

FIFTEEN ROPE FERRY ROAD
WATERFORD, CT 06385-2886



PHONE: 860-442-0553
www.waterfordct.org

MINUTES
REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING
ZOOM Access Only – Waterford Town Hall
Regular Meeting
August 3, 2020

2020 AUG -5 PM 4:41

RECEIVED TOWN CLERK

The August 3, 2020, Moderator Thomas Dembek called the Regular Meeting of the Representative Town Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Greg Attanasio, Michael Bono, Jennifer Bracciale, Timothy Condon, Thomas J. Dembek, Susan Driscoll, Steven Elci, Timothy Fioravanti, Nick Gauthier, Paul Goldstein, Kathleen Kohl, David Lersch, Richard Morgan Richard Muckle, Liam O'Leary, Theodore Olynciw, Sally Ritchie, Michael Rocchetti (7:21 P.M.), Danielle Steward-Gelinas, Robert Swansen, Baird Welch-Collins.

ABSENT: April Cairns, Valerie Metivier, Miriam Furey-Wagner.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: First Selectman Robert Brule; Chair of the Board of Education Craig Merriman; Chair of the Board of Finance Ronald R. Fedor; Selectman Elizabeth Sabilia.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Selectwoman Jody Nazarchyk.

ALSO PRESENT: Town Clerk David L. Campo; Town Attorney Robert Avena.

AGENDA ITEM C – June 1, 2020 Minutes

MOTION by Driscoll, seconded by Muckle, to accept the June 1, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

AGENDA ITEM D – CORRESPONDENCE (See Attachments)

An item was received from Planning Director Abby Piersall entitled, "Proposed Changes to the Waterford Code of Ordinances Chapter 12.08 Concerning the possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages in town parks and recreation areas.

An Item was received from Planning Director Abby Piersall entitled, "Proposed changes to the Waterford Code of Ordinances Chapter 15.6, Blighted Premises".

An Item was received from Town Attorney Rob Avena requesting an amendment to the Waterford Code of Ordinances Chapter 2.5 – Ethics Commission.

Moderator Dembek stated issues would be discussed under New Business

AGENDA ITEM E - PUBLIC COMMENT (See Attachments)

Three items were received for public comment from the following: Mary Childs, Helen Kwasniewski, Chris Venditti.

AGENDA ITEM F - COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

AGENDA ITEM G - LIAISON REPORTS

Thomas Dembek gave a brief update on the progress of the Municipal Complex.

Richard Muckle gave a brief update on the status of the Long Range Fiscal Planning Committee.

Danielle Steward-Gelinas gave a brief update on the status of the Education Committee.

AGENDA ITEM H – BUSINESS ON THE CALL

CALL ITEM 1 – Body Cameras

PRESENTATION: Chief of Police Brett Mahoney.

MOTION by Driscoll, seconded by Welch-Colins, to approve a recommendation from the Board of Finance for an appropriation of **\$11,850** from the **Contingency LI# 10121-59010** to **Capital Project Account 32921-55864 (Body Cameras)**.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous with one member abstaining. (Morgan)

CALL ITEM 2 – Revaluation

PRESENTATION: Assessor Paige Walton.

MOTION by Driscoll, seconded by Welch-Collins, to approve a recommendation from the Board of Finance for an appropriation of **\$259,300** from the **Capital and Non-Recurring Designated LI# 20501-57639 – (Revaluation)**.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

CALL ITEM 3 – IT Learning Boards – End of Life

PRESENTATION: BOE Director of Finance Joseph Mancini.

MOTION by Driscoll, seconded by Welch-Collins, to approve a recommendation from the Board of Finance for an appropriation of **\$155,287.12** from the **Capital and Non-Recurring Designated LI# 20560-57822 – (IT Learning Boards – end of life)**, based upon its consistency with the Capital Improvement Plan.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous

CALL ITEM 4 – IT Virtual Desktop Main Processor

PRESENTATION: BOE Director of Finance Joseph Mancini.

MOTION by Driscoll, seconded by Muckle, to approve a recommendation from the Board of Finance for an appropriation of **\$139,125** from the **Capital and Non-Recurring Designated LI# 20560-57827 – (IT Virtual Desktop Main Processor)**, based upon its consistency with the Capital Improvement Plan.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

CALL ITEM 5 – Replace DVR Security Camera

PRESENTATION: BOE Director of Finance Joseph Mancini, Information Technology Director Ed Crane.

MOTION by Steward Gelinas, seconded by Driscoll, to approve a recommendation from the Board of Finance an appropriation of **\$30,000** from the **Capital and Non-Recurring Designated LI# 20560-57808 – (Replace DVR Security Camera)**, based upon its consistency with the Capital Improvement Plan.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

CALL ITEM 6 – AHEPA Tax Abatement

PRESENTATION: Town Attorney Rob Avena.

MOTION by Driscoll, seconded by Muckle, to approve a recommendation from the Board of Selectmen to approve a request from **AHEPA 250-II Inc.** of 95 Clark Lane, Waterford, for a five (5) year extension of their Tax Abatement agreement to end on **June 24, 2024**, together with two five (5) year options thereafter.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

CALL ITEM 7 – Waterford Beach Park Improvements

PRESENTATION: Recreation and Parks Director Brian Flaherty.

MOTION by Muckle, seconded by Goldstein, to approve a recommendation from the Board of Finance for an appropriation of **\$150,000** from the **FY21 Capital and Non-Recurring Designated LI#20537-57854** and be moved into account **20537-57781**, for the **Waterford Beach Park Improvements**.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

MOTION by Olynciw, seconded by Goldstein, to designate the approved \$150,000 as emergency legislation allowing the town to forgo the 15 day waiting period.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

CALL ITEM 8 – School Security

PRESENTATION: BOE Director of Finance Joseph Mancini, Superintendent of Schools Thomas Giard.

MOTION by Welch-Collins, seconded by Goldstein, to approve a recommendation from the Board of Finance for an appropriation of **\$100,000** from the **Capital and Non-Recurring Designated LI# 20560-57842 – (School Security)**, based upon its consistency with the Capital Improvement Plan.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION by Condon, seconded by Attanasio, to move the subject “Proposed Changes to the Waterford Code of Ordinances Chapter 12.08 Concerning the possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages in town parks and recreation areas” to the Public Health, Recreation & Environment Standing Committee of the RTM.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

MOTION by Muckle, seconded by Condon, to move the subject “Proposed changes to the Waterford Code of Ordinances Chapter 15.6, Blighted Premises” to the Public Works, Planning and Development Standing Committee of the RTM.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

MOTION by Driscoll, seconded by Welch-Collins, to move the subject of amendment to the Waterford Code of Ordinances Chapter 2.5 – Ethics Commission.

to the Legislation and Administration Standing Committee of the RTM.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

MOTION by Olynciw, seconded by Welch-Collins, to move the subjects cited in the letter received for Public Comment from Chris Venditti to the Public Protection and safety Standing Committee of the RTM.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

MOTION by Olynciw seconded by Welch-Collins to amend the motion to recommend to the Public Protection and Safety Standing Committee to research the use of an Ad Hoc Committee to study the issue.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

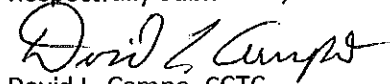
Town Attorney Avena notified the body there may be a need for a special meeting later in August or early September in regards to a roof at The Eugene O'Neil Theater Barn.

RTM Member Driscoll reminded BOE officials that quarterly financials are due. Superintendent Giard said they are available and will be sent to the members.

MOTION by Muckle, seconded by Goldstein, to adjourn at 8:34 P.M.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David L. Campo".

David L. Campo, CCTC
Waterford Town Clerk



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas Dembek, Moderator, Waterford Representative Town Meeting

FROM: Abby Y. Piersall, AICP, Director of Planning and Development

DATE: July 21, 2020

TITLE: Proposed Changes to the Waterford Code of Ordinances Chapter 12.08 Concerning the possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages in town parks and recreation areas.

This request is to consider the potential to allow the possession or drinking of alcoholic beverages at recreational facilities during special events approved by the Board of Selectmen. Alcohol is currently prohibited at Town facilities. This change would enable events such as concerts, fundraisers, or festivals to include the sale and consumption of beer or wine. The change would not enable possession of alcohol at school properties or on beaches.

Changing this Ordinance is a key step in reducing restrictions on the range of events that can be held on town properties. The addition of carefully planned service of wine or beer can help broaden participation in Waterford events and draw new attractions to Town. Enabling sanctioned alcohol consumption in public places supports ongoing efforts increase the frequency and diversity of dynamic and vibrant events in Waterford. Events like dinners at the historic Jordan Green, summer concerts at the Waterford Beach Park, or craft beer and wine tasting at the Farmers Market could be permitted if the Ordinance is changed.

As proposed, the change would only allow beer and wine to be available as sanctioned on a case-by-case basis by the Board of Selectmen.

Section 12.08.040 currently reads:

The possession or drinking of alcoholic beverages in any town park and recreational area, including Waterford Beach, is prohibited.

Proposed language for 12.08.040 is:

The possession or drinking of alcoholic beverages in any town park and/or recreational area is prohibited, except as provided below:

- A. Possession and drinking of beer and wine may be permitted at locations and times as approved by the Board of Selectmen. In no case will the possession and drinking of beer and wine be allowed on the sand or dunes of any beach.



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas Dembek, Moderator, Waterford Representative Town Meeting

FROM: Abby Y. Piersall, AICP, Director of Planning and Development

DATE: July 21, 2020

TITLE: Proposed Changes to the Waterford Code of Ordinances Chapter 15.6, Blighted Premises.

This request is to ask the Waterford Representative Town Meeting to consider the potential modifications to the existing Blight Ordinance. The current Ordinance became effective in April of 2017. Since that time, three individuals have held the position of Blight Enforcement Officer, and all have noted similar concerns about certain elements of the Ordinance.

The intent of the Blight Ordinance was to provide the Town with a straightforward administrative tool to address properties in poor condition. After working with the current Ordinance, several issues have arisen that should be addressed. These include:

1. The structure and presentation of definitions and characterization of blight.
The Ordinance currently combines descriptions of blight with general definitions. These sections should be clearly separated to eliminate confusion about what constitutes blight.
2. The process limits the ability of the Blight Enforcement Officer to effectively work with residents who will voluntarily comply, and can unintentionally lead to very high fines.
Under the existing ordinance, fines begin to accrue from the date the Officer sends a Notice of Blight Violation. Procedurally, the Town receives a complaint and after an inspection to verify the blighted condition of property, sends a violation notice in accordance with the Ordinance. Many property owners will receive the notice and call the Officer to create a blight abatement plan. If the owners fail to fully complete the plan in the time specified, fines are calculated from the date of the original notice.
3. The property owner being cited for blight may appeal a decision of the Blight Enforcement Officer, but there is no mechanism in the Ordinance for the person making the complaint to appeal.
The Blight Enforcement Officer makes a professional determination at the time of the site inspection as to whether or not the property is blighted. Since 2017, multiple cases have illustrated that persons making the complaint may not agree with the Officer when a determination that blight is not present is found. Staff suggests reviewing an option to create a committee that would set fines and address any disagreement a complainer has with the decision of the Officer.

2020 JUL 23 AM 9:18

RECEIVED FOR RECORD

To remedy these issues, it is suggested that the Blight Ordinance be referred to committee for further consideration and potential modifications. The Planning Director, Blight Enforcement Officer, and Town Attorney are currently working on a draft of the Ordinance to present for committee review.

Suisman Shapiro

Attorneys-At-Law

Robert A. Avena
Raymond L. Buribault, Jr.
James P. Berryman
Michael A. Blanchard

Eric W. Callahan

Michael P. Carey

Richard S. Cody

John A. Collins, III

Jeanette M. Dostie

Eileen C. Duggan

Bryan P. Fiengo

Theodore W. Heiser

Jeffrey W. Hill

Carolyn P. Kelly

Kristi D. Kelly

Nicholas F. Kepple

Robert B. Keville

Jillian K. Miller

Roger T. Scully

Robert G. Tukey

Kyle J. Zrends

In Memoriam

Andrew J. Brand

James F. Brennan

James J. Courtney

L. Patrick Gray, III

Michael V. Sage

Matthew Shaffer

Max M. Shapiro

Charles J. Suisman

Thomas B. Wilson

Louis C. Wool

Of Counsel

Hinda K. Kimmel

Jay B. Levin

Richard A. Schatz

July 27, 2020

Via email: Thomas.i.dembek@dom.com

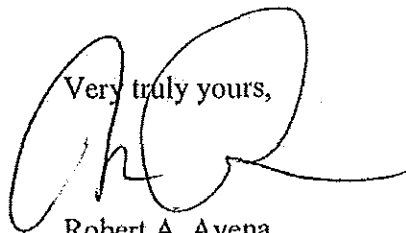
Thomas Dembek, Moderator
Representative Town Meeting
Town of Waterford
15 Rope Ferry Road
Waterford, CT 06385

RE:

Dear RTM Moderator Dembek:

On behalf of the Town Ethics Commission, please find attached a clean copy of a proposed amended Ethics Code Ordinance along with a marked 'revision' copy of the existing ordinance. Please assign this amended ordinance proposal to the appropriate standing committee at the next RTM meeting in August for its consideration.

Very truly yours,



Robert A. Avena
Town Attorney

RAA/pmn
Enclosures

cc: Dave Campo, Town Clerk

2020 JUL 29 PM 3:58

RECEIVED JUL 29 2020

A Tradition of Innovative Solutions

Suisman, Shapiro, Wool, Brennan, Gray & Greenberg, P.C.
2 Union Plaza, Suite 200 • P.O. Box 1591, New London, CT 06320
Phone 860-442-4416 • Fax 860-442-0495 • www.suismanshapiro.com

David Campo

From: Mary Childs <childsmm22@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2020 1:06 PM
To: David Campo; Mary Childs
Subject: public comment for RTM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization.

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe.

Hello Mr. Campo, I would like to request that this message be shared as a public comment at the next meeting and that the RTM members receive a copy of it.

To the Waterford RTM, My name is Mary Childs and I am writing to you as a parent of 4 children who live in Waterford and as a resident of this town for a total of 37 years. I have recently sent letters to the Superintendent of Schools and to the First Selectman and Selectwomen. As elected officials, you have a new call to accept. While racism and actions that are meant to oppress others can be out loud, I am asking you to consider looking into other forms of oppression. These subtle offenses are within our community and our public systems.

At your recent meeting where final budgets were decided, it was clear that the Police Department was supported as that budget was passed with no cuts and with relatively little comment or discussion. Equally clear was the message to the town about it's youngest residents as the Board of Education budget was significantly cut. This cut, while substantial, was not reopened for discussion. Understand that the message this chain of events sends is that more value is being placed on our town department that punishes by protecting and serving versus a department that educates, supports, and elevates our community.

What is the RTM doing to work on personal biases, justice reform, systemic racism, and other difficult but necessary areas of work? You put our money where your mouth is and I would like to know what your next steps are. We need to challenge the status quo in our community and I suggest that instead of giving nods to budgets based on party-line consensus or past practice, you consider the positive impact that a budget will and will not have for our entire community that continues to be more and more diverse.

Thank you for your time. We all have work to do.
Sincerely, Mary Childs

2020 JUN -9 PM 3:09

RECEIVED 2020 JUN 9 PM 3:09

Comment to RTM Meeting on August 3, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

From: Helen Kwasniewski

Item 6 To consider and act upon recommendation from the BOS to approve request from AHEPA for a 5 year extension of their tax abatement.

I would like this board (RTM) to **STRONGLY** say NO to this 5 year extension with 2 five year option.

The reason is: All SENIORS do not get a tax abatement break which we should! Seniors have to make life choices like food vs medication vs paying taxes vs power bill. Seniors have a life style that they are accustom to or want but don't have. The way that the Town of Waterford is going and giving certain groups special or preferred status we will be bankrupt or with high mill rates which we cannot afford either. I strongly believe that AHEPA which is own by the Greek Church can afford they taxes and should support the community that they are in.

Waterford Senior Services provide there van(s) to AHEPA at no cost to them but a huge added expense to the town.

Please do the **right thing** and **REFUSE** this tax abatement.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Helen Kwasniewski

2020 JUL 31 PM 4:07

RECEIVED TOWN OF WATERFORD
TOWN OF WATERFORD

2020 JUL 30 PM 3:02

Handwritten signature
TOWN OF WATERFORD

Christopher Venditti
443 Sipple St.
Oceanside, CA 92058
(860) 287-4644

07/27/2020

Rob Brule
First Selectman
Town of Waterford
15 Rope Ferry Rd.
Waterford, CT 06385

I'm writing you today with a few concerns that I have regarding public safety within the Town of Waterford. As of now, I have not resided in town for about 7 years due to Active Duty Military orders, but I do still pay property taxes, and I keep a special interest in local issues because many of my family members are residents (mother, sister, nieces, and nephews).

The first topic I would like to bring up is the overall lack of fire protection within the Town. I have a unique perspective on this issue because I've been a member of Waterford Fire Engine Co.1 since 2009 but have not lived in town since 2013. I don't believe anyone can deny that the number of incidents the town fire services respond to is decreasing, but we can all agree that volunteer participation is at an all-time low. It's my understanding that more fulltime professional firefighters have been added to the payroll in recent years, and the stations and hours they work has been restructured. With that in mind, I find it very interesting that the town thought it was acceptable to have no fire coverage from 0200-0600 daily. If there's anything that being an Infantryman in the United States Marine Corps has taught me, it's that you cannot predict when you'll need to be ready to fight and work you schedule around that, but rather you need to maintain the highest state of readiness possible. I feel we as a Town are lacking here.

Just last year on October 22, 2019 at 0445 a town resident had his life cut short due to this lack of fire protection. The incident took place **less than 1 mile** from Waterford Fire Engine Co.1. The first piece of fire apparatus was driven by the bunkman, and he could not adequately perform the initial functions of being the first due piece by himself.

These functions include:

- Scene size up – Confirm or deny initial reports of fire, confirm location of fire, confirm location of water supply, position the vehicle in an advantageous location for its function, confirm or deny if anyone is present in the structure, identify entry and exit points, identify locations of possible victims, *ensure adequate resources are on the way*, direct those resources until an INCIDENT COMMANDER assumes the role.
- Initial entry and search – search for fire and victims
- Initial fire attacks – advance the first hose line and attack the fire.

All of these functions should be taking place nearly simultaneously, but you tell me how long it would take you, BY YOURSELF. Now put yourself in the shoes of the homeowner who's being overcome by smoke and heat. We cannot afford to put that much stress on our firefighters and our residents due to a lack of manpower. We are making an already bad situation worse.

I bring this up because even though we are staffing 2 firefighters in town from 0200-0600 currently, it's not enough. These hours are also not part of their contract so theoretically they could be cut at any time. I challenge you as the First Selectman to answer this question- Is the reason for not having better fire protection money, or a lack of understanding? The Waterford Police Department has been advertising a string of car break-ins on their Facebook page for what feels like months now, which is a great way to remind residents to lock their doors. But does a large amount of car break-ins mean we add 2 additional officers to an overnight shift on overtime? Is the cost worth the benefit? Are you familiar with the Kansas City Preventative Patrol Experiment? This was a year-long study conducted by the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department to see if they could make a correlation between visible police presence and crime, and fear of crime. The conclusion was that whether the city was having police proactively patrolling an area or staying out until called in (reactive patrolling) had significant effect on burglaries, auto thefts, larcenies, robberies, and vandalism – crimes traditionally thought to be deterrable.

I say all of that to say this, if we as a town are willing to **ADD 2 officers to a shift due to car break ins (property damage and stolen goods) which is proven to not stop the crime, how many more CITIZENS need to DIE for us to add adequate fire protection for the overnight hours?**

The concerning thing for me is that this lack of regard for residents when it comes to fire protection isn't a one-time thing in Town. In fact, it's starting to become normal, which is not acceptable.

Next I would like to talk about what it means to have leadership present. The Police department is staffed to have a Sergeant on every shift. Why is that? I'm sure your answer will have something to do with having a high level of accountability at all times and degree of tactical expertise ready to respond to any situation at a moments notice. Is the fire service any different? Not only do they never have leadership present (Waterford Fire Engine Co.1 hasn't had a fire officer (leader) respond to an emergency call since **October 2019**), but now the firefighters are forced to make up for this by using manpower needed elsewhere on the fireground. Referencing back to my initial functions on the fireground, the following should be handled by the incident commander - Confirm or deny initial reports of fire, confirm location of fire, confirm location of water supply, confirm or deny if anyone is present in the structure, identify entry and exit points, identify locations of possible victims, *ensure adequate resources are on the way*, direct those resources in, send necessary notifications to dispatch.

- Why does the Police Department get leadership and the Fire Department gets Volunteers who don't have to have the same level of training as the firemen they "lead" (we use that term loosely)?
- Why do you think it's ok to let a failing system continue to fail?
- Have you ever coached a team without captains?

In closing, I have many issues with the way tax dollars are being spent, particularly when it comes to public safety. My mother, sister, brother-in-law, three nieces and nephews live in town, and I fear if something were to happen in their home that at least one of them is liable to not make it out. I've already instructed them to give the address for our neighbors up road who live in the City of New London if something happens because they'll respond with an 16 man crew within minutes (made up of 12 firefighters, 3 lieutenants*, and a battalion chief*). The same crew that has bailed Waterford out recently for their lack of manpower. Offering \$7 per call will not make these "volunteers" just appear, and if it does, they won't be better trained than the professional firefighters. I look forward to hearing from you, Mr. Selectman, as well as a representative from the Towns Public Protection and Safety Committee. I can send a hard copy of this email if needed.