

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 3 PRIMROSE STREET, NEWTOWN, CT
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2023**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Jeffery Capeci, Tom Long, Phil Carroll, Chris Gardner, Dan Honan, Lisa Kessler, Ryan Knapp, Michelle Embree Ku, Matthew Mihalczik, Charles Gardner, William DeRosa

ABSENT: Angela Curi

ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman Dan Rosenthal, Finance Director Bob Tait, BOE Superintendent Chris Mellilo, BOE Chair Deborra Zukowski, BOF Chair John Madzula II, BOF members Steve Goodridge, and Laura Miller

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Capeci called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 pm.

VOTER COMMENT: None

MINUTES: Charles Gardner moved to approve the minutes from the 2/15/23 meeting. Matt Mihalczik seconded, all in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS: Jeff Capeci received an email from BOE Chair Deborra Zukowski informing him that Bob Gerbert, BOE Director of Facilities, last day with the town is Friday, 3/17/23. He will be a loss to the district and the town.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Ryan Knapp reported that the town attorney reviewed the Don't Block the Box Ordinance and advised that they indicate which intersections this applies to. The Police Commission met and identified four intersections.

FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT: First Selectman Rosenthal reported that they did the annual bond offering last week. They issued \$6 million in debt and received 10 bids. The interest rate received was 3.44%. He also reported that the Hawley project remains on track. The project will moth ball the end of the month. The switch gear won't ship until the end of May. When it arrives, they will pick up to do the switch gear installation, transformer installation and commission the project.

NEW BUSINESS

2023-2024 Budget Discussion – John Madzula II, Laura Miller and Steve Goodridge from the BOF presented the proposed 2023-2024 Budget. The proposed budget is a 1.85% increase to tax payers. The medical self-insurance fund went from 6% to 9% contribution. It keeps the fund balance in the medical self-insurance at the level required. The BOE budget was reduced by \$185,000. \$506,000 was moved

from the BOE budget to Capital Non-Recurring. The \$185,000 for Hawley sound system, Reed state lighting and state curtains, because they felt was a want, not a need. There was concern that capital expenses have been covered by FEMA, then COVID and now non-recurring, what happens when it needs to be funded from the budget. R. Knapp researched what the average tax increase would be after the re-evaluation. The average resident would have a 3% increase before the increase in the budget.

Charles Gardner moved to refer the BOS budget the following line times to the Finance and Administrative Committee for review and recommendation to the full Council: General Government, Health and Welfare, Planning, Contingency, Debt Services and Other Financing. Seconded by Matt Mihalcik, all in favor.

Charles Gardner moved to refer from the BOS budget the following line items to the Municipal Operations Committee for review and recommendation to the full Council: Public Safety, Public Works and Recreation/Leisure. Seconded by Matt Mihalcik, all in favor.

Charles Gardner moved to refer the Education budget to the Education Committee for review and recommendation to the full Council. Seconded by Matt Mihalcik, all in favor.

American Rescue Plan Appropriation - Charles Gardner moved to approve ARPA funds for Reed School (\$71,000) & Middle School (\$23,000) for Project Adventure, Middle Gate School (\$33,000), for playground replacement, Community Center/Senior Center bus (\$20,000), for additional funds needed and \$50,000 for each Fire Company (5 x \$50,000) and \$50,000 for fire training equipment to be used company wide. Matt Mihalcik seconded. There was a question of the Project Adventure was a bid. First Selectman Rosenthal explained that this is already in the curriculum at the High School, Middle School and Reed School. Project Adventure is a sole source provider. If you are going to use alternate equipment they would not stand by the product. Motions passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Police Grant, \$35,000 for Auto Theft and Violence – Charles Gardner moved to accept the Police Grant in the amount of \$35,000 for Auto Theft and Violence. Matt Mihalcik seconded, all in favor. All in favor.

Announcements - None

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:41pm

*Respectfully submitted,
Arlene Miles, Clerk*