the Police Department to renew Q Plus for EMD Quality Performance Review, with Priority Dispatch Corp., covering the period from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 in the amount of \$20,800 as detailed in a memo from Interim Chief of Police Mack S. Hawkins to Mayor Connor Martin dated December 1, 2023.

Motion carried 8/0

Grant Applications

State Department of Aging and Disability Services American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS; the State of Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services has awarded the Town \$109,000.00 in state American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and;

WHEREAS; the Town wishes to use these funds on increased programming for seniors and improvements to the Senior Center facilities,

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED; that Connor S. Martin, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford, is authorized to make application to, and execute and approve on behalf of this corporation, any and all documents, contracts, and amendments as may be required by the State Department of Aging as they pertain to this ARPA grant.

On call of the vote, the motion carried 8/0

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Project Funding (CPF)/Congressionally Directed Spending Grant for Rehabilitation of the Hockanum River Trail

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS; In the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, (P.L. 117-103) (the Act), Congress made available “grants for the Economic Development Initiative for the purposes of Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending,” and,

WHEREAS; the Act allocated \$700,000 to the Town of East Hartford for the rehabilitation of the Hockanum River Linear Park Trail,

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED; that Connor S. Martin, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford, is authorized to make application to, and execute and approve on behalf of this corporation, any and all documents, contracts, and amendments as may be required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as they pertain to this Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending grant.

On call of the vote, the motion carried 8/0

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Project Funding (CPF)/Congressionally Directed Spending Grant Appropriation for Purchase of the Downtown East Hartford Post Office

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS; In the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, (P.L. 117-103) (the Act), Congress made available “grants for the Economic Development Initiative for the purposes of Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending,” and,

WHEREAS; the Act allocated \$600,000 to the Town of East Hartford for the East Hartford Downtown Post Office Acquisition,

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED; that Connor S. Martin, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford, is authorized to make application to, and execute and approve on behalf of this corporation, any and all documents, contracts, and amendments as may be required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as they pertain to this Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending grant.

On call of the vote, the motion carried 8/0

Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program Funding Reimbursement from Capital Workforce Partners

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS; Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) will reimburse the Town’s ARPA funds under the Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program and

WHEREAS; these funds can be used to provide East Hartford youth age 14-21 with employment and learning experience, while offering local employers subsidized wages for the interns’ labor

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED; that Connor Martin, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford, is authorized to make application to, and execute and approve on behalf of this corporation, any and all documents, contracts, and amendments as may be required by CWP and the state of CT as they pertain to this Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program grant.

On call of the vote, the motion carried 8/0

Inclusion of Hartford Public Library as Sub-grantee re: Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Outreach Grant Program: National Competitive Outreach Program

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS; the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has made funding available through the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Outreach Grant Program, and;

WHEREAS; this program can provide funding and resources needed to increase awareness of and participation in the ACP among those households most in need of affordable connectivity, and;

WHEREAS; a partnership agreement with the Hartford Public Library is critical to the success of this endeavor,

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED; that Connor S. Martin, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford, is authorized to make application to, and execute and approve on behalf of this corporation, any and all documents, contracts, and amendments as may be required by the FCC as they pertain to this Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Outreach Grant Program.

On call of the vote, the motion carried 8/0

Recommendations from Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee

Proposed Revision to Job Description and Pay Grade for Position of Project Manager – Sustainability in Department of Public Works

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the Proposed Revision to Job Description and Pay Grade for the Position of Project Manager – Sustainability in Department of Public Works, dated November 9, 2023, as provided by the Director of Human Resources at the December 6, 2023 Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee Meeting.

Motion carried 7/0 (Parkinson Out of Chamber)

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
seconded by Tom Rup

Motion carried 7/0 (Parkinson Out of Chamber)

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
seconded by Tom Rup

Motion carried 7/0 (Parkinson Out of Chamber)

Proposed Revision to Job Description and Pay Grade and Change in Title for Position of Accounting Assistant, Finance

MOTION By Awet Tsegai
seconded by

Motion carried 8/0

December 12, 2023

MOTION By Harry Amadasun
 seconded by Tom Rup

that pursuant to the Section 5-3(e) of the East Hartford Code of Ordinances, the Town Council approve the outdoor amusement permit application for the event entitled “Brian A. Aselton Memorial Snow Dash 5k” as submitted by Mack Hawkins, Interim Chief of Police, scheduled for Sunday, January 7, 2024 from 11 am to 3 pm at Langford School located at 61 Alps Drive with a weather date of January 28, 2024 at the same time, subject to compliance with adopted codes and regulations of the State of Connecticut, the Town of East Hartford, and any other stipulations required by the Town of East Hartford or its agencies.

Motion carried 8/0

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCILLORS TO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATION

Councillor Tsegai acknowledged the Administration’s prompt response to make repairs to the entrance sign at Goodwin Park.

Councillor Amadasun recognized the efforts of various Town Departments for their engagement in numerous community events during the holidays.

Councillor Wilson wished all in attendance a Happy Holidays and thanked Councillors for their participation in Ugly Sweater Day.

Councillor Simpson asked if there has been any additional consideration of incentives to encourage East Hartford residents to apply for open-for-hire positions in the Town’s Administration. *Mayor Martin stated that the Town has recently implemented a stipend for bilingual employees. The Mayor will discuss additional incentives with the Human Resources Director and come back to the Council with their findings.*

COUNCIL ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTERS

The pending CHRO claim known as Felicia Gillespie v. Town of East Hartford Public Schools, CHRO Case No.2340192, involving former Board of Education employee, Felicia Gillespie.

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to fully and finally settle the pending CHRO claim known as Felicia Gillespie v. Town of East Hartford Public Schools, CHRO Case No.2340192, involving former Board of Education employee, Felicia Gillespie for a total sum of \$2,500.00.

Motion carried 8/0

The pending assessment (tax) appeal known as HARTFORD EAST ELDERLY APARTMENTS LIMITED PARTNERSHIP Et Al. v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD – HHB-CV22-6072753-S, involving real property located at 886 Main Street, East Hartford for the Grand List year 2021 through 2025.

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

MOVE THAT, this Council accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending tax assessment appeal known as HARTFORD EAST ELDERLY APARTMENTS LIMITED PARTNERSHIP v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6072753-S -S, involving real property located at 886 Main Street, East Hartford to adjust the Appraised Parcel Value of \$12,582,310.00 to \$10,700,000.00 for the Grand List year 2021 through Grand List Year 2025 and authorize a refund or reduction of \$54,022.42 for grand list year 2021, and a refund or reduction of up to \$93,519.18 for Grand list year 2022.

Motion carried 8/0

The pending assessment (tax) appeal known as VISTA TOWER, LLC v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD – HHB-CV22-6073866-S, involving real property located at 36 Main Street, East Hartford for the Grand List year 2021 through 2025.

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

MOVE THAT, this Council accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending tax assessment appeal known as VISTA TOWER, LLC v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6073866-S, involving real property located at 36 Main Street, East Hartford to adjust the Appraised Parcel Value of \$1,205,170.00 to \$1,140,000.00 for the Grand List year 2021 through Grand List Year 2025 and authorize a refund or reduction of \$1,870.42 for grand list year 2021, and a refund or reduction of \$1,940.68 for Grand list year 2022.

Motion carried 8/0

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

Bridgitte Prince, 41 Bodwell Road

- thanked the Administration in supporting the Thanksgiving Dinner hosted by Cathy Flippen and the Destiny Outreach group at the Hockanum Park Apartment Complex.
- supports the Administration's vision to extend the Raymond Library with regards to the proposed acquisition of the Post Office facility on Main Street.
- Commended the Town's efforts with providing services through the Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program.
- Wished the Council a Happy Holidays.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION By John Morrison
 seconded by Harry Amadasun

to **adjourn** (9:33 pm)

Motion carried 8/0

The Vice Chair wished all a good evening and Happy Holidays and announced that the next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Tuesday January 2, 2024.

Attest _____

Jason Marshall
TOWN COUNCIL CLERK