

**MINUTES****CITY COUNCIL & WPCA****REGULAR MEETING****City Hall Auditorium / Zoom****June 19, 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, June 19, 2023. Present at the City Hall Auditorium were Mayor Elinor Carbone, City Councilors Drake Waldron, Armand Maniccia, Anne Ruwet, and Paul Cavagnero. Also, present at City Hall were Public Works Director Ray Drew, Treasurer Dan Farley, Economic Development Director Rista Malanca, City Planner Jeremy Leifert, and Board of Education Building Committee Co-Chairs Ed Arum and Mario Longobucco. Joining via Zoom were Councilors Keri Hoehne, and David Oliver.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

**Juneteenth Mayor for the Day**

Mayor Carbone introduced the Juneteenth Mayor for the Day, Dr. DeLois Lindsey. Dr. Lindsey thanked the Mayor and members of the Community for the honor of being named the Juneteenth Mayor for the Day.

**Public Comment:** (in-person only)

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, 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.

**Dan Santoroso** the Executive Assistant for FISH thanked the Council for approving the ARPA Community Impact Grant application to help support the operations of the homeless shelter and the associated community food pantry.

**JoAnne Torti** Executive Director of ASAP! thanked the Council for the Grant, it will be used to support scholarships for 40 – 50 Torrington residents to attend ASAP! Summer camp.

**Peter Michelson** the Principal at Vogel-Wetmore School thanked the Council for the Grant funds to be able to upgrade the playground for the students and families in the community.

**Melissa Hurley and Andrew Matusiak**, co-owners of Challenging Minds, said they can double the community's support, and thanked the Council.

**Diane Tobin** Clinical Director for Behavioral Health Consulting Services thanked the Council for the Grant funds and for being able to help families who cannot pay for services.

**Mike Benedict**, the Athletic Director for Torrington Warriors Youth Football and Cheer thanked the Council for their support with the Grant.

**Travis Lapinski** took a moment to say how nice all the planters and Franklin Plaza look. He is thankful for all the details.

**Jeanne Fusco** Executive Director of the Susan B. Anthony Project thanked the Council for the Grant, saying that with the funds they can support the Rebuilding Lives Program to provide housing to individuals and families fleeing domestic violence.

**Christina Emery**, Executive Director of Prime Time House, and Secretary for the Torrington Development Corporation thanked the Council for the Grants to be able to support Torrington residents.

**Tanya Dowd**, owner of Lily & Vine thanked the Council for the Grant to help buy new equipment and supplies, and for renovations to increase the capacity for workshops.

**Kayla Graboski** from Brooker Memorial thanked the Council for the Grant to be able to provide support for specialized aptitude testing for Torrington High School students.

**Willem Donahue** Director of Operations for the Northwest CT YMCA thanked the Council for the Grant to be able to support the "Middle School Be Active" program.

**Christina Aguilera**, the founder of Torrington Area Families for Autism thanked the Council for the Grant to be able to establish the Torrington Families for Autism Community Center.

**Erin Johnston** Founder & Co-Executive Director of Fostering Family Hope thanked the Council for the Grant to help with the creation of a family visitation room for Torrington children in DCF care.

**Approve Minutes**

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Council voted to accept the June 5<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing Minutes for the Neighborhood Assistance Act. Councilor Hoehne abstained.

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted to accept the June 5<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing Minutes for the Sewer Use Fee. Councilor Hoehne abstained.

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes from June 5, 2023.

**State/Regional/National Bids and Contracts**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council, on the recommendation of the Public Works Director and Purchasing Agent voted unanimously to utilize the

competitive bids of the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG)-Capital Region Purchasing Council (CRPC) for the procurement of goods and services, as further explained in the Public Works Directors memo dated June 15, 2023.

**Permitting Software**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to enter into a Side Letter Participation Agreement with CRCOG and OpenGov for permitting software and services.

**Resolution #143-242 - THS/TMS Sports Complex**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council voted 4/2, with Councilors Cavagnero and Oliver opposed, to adopt Resolution #143-242 to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City and apply for a Community Investment Fund 2030 (CIF2030) Grant for \$4,578,100.00 to complete the construction of a Community Fitness Complex at the THS/TMS/Central Office building being constructed at 50 Major Besse Drive as further described in the attached application. Councilor Cavagnero said he doesn't support this application and asked why this wasn't included in the new High School Middle School Project plan. Board of Education Building Committee Co-Chairs Mario Longobucco and Ed Arum explained that these funds would be used to upgrade the existing plan; for example, add turf, cement sidewalks, and extra lights to the sports fields. Councilor Hoehne said that this is an opportunity to make the fields last longer and make them easier to maintain. The Council was told that only 51 communities are eligible for this Grant opportunity, and it only opens two times a year for applications. Councilor Ruwet said she supports this application, as this sports facility would be accessible to the entire community. See addendum #1.

**Resolution #143-243 – Neighborhood Revitalization Program**

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Council voted unanimously to adopt Resolution #143-243, authorizing the resubmission of an application to CIF2030 for the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, as further described in the Economic Development Director's memo dated June 14, 2023. See addendum #2.

**ARPA Community Impact Grants**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council, on the recommendation of the ARPA Committee, voted unanimously to approve the following 29 Community Impact Grant requests as presented:

- **ASAP!**– \$25,000
- **Allen Associates**– \$28,000
- **Behavioral Health Consulting Services, LLC** \$17,700
- **Challenging Minds**– \$45,000
- **Community Kitchen of Torrington**– \$10,000
- **EdAdvance**– \$50,000
- **FISH** \$15,000
- **Fostering Family Hope**– \$15,000
- **Lily & Vine**– \$16,300
- **Litchfield County Sports**– \$27,815
- **Brooker Memorial**– \$15,000
- **New Opportunities**– \$50,000
- **New Opportunities**– \$75,000
- **Northwest CT YMCA**– \$52,200
- **Nutmeg Fudge**– \$13,000
- **The Robert C. Geer Memorial Hospital, Inc**– \$20,000
- **Thy Neighbors Farm** - \$15,000
- **Torrington Area Families for Autism**– \$61,200
- **Torrington Public Schools**– \$50,586
- **Torrington Valley Park Midget Football League, Inc.** – \$60,000
- **CAFTA**– \$30,000
- **Center for Dance Arts**– \$15,000
- **Five Points Gallery**– \$15,000
- **Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts**– \$20,000
- **Prime Time House**– \$32,000
- **Susan B. Anthony Project**– \$25,000
- **Torrington Development Corporation**– \$15,000
- **Torrington Historical Society**– \$25,000

- **Warner Theatre**– \$30,000

Councilor Ruwet took a moment to thank everyone on the ARPA Committee for the many hours they spent reviewing grant applications. Councilor Cavagnero thanked everyone who took a moment to explain what the business will be doing with the Grant funds.

#### **ARPA Community Impact Grants**

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council, on the recommendation of the ARPA Committee, voted unanimously to deny the following 16 Community Impact Grant requests as presented:

- **Catholic Charities**
- **Charlotte Hungerford Hospital**
- **Family & Children's Aid**
- **Greenwoods Counseling & Referrals**
- **HMGS Next Gen, Inc.**
- **New Opportunities (Job Training)**
- **Hudson Transport, LLC**
- **Kaylan's Kitchen**
- **Mean Dish Patrish' Afro-Dominican Fusion Truck**
- **Pedrick & Assoc. Strategic Marketing Inc. DBA Laundry Magic Super Laundromat**
- **The B.E.R.E.A.D.Y. Project (Mosaic Me)**
- **The B.E.R.E.A.D.Y. Project (Adult Support Awareness Partners)**
- **Platinum Salon**
- **Seichprey VFW Post 296**
- **South School Garden Apartments, LLC**
- **Women's Business Development Council**

Councilor Ruwet shared that the ARPA Committee had a difficult time denying any of these applications.

#### **ARPA – Blight Committee Ad Hoc Lead Abatement Grant Committee**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, 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 a \$3,200 grant from the Lead Abatement Grant Funds established with ARPA funds to aid in the lead abatement of 326-328 Brightwood Ave, as further explained in the memo from the Economic Development Director dated June 14, 2023. Mayor Carbone reminded the Council that this is a Grant opportunity to remediate the lead. She also said that this Grant is for pre-remediation work.

#### **Portable Toilet Rental**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council, on the recommendation of the Public Works Director and the Purchasing Agent, voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to award, execute, and administer a contract agreement for the rental of Portable Toilets to A1 Portable Toilet of Thomaston, CT, as further explained in the Purchasing Agents letter dated June 12, 2023.

#### **Plumbing**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to enter a bid contract with West State Mechanical Inc., of Litchfield, CT for on-call general plumbing services and repairs for the City. The contract will be in effect from July 1st, 2023 to June 30th, 2024, at the rates specified in the memo dated June 19, 2023. Councilor Maniccia asked if West State was the only bidder, and Public Works Director Ray Drew told him that they were.

#### **Friendly Hands Food Bank**

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to issue a letter of support for the Friendly Hands Food Bank CIF2030 Grant, as further described in the Mayor's memo dated June 15, 2023. Councilor Ruwet asked if it was just a letter of recommendation, Mayor Carbone said it was only a letter of support for Friendly Hands, and that they are responsible for applying.

#### **Small Cities – Friendly Hands Food Bank**

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the Council, on the recommendation of the Small Cities Committee, voted unanimously to forgive and release a Small Cities lien in the amount of \$133,300, contingent upon the sale of Friendly Hands Food Bank property located at 50 King Street, as further described in the Mayor's memo dated June 15, 2023. Mayor Carbone said that this is a great

opportunity for Friendly Hands Food Bank to move into a bigger facility to better serve the community. Currently, they are serving roughly 5,000 families a month. Councilor Waldron shared with the Council that the Small Cities Committee discussed this and is in full support.

**Building Department Report**

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Council voted unanimously to accept the Building Department Report from May 2023.

**Tax Collector Refunds**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, 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 June 19, 2023.

**Sewer Usage Refunds**

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, 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 list dated June 19, 2023.

**Business by Dept. Heads**

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to consider business by Department Heads.

**Economic Development Director Rista Malanca** gave the Council an update on the WBDC Grant program that will be launching soon.

**Business by Mayor & Members**

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

**Councilor Ruwet** congratulated Dr. DeLois on being the Juneteenth Mayor for the day.

**Councilor Hoehne** asked for an update on the Audit, Mayor Carbone told her that she will have the Comptroller attend the next meeting to answer any questions surrounding the Audit.

**Public Comment** (in-person only)

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

**Jim Gaffney** from Litchfield County Sports thanked the Council for approving the ARPA Community Impact Grant to support the Kids Marathon.

**Karen Thomas and Dan Hartnett** from Friendly Hands Food Bank thanked the Council for approving the items on the agenda for forgiveness and allowing the Mayor to write a letter in support of the CIF2030 Grant application. They said at this point they can no longer operate out of the King Street facility.

**Stephen Thompson**, owner of Thy Neighbors Farm also thanked the Council for their support in approving the Grant to help support Torrington Grown for Torrington's Own, to help mitigate food insecurity.

**Andrew Matusiak** co-owner of Challenging Minds thanked the Council again for the approval of their Grant application.

**Peter Michelson** Principal of Vogel-Wetmore thanked the Council again for approving the Vogel-Wetmore School Park Grant application.

**Adjournment**

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:46 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by*  
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:

  
CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK

Addendum #1:

Resolution #143-242

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
(AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER)  
**CERTIFIED RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

I, Carol L. Anderson, City Clerk, certify that below is a true and correct copy of a  
(Name of Official) (Title of Official)

resolution duly adopted by City of Torrington  
(Name of the Applicant)

at a meeting of its Board of Councilmen  
(Governing Body)

duly convened on June 19, 2023 and which has not been rescinded or modified in  
(Meeting Date)

any way whatsoever and is at present in full force and effect.

June 20, 2023  
(Date)

Carol L. Anderson, City Clerk  
(Signature and Title of Official)

SEAL

WHEREAS, pursuant to CT General Statutes Section 32-285a,  
(State Statutory Reference)

the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development is authorized to extend financial assistance for economic development projects; and WHEREAS, it is desirable and in the public interest that the City of Torrington make an application to the State for  
(Applicant)

\$ 4,578,100 in order to undertake the Community Fitness Complex  
(Name and Phase of Project)  
and to execute an Assistance Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE  
Board of Councilmen

(Governing Body)

1. That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the state financial assistance imposed by 32-285a  
(State Statutory Reference)

2. That the filing of an application for State financial assistance by  
City of Torrington

(Applicant) In an amount not to exceed \$ 4,578,100 is hereby approved and that

Elinor Carbone, Mayor  
(Title and Name of Authorized Official)

is directed to execute and file such application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decisions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of

City of Torrington

(Name of Applicant)

Addendum #2:

Resolution #143-243

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
(AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER)  
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(Meeting Date)

any way whatsoever and is at present in full force and effect.

June 20, 2023  
(Date)

Carol L. Anderson, City Clerk  
(Signature and Title of Official)

SEAL

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ct General Statutes Section 32-285a

(State Statutory Reference)

the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development is authorized to extend financial assistance for economic development projects; and WHEREAS, it is desirable and in the public interest that the City of Torrington make an application to the State for  
(Applicant)

\$ \$6,350,000 in order to undertake Neighborhood Revitalization that HELPS.  
(Name and Phase of Project)

and to execute an Assistance Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE  
City Council

(Governing Body)

1. That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the state financial assistance imposed by 32-285a

(State Statutory Reference)

2. That the filing of an application for State financial assistance by City of Torrington

(Applicant)

In an amount not to exceed \$ 6,350,000 is hereby approved and that

Elinor Carbone, Mayor

(Title and Name of Authorized Official)

is directed to execute and file such application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decisions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of

City of Torrington

(Name of Applicant)