

MINUTES**CITY COUNCIL & WPCA****REGULAR MEETING****City Hall Auditorium / Zoom**

August 7, 2023

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 Monday, August 7, 2023. Present at the City Hall Auditorium were Mayor Elinor Carbone, City Councilors Drake Waldron, Armand Maniccia, Anne Ruwet, Paul Cavagnero, and David Oliver. Joining via Zoom was Councilor Keri Hoehne. Also present at City Hall were Fire Chief Eric Borden, Deputy Fire Chief David Tripp, Facilities Director Jamie Sykora, Purchasing Agent, Pennie Zucco, Economic Development Director Rista Malanca, Interim Superintendent of Streets and Parks Tim Cote, and WPCA Administrator Ed Tousey. Also joining via Zoom was Director of Services for the Elderly Joel Sekorski.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Public Comment: (in-person only)

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the City 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 Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the City Council voted to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes from July 17, 2023. Councilor Maniccia abstained.

Fair Rent Commission Appointments

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the City Council voted unanimously to approve Donna Isely (tenant), Kevin Hayes (landlord), and Scott Matava (neither) to the Fair Rent Commission for a one-year term to expire on June 30, 2024.

On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the City Council voted unanimously to approve Travis Lipinski (landlord), and Connie Quinn (neither) to the Fair Rent Commission for a two-year term to expire on June 30, 2025.

WPCA Payments

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the City Council herein acting as the Water Pollution Control Authority, voted unanimously to approve the following payments from Fund #490 Sanitary Sewer Capital Improvement.

DATE	INVOICE	CONTRACTOR	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
8/7/2023	0000228844	Wright-Pierce	\$2,435.39	Toro Rd Siphon Abandonment
8/7/2023	1464	Yield Ind.	\$13,790	St. John sanitary Sewer repair
8/7/2023	1465	Yield Ind.	\$7,450	Whiting Ave sanitary Sewer repair

Services for the Elderly Commission Appointments

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the City Council voted unanimously to approve the following four appointments as recommended by the Services for the Elderly Commission in their June 19, 2023 meeting:

- Mike Gardinello, Ed Wilmot, and Mary Ann Berlinski as Regular Members with a term expiring on July 5, 2026.
- Janice Colangelo as an Alternate Member to fill the remainder of a term set to expire on July 5, 2025.

Management & Reporting Software Services – TFD

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the City Council, on the recommendation of the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, and the Purchasing Agent, voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to award, execute and administer the purchase of Management and Reporting Software Services for the Torrington Fire Department from Locality Media dba First Due of Garden City, NY in the amount of \$33,950. These services will be funded through the Fire Department Software GL Account, having been previously approved by the Board of Public Safety, and are further explained in a letter from the Purchasing Agent dated July 27, 2023.

Patrol Canine – TPD

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the City Council voted unanimously to waive the City's Procurement Process requiring three quotes for purchases under \$10,000 and authorize the Purchasing Agent and Police Chief to utilize the State's Procurement Rules under General

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Letter Number 71 allows for the direct purchase, without obtaining competitive quotations or bids, for the purchase of law enforcement service dogs and to enter into an agreement with Norbert Safko of Summitville, NY, for the purchase of a Patrol Canine for \$9,500 as outlined in Norbert Safko quote dated July 24, 2023. This has been previously approved by the Board of Public Safety. Councilor Ruwet asked since they are waiving the bid process if there are not a lot of people who sell Patrol Canines, Mayor Carbone said that the State recognizes that there are only a few places or people that specialize in law enforcement service dogs. This individual will handle the training and will guarantee a fit with the Officer and dog.

Extension of Tree Trimming and Removal Services

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the City Council voted unanimously to extend the current bid contract for Tree Trimming and Removal Services for FY 23/24 at the same prices and terms as the current contract, to Asplundh Tree Expert Company of Willow Grove, PA, as further explained in the Purchasing Agent's letter dated July 31, 2023.

Marketing Consultant Selection per Econ. Dev. Director's Memo #1 dated August 2, 2023

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the City Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to award, execute and administer a contract with Mintz + Hoke of Avon, CT for the development of a strategic marketing plan for \$38,500 to be funded through the City's Building Healthier Communities Grant. Councilor Cavagnero asked how Mintz + Hoke was chosen, Economic Development Director Rista Malanca, explained that the City was looking for a company that could develop a strategic marketing plan and implantation plan. Ms. Malanca said that there were 12 proposals received and Mintz + Hoke was the most qualified and checked all the boxes for what the City was looking for. Councilor Cavagnero also asked whom Mintz + Hoke had worked for recently, Ms. Malanca told him that they have worked with the State and Middletown. Councilor Hoehne asked how much the Building Healthier Communities Grant was for, and how much was left. Ms. Malanca told her that it was a \$750,000 grant awarded in 2019, to support Economic Development in the City and that they are about halfway through the funds. Mayor Carbone said that they could get a status report for the Grant funds and bring it back to the Council for review.

On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the City Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to negotiate an on-call service agreement with Mintz + Hoke for the implementation of the City's strategic marketing plan. Councilor Cavagnero asked for Council to see the agreement once it is negotiated. Ms. Malanca explained that Mintz + Hoke could help with radio, newspaper, and tv ads because they do it all. Mayor Carbone explained that these additional services will be paid for the Economic Developments Marketing line item which has \$20,000 in it annually.

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the City Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to negotiate an on-call service agreement with Katina Hungerford for the development and promotion of social media content. Councilor Ruwet asked if the \$20,000 marketing budget covers the on-call services with Mintz + Hoke and Katina Hungerford, Ms. Malanca told her that it did.

70 North Street – Project Update per Econ. Dev. Director's Memo #2 dated August 2, 2023

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the City Council voted unanimously to accept the Economic Development Director's report on the \$2,000,000 Brownfield Remediation Grant to assist with the abatement and selective demolition of 70 North Street. Ms. Malanca explained that going forward this will be the policy for the Council to accept status reports. She said that this is the first time that the City has entered a passthrough agreement with Torrington Standard for the demolition and abatement of 70 North Street. This project was over \$4,000,000 and the City only received \$2,000,000 in grant funds from the State, so entering into this agreement saves the City money and time. Torrington Standard selects contractors, hires contractors, and the City identifies where the \$2,000,000 gets applied. She went on to say that she and the State have reviewed the plans to ensure everything is being done according to the rules. Councilor Ruwet asked what plans they have after the remediation of the property, Ms. Malanca explained that there are 24-25 buildings on the property and that all of them will be demolished except for three. One of those buildings is currently occupied, the two that will stay will be redeveloped for lighter manufacturing uses.

ARPA Fund for Franklin Street per Econ. Dev. Director's Memo #3 dated August 2, 2023

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the City Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to award, execute and administer a contract to retain legal services from Pullman & Comley of Hartford, CT.

Torrington's Safe Homes Initiative per Econ. Dev. Director's Memo #4 dated August 2, 2023

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the City Council voted unanimously to award an additional \$602 for a total grant amount of \$3,802 from the Lead Abatement Grant Funds established with ARPA funds to aid in the lead abatement of 326-328 Brightwood Ave. Mayor Carbone reminded the Council that they had set aside \$200,000 in ARPA funds to work with Torrington Area Health District to disburse these funds to properties where lead paint abatement would create a healthy home environment. She went on to say once the company went in to do the assessment of work and report back, the funds they needed escalated by another \$602.

Senior Center Cooler

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the City Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to award, execute and administer a contract for the purchase and installation of a new Walk-In Cooler at the Senior Center to the Warehouse Restaurant Supply Store of Waterbury, CT in the amount of \$19,890, as further explained in the Facilities Manager's memo dated August 1, 2023.

Charging Stations

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the City Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to sign an agreement for EV Chargers from Inovis Energy, Inc. of Rockland, MA in the amount of \$153,570, this will be funded by Eversource Incentives and DEEP EVSE Grant funds, as further explained in the Facilities Manager's memo dated August 3, 2023.

Lien Releases

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the City Council voted unanimously to release the liens listed in the Corporation Counsel's memo of August 7, 2023.

Tax Collector Refunds

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the City Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Tax Collector and authorize the tax refunds indicated on the list dated August 7, 2023.

Sewer Usage Refunds

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the City Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Tax Collector and authorize the sewer usage refunds indicated on the list dated August 7, 2023.

Business by Dept. Heads

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

Councilor Cavagnero spoke of his concerns about road repairs, for instance, Highland Avenue, and about streetlights that have been decommissioned, causing potential safety issues.

Public Comment (in-person only)

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the City Council voted unanimously to open the meeting to the public to comment on agenda items only.

Tom Kandefter asked if the EV Charging Stations will be available to the Public on a no-charge basis.

Facilities Director Jamie Sykora explained that the EV Charging Stations are being installed at three different parking lots downtown, City Hall, Riverview, and Franklin Plaza. He said that the City will recoup the cost of the electricity used and any charges to park. Councilor Cavagnero asked why Franklin Plaza, Mr. Sykora told him that they wanted to keep the first stations downtown with public access, and they had to have readily available power with the electrical infrastructure to support them.

Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the City Council voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:

Carol L. Anderson
CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK