



**TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON
January 6, 2025
Regular Town Council Meeting
Council Chambers**

APPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Black-Burke called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Nuchette Black-Burke, Deputy Mayor Darleen Klase, Councilor Mary Armstrong, Councilor Ronald Eleveld, Councilor Kristin Gluck Hoffman, Councilor Ojala Naeem, Councilor William Pelkey, and Councilor Walker

Absent: Councilor Leroy Smith

2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION

Councilor Naeem led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Naeem led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS - None

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Neill Sachdev, 916 Kennedy Road, wished everyone a Happy New Year. He thanked the Council for the opportunity to elect a Poet Laureate for the Town of Windsor. This selection underscores the Town Council's commitment to supporting the arts. The person they are putting forth tonight for the Town Council to vote on will help to celebrate expressive media. It is foreseen that this individual will create events and opportunities for residents to express themselves through poetry and storytelling. We wanted to share our support of that on behalf of the Arts Commission.

Sharran Selig Bennett, 810 Bookbinder, stated she wanted to speak about the resolution being proposed this evening. She is very much in favor of the traffic calming but she'd like to say as a business person here in town, she's obviously concerned about the business climate. However, she is much more concerned about the safety issues in town. She believes she said the last time that she hadn't crossed the intersection in 10 years in front of her store at 161 Broad Street. She's seen over the last 40 years that she has been at this address, the changes that have happened through the center. The worse thing that happened was when

the center was made into four lanes and that was done at the time that I-91 was widened. That was so they could redirect the traffic off of I-91 onto Broad Street in the center of town. She would like to say that it is difficult to safely cross Broad Street, ride a bike down Broad Street, or walk down Broad Street. We have a number of special students that walk back and forth to the library and to the town hall and they take their lives in their hands every time they try to cross the street. She would like to say that after 20 years of attempting to have Windsor Center safer, that it is time to make this move. The time has come to make this move now. She hopes the Town Council will vote in favor of putting the referendum in the hands of the residents. From there, it will be the residents' job to make the decision and vote on it.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Eleveld stated Happy New Year to all. He thanked everyone for showing up and having their voices be heard. He noted that some of the councilors got together for a New Year's holiday dinner that was quite enjoyable.

Councilor Smith - absent

Mayor Black-Burke said Happy New Year to everyone and wished everyone prosperity, good health and blessings.

Councilor Pelkey said Happy Epiphany or Three Kings Day if that is something that you celebrate today. He thanked the volunteer firefighters in attendance tonight. How about a New Year and a new you? If you're looking for a new year's resolution, how about you make this year the one that you step up and make a real difference in the community. Joining the Windsor Volunteer Fire Department is an incredible New Year's resolution. It combines purpose, action and personal growth. It's a chance to challenge yourself and build strong bonds with others and serve your neighbors in a way that truly matters. Apply today at windsorfire.org.

Councilor Naeem said Happy New Year to everyone and thanked those that came out to speak tonight. One reminder is that Archer Memorial AME Zion Church is sponsoring the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration coming up on January 20th. She had a wonderful time last year with the Mayor being the Keynote Speaker during the event. Vice President of the Board of Education, Ayana Taylor will be Keynote Speaker this year which will be at 2:00 PM here in the Town Council Chambers.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman said Happy New Year to everyone. It was wonderful to see everyone come out. She hopes not only these folks in this room but those that are watching as well come out to vote in this referendum.

Councilor Armstrong said it's good when we can see so many people come out and we do appreciate that. She stated Happy New Year to all. Hopefully, this will be a prosperous New Year for you not only in wealth but in your health.

Councilor Walker wished everyone a Happy New Year and the best of everything in 2025. He acknowledged those people that lost their lives in New Orleans in the terror attack. If you look at the victims, these were just innocent people going about their business. His prayers go out to those victims and their families.

Deputy Mayor Klase stated there was an incident in her home this weekend and our Police officers, fire fighters and emergency services were amazing. She knows that they provide that type of service to all in town, however, having been a person that they helped, they were just stellar. She thanked them very much.

Mayor Black-Burke said our safety team in Windsor is top notch and stellar. She believes that all of them at the dais have had personal interactions where the safety team had to respond. To see them in action, it's a beautiful thing. How proud we are that they serve the Town of Windsor. She thanked the EMS, fire fighters, and police officers for all they do.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Board of Education

Mayor Black-Burke thanked Mr. Lockhart and the fire fighter team for all they do once again. Mr. Lockhart thanked her on behalf of the fire department. We are here to serve and we love the people and that's why they do it. He thanked the town for allowing them to do it and providing them with the resources to actually do the job.

Mr. Leonard Lockhart, Board of Education, gave the following report:

- The next regular meeting is Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 6:30 PM in the LPW Board Room. The meeting will be held via in-person and Zoom in the LPW Board Room. Superintendent Dr. Terrell Hill will present his 2025-2026 budget at 6:30 PM, followed by a public forum on his budget with the regular meeting immediately following. The agenda will be posted on the district website. We encourage everyone to come and attend.
- The BOE will hold Public Forums on the 2025-2026 proposed budget on Tuesday, January 28, Wednesday, February 5 and Tuesday, February 11 at 6:00 PM and if need be, another date may be February 13 in the LPW Board Room. The first three meetings will allow public comment. All are invited to comment on the proposed budget at that time. If there is a need for the fourth meeting, there will not be public comment at that meeting. At the conclusion of each public forum, the finance committee will meet to review the proposed budget. Community members will also have the opportunity to speak at the "Audience to Visitors" portion of all the finance committee meetings with the exception of the last one. All meetings will be aired on the WIN-TV Educational Channel, Comcast Channel 95 or Frontier Channel 6103. Please see the district website for meeting agendas, which will include Zoom meeting links as well as other alternative ways to view or listen to these meetings.

Also, as Finance Chair, he will make sure he has the previous three budgets that were approved by the town so there can be a point of reference. Any working collateral that they will have during this process will also be permanent on the front page as well. We want to make sure that we encourage the public to engage them and be at the meetings and to listen to deliberation. It's not a meeting with the public, it's rather a meeting in public. So, once we've had the audience to visitors, you will hear them deliberate with the Superintendent as well as all of his staff and we'll make sure that they go line by line and really understand what the 'ask' of the budget is. Once the Superintendent gives them the budget, it is no longer the Superintendent's budget, it's the Board of Education budget at that point. We have the responsibility to make sure that we put forth a budget to the Town Council that we feel will move the district forth. He wants to make sure the town understands the process. The Superintendent will propose the budget at 6:30 PM. Once the Board of Education takes possession of the budget and it is explained to them, at that point it becomes the Board of Education budget to be able to make changes as they would like to see to the budget before it is presented to the Town Council. At every Finance meeting, they'll be sure to articulate that over and over again so everyone can understand the process.

- Windsor Public Schools and offices will be closed on Monday, January 20, 2025 in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- Dr. Hill's next Coffee Talk will be on Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 PM in the LPW Board Room. Please go to www.windsorct.org to RSVP for the event. That is very important as Dr. Hill would like to know how many people are coming, and wants to make sure he has the appropriate seating and refreshments for your arrival. If you don't RSVP, and you come with 20 people, he may not be prepared for you and it might not be an enjoyable experience for you as you want to engage the Superintendent. So please, RSVP in advance.

Deputy Mayor Klase thanked Mr. Lockhart for the report. As you know, we are all going into this budget process and it will be a pretty difficult year. She would encourage the Board of Education to not only have us understand those numbers but understand the values of them with the stories behind them so that the Town Council can understand that while they deliberate as well.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

The Archer Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church is sponsoring the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration for the community on Monday, January 20, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Windsor Town Hall Council Chambers, 275 Broad Street in Windsor, CT. The keynote speaker will be community leader and Vice President of the Windsor Board of Education, Ayana Taylor. Choral selections will be sung by the Windsor High School Gospel Choir, directed by Dr. Tracee White. All are welcome as the community comes together in commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream, life, and legacy. The event is free and



is open to the public. For questions, please contact the Archer Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church office at 860-688-5225 or via email at churchsec@archeramezchurch.com.

Town Offices Closed

A reminder that Town offices will be closed on January 20, 2025 in observance of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

One Book, One Windsor

Come join in on the annual One Book, One Windsor event on January 12, 2025 from 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM at the Windsor Public Library. The book for this year is “The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store” by James McBride. Light snacks and refreshments will be served. For more information, call 860-285-1984.

Plan of Conservation and Development Community Survey

The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is a guiding document that shapes the vision and priorities for the Town’s growth, development, and conservation over the next 10 years. We have recently launched a process to update this community wide plan. The plan will serve as a roadmap for important decisions regarding land use, housing, economic development, transportation, sustainability, and more.

A dedicated POCD website is being developed as a central location for residents to learn about the POCD planning process, goals, and timeline. It will include engagement tools such as citizen surveys and project updates to keep residents and property owners informed and engaged. As the POCD progresses, this site will provide access to drafts, updates, and upcoming meetings. On the main page of the town’s website, there is the following link to a community survey <http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/>

The survey takes approximately 5–10 minutes to complete. The goal of the survey is to collect input on priorities such as housing, economic development, open space, transportation, and infrastructure. This input will help to recognize residents’ concerns and identify opportunities. The survey in conjunction with the consultant’s other public engagement strategies in the coming month will ensure that the final POCD reflects the values, needs, and vision of the entire community.

Senior Fitness Center Open House

The Senior Center staff will host a *Senior Fitness Center Open House* on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM. Attendees will have the chance to meet Fitness Trainer Dee Abrams, view equipment demonstrations, and learn how their healthcare coverage may cover the cost of a fitness membership. All attendees will be entered into a raffle to win a FREE three-month Fitness Center membership!

Friends of Northwest Park Coffeehouse Concert Series

Are you interested in enjoying some great music? If so, feel free to join in the fun at the Friends of Northwest Park’s Coffeehouse Concert series. Visit



<https://northwestpark.org/concerts/> for the series line up and dates. Two concerts are scheduled per month at the Northwest Park nature center through April. Tickets are \$20 per person. Proceeds go towards helping to support environmental learning experiences at park for Windsor students. For more information, contact Northwest Park at 860-285-1886 or purchase your tickets at <https://northwestpark.org/>

Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked about the parking ban. She's still seeing lots of cars parked after midnight or so. What is the process of that? Do folks go around and check neighborhoods? Town Manager Souza stated that is part of the district officers and patrol officers as part of their tasks and in accordance of the overnight parking ban, which is regardless if it is snowing or not. The ban runs through the middle of April. Cars are asked to not park on the public streets during that ban time. Please note that there is about 160 miles of roadways in the town so you won't see those cars each and every night.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Smith – nothing to report.

Finance Committee – Councilor Naeem – nothing to report.

Health and Safety Committee – Councilor Armstrong – nothing to report.

Joint Town Council/Board of Education Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase – nothing to report.

Personnel Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase stated the Personnel Committee will meet tomorrow and Wednesday.

10) ORDINANCES – None

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Approve a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$6,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH BROAD STREET TRAFFIC CALMING AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$2,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES, \$1,000,000 FROM STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT URBAN ACT GRANT FUNDS AND \$3,000,000 FROM UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FUNDS TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey that the reading into the minutes of the text of the bond ordinance entitled, 'AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$6,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH BROAD STREET TRAFFIC CALMING



AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$2,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES, \$1,000,000 FROM STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT URBAN ACT GRANT FUNDS AND \$3,000,000 FROM UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FUNDS TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION' is hereby waived, the full text of the ordinance having been distributed to each member of the Council and copies being made available to those persons attending this meeting; and that the full text of the ordinance be recorded with the minutes of this meeting.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to approve a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$6,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH BROAD STREET TRAFFIC CALMING AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$2,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES, \$1,000,000 FROM STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT URBAN ACT GRANT FUNDS AND \$3,000,000 FROM UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FUNDS TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

Peter Souza, Town Manager stated at this time the Town Council is respectfully requested to consider approving a bond ordinance which would cover the costs of Option #3 that includes roundabouts, one lane of traffic in the north and south side direction, parking on the west side of the roadway along with bike lanes on both north and south bound lanes. It does not impact the curb line on the town green side. This ordinance would as outlined include \$4,000,000 of state and federal grants that we received at this point. If this was approved by the Town Council and the voters at referendum, we would continue to pursue different grant opportunities and work with our state representatives and senators to see if we could gain additional funds to reduce the \$2.1 million that is currently projected to come from local funds.

The outline included in the agenda packet is a general timeline. This project, if approved, a referendum design would be completed over the next nine months including approval from the Connecticut DOT for doing work within the public right of way. We have met a number of times over the last two years and they are in favor of, or in support of, the general concept but it needs to go through full design and engineering since it will remain a state road.

If approved at referendum and ultimately borrowed, the funding requirements to pay debt service on these local monies would not be impacting the town's budget until FY 2028 or depending upon the final timing of when we issue the bond. There will not be an impact on the FY 2026 budget.

Town Manager Souza added there will be 35-37 parking spaces on the west side of the Broad Street.

Motion Failed 4-3-1 (Councilors Eleveld, Pelkey, and Walker opposed, Councilor Gluck Hoffman abstained)

- b) Approve a resolution to set a referendum date and approve ballot language for the Broad Street Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety project

Mayor Black-Burke noted that since Item 11 A did not pass, they will not discuss this item.

12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Approve an appropriation in the amount of \$20,500 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for costs in association with the Broad Street Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety Project referendum

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, (not seconded) to approve an appropriation of \$20,500 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for expenses related to the Broad Street Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety Project referendum.

Councilor Pelkey objected to the consideration of the question. The item was skipped as item 11 A did not pass and they moved onto Item 12 B.

- b) Introduce an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,400,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PURCHASING OF A FIRE RESCUE PUMPER; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$816,000 BONDS AND NOTES AND \$584,000 FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT FUND TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong, that the reading into the minutes of the text of the ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,400,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PURCHASING OF A FIRE RESCUE PUMPER; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$816,000 BONDS AND NOTES AND \$584,000 FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT FUND TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION" is hereby waived, the full text of the ordinance having been distributed to each member of the council and copies made available to those persons attending this meeting; and the full text of the ordinance be recorded with the minutes of this meeting.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong, to introduce a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,400,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PURCHASING OF A FIRE RESCUE PUMPER; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$816,000 BONDS AND NOTES AND \$584,000 FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT FUND TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

Paul Goldberg, Fire Administrator, and Steve Bianchi, Interim Fire Chief, stated the rescue pumper vehicle planned to be replaced is currently assigned to Company 3 (Poquonock Firehouse) and is a 1993 Pierce Rescue/Pumper. This vehicle has a range of equipment with

various firefighting and rescue capabilities. This vehicle responds to approximately 50% of the fire/rescue calls in town, equalling about 375 responses per year. This creates the need for a dependable, well-equipped and modern piece of apparatus. The equipment on the truck also is aging and is planned on being replaced.

It is proposed to acquire this equipment through the nationwide intralocal cooperative purchasing program known as *HGACBuy*. The new vehicle would be purchased from the Pierce Manufacturing Company. Delivery of the vehicle is approximately 30 months from the time the contract is executed.

Town Manager Souza said the total purchase cost for a new rescue pumper is \$1,500,000 including the estimated cost of replacement equipment and tools needed to meet both NFPA 1901's guidelines and what historically the fire department has used in the emergencies we respond to. At this time the Town Council is asked to introduce a funding authorization in the amount of \$1,400,000. Funding authorization for the replacement equipment and tools is recommended to be deferred for approximately 24 months so firmer pricing can be obtained closer to when the apparatus is scheduled to be delivered.

Proposed funding is a combination of bonding (\$815,000) and 'pay as you go' cash funding (\$585,000) from the Public Safety Equipment Fund.

Bonding in the amount of \$815,000 is being requested. The average annual debt service based on a 20 year term and a 5.0% interest rate is \$62,144. The Public Safety Equipment Fund will have an available balance of \$1,056,000 if this funding authorization is approved. This balance is planned to be used for future fire apparatus replacements and building improvements.

Please note actual borrowing of \$815,000 will not be until the bond issue of Spring 2027 which is roughly 6 months prior to the delivery of the vehicle. This timing would result in the first debt service payment being in FY 2028.

Councilor Pelkey asked what the current balance is in the Public Safety Equipment Fund? Town Manager Souza said the current balance is about \$1.6 million. Within the capital projects fund, we have a large plan replacement of a ladder truck about two years from now. That balance is planned to be used for that to pay in part in cash financing as well as the improvements and replacement of mechanicals indoors and life cycle items at the different fire houses over the next 2-3 years.

Councilor Pelkey asked what the financial difference is (obviously an estimation) between bonding \$815,000 as opposed to using cash. What is the likely difference in that 20–22-year period? Town Manager Souza said on an annualized basis it is about \$600 between bonding as opposed to what we would be earning in our investment account. If you amortize that over 20 years, the total interest over that 20-year period that we would pay in debt service is approximately \$428,000 and it would be approximately \$418,000 that would be foregone interest.

Councilor Pelkey asked why are we looking to potentially bond this project as opposed to paying cash? Town Manager Souza stated that it is finding that balance. Those that have seen the Capital Improvement Programs that the staff has presented, we are always attempting to find that balance of 'pay as you go' and allowing for the flexibility of having monies, unassigned fund balances. This current fiscal year, the Council is using \$3 million from the unassigned fund balance to reduce the potential tax levy. We're looking out over many years to find that balance. Certainly, the Town Council has that prerogative to use cash. This is trying to preserve that flexibility for the Council as we look towards not only FY 26 but we look out over a 3–5-year period where we know we'll have a lot of budget pressures and trying to find that 'sweet spot' between financing and 'pay as you go' cash.

Councilor Pelkey stated that if he is hearing the Town Manager correctly, the bonding is giving us greater flexibility in the near term. Town Manager Souza said in the operating budget.

Councilor Naeem stated while we have this cash on hand right now as we look at our CIP and look at some of the projections we've discussed at Finance Committee, we have to think about how is that cash being used during the course of the next five years. She feels it would be risky to stray away from those items that are ear marked for the future projects we are looking at.

Councilor Eleveld asked if the current pumper is over 30 years old. Mr. Goldberg replied it is 32 years old. Councilor Eleveld said it is recommended by the NFPA that we don't have equipment older than 25 years old, correct? Mr. Goldberg said that is correct. Councilor Eleveld said we've already exceeded the recommended NFPA usage of that equipment. He asked why that piece of equipment is so expensive? Mr. Bianchi stated that it has gone up by 22% as compared to the last two they purchased about four years ago. Town Manager Souza added that he has this question every year but they are very complex pieces of apparatus. There are significant safety measures that are built into it for firefighter safety. Just the functionality of these pieces of equipment are tremendous. Just think of your vehicle and what has changed in the way of electronics in the last few years, then you have to look at the fire truck as being on steroids with the capabilities that it has. He himself has questioned the amount but it's the cost of doing business.

Councilor Eleveld said it takes 2-1/2 years to get the truck. Are we protected from price increases? Mr. Bianchi stated he believes they are. Councilor Eleveld asked what station this will be at and Mr. Bianchi replied the Poquonock Station.

Councilor Armstrong asked if the present vehicle we have is functional? Mr. Bianchi asked her to describe functional. Councilor Armstrong stated that when it is needed is it equipped to be used? Mr. Bianchi stated yes, it is usable.

Councilor Pelkey asked how does this work? 20-24 months from now do we give a check for the full amount? Mr. Goldberg said we will issue a purchase order and upon delivery and acceptance, then we issue a check to the manufacturer.



Councilor Pelkey asked if there would be any discount if we use cash and/or expedited delivery? Mr. Goldberg said nothing can expedite the delivery. As far as a discount is concerned, we are part of a co-op so we are getting a discount from the co-op and if we use cash there might be up to a 5% discount.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

- c) Set a Public Hearing for January 21, 2025 at 7:20 p.m. for an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,400,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PURCHASING OF A FIRE RESCUE PUMPER; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$816,000 BONDS AND NOTES AND \$584,000 FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT FUND TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong that a Public Hearing be set for January 21, 2025 at 7:20 p.m. (prevailing local time) to act on a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,400,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PURCHASING OF A FIRE RESCUE PUMPER; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$816,000 BONDS AND NOTES AND \$584,000 FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT FUND TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION" and "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the town clerk is authorized and directed to post and publish notice of said Public Hearing."

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

- d) Appointment of Windsor Poet Laureate

Scott Colby, Assistant Town Manager, stated at its September 3, 2024 meeting, the Town Council approved establishing a Town of Windsor Poet Laureate along with the selection guidelines. The Arts Commission is respectively recommending the Town Council appoint Brittana Tatum as the town's Poet Laureate. Per the Town Council's appointment process, the appointment is introduced and then acted on at the following meeting.

Following the closing of the application period, the Arts Commission reviewed all submissions to assess candidates based on the established criteria: residency, experience, passion for poetry, public speaking abilities, and potential to engage with the town's diverse community. After thorough deliberation, the Commission selected three finalists to interview. These candidates were invited to present an original poetry reading, as well as discuss how they envision fulfilling the Poet Laureate role and fostering a deeper connection with the town's residents through poetry.

After conducting the interviews and evaluating the finalists, the Arts Commission is now prepared to make a recommendation to the Town Council for the appointment of the Poet Laureate. The Commission feels the selected candidate, Brittana Tatum, will not only bring artistic excellence to the position but also be an ambassador for poetry, literacy, and cultural inclusivity within the town.

This appointment is a two-step process with the introduction on January 6, 2025 and with the Town Council taking action on January 21, 2025. The Town Council has the ability to waive section 18 the Town Council Rules of Order by a two-thirds vote to take action on January 6, 2025.

Mayor Black-Burke asked how many applications there were for the Poet Laureate? Assistant Town Manager Colby stated there were five.

e) Approve the sale of a portion of Upper Broad Street right of way

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to approve the sale of .032 acres of town owned land along 114 Upper Broad Street to 144 152 Broad Street LLC and to authorize the Town Manager to execute needed conveyance forms.

Patrick McMahon, Economic Development Director, stated the Developer of Founders Square is interested in acquiring a .032-acre (1,394 SF) parcel of town-owned land along the frontage of 114 Upper Broad Street to incorporate the area into the mixed-use project.

The Developer previously purchased 114 Upper Broad Street and demolished a single-family home to make room for additional parking that will facilitate the second phase of the proposed redevelopment. The subject town owned land runs along the frontage of 114 Upper Broad Street and is needed to provide access to the proposed new parking lot.

The town has executed a Purchase and Sale Agreement outlining the conditions for the sale of the parcel to the Developer including the required Town Council approval.

The proposed sale price of \$7,923 is based on the average per acre value set through State DOT appraisals used on the previous sale of state and town-owned land to the Developer. Since the sale is valued at less than \$10,000, there is no public hearing or special town meeting approval required.

Councilor Eleveld said it seems this project keeps coming back to the Council. Why can't we get this done once and for all? Mr. McMahon stated the opportunity arose for the developer to purchase 114 Upper Broad Street to incorporate into the property and realized that this small sliver of property would be needed for the new parking layout. The developer is just taking advantage of the opportunities in the market place.

Motion Passed 6-1-1 (Councilor Pelkey opposed, Councilor Eleveld abstained and Councilor Smith absent)

f) Introduce an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5, ARTICLE XIV, VETERANS' EXEMPTION."

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem that the reading into the minutes of the text of the ordinance entitled, 'AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5, ARTICLE XIV, VETERANS' EXEMPTION' is hereby waived, the full text of the ordinance

having been distributed to each member of the Council and copies being made available to those persons attending this meeting; and that the full text of the ordinance be recorded with the minutes of this meeting.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to introduce an ordinance entitled, 'AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5, ARTICLE XIV, VETERANS' EXEMPTION.'

Scott Colby, Assistant Town Manager, gave an overview of the project stating currently there are 960 individuals who participate in or receive the state benefit. Veterans who qualify for the state benefit receive an exemption on their property assessment ranging from \$3,000 to \$21,000 depending upon varying factors (i.e., level of disability, age, income).

Based upon the income limits, 62 individuals out of the total 960 currently participating receive the additional local benefit. The local option benefit is presently a \$20,000 exemption on their assessment if their income is under \$43,800, if they are unmarried or at \$53,400 if they are married, regardless of VA qualifying disability status. The current local exemption amount offers a benefit of approximately \$606 and results in approximately \$37,597 of forgone tax revenue.

The Veteran's exemption application period runs annually from February 1st to October 1st. Applicants who qualify must apply during this time for the exemption to be applied to the next upcoming Grand List assessment, which occurs in October. The exemption is then reflected on the homeowner's tax bill the following year, typically in July. For example, if an applicant submits their application in March 2025, the exemption will be applied to the October 2025 Grand List and appear on the July 2026 tax bill.

Councilor Naeem stated that they had a couple of discussions regarding this during the Finance Committee meetings. Just looking where our other tax exemptions are, it makes a lot of sense to bring this up.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

- g) Set a Public Hearing for January 21, 2025 at 7:20 p.m. for an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5, ARTICLE XIV, VETERANS' EXEMPTION."

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem that a Public Hearing be set for Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 7:20 p.m. (prevailing time) in the Council Chambers of the Windsor Town Hall, to hear an ordinance entitled, 'AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5, ARTICLE XIV, VETERANS' EXEMPTION" and "FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is authorized and directed to post and publish notice of said Public Hearing."

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)



13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey to accept the resignation with regret of Jeff Adamson from the Inland, Wetlands and Watercourses Commission and the accept resignation of Edward Richters from the Windsor Arts Commission.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

a) Minutes of the December 16, 2024 Public Hearing

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong to approve the Public Hearing minutes of the December 16, 2024 as presented.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

b) Minutes of the December 16, 2024 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2024 Regular Town meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Smith absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Helene M. Albert
Recording Secretary