

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL & WPCA
REGULAR MEETING
City Hall Auditorium / Zoom
August 1, 2022

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 1, 2022. Present at the City Hall auditorium were Mayor Elinor Carbone, Corporation Counsel Victor Muschell, and City Councilors Armand Maniccia, Keri Hoehne, and Anne Ruwet. City Councilors Drake Waldron, David Oliver, and Paul Cavagnero joined via Zoom. Also present at City Hall were, Public Works Director Ray Drew, and WPCA Administrator Ed Tousey.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Public Comment: (in-person only)

On a motion by Councilor Hoehne, seconded by Councilor Maniccia 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.

Tom Kandefer shared his opinions on the cannabis statutes. He went on to say that the funds received from cannabis should go towards the greater good of the cities and towns in the state.

Approve Minutes

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Council voted unanimously to accept the Regular meeting minutes from June 20, 2022.

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council voted to accept the Special meeting minutes from July 21, 2022. Councilor Waldron and Councilor Maniccia abstained from the vote.

Inland Wetlands Commission Appointment

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council voted unanimously to accept Emily Jury (R) as a regular member of the Inland Wetlands Commission, with a term set to expire September 4, 2023.

Pilot Program for Eye Recycle

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the MSW Recycling Coordinator and Public Works Director to enter a contract for a one-year pilot program with Eye Recycle of Waterbury, CT at no cost to the City. Public Works Director Ray Drew explained to Council that Mike Stallings, owner of Eye Recycle of Waterbury, CT, approached the City about giving residents a different option for redeeming their bottles, and cans. Mike Stallings gave an overview of the program, which is a redemption center, that offers curbside pick-up for residents. He went on to say that it is a 50/50 split with any redeemable items in Connecticut. Councilor Maniccia asked how it would look for individual homeowners in the City, Mr. Stallings let him know that the pickups would be scheduled out, and you would have to have your bags, which you would purchase for \$0.50 a bag, out between the hours of 12 p.m. – 8 p.m., and that you would get paid in arrears in a month. Councilor Hoehne asked how many employees they currently had, Mr. Stallings told her that they have eight, but two more are starting next week. Councilor Hoehne asked if he was doing presentations for other Cities in the State, Mr. Stallings explained that he had done presentations in Waterbury, Naugatuck, and New Haven. He went on to say that Naugatuck is fully on board with the program and that Waterbury is currently piloting areas to see how the program goes. Councilor Hoehne asked how the City would get the information out to the targeted areas, Mayor Carbone let her know that with the targeted areas for the pilot they would do a direct mailing. Mr. Stallings let her know that on Eye Recycles end they would be promoting on social media. Councilor Cavagnero wanted to know if there have been any problems with poachers, Mr. Stallings let him know that there haven't been any issues at this point but assured him that the company will work with customers if an issue arises. Councilor Cavagnero also wanted to know if at curbside pickup the company would go through the bins or bags to determine what would be recyclable, Mr. Stallings told him that the company doesn't do that and that they provide instructions on how to bag the redeemable items. Public Works Director Ray Drew informed Council that if the Pilot areas were successful with the new program that there would be an option to expand to different targeted areas or even City wide faster than one year.

Digitize Building Department Records

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to utilize State Procurement Contract #19PSX-0006 and purchase digitization services from Scan-Optics, LLC of Manchester, CT for the conversion of the Building Department's paper records to a digital environment, at an estimated cost of \$52,849, further explained in Building Official Kevin Gillette's memo dated July 28, 2022.

Project #143-SC1801-14-Rehab

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Small Cities Committee, and authorize project approval to **V. Nanfito Roofing & Siding Inc.** of Meriden, CT, for \$10,776 for the replacement of the front and rear storm doors, the basement bulkhead, and hatchway doors, replace windows, wallboard repairs, electrical, and lead-based paint mitigation at 89 Blake Street. Councilor Waldron let the Council know that the Small Cities Committee had met and approved the project requests before the meeting.

Project #143-SC1801-18

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Small Cities Committee, and authorize project approval to **Alberca Construction Co.** of Manchester, CT, for \$3,950 for asbestos abatement at 42 Pythian Avenue. Councilor Waldron said that this project request and the next one is a preview of the bigger project to come and that the asbestos must be removed before any other work is done.

Project #143-SC1801-11

On a motion by Councilor Hoehne, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Small Cities Committee, and authorize project approval to **Alberca Construction Co.** of Manchester, CT, for \$3,950 for asbestos abatement at 31 Willow Street.

Payment Authorizations

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, 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. Councilor Maniccia asked if this work was already completed, and if it was satisfactorily done, WPCA Administrator Ed Tousey said that it had been.

| DATE | INVOICE | CONTRACTOR | AMOUNT | DESCRIPTION |
|-----------|---------|------------------|------------|--|
| 7/5/2022 | 221566 | Wright Pierce | \$1,250.23 | Pre-Design Study/report Toro Road Siphon |
| 6/7/2022 | 221070 | Wright Pierce | \$2,302.97 | Pre-Design Study/report Toro Road Siphon |
| 6/6/2022 | 220917 | Wright Pierce | \$9,602.61 | Winsted Rd tunnel/Force main |
| 7/6/2022 | 221692 | Wright Pierce | \$9,646.49 | Winsted Rd tunnel/Force main |
| 3/24/2022 | 1248 | Yield Industries | \$8,895 | Turner/Cameron St Repair |
| 4/19/2022 | 1263 | Yield Industries | \$9,646.49 | Brightwood Ave at Alice St Repair |

Police Department Uniforms

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to utilize State Procurement Contract #17PSX0024 and purchase the uniform equipment from New England Uniform, LLC of Danbury, CT for \$29,770.15 to be paid for by the 2022 JAG Local VCP Grant, further explained in Purchasing Agent Pennie Zucco's letter dated July 27, 2022, pending Board of Public Safety approval.

Police Department Ammunition

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council voted unanimously to utilize State Procurement Contract #19PSX0220 and purchase ammunition for the fiscal year 22/23. The estimated budgeted amount for these purchases is \$24,500, further explained in Purchasing Agent Pennie Zucco's letter dated July 27, 2022, pending Board of Public Safety approval.

Building Department Report

On a motion by Councilor Hoehne, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Council voted unanimously to accept the Building Department Report from June 2022.

Sewer Use Lien Release

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to release the sewer use liens in Corporation Counsel's memo of August 1, 2022.

Tax Collector Refunds

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Tax Collector and authorize the tax refunds indicated on the lists dated July 18, 2022, and August 1, 2022.

Sewer Usage Refunds

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Tax Collector and authorize the sewer usage refunds indicated on the lists dated July 18, 2022, and August 1, 2022.

Business by Dept. Heads

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to consider business by department heads.

City Clerk Carol Anderson reminded everyone to vote in the Primary coming up on Tuesday, August 9th, she also Thanked Lynn Florio for all her years of service in the City Clerk's office.

Corporation Counsel Victor Muschell addressed a letter that the Council had received regarding public displays of profanity and changing the blight ordinance to enforce such displays around the City. Atty. Muschell went on to say that the City's blight ordinance is created from a particular State Statute which is based on certain definitions of what is considered blight. Obscenities are not one of the blights that the City can take into account for an ordinance. He proceeded to say that with freedom of speech, there is no way to be able to regulate these displays around the City. Councilor Hoehne wanted to know if the City has any control over these displays because some are very close to elementary schools. Atty. Muschell said there is nothing that the City can do unless it is displayed on a public building. He spoke about the Supreme Court cases over the years regarding these types of displays. Councilor Cavagnero asked for clarification on a child having to turn his or her head to avoid looking at the signs, Atty. Muschell explained that there had been a couple of court cases where a bus was driving by a sign and the court said that for a child to turn their head to avoid the sign isn't sufficient to surpass someone's right to freedom of speech.

Business by Mayor & Members

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

Councilor Hoehne inquired about the ARPA Grant Applications since the window to apply had closed, Mayor Carbone let her know that the ARPA Committee had received 54 applications with requests totaling over \$2.3 million, total funds available for this round was \$875,000.

Councilor Ruwet as part of the ARPA Committee reminded the Council that this was only round one and that there will be a second round of funding. She went on to request that Ordinance Committee set a date for a meeting.

Public Comment (in-person only)

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

Laurene Pesce wanted to Thank the Council for approving Eye Recycle for the pilot program. She went on to say as part of the ARPA Committee that she is excited and intimidated by all the applications that they received but cannot wait to go through them all.

Mike Banzurik commented on freedom of speech regarding displays around town. He went on to share his comments surrounding cannabis and its legality.

Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:


CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK