

**ENFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2021**

A Regular Meeting of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Chairman Ludwick on Monday, March 15, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

PRAYER – The prayer was given by Councilor Muller.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL-CALL – Present were Councilors Bosco, Cekala, Cressotti, Hemmeler, Ludwick, Mangini, Muller, Riley, Sferrazza, Szewczak and Unghire. Also present were Town Manager, Christopher Bromson; Assistant Town Manager, Kasia Purciello; Town Clerk, Sheila Bailey; Town Attorney, James Tallberg; Chief Information Officer, Paul Russell; Program Manager for the Enfield Child Development Center, Karen Edelson; Director of Public Works, Donald Nunes; Director of Development Services, Laurie Whitten; Director of Human Resources, Steve Bielenda

FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Chairman Ludwick made the fire evacuation announcement.

MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

MOTION #5714 by Councilor Mangini, seconded by Councilor Szewczak to accept the minutes of the March 1, 2021 Special Meeting.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5714** adopted 11-0-0.

MOTION #5715 by Councilor Muller, seconded by Councilor Unghire to accept the minutes of the March 1, 2021 Regular Meeting.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5715** adopted 11-0-0.

SPECIAL GUESTS

There were no special guests on this evening's agenda.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS

John Santanella, 1204 Enfield Street

Stated about 18 months ago he raised a question regarding voter instructions on municipal election ballots. He noted he had asked for an explanation as to why voters were limited to cast only four votes for seven open at-large Town Council seats. He stated because he was unable to get a clear understanding from anyone at Town Hall, he took the matter to the State Elections and Enforcement Commission. He noted in their finding dated May 20, 2020, he received some clarification as to the origins of this instruction. He stated the finding from "Connecticut General Statute 9-188 states that, "For Elections for Boards of Selectmen, voters shall not vote for more candidates than any political party can elect." He pointed out this section specifically pertains to elections for Selectmen and may provide a historical basis for Enfield's four-vote limitation.

Mr. Santanella stated the Town of Enfield switched from a Board of Selectmen to the current Council/Manager government in the mid-1960's, and arguably the Town officials carried over the limitations of this statute to the first Town Council elections and has continued that practice ever since. He noted there are other statutes that limit the number of candidates a party can nominate, and Enfield's Charter specifically states that no more than four of the seven at-large candidates shall be from the same political party, but nothing in the SEEC finding concludes either that by statute or by Enfield's own Charter that Enfield voters must be limited to only four votes. He noted the finding states that the Charter is silent on how many of the seven at-large Councilors electors are entitled to choose. He stated while the Commission found that the four-vote limit was a reasonable measure to ensure the requirements for minority representation on the Council, it did not say that this limitation was a necessary limitation, and in fact, it is not. He noted the requirement to ensure minority representation on the Council can also be met if voters are able to cast five, six or seven votes on the ballot.

He clarified there is no statutory violation by the four-vote instruction, and no statute would be violated with a seven-vote instruction. He noted the decision on how many electors a voter may cast is determined solely at the discretion of the Town of Enfield. He noted it is one thing to have the opportunity to vote for a candidate and choose not to exercise that vote, but it is totally different not to be given that opportunity at all. He stated his belief Enfield voters should have the opportunity to cast one vote for every open at-large seat on the Town Council. He noted the current practice is outdated and should be changed. He noted it would be helpful to understand whose decision this is and what needs to happen for those instructions to change.

Mr. Santanella stated his hope the Town Council gives this matter more attention and takes whatever steps are necessary to give all Enfield voters the opportunity to vote for each at-large candidate they would like to see represent them in the November election.

COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS

Councilor Riley stated she is the President of First Readers, and they are having a ceremony this year at Asnuntuck Community College on Monday, May 24th. She noted this will be a drive-through style and each school will have their own time to attend. She stated invitations will be sent out around the time April vacation happens.

Councilor Riley cautioned drivers about speeding since children will be playing outside later in the day because of Daylight Savings Time and the weather is improving.

She stated she really enjoyed volunteering at the vaccine clinic, which is being run very well. She thanked all the volunteers for their help. She noted she especially thanks Deb McCarthy for all her hard work and coordination of the volunteers.

Councilor Mangini stated Deb McCarthy has done a phenomenal job, not only with the Covid vaccine clinic, but also for all her hard work and dedication in other areas as well.

She suggested perhaps Mr. Santanella's request concerning voting might be taken up through the Town Attorney's Office.

Councilor Sferrazza stated he would like Attorney Tallberg to confirm what Mr. Santanella said. He noted he is specifically interested to know who in the Town can make that change.

Councilor Hemmeler stated last week there was a fire at the Freshwater apartments, and eight families were affected. She noted she spoke to Joanna at Youth Services, and she has done a great job in helping these people. She stated she also spoke to Cindy Guerreri, and they are in the process of evaluating everything to see how they can help. She stated her hope they can set up something, so the public can also help.

Councilor Cressotti stated the Enfield Together Coalition has been working on a marketing campaign, and they are focusing on mental health, alcohol, drug abuse, vaping and prescription drug use.

Referring to the recent fire at the Freshwater apartments, Councilor Cressotti thanked the Red Cross for their assistance to the Thompsonville Fire Department. He pointed out 15 adults and 12 children were displaced because of this fire. He added the Social Services Department has done a fantastic job in assisting in this matter.

Councilor Cressotti stated last week was the National Employees Appreciation Day. He thanked Town workers in every department for their daily efforts in making Enfield a great municipality. He commended DPW and Building & Grounds for the work they do that saves the Town money.

Councilor Szewczak requested a mathematical analysis of what would happen if everyone cast seven votes and how that would look. She noted seven might not be the optimum number.

MOTION #5716 by Councilor Szewczak, seconded by Councilor Unghire to suspend the rules to address under Miscellaneous this evening Items 14 E, F, G, H, I, J, K and L.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5716** adopted 11-0-0.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT & COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Bromson stated the Council has before them the latest Projects and Activities Report.

He stated Deb McCarthy is doing a wonderful job, and it is really a herculean task to schedule this number of volunteers for the vaccine clinic. He noted there will be a big upsurge in vaccinations because the Governor lowered the age for people wishing to receive the vaccine. He noted Trinity Health will be increasing the hours of the clinic on Monday, and they will be increasing the number of people coming every day.

He also commended Maya Matthews in the Town Manager's office for her hard work during this vaccination process.

Chairman Ludwick thanked Mr. Bromson for the Projects and Activities Report.

Chairman Ludwick apologized to the public and the Department of Transportation for not being able to televise the scheduled presentation due to technical difficulties. He commended the ETV staff for working on the technical issues, which made it possible to televise the regular meeting of the Town Council.

Mr. Bromson commended Alex Giner, who did an incredible job over the last year. He also commended Paul Russell, the Chief Information Officer.

Mr. Bromson thanked the Department of Transportation for their willingness to do a presentation this evening, and even though they were unable to televise a presentation, DOT did provide their PowerPoint presentation, which will be posted tomorrow.

TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT & COMMUNICATIONS

Referring to Mr. Santanella's question, Attorney Tallberg stated that authority derives from the Town Charter, Section 2, which provides that biennially there shall be seven at-large Councilors, no more than four of whom shall be of the same political party. He noted as Mr. Santanella indicated, that section was challenged by him and the SEEC held that it is within the Town's discretion to set that. He noted for reasons that pre-date him and many others, that provision is in the Charter. He noted in his experience, Charter reform is a very laborious process, which requires a Charter Revision Commission with a mandatory minimum number of meetings over a lengthy period and public hearings. He stated it would be within the Town's authority and discretion if they wish to take up Charter reform. He noted he is unsure if there is a quicker way to do that, but his initial impression is it is a Charter reform issue.

Attorney Tallberg stated at the last meeting Councilor Bosco asked whether outdoor dining would be extended. He noted Executive Order 7MM issued by the Governor last May is set to expire April 19th, and that is the order that relaxed the requirements, and specifically allowed restaurants to set up outdoor dining in places they previously could not do so.

Attorney Tallberg stated there are two competing legislative proposals – one is from the Governor to essentially expand that, codify it and make it law. He noted there is another proposal from a State representative in Trumbull, similarly looking to extend that and make it law. He stated there is a little bit of push back right now from some in the land use area, who argue that this is an over-reach and would take away what has typically been a review process with a hearing and a vote of the board. He noted if the legislation passes, it would be a moot issue. He noted it would then be the law, and there will not be any action needed by towns. He stated they will know within the next 30 days whether the Executive Order, which is set to expire April 19th, is going to get pushed down again. He noted there is a lively debate at this time where a lot of municipalities are pushing the Governor to extend this to perhaps July 1st and then reset the clock.

He stated if the order expires and there is no legislative fix, then to extend the outdoor dining would be within the authority of the P&Z Commission. He noted he will keep the Town Council posted on this.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

Councilor Muller stated the Health District met last Wednesday, and they were awarded funding to continue opioid abuse prevention in the amount of \$36,000.

He noted Trinity Health is looking to expand vaccine clinics throughout the region. He thanked Mr. Bromson and Deb McCarthy for all they did to make this happen in Enfield.

Councilor Muller referred to John F. Kennedy Middle School renovations and noted work continues in White Wing, the auditorium, gymnasium, and cafeteria.

Councilor Bosco stated they just received the last update on the ordinance for trash, which the committee will review, and if it is all set, they will come to the Town Council for a public hearing. He noted they also just received the list of roads that would be done through the referendum.

Councilor Cressotti stated the Commission on Aging met last week. He thanked Jennifer Switalski at Social Services, who has assisted over 300 seniors in setting up vaccine appointments. He noted many Commission on Aging members volunteer daily at the vaccine clinic at The Annex.

He stated the Senior Home Repair Program is still suspended at this point. He noted the annual symposium is still on hold. He stated the Senior Living Program, which is hosted by Martha McCloud, is still going on, and the March theme is Covid and vaccine. He noted in April, they will be dealing with senior safety and scams with Officer Mark Rochette from the Enfield Police Department. He stated in May, they will be interviewing both the Commanders at the American Legion Post with a Memorial Day theme.

Councilor Cressotti stated the Senior Center is planning on opening April 5th with a hybrid model. He noted registration for in-person and virtual programs will begin March 22nd for Enfield residents and March 29th for non-residents. He stated Covid guidelines will still be followed. He noted space is limited.

Councilor Cressotti stated Sheila Grady notified the Commission that she will be leaving the Senior Center for another position in Ellington. He wished her well and noted she ran the Senior Center very effectively, and she did a fantastic job.

OLD BUSINESS

APPOINTMENTS (TOWN COUNCIL)

MOTION #5717 by Councilor Cekala, seconded by Councilor Cressotti to remove Item #4 from the table.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5717** adopted 11-0-0.

NOMINATION #5718 by Councilor Cekala to appoint Michala Schupp (L) to the Enfield Beautification Committee for a term which expires 12/01/2022.

MOTION #5719 by Councilor Szewczak, seconded by Councilor Sferrazza to close nominations.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5719** adopted 11-0-0.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared Michala Schupp appointed to the Enfield Beautification Committee by an 11-0-0 vote.

MOTION #5720 by Councilor Cekala, seconded by Councilor Szewczak to remove Item #17 from the table.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5720** adopted 11-0-0.

NOMINATION #5721 by Councilor Bosco to appoint John Petronella (D) to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a term which expires 12/21/2021.

MOTION #5722 by Councilor Szewczak, seconded by Councilor Riley to close nominations.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5722** adopted 11-0-0.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared John Petronella appointed to the Planning and Zoning Commission by an 11-0-0 vote.

All other Old Business items remained tabled.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no New Business items this evening.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

All items were moved to Miscellaneous.

MISCELLANEOUS

RESOLUTION #5723 by Councilor Mangini, seconded by Councilor Muller.

RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made:

TO:	Rail Station		
	Construction	31008157-545000	\$57,681
FROM:	CIP Revenue FY18 Other Federal Grants		
	Federal Highway Grant	31042018-460002	\$57,681

CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of March 5, 2021.

/s/ John Wilcox, Director of Finance

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #5723** adopted 11-0-0.

RESOLUTION #5724 by Councilor Mangini, seconded by Councilor Muller.

RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VII Section II of the Town Charter, the Enfield Town Council does hereby amend the wage adjustment of the teacher aide position by increasing current aides by \$1.30 per hour and the starting wage at \$14 hour.

Chairman Ludwick recused himself from this vote.

Mr. Bielenda stated employees are leaving to take similar positions that pay up to \$4.00 more per hour. He explained the elimination of one full-time teacher and one full-time teacher aide will cover the increase brought about by this proposed hourly wage adjustment.

Councilor Mangini questioned if this salary is enough since minimum wage is \$15.00 per hour. Mr. Bielenda stated they still have a few years before they get to \$15.00 per hour.

Councilor Mangini questioned if this is a fair amount to pay workers that care for children. Ms. Edelson stated this is what they can do budget-wise. She agreed employees deserve more. She noted this gets them ahead of the State of Connecticut minimum wage, which is going up to \$13.00 per hour.

Councilor Mangini commended Ms. Edelson for her innovative thinking. She noted perhaps this can be further discussed in the upcoming budget.

Councilor Riley referred to the two positions not being filled and questioned if that is jeopardizing teacher/children ratios. Ms. Edelson stated she can operate to full potential without those two positions.

Councilor Cekala questioned if those two positions are being eliminated, or will they be kept, but not filled. Mr. Bielenda stated they are not funding those positions. He noted this could be addressed in the future if a need arises.

Councilor Cressotti questioned how many teacher aides work at the ECDC, and Ms. Edelson stated she presently has 15 Full-Time Teacher Aides and 5 Part-Time Aides.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #5724** adopted 10-0-1, with Chairman Ludwick abstaining.

RESOLUTION #5725 by Councilor Mangini, seconded by Councilor Szewczak.

WHEREAS, the Town of Enfield adopted Resolution #3002 establishing a policy for the Disposition of Town-Owned Surplus Personal Property; and

WHEREAS, Surplus Property is defined as “tangible personal property owned by the Town of Enfield that has been determined to be unneeded presently or in the foreseeable future, or that is no longer of value or use to the Town”; and

WHEREAS, the policy requires that the Town Council approve the disposition of Surplus Property valued at Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000) or more; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Works has identified the property listed on Attachment A as Surplus Property valued at Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000) or more; and

WHEREAS, the Town Manager has reviewed the recommendations by the Department of Public Works and now seeks Town Council approval; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the disposal of the property listed on Attachment A, pursuant to the policy for the Disposition of Town-Owned Surplus Personal Property, is hereby approved.

Mr. Nunes stated this would be for a replacement vehicle. He noted this 2005 front loader is currently parked and not being used. He noted it requires about \$4,500 in repairs, and it has a tremendous amount of hours and mileage. He stated it is time to get rid of it. He pointed out they have a replacement for this vehicle, and they should be receiving it shortly.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #5725** adopted 11-0-0.

RESOLUTION #5726 by Councilor Muller, seconded by Councilor Mangini.

WHEREAS, the Town Council expanded the membership of the Enfield Economic Development Commission (Commission) by Resolution No 4184 on June 6, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Conn. Gen. Stat. 7-136 allows for total Commission membership of not less than five (5) nor more than fifteen (15); and

WHEREAS, the Commission's current membership consists of fifteen (15) members and is unable to constitute a quorum; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council would like to reduce the Commission's membership to nine (9) members; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that after a public hearing was held on March 1, 2021 with no objection, the Enfield Town Council hereby amends Chapter 26, Article 1, Section 26-35 of the Code of Enfield Connecticut.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #5726** adopted 11-0-0.

RESOLUTION #5727 by Councilor Mangini, seconded by Councilor Szewczak.

WHEREAS, the Enfield Town Council adopted the Town of Enfield Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Policy on June 3, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the TIF Policy provides for the designation of a nine person TIF Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council wishes to modify the TIF Policy as to the membership of the TIF Advisory Committee to include five (5) members; two (2) members of the Town Council and one (1) member each from the Economic Development Commission, the Conservation Commission, and the Planning & Zoning Commission, with the Director of Development Services, Director of Finance, and Supervisor of Assessment and Revenue Collection, acting as staff to the TIF Committee; and

WHEREAS, the TIF Policy requires a public hearing for any modifications thereto.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Enfield Town Council will hold a Public Hearing in the Enfield Town Hall Council Chambers, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, Connecticut on Monday, April 5, 2021 at 6:50 p.m. to allow interested residents an opportunity to express their opinion regarding the proposed modification of the Tax Increment Financing Policy as to the membership of the TIF Advisory Committee.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #5727** adopted 11-0-0.

RESOLUTION #5728 by Councilor Riley, seconded by Councilor Muller.

WHEREAS, the Town of Enfield (Town) owns the property located at 124 North Maple Street (Enfield Annex); and

WHEREAS, the Town intends to construct a permanent steel structure with a concrete slab in the northerly parking lot adjacent to Moody Road; and

WHEREAS, the Enfield Town Council must refer this proposed improvement to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a report in conformance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statute 8-24.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the proposed improvement listed above is referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission in conformance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statute 8-24.

Mr. Bromson stated this resolution, as well as the following resolutions, are statutory requirements which just be referred to Planning & Zoning.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #5728** adopted 11-0-0.

RESOLUTION #5729 by Councilor Mangini, seconded by Councilor Szewczak.

WHEREAS, the Town of Enfield (Town) owns the property located at 558 Enfield Street (Lafayette Park); and

WHEREAS, the Town intends to replace an existing dilapidated basketball court at the property with a new full size outdoor basketball court; and

WHEREAS, the Enfield Town Council must refer this proposed improvement to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a report in conformance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statute 8-24.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the proposed improvement listed above is referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission in conformance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statute 8-24.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #5729** adopted 11-0-0.

RESOLUTION #5730 by Councilor Cekala, seconded by Councilor Mangini.

WHEREAS, the Town of Enfield (Town) owns the property located at 1010 Enfield Street (former Thomas G. Alcorn School); and

WHEREAS, the Town intends to build a new basketball court; and

WHEREAS, the Town intends to expand and repave the existing parking lot, adding 75 parking spaces; and

WHEREAS, the Enfield Town Council must refer the proposed improvements to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a report in conformance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statute 8-24.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the proposed improvements listed above are referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission in conformance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statute 8-24.

Upon a **ROLL-CALL** vote being taken, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #5730** adopted 11-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

There were no comments from the public.

COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS

There were no comments from the Council.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION #5731 by Councilor Szewczak, seconded by Councilor Sferrazza to adjourn.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5731** adopted 11-0-0, and the meeting stood adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Bailey
Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council

Jeannette Lamontagne
Secretary to the Council

Appended to the minutes of the
March 15, 2021 Regular Town
Council Meeting
See Page 7

**ENFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF FUNDS**

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made.

TO: Rail Station

Construction	31008157-545000	\$57,681
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FROM: CIP Revenue FY18 Other Federal Grants

Federal Highway Grant	31042018-460002	\$57,681
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CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of March 5, 2021.



John Wilcox, Director of Finance

3/8/2021
Date: _____

APPROVED BY: 

Christopher Bromson, Town Manager

3/12/21
Date: _____

Appended to the minutes of the
March 15, 2021 Regular Town
Council Meeting
See Page 8

ATTACHMENT A

<u>YEAR VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT</u>	<u>SERIAL/VIN#</u>	<u>MILEAGE/HOURS</u>	<u>EST. VALUE</u>
2005 Crane Carrier Front Load Refuse Truck	VIN#1CYCCL4875TO46757	127,642 miles	\$10,500