

**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL & WPCA
REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL AUDITORIUM
ONLINE (ZOOM)
November 9, 2020**

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the City Council and Water Pollution Control Authority was held in the City Hall auditorium on Monday, November 9, 2020. In response to the Governor’s Executive Orders regarding COVID-19, members of the public were able to attend the meeting remotely using the ZOOM online meeting platform. Board members and City staff also had the option to join the meeting remotely.

The meeting was attended in-person by Mayor Elinor Carbone, Corporation Counsel Victor Muschell and City Councilors Frank Rubino, Anne Ruwet and Sharon Waagner. Economic Development Director Rista Malanca, Acting WPCA Administrator Ed Tousey, City Clerk Carol Anderson and City Councilors Paul Cavagnero and Drake Waldron joined by ZOOM.

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

Minutes

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the public hearing held October 19, 2020.

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held October 19, 2020.

Appointments

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to approve the Mayor’s reappointment of Patricia Fairchild as a regular member of the Parks & Recreation Commission for a five-year term expiring on December 1, 2025.

Business by the Ordinance Subcommittee

On a motion by Councilor Rubino, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to consider business by the Ordinance subcommittee. Councilor Rubino provided an update on the subcommittee’s discussion regarding a possible noise ordinance and requested that Corporation Counsel. Atty. Muschell attend their next meeting to provide additional guidance.

Economic Development Consulting Services

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to enter into a contract with Blue Haus Group for the scope of services provided in Phase 1 of their proposal for the total amount of \$8,000 with funding from the Building Healthier Communities Grant.

On the motion by Councilor Ruwet and seconded by Councilor Rubino, Economic Development Director Rista Malanca presented a brief overview of Blue Haus Group and explained how they could help promote economic development by activating some of the City’s underutilized spaces. Mayor Carbone emphasized the importance of activating the City’s Downtown and clarified that the contract would be paid for through the Building Healthier Communities Grant. Councilor Waagner expressed concern that Good Earth Advisors and Main Street Torrington had already done a great deal of work to revitalize Torrington’s Downtown area. Ms. Malanca and Mayor Carbone explained that the services provided by Blue Haus Group would be different from any of the work previously done to enhance Torrington’s Downtown. Councilor Cavagnero requested additional information regarding the company’s history and expressed his concerns about the potential cost of Phases 2 and 3 of Blue Haus Group’s proposal. He also requested that an advisory committee comprised of young people be established to help guide their efforts. Ms. Malanca and Mayor Carbone described a couple of Blue Haus Group’s previous ventures in Hartford and Meriden and clarified that only a small portion of the \$750,000 Building Healthier Communities grant would be allocated for economic development initiatives.

WPCA Invoice Payments

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council herein acting as the WPCA voted unanimously to approve the following payments from Fund #490 Sanitary Sewer Capital Improvement:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>INVOICE</u>	<u>CONTRACTOR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
10/20/2020	0000209783	Wright-Pierce Engineer	\$6,362.90
10/21/2020	Application #4	Saltmarsh Ind.	\$91,692.58
10/14/2020	10200597	Weston & Sampson Engineers	\$20,900.00
10/28/2020	11200511	Weston & Sampson Engineers	\$17,275.00

Release of Liens

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to accept Corporation Counsel's recommendation and authorize the Mayor, pursuant to C.G.S. § 12-179, to release the liens described in Atty. Muschell's memo dated November 9, 2020.

Tax Collector Refunds

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Tax Collector and authorize the tax refunds indicated on the list dated November 9, 2020.

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council herein acting as the WPCA, voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Tax Collector and authorize the sewer usage refunds indicated on the list dated November 9, 2020.

Business by Dept. Heads

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to consider business by Department Heads. City Clerk Carol Anderson reflected on the 2020 Presidential Election and reported that 1/3 of the votes cast in Torrington were by absentee. Mayor Carbone also commented on the success of the Election.

Business by Mayor & Members

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

Councilor Waldron discussed the impact of COVID-19 on interscholastic sports.

Councilor Waagner commended Ms. Malanca for her work in the Economic Development Office and requested an update on the Building Healthier Communities Grant.

Councilor Ruwet congratulated the newly elected and commended all who ran for office in 2020. She also congratulated the Board of Education on the referendum in which voters approved the construction of a new high school and middle school complex. Additionally, she congratulated Councilor Waldron on a recent news article in which he was featured and thanked the City Clerk for her role in the 2020 Election.

Mayor Carbone reported that the CT Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner David Lehman would be visiting her and Ms. Malanca to discuss some of the progress and opportunities for economic development in Torrington. The Mayor also announced that the ribbon cutting ceremony for Franklin Plaza was scheduled to take place at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 12, 2020 and she commended the Torrington Public Schools administration and the Board of Education on the success of the referendum. In addition, Mayor Carbone provided an update on Torrington's 2020 Holiday festivities, including a reservation-only Christmas Village, vintage window shopping event and story walk.

Executive Session

On a motion by Councilor Rubino, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to enter Executive Session, pursuant to C.G.S. §§1-200(6)(B) and 1-200(9)(C), at 7:30 p.m. to discuss strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims. They were joined by Corporation Counsel Atty. Victor Muschell.

Open Session

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to enter Open Session at 7:43 p.m.

Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Jonathan R. Draper, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST: 
CAROL L. ANDERSON, MMC
CITY CLERK