LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 3 PRIMROSE STREET, NEWTOWN, CT WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2021

MINUTES

PRESENT: Jordana Bloom, Alison Plante, Chris Smith (via teleconference), Phil Carroll, Ryan Knapp, Judit DeStefano, Paul Lundquist, Chris Eide, Matthew Mihalcik, Cathy Reiss, Andy Clure, Dan Honan

ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman Dan Rosenthal, 18 public, 0 press

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Lundquist called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:32 pm.

VOTER COMMENT: *Don Lococo*, *27 Hi Barlow Road* – Mr. Lococo shared disappointment with the work done so far on researching the potential ordinance of prohibiting open carry of firearms on town property. He is strongly in favor of the ordinance.

Naiya Amin, 11 Whitewood Road – Miss Amin shared her support of the ordinance.

Nicole Melchionno, 4 Charter Ridge Drive – Miss Melchionno strongly encouraged the Legislative Council to give a positive recommendation for the ordinance.

Camille Paradis, 85 Riverside Road – Miss Paradis is in favor of the Council approving the potential ordinance.

Maggie LaBanca, 33 Paugussett Road – Miss LaBanca urged everyone to continue to review this ordinance.

Karin LaBanca, 33 Paugussett Road – Ms. LaBanca strongly feels that guns should be concealed and is in favor of passing the potential ordinance.

Andrew Buzzi, 38 Obtuse Road – Mr. Buzzi shared his disapproval of the Council considering passing this ordinance, but will respect any decision that is made.

MINUTES: Mr. Honan moved to accept both sets of minutes of the Legislative Council Regular Meeting and the Joint Special Meeting from October 20, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Carroll. All in favor. Motion passes (12-0).

COMMUNICATIONS: Mr. Lundquist congratulated the newly appointed Legislative Council and First Selectman Rosenthal on his next term.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Ordinance Committee - Discussed under new business.

FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT: First Selectman Dan Rosenthal reported that at the last BOS meeting, they approved an appropriation out of capital non-recurring to replace cameras in police vehicles and mobile data terminals. The Chief was able to secure a good price which was only good until the end of November, which is why it was passed. They also approved another small transfer out of contingency of about \$11,000 for adjustments made relative for new hires and for contributions to the defined 401A benefit plan. The Sandy Hook permanent memorial project is moving along well. The concrete footing of the main water feature has been poured and is on track in terms of timing and budget. The radio project that the voters approved back in April, is getting closer to the tower upgrades. They will soon be placing a bulk order of new radios. Mr. Knapp asked the First Selectman about the issue of the bus driver shortage and if the Town can work with the BOE on getting substitute bus drivers from seasonal Parks and Rec or Highway employees who have experience driving trucks. The First Selectman agreed that this can definitely be explored and will look into it.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and Possible Action

• Status of Unfinished Ordinance Committee Work: Potential Ordinance to Prohibit Open Carry of Firearms on Town-Owned Property

[NOTE: This item is procedural ONLY and has no direct impact on future actions of the newly elected Legislative Council. It will be solely within the purview of the newly elected Legislative Council to determine whether this work continues]

Ms. DeStefano moved to recommend continued consideration by the newly elected Legislative Council of an ordinance to ban open carry of firearms on town-owned property. Seconded by Mr. Eide.

Ms. DeStefano hopes that the future Legislative Council takes into consideration all the time and heartfelt testimony that has been given on this topic and would like to see this continued on with the next Council.

Mr. Eide moved to amend the motion in question to read moved to recommend continued research, development and approval by the newly elected Legislative Council to ban open carry of firearms on town-owned property. Seconded by Ms. Bloom.

Mr. Eide noted that this is the same language that the Ordinance Committee was considering at the last meeting. We believe it should be approved by the next Legislative Council. Mr. Carroll does not support this. He feels that this current Council does not have the authority to tell the next Council what they should do. Mr. Smith believes that from a Committee perspective, this Council should put forth the language that Mr. Eide proposes. Mr. Honan feels that a list of items that need to be done and have been discussed so far should be given to the future Council so they have a basis to work from. Mr. Smith spoke on the research done by the Ordinance Committee. They made note of what people have been seeing and experiencing in town, as well as what areas qualified as town property. They also discussed existing language in the Charter that addresses discharging of firearms on town property and it could be as simple as altering the existing verbiage. Outside of these things, he doesn't feel there is anything else that can be considered. We have proof within the town that this is an issue, so the only piece left would be to confirm the language. Ms. Bloom spoke to the comments, laws are fluid, changing and are not stagnant – many laws that we have today are because people spoke up and made change. Our job as a Council and country is to constantly evolve by trying to make better, safer, clearer and thoughtful laws. We are only asking for firearms to be concealed, not take them away and feels the next Council should consider this. Mr. Knapp would not recommend the amendment to the language or recommend the next Council to approve anything that hasn't been drafted yet. Mr. Mihalcik agrees with Mr. Knapp. Ms. DeStefano supports her original motion. Mr. Lundquist feels the original motion is a more neutral recommendation and he is not in favor of the amendment.

Mr. Eide's amended motion fails (4-8, Nays: DeStefano, Lundquist, Reiss, Honan, Knapp, Mihalcik, Carroll, Clure).

Mr. Knapp said he took a step back in drafting an ordinance when it is not something he agrees with. He feels these things should be regulated at the State level. He can see how emotionally taxing it is for most people. He believes in the concept of preemption and does not want to set us up for legal action. He does not support carrying this forward with the Legislative Council. Ms. Bloom feels that waiting for the state to act on this is an abdication of the town. She believes we have a duty and a responsibility to help those that have the been traumatized in this town. Ms. Reiss agrees with Mr. Knapp and doesn't think it is in the purview to take up such a thing within a municipality. From the research that was done, an open carry ordinance on town property would have little to no impact on the visibility of guns around town. She feels if such an ordinance is enacted, it is likely to be challenged in court. Whatever decision is

made could then be appealed and land in Supreme Court and that process would not help us to heal. It is only fostering anger and hate among us, and therefore, she cannot recommend that Newtown continues this process any longer. Mr. Smith feels that more legal research needs to be done. Mr. Eide said it is fair to say there are questions and the work should continue. Mr. Mihalcik respects the committee's work but would like to receive more clarification on the proposed ordinance. Mr. Lundquist spoke on the fact that the Ordinance Committee did not have time to bring this to a conclusion. While open carry is not common, there is evidence of some presence of it. We know the Council has the ability to create these ordinances for the peace, health and happiness of the community. This is not a matter of imposing one group's preferences on another. We know from the work done so far, that gun owners are responsible, well-trained and have done everything required to be qualified to carry a legal firearm. They want to be able to stand up for their rights as gun owners which he understands. There is rational and understandable perspectives on all sides. Mr. Lundquist feels that by limiting the ordinance to merely banning open carry only on town property – this is the least restrictive means to achieve a highly impactive goal. He strongly believes that this is something that should be continued.

Ms. DeStefano's original motion passes (8-4, Nays: Knapp, Carroll, Reiss and Mihalcik).

• 2022-2023 Newtown Budget Timetable

Ms. DeStefano moved to accept the proposed 2022-2023 Newtown Budget Timetable. Seconded by Mr. Mihalcik. See attachments B & C.

Mr. Honan moved to amend the wording in the budget calendar under March 7th-15th from "LC Budget Committee Meeting" to "LC Budget Committees Meetings." Seconded by Mr. Eide. All in favor. Motion passes (12-0).

All in favor of the overall budget schedule. Motion passes (12-0).

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion and Possible Action

• Non-Lapsing Education Fund Policy from the BOF, BOE, LC Joint Workgroup

Mr. Lundquist noted that the BOE was speaking on this topic tonight and is hoping they will have action that the Council can respond to at the next meeting. His personal preference is to hold off on this until our next meeting. *See attachment D, E, F.*

VOTER COMMENT: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Lundquist announced that per Charter, we are due to receive the recommended CIP from the BOF. It will be with us for the new Council to take on.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Mr. Mihalcik moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:48pm. Seconded by Ms. DeStefano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted, Rina Quijano, Clerk

Paul Lundquist

Hello LC:

FYI: As a follow-up to the recent Ordinance meeting, I was asked by Po Murray to share photos showing examples of open carry in Newtown.

The first photo was from the 2016 NSSF rally. The 2nd photo is from 2013 showing CCDL members openly carrying their firearms at our Starbucks.

This will be included as communications with this week's meeting minutes. No action required.

Thanks,

Paul

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Po Murray pmurray@newtownaction.org>

Date: Tue, Oct 26, 2021 at 8:58 PM

Subject: Can you share with all LC members?

To: Paul Lundquist <plundquist.newtown@gmail.com>

Cc: Don Lococo <dlococo@newtownaction.org>, Carol Wakeman <cwakeman@newtownaction.org>, Dave Stowe

<dstowe@newtownaction.org>

Newtown!







January 2022 (United States)

February 2022

S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31 • 'New Year's Day' day off New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 • Martin Luther King Jr. Day	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5



February 2022 (United States)

March 2022 S M T W T F S 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4 PUBLISH BOS/BOE BUDGETS	5
6	BOS/BOE SUBMITS BUDGET TO BOF	8	9	BOF HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING BOF BUDGET MEETING	11	12
13	14 Valentine's Day BOF BUDGET MEETING BOF REG MEETING	15	16	BOF BUDGET MEETING	18	19
20	21 • Presidents' Day	22	23	BOF BUDGET MEETING BOF REG MEETING	25	26
27	28	1	2	3	4	5



March 2022 (United States)

S M T W T S S 1 2 2 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	1	BOF SUBMITS BUDGET TO LC & PRESENTS REG LC MEETING	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 PUBLISH BOF BUDGET	12
		LC BUDGET COM	MITTEE MEETING			
13	14	15	LC HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING REG LC MEETING	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19
20	21	22	LC BUDGET MEETING	24	25	26
27	28 LC BUDGET MEETING	29	LC BUDGET MEETING	31	1	2
Federal Holidays Loc	al Holidays • Multiple Eve	nts				



April 2022 (United States)

22 23 24 25 26 27 28

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6 LC ADOPTS BUDGET REG LC MEETING	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	PUBLISH ADOPTED BUDGET	16
17 Easter Sunday	18 Easter Monday Tax Day	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	ANNUAL BUDGET REFERENDUM	27	28	29	30

3 PRIMROSE STREET, TOWN HALL NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT 06470 TEL. (203) 270-4221 / FAX (203) 270-7935 www.newtown-ct.gov



ROBERT G. TAIT FINANCE DIRECTOR

OFFICE OF THE FINANCE DIRECTOR

***** 2022 - 2023 BUDGET TIME TABLE ******

October 25, 2021	Departments Receive Budget Instructions.
December 14, 2021	Completed Budget Forms to the Finance Director.
December 20 – January 07, 2022	First Selectman/Finance Director budget review with departments
January 10 – January 31, 2022	Departments meet with Board of Selectmen.
February 07, 2022	Board of Selectmen & Board of Education submit Budget to the Board of Finance (Per charter no later than the 14 th)
February 10, 2022 (Thursday)	Board of Finance holds a public hearing on the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education proposed Budgets (per charter no later than March 2 th). (Publish 5 days prior to hearing: 2/04/22)
March 02, 2022	Board of Finance submits Budget to the Legislative Council (Per charter no later than March 14 th).
March 16, 2022 (Wednesday)	Legislative Council holds a Public Hearing on the Proposed Board of Finance Recommended Budget (Per charter no later than March 30th). (Publish 5 days prior to hearing: 3/11/22)
April 06, 2022	Legislative Council Adopts Budget (no later than second Wednesday in April)
April 26, 2022 (Tuesday)	Annual Budget Referendum (4 th Tuesday of April) (Publish 4/15/22)

Non-Lapsing Education Fund

Joint Work Group

Board of Education, Board of Finance & Legislative Council

TO: Keith Alexander Chair Board of Finance

Michelle Embree Ku Chair Board of Education Paul J. Lundquist Chair Legislative Council

FROM Joint Non-Lapsing Work Group:

Dan Delia Board of Education
Chris Eide Legislative Council
Debbie Leidlein Board of Education
John Madzula II Board of Finance
Cath Reiss Legislative Council
Ned Simpson, Chair Board of Finance

Attached is the work product of the Board of Finance Joint Non-Lapsing Work Group. We ask that your body review and act upon this recommendation.

The Work Group has been meeting since March 2021. Our efforts started with a compilation of pertinent documents. Discussion with Town Attorney D. Grogen and School District Attorney M. Ritter occurred at our May 3rd meeting. This was followed by discussions with town Finance Director, Robert Tait and schools Director of Business & Finance, Tanja Vadas. With that base of knowledge available, the Work Group worked to craft the attached document.

This agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the BOE, BoF, and LC members of the Joint Committee on the Non-Lapsing Fund. Such agreement was made notwithstanding any existing agreements, policies, and understandings, both written and oral, between the parties and policies of the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof regarding the roles, flows, and approvals for funds going into the Non-Lapsing Fund and expenditures from the Non-Lapsing Fund

With this transmittal, we consider our work complete.

Thank you for entrusting the responsibility for seeking three-way agreement.

Attached

Non-Lapsing Joint Agreement 20210927.docx

Non-Lapsing Education Fund

A Policy Agreement between:

Board of Education, Board of Finance & Legislative Council

Section 1. Preamble

In 2010, the General Assembly passed a law, Connecticut General Statutes 10-248a, establishing a mechanism through which unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation for education could be transferred to a fund for expenditure in future years. The intent was to avoid "spend it or lose it" transactions and reward school administration for budget management. Such a fund is called "non-lapsing" The Board of Finance (BoF) of the Town of Newtown established such a non-lapsing education fund (the "Non-Lapsing Fund") on May 12, 2014.

The statute was amended in 2019. This change increased the-maximum deposit amount to two percent and gave a board of education the authority to spend from their non-lapsing account without review/approval from any other town body. (Attachment A)

The Board of Education (BOE) changed their policy and procedures to reflect the revised statute. During preliminary discussions the Board of Finance raised concerns regarding the proposed Board of Education drafts.

Since 2014 the Board of Education has submitted Non-Lapsing deposit and expenditure transactions to the Board of Finance, which the Board of Finance approved. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020, the Board of Education maintained an unusually high surplus at the end of the fiscal year 2019-2020. At their September 14, 2020 meeting the Board of Finance did not approve a request for a \$1.3 million deposit of Board of Education appropriations surplus into the Non-Lapsing Fund. There was significant public criticism of this Board of Finance action. The Legislative Council then discussed the Non-Lapsing Fund and the Town's attorney issued an opinion that it should be Legislative Council that approves Board of Education requests for Non-Lapsing transactions.

The purpose of this policy is to work within the spirit of cooperation and the law to establish a three way agreement between the Board of Education, Board of Finance and Legislative Council to define roles, responsibilities and process for Non-Lapsing Fund deposits and expenditures.

Section 2. Deposits into Non-Lapsing

The Board of Education may, subject to the approval of the Legislative Council considering recommendation from the Board of Finance, deposit into the Non-Lapsing Fund all or a portion of any unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation for education for the Town, provided that the amount deposited into the Non-Lapsing Fund shall not exceed the amount set forth in Section 10-248a of the Connecticut General Statutes

- A. The Board of Education shall send notice to the Legislative Council of their desire to present their request to a joint meeting of the Board of Finance and the Legislative Council to be held no later than the first week of September.
- B. The Legislative Council considering recommendation from the Board of Finance may authorize deposits into the Non-Lapsing Fund in each fiscal year.
- C. The total amount in the Non-Lapsing Fund may accumulate without limitation over time if not expended.

Section 3. Use of Funds

- A. The Board of Education shall, subject to the approval of the Legislative Council considering recommendation from the Board of Finance, authorize expenditures from the Non-Lapsing Fund for any expenses that the Board of Education determines are necessary to support students or that are in the best interests of the Newtown Public Schools.
- B. If the Board of Education requests an expenditure from this account to be used to help pay for an approved Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) project, then such request is approved when the Legislative Council approves the CIP.
- C. As part of the communication in Section 2. A. above, the Board of Education will provide a written summary of the Non-Lapsing Fund's balance and expenditures for the prior fiscal year

Section 4. Educational Purposes

The Non-Lapsing Fund balance comes from an appropriation that was approved by the voters of the Town for educational purposes and the Board of Education shall use the Non-Lapsing Fund for educational purposes.

Approved by Board of Education:	·	
Adopted by Board of Finance:		
Approved by Legislative Council:		

Attachment A - The Statute - 10-248a

2011 Statute

Sec. 10-248a. Unexpended education funds account. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, and each fiscal year thereafter, notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes or any special act, municipal charter, home rule ordinance or other ordinance, the board of finance in each town having a board of finance, the board of selectman in each town having no board of finance or the authority making appropriations for the school district for each town may deposit into a non-lapsing account any unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation for education for the town, provided such amount does not exceed one per cent of the total budgeted appropriation for education for such prior fiscal year.

2020 Statute

Sec. 10-248a Unexpended education funds account. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, and each fiscal year thereafter, notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes or any special act, municipal charter, home rule ordinance or other ordinance, the board of finance in each town having a board of finance, the board of selectman in each town having no board of finance or the authority making appropriations for the school district for each town may deposit into a nonlapsing account any unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation for education for the town, provided

- (1) such deposited amount does not exceed two per cent of the total budgeted appropriation for education for such prior fiscal year,
- (2) each expenditure from such account shall be made only for educational purposes, and
- (3) each such expenditure shall be authorized by the local board of education for such town.

Excerpt of Comments from Board of Education's Attorney

The following is excerpt from the June 23, 2020 Board of Education CIP/Facilities/Finance Committee meeting where Matthew Ritter, Shipman & Goodwin the school district's attorney discussed the revised statute. Mr. Ritter was Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives for the session where the statute was passed

"Best advice I can give you regarding 10-248a, is that it is meant to be a mutually cooperative relationship. The statute involves board of education powers and town powers. If one side thinks they can do whatever they want it's going to mess up the whole concept. It really does rely on cooperation between the two sides.

Money gets deposited into the account. Expenditures get approved by the board of education for educational purposes. The language in 10-248a has some notwithstanding language regarding general statutes and local charters. It talks about how money gets deposited, expenditures from the account are approved by the board of education for educational purposes.

Question: Does this mean the local board of education can use the funds for items, including capital expenses, without going through the appropriation process set forth in the town charter as long as it is for educational purposes? The answer is Yes.

The statute overrides a town charter. Best way to look at it is this. When the money is in the account, unless you have a policy to the contrary, which is a negotiation, the fall back is 10-222. The local board's discretion on how to spend that money as long as it's for educational purposes. Could be capital, could be non-capital.

So, your reaction might be, well that's great the board of education has complete control. No. Here is the problem. If you spend money on projects the board of finance or the town council hate, they will not agree to put money into the account in the future. That goes back to my initial comment: you've got to get along to make this work. The answer is unless there is a policy that talks about how you spend money from that fund, all the statute requires is that board of education approve the project that it goes for educational purposes."

From: <alexanderk.bof@gmail.com> Date: Mon, Nov 1, 2021 at 7:37 PM

Subject: RE: BOE Attorney Review of Non-Lapsing Education Fund Policy

To: Ku, Michelle <kum boe@newtown.k12.ct.us>, Paul Lundquist <Plundquist.Newtown@gmail.com>

Hello Chairs,

The Board of Finance discussed the joint work group's result and chose to approve it from the originally submitted result (rather than the attorney version) with two modification. The name of the preamble was changed to purpose to explain why it is included (as many other policies have a purpose section) and an adjustment to the language relating to use of the fund balance for the CIP to indicate that the regular CIP amendment process would have to be followed. This last was related to a discussion that the work group had apparently around a request from the BOF members that the CIP use only be year one, but as that was not passed, a new suggestion came up with what appears to be a clearer purpose to ensure the value of the CIP.

Obviously your Boards can choose how to respond to the results of the work group though I admit I don't know where this ends up if everyone does something different. (My nay votes on the amendments were related to my interest in trying to send the document back "as is" in hopes of getting all Boards to accept since the LC seemed to be willing to go either way).

The changes and part of the discussion are in the minutes (attached and excerpted below) and the meeting should be available online starting at 1:08:45 (EarthChannel Player v4 CDSECI).

--Keith

From minutes of Thu 10/28:

Discussion and possible action on Non-Lapsing Education Fund Policy Agreement

Chair Alexander reminded the Board that they received a letter that came with the Policy recommendation. This recommendation came as an agreement from the BOE Non Lapsing Working Group. There is a policy from the BOE attorney as well as one from the Joint Committee. The BOE has not made any recommendations on either Policy. Mr. Simpson shared that Ms. Roussas went to a sub committee during the Spring of 2020. The town attorney, BOE attorney, the finance director, business director and many persons spent a great deal of time analyzing this issue. Ultimately, Mr. Simpson is frustrated due to the lack of consideration and thoughtfulness from the process as well as the elimination of the preamble on the BOE attorney's part.

Chandravir Ahuja made a motion for the BOF to accept the document prepared by the BOE Non Lapsing Working Group. Chris Garnder seconded.

Mr. Ahuja accepts the document and if any changes would be made it would be changing "Preamble" to "Purpose". Mr. Simpson shared his concern with using the word "unlimited".

Mr. Simpson made a motion to amend the motion for the BOF to accept the document prepared by the BOE Non Lapsing Working Group and Section 1. Preamble be renamed to Section 1. Purpose. All in favor except Keith Alexander. Motion passes.

Sandy Roussas made a motion to amend the motion for the BOF to accept the document prepared by the BOE Non Lapsing Working Group and change the language in Section 3 Sub-section B if the BOE requests it must come from Year 1 only and will be approved when the LC approves the CIP. Ned Simpson seconded.

Sandy Roussas retracts her amendment.

Sandy Roussas made a motion to amend the motion for the BOF to accept the document prepared by the BOE Non Lapsing Working Group and change the language in Section 3 sub-section b to "If the BOE requests an expenditure from the Non-Lapsing Education Fund to pay for all or part of the costs of an approved Capital Improvement Plan ("CIP") project, then such request is approved when the requests for the CIP is amended and approved by appropriate parties as part of the annual review process. Ned Simpson seconded. All in favor except Keith Alexander and John Madzula. Motion passes.

Chandravir Ahuja made a motion to accept the document prepared by the BOE Non Lapsing Working Group document with two adjustments. Chris Gardner seconded. All in favor and motion passes.

Attachments area Here it is.Here you go.Did you get this?