

**TOWN OF CROMWELL
TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
41 WEST STREET, CROMWELL, CT 06416
August 18, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes**

Present: Mayor E. Faienza, Deputy Mayor J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henahan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters

Also Present: Town Manager A. Salvatore, Director of Finance M. Sylvester, Chief of Police D. Lamontagne, Assistant Director of Public Works J. Harriman

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Faienza called the meeting to order at 7:14 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Town Council stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by J. Donohue and **seconded** by S. Fortenbach to approve the Town Council Meeting Agenda of August 18, 2021.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henahan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. **Motion carried.**

D. COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REPORTS/LIAISON REPORT/STAFF REPORTS

None.

E. MAYOR'S UPDATE

Mayor Faienza reported:

- The Revaluation interviews are complete. They made the decision to hire Northeast Municipal Resources after many questions. They are a local company and are going to focus on public communication.
- There will be a 9/11 Ceremony on Saturday, September 11th at 8:30 at Frisbee Park. He encouraged the public to attend.
- Economic Development is progressing in town. He expressed that he is grateful to have been a part of this through the years, but added he still has some work to do in the next couple of months.
- He would like to do some business visitations before the end of his term

F. TOWN MANAGER'S UPDATE

Town Manager Salvatore reported:

- He agreed with the Mayor on the Revaluation Company selected. They did an outstanding job in their interview, he ensured the Council that the people they met with for the interview would be the prime individuals doing the revaluation.

- We are monitoring COVID recommendations and will enforce additional restrictions if necessary.
- The new library space has been named "The Belden Room" after the individual who opened the Belden Library.
- The Highway Division now has a sign posted that says, "Your Tax Dollars at Work". A message to the taxpayers that the Public Works crew is working on behalf of the residents.
- Sidewalks came in underbid. He is in discussions with the Town Engineer regarding extending the sidewalks.
- The wall on Main Street came in \$200,000 under budget. Any remaining money will be moved to CNR.
- He worked with David Geer on another movie, with scenes filmed at Cromwell Landing, River Road, and the Council Chambers. This was great for Economic Development, as the crew members stayed at the Marriot and purchased food from local restaurants.
- Feasibility Space Study was completed. It will cost \$830,000 to bring the 3,200 SF Sewer Building up to code, \$1M to bring the Old Highway Building up to code, and \$250,000 to wrap up the Mechanic's Building (Phase 1). He intends to look at the Highway and Mechanic space to see if it is feasible to combine them and add a Community Room or Senior Center and to look at entire footprint for adequate parking and a potential fueling station on the property.
- Job description project is nearing completion. He hopes to bring the job descriptions to the September meeting.
- Finance Director Marianne Sylvester is researching permitted uses for the ARPA grant. They are still working on this and will eventually give a presentation to the Town Council.
- They are in discussions with individuals interested in the Red Lion. The property is up to date on their property taxes.

G. FINANCIAL/FINANCE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Finance Director Marianne Sylvester submitted a written report and presented it to the Town Council.

1. Appropriate \$397,200 for the Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP). Payment of CCGP funds will be on a "grant basis", not a "reimbursement basis". The grant has been approved by the State for the installation of sidewalks along the south side of Geer Street and west side of Main Street.

Town Engineer Jon Harriman was present and clarified that this is not a reimbursement, the Town will receive a check for the amount requested. He stated the approval of the Town Council is the last step to receive the funds.

Motion made by J. Demetriades and **seconded** by S. Fortenbach to Appropriate \$397,200 for the Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP). Payment of CCGP funds will be on a "grant basis", not a "reimbursement basis", as outlined in Agenda Item G.1.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. **Motion carried.**

H. CHIEF OF POLICE'S UPDATE

Police Chief LaMontagne submitted a written report and read it to the Town Council. She informed the Council that she and the Captain applied for a grant administered by OPM for funding up to \$35,000 for incidents with a correlation between the pandemic and youth crime.

I. PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Assistant Public Works Director Jon Harriman was present and reported:

- Public Works is in summer maintenance mode: a lot of mowing, catch basin replacement, fixing drainage issues (popped up during rain events).
- The Fall paving schedule will be starting starting soon, the paving will take place on: Eastwood Road, Edgewood Street, Marlon Place, Kowal Drive, and Fenwood Drive.
- They plan to widen an area on Kowal Drive, in addition to replacing a number of sidewalk ramps where they intersect Main Street.
- Cedar Drive – They are looking at a way to mitigate some drainage issues by taking drainage coming down and routing it through an existing drainage easement to get it away from the low point at the entrance where it has been flooding. He believes a larger study will be required to fix the issue.
- They are having internal discussion regarding extending the sidewalks.
- Feasibility Study – they are close to a complete punch list. They are presently in a dispute resolution mitigation with the contractor. A brief discussion was held regarding remaining issues on the punch list.
- Cromwell Landing – There are a couple of items remaining. An interpretive sign has been designed by Mr. Donohue and the Cromwell Historic District that describes the history of the river, it will be mounted on a post down by the fishing pier. Eversource is committed to hooking up the light on Monday and once that is done, everything there should be complete.

J. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

K. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and possible action regarding creating an Events Committee/creating a unified town calendar

Councilman Fortenbach informed the Council that he talked to the High School Principal about a high school student doing this either as a Senior Capstone Project or having a school club create and maintain this as a Google Calendar.

Motion **made** by J. Donohue and **seconded** by S. Fortenbach to table this item.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. ***Motion carried.***

2. Discussion and possible action regarding Request for Waiver of Bidding Process for Board of Education

Ann Burke was present on behalf of Tom Litwinczyk from the Board of Education. She explained that the Waiver of Bidding Process request is for the asbestos removal and the architectural work so that the renovation of the culinary kitchen at Cromwell High School can be moved along quickly.

Motion **made** by P. Ahlquist and **seconded** by J. Henehan to waive the bidding process for the architectural work for the renovation of the high school culinary kitchen.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. ***Motion carried.***

Motion **made** by P. Ahlquist and **seconded** by J. Henehan to waive the bidding process for the asbestos remediation process in conjunction with the Cromwell High School Kitchen Renovation.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. ***Motion carried.***

3. Discussion and possible action regarding Tax Abatement Request for Modification

Mark Forlenza was in attendance representing Cromwell Village Associates, LLC. He requested a modification of the tax abatement approved in 2019. A brief discussion was held.

Motion **made** by P. Ahlquist and **seconded** by J. Henehan to approve the modification of tax abatement schedule as presented be followed, upon issuance of a final Certificate of Occupancy.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. ***Motion carried.***

L. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. July 14, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

Mayor Faienza read the email attached hereto into the record to reflect a change to the July 14, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes under Citizen Comments.

On Page 5, revise "P. Ahlquist rescinded his second" to read, "J. Henehan rescinded his second".

Motion made by J. Demetriades and **seconded** by S. Fortenbach to approve the July 14, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes as amended.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach. ***Motion carried.***

M. RESIGNATIONS

None.

N. APPOINTMENTS

1. Mattabassett District

- a. Bonnie Anderson, Regular Member for a term expiring September 2024

Motion made J. Donohue and **seconded** by S. Fortenbach to appoint Bonnie Anderson to the Mattabassett District as a regular member for a term expiring September 2024.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. ***Motion carried.***

2. Board of Finance

- a. Brian Stermer, Alternate Member for a term expiring December 2021

Motion made S. Fortenbach and **seconded** by J. Donohue to appoint Brian Stermer to the Board of Finance as an Alternate Member for a term expiring December 2021.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. ***Motion carried.***

3. Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency

- a. Robert Donohue, Alternate Member to Regular Member for a term expiring December 2023

Motion made J. Henehan and **seconded** by S. Fortenbach to appoint Robert Donohue to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency from an Alternate Member to a Regular Member for a term expiring December 2023.

In favor: E. Faienza, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters.

Abstained: J. Donohue.

Motion carried.

O. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- Councilman Demetriades shared that CCD is having their Block Party on Saturday, August 21st from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. There will be 29 vendors, 8 bands, 1 food truck (Cromwell Pizza and Pasta), and non-profit organizations including Project Graduation, Performing Arts Boosters, Cromwell Children's Coalition, and Cromwell Arts Alliance.
- Councilman Fortenbach will be at the Performing Arts Boosters table, they are having a bake sale. He will also be at the Project Graduation table, they will have excellent raffle prizes.
- Councilman Fortenbach reported that he spoke at the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting about the following ideas: DEI could be an umbrella committee that oversees some of the smaller committees in town that have difficulties getting quorums, they also discussed having a unity pole.

P. ADJOURN

Motion **made** J. Donohue and **seconded** by J. Henahan to adjourn.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, P. Ahlquist, J. Demetriades, J. Henahan, S. Fortenbach, A. Waters. ***Motion carried.***

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amanda Calve
Secretary

Calve, Amanda

From: Faienza, Enzo
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 4:24 PM
To: Deirdre Daly
Cc: Donohue, Jennifer; Ahlquist, Pat; awater@cromwellct.com; Henehan, John; Demetriades, James; Fortenbach, Stephen; Salvatore, Anthony; Calve, Amanda
Subject: Re: Objection to July 17th Town Council Meeting Minutes

Dear Mrs. Daly,

Good afternoon, I hope all is well. Thank you for your email this afternoon. We will note the additional comments and modify the minutes at our next town council meeting to reflect that prior to approving them.

Thank you very much and have a nice rest of your day.

Best Regards,
Enzo

Sent from Enzo's iPhone

On Aug 2, 2021, at 4:05 PM, Deirdre Daly <ddaly1214@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear Town Council Members,

In reading the July 14 Town Council meeting minutes I noticed the minutes failed to accurately document the central point of my comments. While what is written reflects some of my comments, the failure to include that I did offer an alternative solution in my statements significantly change the meaning of my comments and thus do not accurately represent my statements as a whole.

To ensure the minutes accurately reflect the entirety of my comments I would add:

"Ms Daly advocated that any sidewalk being placed on Geer Street should be placed on the industrial park side of the street, where it would have minimal impact on the long existing residential properties and could be readily maintained by the industrial maintenance crew rather than senior homeowners."

I am asking you to object to the ratification of the meeting minutes at the next town council meeting to ensure they are amended with this change.

If you would like me to reread my statement at the next town council meeting to ensure that my suggestion above is accurate I would be happy to do so.

Sincerely,

Deirdre Daly