



REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

DECEMBER 14, 2020

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ABSTENTIONS: Monahan, O’Shea, Ruggiero, Steele, Ference Iacono, Messina, Tallman, Grauer, C. Kelly, Perugini, Britton, Petise

The Moderator asked for nominations from the floor for Deputy Moderator.

Cindy Perham, District 2 nominated Mark McDermott, duly seconded.

Upon motion made, duly seconded and carried unanimously, nominations for Deputy Moderator were closed.

**VOTE:** Mr. McDermott was elected Deputy Moderator by unanimous voice vote.

**ITEM NO. 4 ON CALL:** APPROVAL OF 2021 MEETING CALENDAR

The Moderator moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**VOTE:** The schedule of regular meetings for 2021, as follows, was approved by unanimous voice vote:

January 25	April 7, 8 and 26	July 26	October 25
February 22	May 3 and 24	August 23	November 29
March 22	June 28	September 27	December 13

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

The Moderator announced that Items 6, 8 & 9 were eligible for consent. Mark McDermott, District 7 moved the Consent Calendar, duly seconded and approved unanimously.

**ITEM NO. 5 ON CALL:** JOINT RETIREMENT INVESTMENT BOARD REPORT

This report was received in Committee.

**ITEM NO. 6 ON CALL:** APPOINTMENT OF ALYSSA G. STACK TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

This Item was on the Consent Calendar.

**ITEM NO. 7 ON CALL:** TO HEAR, CONSIDER AND ACT UPON THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION AS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN: “RESOLVED, THAT THE PROGRAM YEAR 45 (OCTOBER 1, 2019 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2020) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) ANNUAL ACTION PLAN BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED TO INCLUDE A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$297,452, TO PREVENT, PREPARE FOR AND RESPOND TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT; AND FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT BRENDA L. KUPCHICK, FIRST SELEWOMAN OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD, BE, AND HEREBY IS, AUTHORIZED TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO FACILITATE THE TOWN’S

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RECEIPT OF THESE FUNDS AND PARTICIPATION IN SAID CDBG PROGRAM.”

Lisa Havey, District 6 moved to waive reading of the Item, duly seconded and carried unanimously. Hannah Gale, District 6 moved the Item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**VOTE:** The CDBG PIY45 amendment was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**ITEM NO. 8 ON CALL:** TO HEAR, CONSIDER AND ACT UPON THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION AS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE: “RESOLVED, THAT THE ATTACHED BOND RESOLUTION ENTITLED, ‘A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$1,484,000 FOR ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING AND REMEDIATION COSTS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT RELATED TO CONTAMINATION AT THE TOWN’S RECLAMATION YARD AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION,’ BE, AND HEREBY IS, APPROVED.”

This Item was on the Consent Calendar.

**ITEM NO. 9 ON CALL:** TO HEAR, CONSIDER AND ACT UPON THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION AS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE: “RESOLVED, THAT THE ATTACHED BOND RESOLUTION ENTITLED, ‘A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$202,000 FOR ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING AND REMEDIATION COSTS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT RELATED TO CONTAMINATION AT THE TOWN’S WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION,’ BE, AND HEREBY IS, APPROVED.”

This Item was on the Consent Calendar.

**ITEM NO. 10 ON CALL:** TO CONSIDER AND ACT UPON THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION: “RESOLVED, THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTE §10-153D(B), THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE FAIRFIELD EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2021 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024, IS REJECTED.”

Lisa Havey, District 6 moved this Item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**VOTE:** The motion to reject the collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Education and FEA failed with 0 in favor, 40 opposed and 0 abstentions.

**ITEM NO. 11 ON CALL:** TO HEAR, CONSIDER AND ACT UPON THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION AS RECOMMENDED BY THE FIRST SELECTWOMAN: “RESOLVED, TO FUND AND APPROVE THE ATTACHED AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD

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("TOWN") AND THE UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION #454, THE FAIRFIELD PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES UNION AND UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION #222 INCLUDING NON-UNION ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES FOR A VOLUNTARY EARLY RETIREMENT INCENTIVE PLAN ("VERIP") FOR ELIGIBLE MEMBERS

Marisa Ringel, District 10 moved this Item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

First Selectwoman Kupchick believes this program will be successful to attract new talent and provide a high level of customer service. She explained the confusion regarding the 17 normal retirements. 23 out of 31 eligible employees will take advantage of the plan. 3 positions will be eliminated that are currently funded. There have been 3 retirements since the budget was passed. 22 people retired in one year out of over 500 employees including police & fire, however the Town does not track the average retirement age.

Jill Vergara, District 7 asked if there is a specific number of people who have expressed an interest in retiring to which Ms. Kupchick replied 31 have gone through the confidential process with the Benefits Manager.

Bill Gerber, District 2 said the information provided by the First Selectwoman had been very helpful. He asked if an actuarial report on the final number could be provided within a month. Ms. Kupchick said she is committed to providing the information, however she is unable to commit to that timeframe. Mr. Gerber acknowledged that although an early retirement incentive was given in 2009 the administration provided no information following it.

Sharon Pistilli, District 3 asked what the percentage change is from one step to the next. Jim Haselkamp, HR Director said it's on an annual basis on the employee's anniversary date, but it's different according to the CBAs.

Meredith Odinak, District 4 asked if there are plans for training and modernization even if this plan does not pass. Ms. Kupchick said plans were underway for training of department managers in areas of employee disciplinary action, but the schedule training had to be canceled due to Covid-19.

Marisa Ringel, District 10 said there had been productive dialog on this topic but feels the Body may be micromanaging this. It's about balancing human capital and improving services. There is value that cannot be quantified.

Jay Wolk asked why the plan did not go to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance first to which Ms. Kupchick answered according to the CT General Statutes only the legislative body's approval is needed much like the approval of a collective bargaining agreement.

Josh Garskof, District 5 asked for clarification on the 3 positions that will not be filled. Ms. Kupchick explained a position may be integrated into another to create a more robust position.

Veronica Monahan, District 1 noted that the First Selectwoman is cleaning up a lot of neglect and corruption which she appreciates all the hard work she is doing.

Lisa Havey asked whether this will be budget neutral to which Ms. Kupchick noted she would strive to keep this budget neutral.

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Ms. Vergara referenced a page from the CAFR about the pension liabilities. Jared Schmitt, CFO questioned the document she was referring to.

Lauren Bove, District 7 asked if there was another way to achieve the modernization and changes without VERIP. Ms. Kupchick said it would not be possible because of arbitration and bumping rights within the unions.

Karen McCormack, District 2 said the First Selectwoman has been transparent in trying to move the Town forward to a better place that we can be proud of.

Jeff Steele, District 2 said the Body had received more information over the last couple months. The BOF and pension board vetted the plan and the unions agreed to it. He looks forward to the updates as suggested by Mr. Gerber.

Hannah Gale said this is a better deal; it's not necessarily about saving money as you have to look at the organization and its place in time as we are becoming a city with all the building and people moving in. It's time to change and see this as a positive.

Ms. Vergara asked BOF member Lori Charlton to explain the information she provided about the pension liability. Ms. Charlton explained the unfunded liability could increase from \$33 million to \$35 million and from 86% to 78% funded.

Ms. Kupchick said based on information at the last JRIB meeting the discount rate may not need to be reduced. CFO Schmitt advised that the document Ms. Charlton is referring to is a draft of the CAFR that is under review and is not a final document.

**VOTE:** The resolution to fund and approve the Agreements between the Town and three bargaining units for a voluntary early retirement incentive plan was approved with 21 in favor and 19 opposed.

**IN FAVOR:** Mahoney, Monahan, O'Shea, Ruggiero, Gerber, McCormack, Steele, Durrell, Gale, Powell-Dunmore, Ference, Iacono, Messina, Tallman, Grauer, C. Kelly, Perugini, Britton, Altobelli, Petise, Ringel

**OPPOSED:** Perham, Jacobs, Nickel, Pistilli, Karson, A. Kelly, Odinak, Spolyar, Diaz, Garskof, Siebert, Wolk, Ambrose, Havey, Bove, McDermott, Vergara, Wackerman, Georgiadis

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth P. Browne, MMC, MCTC  
Town Clerk