

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL & WPCA
REGULAR MEETING
City Hall Auditorium / Zoom
January 2, 2024

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the City Council and Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) of the City of Torrington was held at the City Hall Auditorium on Tuesday, January 2, 2024. Present at the City Hall Auditorium were Mayor Elinor Carbone, City Councilors Drake Waldron, Stephen Ivain, Molly Spino, Anne Ruwet, and David Oliver, and Director of Human Resources Denise Kurpiewski. Public Works Director Ray Drew participated via Zoom. Councilor Paul Cavagnero was absent.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Ivain, the Council voted unanimously to open the meeting to the public, in accordance with Section 4(e) of the City Council & WPCA Meeting Rules of Procedure. No one from the public wished to speak.

Approve Minutes

On a motion by Councilor Spino, seconded by Councilor Ivain, the Council voted to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes from December 18, 2023. Councilor Ruwet abstained.

On a motion by Councilor Spino, seconded by Councilor Ivain, the Council voted unanimously to accept the Special Meeting Minutes from December 21, 2023.

Contract Amendment – AFSCME Local 2212 (Public Works)

On a motion by Councilor Spino, seconded by Councilor Ivain, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to execute and amend union contract Local 2212 of Council #4 AFSCME (Public Works) dated July 1, 2021, through June 20, 2025, as further explained in the Director of Human Resources memo dated December 20, 2023. Mayor Carbone took a moment to introduce the new Director of Human Resources, Denise Kurpiewski, to the Council. Councilor Ivain asked if this could be applied to other work groups, Mrs. Kurpiewski said that the Public Works Department is the primary department that they are working on currently, with intentions to look at other bargaining units to be able to take advantage of this change. She said that in Public Works there is the opportunity to advance without changing roles.

ARPA – Blight Committee Ad Hoc Lead Abatement Grant Committee

On a motion by Councilor Spino, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Blight Task Force, Ad Hoc Lead Abatement Grant Committee, and Torrington Area Health District to award not to exceed \$8,000 grant from the Lead Abatement Grant Funds established with ARPA funds to aid in the lead abatement of 25 Willow Street. Mayor Carbone explained to the Council that this is for assessment purposes to figure out what is causing the elevated lead levels. Councilor Ruwet asked if there was any representation from the Council on the Blight Committee, Mayor Carbone told her that it is only Department heads, not elected officials. This is not a public meeting; the committee meets and makes recommendations which are presented to the Council. Councilor Ivain asked if these funds were only to identify the lead issues, Mayor Carbone told him that the companies would go in to find the source of the lead. Councilor Ivain asked if any leftover funds could be used for the lead abatement, Mayor Carbone explained that when the Council established this lead abatement grant fund, it was left to the discretion of the Council, it could come to the Council for recommendation to fund the abatement. However, there are many programs out that that fund abatement, including the Connecticut Children's Hospital, most of these programs do not offer the assessment before the abatement.

Lien Releases

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Spino, the Council voted unanimously to release the liens listed in the Corporation Counsel's memo dated January 2, 2024.

Tax Collector Refunds

On a motion by Councilor Spino, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Tax Collector and authorize the tax refunds indicated on the list dated January 2, 2024.

Business by Dept. Heads

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Spino, the Council voted unanimously to consider business by Department Heads. There was no business to be discussed.

Business by Mayor & Members

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Spino, the Council voted unanimously to consider business by the Mayor and City Council members.

Councilor Ruwet wished everyone a Happy New Year and that she's looking forward to 2024.

Councilor Ivain said that last week Planning and Zoning approved Trinity Church as the homeless shelter for the Winter. He also thanked the Council for approving bridge funding for the hotel rooms for the homeless, leading up to that approval process. Mayor Carbone said that she would report back to the Council with home many days, and hotel rooms were used during that time.

Councilor Waldron wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mayor Carbone reminded the Council that the City is heading into budget season and will need two members of the Council for the Budget Subcommittee. Councilor Spino volunteered. Mayor Carbone told the Council that with the cannabis revenue, opioid settlement funds, and deposit funds from the nip bottles, she would like to bring to the Council how these funds can be spent according to the State statute, and a report on what has been expended from these funds. Mayor Carbone wished everyone a Happy New Year and said that she looks forward to getting us through the upcoming budget cycle again.

Public Comment (in-person only)

On a motion by Councilor Spino, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to open the meeting to the public to comment on agenda items only. No one from the public wished to speak.

Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:


CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK