

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the City Council and Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) was held at the City Hall auditorium on Monday, June 21, 2021. Attendance was by ZOOM and in person. Present at City Hall were Mayor Elinor Carbone and City Councilors Frank Rubino, Paul Cavagnero, and Sharon Waagner. Also present were Corporation Counsel Victor Muschell, City Clerk Carol Anderson, IT Director Gerry Crowley, Purchasing Agent Pennie Zucco, Public Works Director Raymond Drew, Facilities Manager Jamie Sykora, and Deputy Fire Chief David Tripp. City Engineer Paul Kundzins, WPCA Administrator Ed Tousey, and Councilors David Oliver and Drake Waldron joined by Zoom.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to open the meeting to the public. Torrington resident Keri Hoehne and her daughter, Bayly Hoehne, requested that additional funds be allocated to the Board of Education for FY 2021-2022.

Minutes Approved

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the special meeting held jointly with the Board of Public Safety on June 2, 2021.

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the public hearing held jointly with the Board of Finance on June 3, 2021.

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the special meeting held jointly with the Board of Finance on June 3, 2021.

On a motion by Councilor Rubino, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the public hearing held June 7, 2021.

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held June 7, 2021.

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the public hearing held June 14, 2021.

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the special meeting held June 14, 2021.

Appointments

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Stephanie Burr as a regular member of the Arts & Culture Commission to fill the remainder of a four-year term expiring on December 31, 2024.

Budget Presentation

Mayor Carbone provided a historical overview of the coronavirus's impact on the FY 2020-2021 budget process, updated the board on new guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury restricting the use of American Rescue Plan funds, and discussed the impact of Governor Lamont's coronavirus relief funding for distressed municipalities being excluded from the State's final adopted budget. The Mayor also gave updated figures on the City's grand list growth, provided an explanation of ECS/Alliance District funding, and explained her recommendations for the following changes/reductions to the FY 2021-2022 budgets, in order to accomplish no mill rate increase:

- Reduce the BOE Operating Budget by \$569,281 and utilize funds available through ARPA to cover additional programs.
- Reduce the BOE Capital Budget by \$2,995,898 and utilize ARPA funds for qualifying projects. (The Mayor also recommended putting the Torrington Middle School and Vogel-Wetmore roof projects out to referendum).
- Allow the BOE to move its FY 2020-2021 surplus (estimated to be \$444,000) into capital reserve to cover additional capital expenses and annual turf field allocation.
- Identify additional qualifying expenses for addressing educational disparities that can be moved to the ARPA grant under qualified census tract obligations and funding opportunities through the Community Investment Fund 2030.
- Reduce the City budget by \$2,120,421.

Councilors Cavagnero and Waagner requested clarification regarding eligible expenses for ARPA funds. Mayor Carbone explained some of the restrictions and reported that the City would not have broad latitude to spend the funds because the City did not experience a loss of revenue as a result of the coronavirus. Councilor Cavagnero expressed frustration regarding a lack of communication from the Board of Education and Councilor Rubino questioned whether it would make sense to add the construction of a new public safety facility to the referendum, if one is scheduled for the Torrington Middle School and Vogel-Wetmore roof projects. Mayor Carbone explained that the City was not prepared to bring the public safety facility project to referendum because a feasibility study had not been completed and the bonding obligation for the new Middle/High School project was still uncertain. Councilor Cavagnero also expressed interest in seeking private funding for the construction of the new animal control facility and Mayor Carbone apprised him of the efforts that the City had already made to secure alternative funding sources for the project. Lastly, the Mayor clarified that a referendum, if it passes, would give the City authorization to bond funds, but would not require the City to do so. Mayor Carbone assured the Council that she would continue to seek alternative funding sources for the capital projects, even if a referendum passes. The Council signaled their approval for the Mayor to engage Bond Counsel regarding a possible referendum.

Municipal Affordable Housing Plan Fee-For-Service Agreement

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to approve and authorize the Mayor to execute the Municipal Affordable Housing Plan Fee-For-Service Agreement by and between the Northwest Hills Council of Governments and the City of Torrington.

Contract Award: Extension of Plumbing Services

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Facilities Manager and Purchasing Agent and authorize the Mayor to extend the current bid contract for FY 2021-2022 for general plumbing and related repairs to West State Mechanical, Inc. of Litchfield, CT under the same terms and conditions and at the existing rates of \$90/hour per journeyman and \$60/hour per apprentice.

Contract Award: Extension of HVAC Services

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Rubino, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Facilities Manager and Purchasing Agent and authorize the Mayor to extend the current bid contract for FY 2021-2022 for HVAC services to Air Temp Mechanical Services, Inc. of Southington, CT under the same terms and conditions and at the existing rates of \$83/hour per journeyman and \$75/hour per apprentice.

Public Works Director Ray Drew introduced the new Facilities Manager, Jamie Sykora, and Mr. Sykora conveyed his excitement to support the City in his new role.

Contract Award: Copier Lease Agreement

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the IT Director and Purchasing Agent to enter into a 60-month lease agreement with Automated Business Solutions (ABS) of Southington, CT for the total amount of \$97,261.80, to replace and service new multi-function copier devices configured with print and scan management software, and authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City regarding the execution of the contract and its administration.

Contract Award: Everbridge® Mass Notification System

Everbridge® Technical Account Manager Kevin McManus presented an overview of the Everbridge® Mass Notification System. He explained some of the system's important features and described how it could benefit the City. Deputy Chief Tripp further explained the benefits of the Everbridge® Mass Notification System and Councilor Waagner expressed her support.

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to approve the 36-month contract with Everbridge®, for the total amount of \$37,017.32, to be paid from CRF funds, for the Everbridge® Mass Notification System Pro software, and authorize the Mayor to execute the contract agreement.

WPCA Invoices Approved

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

| DATE | CONTRACTOR | AMOUNT |
|-----------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 6/8/2021 | Yield Industries | \$1,949.00 |
| 6/21/2021 | Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, INC | \$3,371.84 |
| 6/21/2021 | Wright-Pierce Engineers | \$2,095.12 |
| 6/21/2021 | Torrington Water Co. | \$10,760.36 |
| 6/21/2021 | Torrington Water Co. | \$2,188.26 |

Release of Liens

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, 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 June 21, 2021.

Tax Collector Refunds

On a motion by Councilor Rubino, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Tax Collector and authorize the tax refunds indicated on the list dated June 21, 2021.

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Rubino, 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 June 21, 2021.

Business by Dept. Heads

On a motion by Councilor Rubino, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to consider business by Department Heads. City Clerk Carol Anderson provided updates on new legislation which will:

1. eliminate “race” from marriage licenses issued after June 30, 2021,
2. change “Groom/Spouse 1” and “Bride/Spouse 2,” as they are currently listed on existing marriage licenses to “Spouse 1” and “Spouse 2,” respectively, on marriage licenses issued after September 30, 2021, and
3. allow adult adoptees to obtain copies of their original birth certificates from the Town or City Clerk’s Office in the municipality where they were born, effective July 1, 2021.

Mrs. Anderson also gave an update on dog licensing and expressed her condolences for the passing of the former City Clerk, Addo Bonetti.

Business by Mayor & Members

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to consider business by the Mayor and members of the City Council. Councilor Waldron announced that he was officially retired. Councilor Waagner commended Bayly Hoehne for addressing the Council and requested an update on the filling of Economic Development Commission vacancies. Mayor Carbone reported that she planned to bring forward some recommendations for appointments to the EDC.

Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

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

ATTEST:


CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK