

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR BOARD OF SELECTMEN

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, February 18, 2021

7:00 p.m.

East Windsor, Connecticut

Meeting held via ZOOM Teleconference

Meeting ID: 332 683 3563

Town Hall closed to the Public by
Executive Order of First Selectman Jason E. Bowsza
Due to Coronavirus pandemic

Meeting Minutes

**** These Minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting****

Board of Selectmen:

Jason E. Bowsza, First Selectman
Marie DeSousa, Deputy First Selectman
Alan Baker, Selectman
Sarah Muska, Selectman
Charlie Nordell, Selectman

ATTENDANCE: Board of Selectmen: Jason E. Bowsza, First Selectman; Marie DeSousa, Deputy First Selectman; Alan Baker, Selectman; Sarah Muska, Selectman; Charlie Nordell, Selectman

ABSENT: All Selectmen were present this evening.

GUESTS/SPEAKERS signing in to teleconference: Treasurer's Department: Amy O'Toole, Treasurer; Board of Finance Members: Karen Christensen, Noreen Farmer, Tom Lansner; Department of Public Works: Joseph Sauerhoefer, Operations Manager; Police Commission: Robert Leach, Chairman; Ed Filipone, Vice Chairman; Police Department: Edward DeMarco, Chief; Roger Hart, Deputy Chief; Sergeant Derek Leab; Lieutenant Matthew Carl; Bill Freeman, Communications and IT Specialist; Veterans Commission/Economic Development Commission: Gil Hayes.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

1. TIME AND PLACE OF REGULAR MEETING:

First Selectman Bowsza called the February 18, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 7:00 p.m. The Meeting is being held via teleconference due to closure of the Town Hall to the Public as the result of the coronavirus pandemic.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

First Selectman Bowsza requested Deputy First Selectman DeSousa to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ATTENDANCE:

First Selectman Bowsza noted the Board has established a quorum with five members present via video conference.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A. January 21, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: To ACCEPT the January 21, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.

DeSousa moved/Muska seconded/**DISCUSSION:** None

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/DeSousa/Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

B. February 2, 2021 Board of Selectmen Public Hearing Minutes:

MOTION: To APPROVE the Board of Selectmen Public Hearing Meeting Minutes from February 2, 2021 as presented.

Muska moved/DeSousa seconded/**DISCUSSION:** None

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/DeSousa/Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

First Selectman Bowsza announced the first opportunity for public comment; no one requested to speak.

6. COMMUNICATIONS:

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

First Selectman Bowsza acknowledged the following correspondence:

- A. Black History Month Proclamation (See Attachment A)
- B. Letter regarding Senate Bill 697, An Act Concerning Certain Municipal Agreements to Fix Assessments (See Attachment B)

7. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

A. Resignations:

- 1. Jamie Sydoriak (D), Inland Wetland & Watercourse Agency, alternate member
- 2. Jamie Sydoriak (D), Conservation Commission, alternate member

MOTION: To ACCEPT, with regret, the resignation of Jamie Sydoriak from the Inland Wetland & Watercourse Agency as an alternate member and the Conservation Commission as an alternate member as well.

Baker moved/Nordell seconded/DISCUSSION: First Selectman Bowsza noted Ms. Sydoriak has been a strong contributor to both Boards. Her resignations are accepted with regret.

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/DeSousa/Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

- 3. Michael Scalzo (D), Ethics Commission, regular member

MOTION: To ACCEPT, with regret, the resignation of Michael Scalzo as a regular member of the Ethics Commissioner.

DeSousa moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: First Selectman Bowsza indicated Mr. Scalzo was a member of a core group of people who came in at a contentious time and Mr. Scalzo served well. His resignation is accepted with regret.

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/DeSousa/Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

B. Reappointments:

- 1. Gilbert Hayes (D), Veterans Commission, regular member for a term expiring March 1, 2025.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

2. Bruce Putinas (D), Veterans Commission, regular member for a term expiring March 1, 2025.

MOTION: To REAPPOINT Gil Hayes (D), to the Veterans Commission as a regular member for a term expiring March 1, 2025.

Baker moved/DeSousa seconded.

Selectman Baker indicated he had intended to make both reappointments together; he amended his motion, Deputy First Selectman DeSousa amended her second.

AMENDED MOTION: To REAPPOINT Gil Hayes (D), to the Veterans Commission as a regular member for a term expiring March 1, 2025, AND REAPPOINT Bruce Putinas (D), Veterans Commission, as a regular member for a term expiring March 1, 2025.

Baker moved/DeSousa seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

**VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/DeSousa/Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)**

C. New Appointments:

1. Steve Smith (R), Water Pollution Control Authority, regular member or a term expiring October 1, 2024.

MOTION: To APPOINT Steve Smith (R), to the Water Pollution Control Authority, regular member for a term expiring October 1, 2024.

Muska moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: Selectman Nordell indicated he would like to see more people on this board who are subject to the billing process; for that reason, he will be voting no.

**VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/DeSousa/Muska
Opposed: Nordell
Abstentions: None**

ADDED AGENDA ITEMS:

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

First Selectman Bowsza noted there is currently an agreement between the Town and CPACE which is an extension of the Green Bank for certain collections that are done on behalf of the Tax Collector. For that work we get a modest contribution from CPACE. They've indicated they're interested in reclaiming that responsibility, and also eliminating the \$500 payment to the Town. He would like to add the CPACE partial release agreement as Agenda item 9E under **NEW BUSINESS**.

**MOTION: To ADD TO THE AGENDA as item 9E under NEW BUSINESS,
Discussion of the CPACE Agreement.**

DeSousa moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

**VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/DeSousa/Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)**

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. South Road Ownership Option Update:

First Selectman Bowsza advised the Board when the Bond Commission approved our request to allow us to subdivide that property they kept the low-income restriction in place which will succeed any real estate transfers and thereby bind the potential property owners of any successive real estate conveyances. With the help of Pullman & Comley and the Department of Housing we're working through Senator Anwar's office to try to get a Special Act adopted that would specifically remove the low-income requirement on that four acre parcel so we can subdivide and convey that property free and clear. Absent that Special Act there is going to continue to be a low-income requirement on that property, which is not the goal that would be in the best interest of potential property owners. First Selectman Bowsza indicated they've had a number of conversations with the Department of Housing trying to work through that process; the Department of Housing has said they don't oppose the Special Act. First Selectman Bowsza explained the difference between a Public Act and a Special Act, and the Special Act's applicability to the South Road process.

B. *ACI Auto Group LLC – Tax Incentive Program

Any starred (*) items will not be discussed but will remain on the agenda pending receipt of additional information.

C. *Polling Location Change

Any starred (*) items will not be discussed but will remain on the agenda pending receipt of additional information.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Budget Workshop

1. *Police Department – Account #10054201 – Tab 3:*

Joining the Board representing the Police Department were Edward DeMarco, Chief; Roger Hart, Deputy Chief; Derek Leab, Sergeant; Matthew Carl, Detective; and Bill Freeman, IT Specialist. Also present from the Police Commission were Robert Leach, Chairman, and Ed Filipone, Vice Chairman.

Chief DeMarco indicated the Budget Team consisted of Robert Leach of the Police Commission, Deputy Chief Hart, Administrative Lieutenant Matt Carl, and Sergeant Derek Leab, our Accreditation Manager, is with them as well. Also present is Bill Freeman, their Communications and Technology Manager. Chief DeMarco reported Sergeant Derek Leab will cover the Police Accountability Bill and how it impacts our budget, Deputy Chief Hart will cover the actual numbers, Lieutenant Carl will get into the main focus of the budget and what the community and staff members need, which includes a comprehensive mental health team within the department.

Chief DeMarco noted the Police Department held meetings with the Police Commission, the Board of Selectmen, and the Board of Finance last year regarding the Police Accountability Act and the state of Police relations after some horrific police actions and subsequent demonstrations across the country which brought National attention to policing. During that meeting they discussed what the Police Department is doing to actively promote fair and impartial policing. He cited East Windsor is far ahead of the curve relative to other Police Departments; during that meeting they spoke of the Department's personality as being community caretakers who prescribe to the 21st Century policy philosophy. Chief DeMarco gave examples of the Department's outreach with the community which has resulted in a positive relationship. This budget focuses on the community's needs and mandates.

Chief DeMarco turned discussion over to Sergeant Derek Leab, the Accreditation Manager for the Department. Chief DeMarco noted Sergeant Leab is also a Patrol Commander, and our Public Information and Social Media Officer with 10 years experience in East Windsor.

Sergeant Leab reviewed the specifics of the Police Accountability Act, which was passed in July, 2020 by the Connecticut Legislature after the George Floyd incident. The Act includes many unfunded mandates, and the timeframes

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

required to seek compliance. Sergeant Leab reviewed the various components of the Act, and the financial impact of those mandates. Some of the mandates include: body cameras for all patrol officers, training, development of a plan for a mental health/social worker to assist officers, officer health assessment on a recurring basis, and Police accreditation.

Sergeant Leab cited that every department must be accredited by 2025. Accreditation, as described by Sergeant Leab, is a program for departments to reduce liability and increase professionalism by meeting standards in law enforcement. Sergeant Leab noted the Department started the process in January, 2019; the Department is currently SEEKING confirmation of Tier I Accreditation, which leaves two additional tiers to be completed. They anticipate complete accreditation by 2022, which would be three years ahead of required compliance. Sergeant Leab explained that the Act requires National accreditation, which is a higher price tag (\$13,000 start up fee, followed by a \$4,000 annual fee) than State accreditation, which is free. He cited push-back from smaller departments who can't afford the cost of National accreditation. Senator Anwar has proposed Bill 126 to allow departments to seek either State or National accreditation.

Deputy Chief Hart then presented the specific budget numbers requested for Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022.

Personnel:

Clerical Salary – requesting \$265,535 which reflects a \$76,549 increase. Deputy Chief Hart indicated the \$76,549 was previously in the Officer Salary line for Mr. Freeman's salary.

Officer Salary – requesting \$2,240,734 – this salary line shows a \$56,177 decrease (rather than the \$76,549 associated with Mr. Freeman's salary) but shows a lesser decrease as it includes a request for a new junior officer position to replace a senior officer who has retired.

Dispatcher Salary – requesting \$377,000, which is an increase of \$19,115. This line is different than the original budget request, as it now reflects three years of contract negotiations and raises.

Administrative Salary – requesting \$279,222 which is an increase of \$6,140. This line represents the Chief and the Deputy Chief salaries; the increase is due to contractual raises.

PD Overtime – requesting \$354,557, which is a zero increase.

Training Salary – requesting \$36,996, which is a \$1,000 reduction from last year.

Longevity – requesting \$25,677, which is a decrease of \$799 due to the retirement of a senior officer.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

Department/Operational Expenses:

Professional Services – requesting \$22,551, which is an increase of \$3,000 for replacement of radar equipment.

Vehicle Maintenance – requesting \$33,547, which is an increase of \$2,000 for tires.

Travel – requesting \$1,000, which is flat funded.

Supplies – requesting \$19,815, also flat funded.

Equipment – requesting zero this year, which is a reduction in the budget of \$4,835.

Uniforms – requesting \$47,454, which represents a zero increase.

Dues & Fees – requesting \$52,096, which is an increase of \$500. Original request reduced by the First Selectman.

Deputy Chief Hart indicated the total budget request for the Police Department for Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022 is \$3,756.213, which is a \$156.847 increase.

Chief DeMarco requested to acknowledge that the management team of the Police Department is professional but also humble, as it's sometimes difficult for them to recognize themselves. The Management Team is comprised of Chief DeMarco, Deputy Chief Hart, Sergeant Derek Leab, Lieutenant Matt Carl; he reviewed the accomplishments of the various members.

Deputy Chief Hart then reviewed a current history of budget management for the Department. Within the budget requests for the past six fiscal years the Department has returned \$507,705 to the Town as unexpended budgeted funds.

Chief DeMarco turned the presentation over to Lieutenant Matt Carl to summarize their proposal for an East Windsor Police Department Mental Health Team. Chief DeMarco indicated this is really the main focus of their budget this year. It meets the State mandates under the Police Accountability Act and meets the demands of this community

Lieutenant Carl cited the stresses put on society by COVID; prior to that there was an explosion of opioid addiction within the town and the region, and the general lack of funding for mental health. Lieutenant Carl noted the primary task for Police social work is to provide the community with crises intervention, mediation, and referrals. While the types of social problems that the Police and the social worker will deal with will vary from community to community they generally relate to mental health, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, and addiction. He cited the inability to offer long-term solutions; they often return on subsequent calls for the same issue.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

Lieutenant Carl then reviewed historical data from 2020, noting that the Department responded to 141 calls last year related to mental health. He indicated these are not simple calls; they require follow-up visits, getting involved in people's lives, and finding a comprehensive solution to their issues. These non-criminal calls relate to medical aid, aided persons, and welfare checks. Lieutenant Carl noted they've been able to analyze when the calls occur, and what days of the week and hours of the day identify clusters of calls. Although the calls are townwide, the clusters are basically the center of Broad Brook and the center of Warehouse Point. Lieutenant Carl suggested this analysis will enable them to focus their calls where they're needed and free up other officers to address other police issues such as crime, motor vehicle incidents, accidents, and other issues.

Lieutenant Carl indicated the Police Department is proposing a comprehensive solution to address the mental health issues of the community while addressing the stress issues of the officers as well. He reported the Department currently employs a full-time certified Police Officer (Tamarah Stepien) who has a Masters degree in social work with over 400 volunteer hours as a clinician; this last November she became licensed in the State as a social worker who has advanced training and practical experience in crisis intervention, de-escalation and peer support.

Lieutenant Carl suggested most of the Police Departments are trying to address the mental health issues by bringing a social worker into police work. East Windsor's solution is better because we have a Police Officer who became a social worker. The benefit of that is the Police Officers know the community, they know how we react and how to train us better, they know our lingo and experiences. Lieutenant Carl suggested sometimes there are struggles to integrate social workers in the Police society.

Lieutenant Carl reviewed the proposal for the Department's Peer Support Team. If the Department receives the funding to replace Officer Stepien, then Officer Stepien would become a full-time dedicated officer who would work with 2 part-time social workers that would help her in answering those calls. They would provide peer support for the Police Department, they would provide internal training in crisis intervention, work with the Department regarding de-escalation techniques, assist dispatchers acquire early information on the calls so the officers can assess the risk before arriving at the calls, identify other professionals – like a crisis team – who might provide beneficial assistance, and then openly act, review, and reassess. Lieutenant Carl noted the Mental Health Team would also work with the officers to provide peer support for incidents which affect society and the officers.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

Regarding return on investment, Lieutenant Carl noted East Windsor has already invested significant dollars on Officer Stepien's training. The return on investment will come back to the Department as they get internal training, peer support, and rapid response to these calls. By providing the long-term comprehensive plan to the individuals it frees up the Police Officers to investigate criminal incidents, motor vehicle accidents, etc. and get them back to the police work.

Lieutenant Carl indicated the Department has developed trust and legitimacy with the community but their authority comes from the community, and the types of calls the community wants us to handle, and how they want us to police. East Windsor clearly has a need to address calls related to mental health and addiction. Lieutenant Carl indicated we're answering that call with this team; the goal is to try to prevent it in the future, trying to take a preventative measure, and trying to get into the homes and their lives to build these long-term solutions. We'll have a team to refer these cases back to, and to provide assistance to the officers in their own mental health journeys.

Deputy Chief Hart noted this concept relates to the earlier discussion of the Salary line in the budget presentation. This is a new position; we would be taking Officer Stepien out of patrol so she can be dedicated to this program of working with 2 part-time social workers. We're currently working with the Town through the Youth Services Bureau funding; they would continue that through this program. Chief DeMarco noted there is office space directly off the Department lobby which would provide security and protection and privacy. The goal is to provide preventative and proactive Police programming.

Lieutenant Carl gave a summary of the series of calls in the past week.

Chief DeMarco reported the Department is requesting \$156,847 to implement this proposed Mental Health Team.

First Selectman Bowsza requested Lieutenant Carl talk about the critical incident training. Lieutenant Carl, as Supervisor of the Training Division, indicated that Officer Stepien is an instructor in critical incident training. It's a 5-day course, open to dispatchers, our civilian team and our officers; they learn de-escalation, coping skills, and how to handle critical incidents. Lieutenant Carl noted they were trying to get all of the Department personnel trained but COVID brought that to a halt. We're trying to resume that training but it's really something to be done in-person rather than on ZOOM. Officer Stepien coming off 40 patrol hours and dedicating herself to this new team will greatly assist the program development.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

First Selectman Bowsza cited his misconception that training could be done during rollcall. After private discussions he now realizes that's in-depth training; to have a high level of dispatchers and officers with that training is an accomplishment, and a goal we should continue to advance.

First Selectman Bowsza complimented the Department for the analytics regarding the call history. He questioned if the 12 month aggregated data was a rolling 12 months or an annual 12 months? Mr. Freeman indicated it can be presented either way, depending on what you want to see. First Selectman Bowsza cited as compelling as the information that you presented is, it's only good if we do something with it. First Selectman Bowsza noted this information appeared in the JI; he's already getting calls from other municipal leaders who want to discuss this concept. This is progressive policing. It's a cutting-edge inverted way of addressing a problem different from the conventional methods, and it's already getting positive feedback from neighboring towns. This is the number one priority First Selectman Bowsza is laying out in this year's budget; this is something that can be beneficial to the community as a whole. He complimented Chief DeMarco for the presentation; Chief DeMarco cited the team effort which went into the data accumulation. They feel this program will have a townwide impact - already with youth engagement and social services. First Selectman Bowsza indicated he also finds this compelling because it's an interdepartmental partnership with the Youth Services Bureau.

First Selectman Bowsza called for questions from the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Finance.

Selectman Muska thanked the members of the Police Department for their thorough and informative presentation, and for keeping ahead of other communities and always looking ahead to do what's needed. In the area of domestic violence and having done work with the Network, Selectman Muska felt there is a need for this in the community – to have someone local that a victim can turn to. She'll be supporting this Mental Health Team.

Deputy First Selectman DeSousa indicated that everything that's been said today about the Police Department she agrees with. Kudos to everyone involved. Deputy First Selectman DeSousa requested clarification that we're asking for the Mental Health Team in the Police department and the social workers in the Social Services Department? First Selectman Bowsza suggested their proposal is to take a sworn officer out of a patrol position and establish their own Mental Health Team within the Police Department, still as a sworn officer that would be supported by 2 part-time social workers funded through the Youth Services Bureau Grant. It's a collaborative effort between the Community Services

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

Department and the Police Department. Chief DeMarco clarified that it's the \$56,000 that you see in the Officer Salary line that's being requested to pay for a patrolman that then allows them to take Officer Stepien out of that patrol position and be focused wholly on the mental health team in a marriage with the 2 social services people. Deputy First Selectman DeSousa questioned will you at any point include one of the social services people and intermarry them with the Board of Education? Lieutenant Carl reported he's been in touch with the Superintendent, and Melissa Maltese, of Social Services; the goal is to get all the partners in town together so we can do wrap-around services with the school, the Board of Education, and the Youth Services Bureau. Chief DeMarco cited there's a mental health component with domestic violence, and a services component where one person might need assistance with housing or a credit card.

Selectman Baker felt it bears repeating, you've definitely earned the trust, both financially and from a peace-keeping standpoint. He felt we have a lot to be proud of in Town. Referencing Deputy First Selectman DeSousa's comments he suggested he's envisioning when you have these mental health contacts the officer is there to diffuse the situation, but that's the end of your involvement until the next time there's a call. In this new paradigm what do you envision the hand-off being; he's hearing that Officer Stepien is going to be taking on some cases but eventually she'll have to hand them off to other agencies. How far do you envision taking this? Chief DeMarco agreed, the officers respond to a call and get people the services they need but then have to move on to the next call. The value of the social worker is the networking, the resources, what they bring forward to help people. It could be signing up people for their vaccines, or doing your taxes, or finding a counselor in addiction - that's the kind of things Officer Stepien will be doing. We're not envisioning her being the counselor doing the actual treatment; it's that networking and services.

Deputy Chief Hart indicated the department is currently in partnership with a grant with CHR (Community Health Resources) so we have a social worker who comes to the agency once a week, but we're finding that our needs are more than that once a week visit. Deputy Chief Hart noted the officers respond, if Officer Stepien is working she can respond as well, or we can do referral forms – which would now be referred to Officer Stepien to do follow up and work with the individuals. It's difficult for the civilian social worker to accomplish follow up because she's not known to the community as Officer Stepien is.

Chief Demarco cited this is a dual component; it's not only for the individual but it's for the employees as well. Officers see repeated calls under stressful conditions; sometimes they need consideration and peer support as well.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

First Selectman Bowsza pointed out the Town has already paid for Officer Stepien to become a social worker; she's currently on third shift. Based on Mr. Freeman's analytics we can target her shifts for when the demand for mental health services are. This is a more creative way of using the resources they have available.

Selectman Nordell agreed, this is an incredible concept. He can't envision anyone not getting behind you to support this.

Board of Finance member Lansner cited the uniqueness of the concept; Board of Finance member Farmer and Treasurer O'Toole had no additional questions.

First Selectman Bowsza called for additional questions before moving on to the next budget request.

Deputy First Selectman DeSousa cited conflicting comments between the Police Commission and comments on Facebook regarding the dog pound; are we good at the dog pound? Deputy Chief Hart replied technically, we're good at the dog pound. There was a CIP project proposed for a couple of years to do improvements; some are mandatory and must be done to bring the pound up to acceptable code. We're grandfathered for a lot of the reasons on the list. Deputy Chief Hart indicated there's a new heater and a new oil tank down there, the thermostat has been moved into the kennel area so the temperature doesn't go below a certain point, we've replaced the doors leading outside; the \$60,000 would probably suffice if the Town approved the project. Deputy Chief Hart cited they have 2 professional part-time ACOs who love animals and would be the first to speak up if the animals were being mistreated. Deputy First Selectman DeSousa agreed; she just wanted to put that out there.

2. *Emergency Management: Account #10054207 - Tab 3*

Chief DeMarco, as head of the Emergency Management team, which is composed of himself, Deputy Chief Hart, Lieutenant Matt Carl, and Judith Tweedlie, reviewed the Emergency Management budget:

Accomplishments:

- They have employed the Everbridge Suite, which is a community notification system
- Added a generator at the Town Hall Annex, which resulted in an increase in the maintenance line.
- Brought on Denise Menard as a community liaison during the pandemic.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

- They continue to do group meetings and exercises; Chief DeMarco cited a recent meeting held to discuss and plan vaccination clinics.
- The COVID 19 pandemic has increased their workload extensively as the continue to provide personal protective equipment to the community.

Goals:

- The community is still weak on shelters, creation of community emergency shelters remains a team priority.
- Continued availability of personal protective equipment
- Continued updating of the Emergency Operations Plan
- Continue Succession Planning

Deputy Chief Hart reviewed the following budget request for Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022 of \$23,355.

Personnel:

Stipend – Requesting \$23,500, which includes an increase for Chief DeMarco and Deputy Chief Hart, and now includes Lieutenant Carl totaling \$13,790.

Department Expenses:

Phone – includes an increase of \$8,565 for the annual cost of the Everbridge Suite System (community notification system)

Communications – no funding requested.

Equipment Maintenance - increased by \$1,000 to include maintenance of the Town Hall generator.

Supplies – Flat funded at \$1,000.

Treasurer O'Toole clarified that the Town is currently funding the Everbridge Suite communications system from the COVID relief grant money. Even though it looks like a new item under the Emergency Management budget it's been funded from a different source for this current Fiscal Year.

Board of Finance members Farmer and Lansner and the Board had no questions regarding the Emergency Management budget request.

3. Communications - Account #10054221 – Tab 3

Deputy Chief Hart indicated this budget is really a First Selectmen's budget which he and Chief DeMarco have been managing for several years. First Selectman Bowsza noted, with regard to dispatch, now that we're separating out the Broad Brook Fire Department from the Town Budget that line is going down to \$9,400. Treasurer O'Toole concurred, noting that's the East Windsor

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

Ambulance portion of the dispatching bill; Deputy Chief Hart indicated that's a fee paid to Tolland Network.

Selectman Baker noted the detail in the Budget book reflects that we're paying for annual maintenance for firehouse software; is that a specific component of firehouse software to interface with dispatch or are we paying for firehouse software for both fire departments? First Selectman Bowsza indicated that documentation is the original budget request; it's not reflective of the Munis run; that's showing fire services expenses that will no longer be there. First Selectman Bowsza clarified the documentation in the Budget book reflects either the current year or initial department request, while the Munis run reflects the revised budgets which shows the difference between First Selectman Bowsza's recommended budget vs. the original budget requests. Treasurer O'Toole clarified that the firehouse software notification is actually Tolland Dispatch's expenses. That detail tells us how much we're paying for each organization – Warehouse Point, Broad Brook, and East Windsor Ambulance – it reflects their expenses to be part of their dispatching center. First Selectman Bowsza reiterated that expense won't be incurred by the Town going forward. Selectman Baker agreed.

Board of Finance members Farmer and Lansner and the remainder of the Selectmen had no questions.

4. *Police Commission – Account #10054202 – Tab 3*

Police Commission Chairman Leach joined the Board virtually. He noted there are no changes from the previous budget; **the budget request for Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022 is \$1,725.**

First Selectman Bowsza called for questions from the Board of Finance members, or the Board? No one raised any questions.

B. Board of Education Unaffiliated Pension Amendment

C. Board of Education Unaffiliated Pension Appendix "H", Clarification of appendix "I"

First Selectman Bowsza requested items B - **Board of Education Unaffiliated Pension Amendment**, and C - **Board of Education Unaffiliated Pension Appendix "H", Clarification of appendix "I"**, under **NEW BUSINESS** be postponed, as negotiations remain pending.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: To POSTPONE item B - Board of Education Unaffiliated Pension Amendment, and C - Board of Education Unaffiliated Pension Appendix "H", Clarification of appendix "I", under NEW BUSINESS

Nordell moved/DeSousa seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/Muska/Nordell/DeSousa
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

D. Tax Refunds

MOTION: To APPROVE Tax Refunds in the amount of \$4, 379.37 as identified under Tax Refund Report dated February 16, 2021.

Muska moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: None

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/Muska/Nordell/DeSousa
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

E. Discussion of CPACE partial Agreement:

First Selectman Bowsza indicated he's bringing discussion of this item to the Board at the request of the Tax Collector, who brought it to him at the request of the Green Bank. The arrangement has been that towns provide a particular service for the Connecticut Green Bank, and in exchange for that collection that's done on a local level we're paid a nominal fee of \$500. The Green Bank is interested in reclaiming a portion of that function from municipalities, and forgoing the \$500 contribution they made to us for that service.

This request creates less work for the Tax Collector, at basically a minor loss of revenue.

MOTION: To AUTHORIZE the First Selectman to sign the CPACE Partial Release Agreement.

Baker moved/DeSousa seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/Muska/Nordell/DeSousa
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

10. SELECTMEN COMMENTS AND REPORTS

A. Jason Bowsza:

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

(See Attachment C)

B. Marie DeSousa:

(See Attachment D)

C. Charlie Nordell:

(See Attachment E)

D. Sarah Muska:

(See Attachment F)

E. Alan Baker:

The applications that were before the Planning and Zoning Board that Planning and Community Director Chapin mentioned earlier tonight were withdrawn by the applicant, so those Zone Changes won't be made. He felt a lot of people in the area were probably happy to hear that.

First Selectman Bowsza clarified that in reference to Selectman Muska's comment earlier, in the audit there were no findings of fact or problems on the Town side of the audit, but it is recommended that the Board of Education submit to a corrective action plan. He felt that's an important distinction, that has been recommended by the auditors but there's no issue on the Town side of the issue.

11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Gil Hayes, Rye Street: Mr. Hayes recalled that at the Board's February 4th meeting he expressed interest in Black History Month in relation to East Windsor. He applauds the Board for the creation of the Proclamation. He reported he spoke with Dr. DeBarge about the school's celebration of Black History Month; she was very forthcoming with her answers. Mr. Hayes reported, the schools, to his delight, not only celebrates Black History Month, but the curriculum, throughout the year, does go into diverse social awareness and they have what they call a "Circle of Social Awareness" clubs or groups where they discuss things like discrimination. One example was diversity, and the example they gave is "the art of thinking independently together". And that's a good segue into discussing different things. Mr. Hayes reiterated the school does do it throughout the year and Dr. DeBarge sent him many examples.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Hayes questioned if the Proclamation of Black History Month should be read on the record, or would it appear on the website for East Windsor? First Selectman Bowsza indicated it will be included in the Minutes, and posted on the website as well.

Mr. Hayes thanked the Board; he noted he read somewhere “A stick gathered together is unbreakable”.

12. **EXECUTIVE SESSION/Pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 1-200 (6)(b) negotiations, (6)(e) discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records or the information contained therein described in subsection (b) of section 1/210 –**
Action Possible

MOTION: To GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION to include First Selectman Bowsza, Deputy First Selectman DeSousa, Selectman Baker, Selectman Muska, Selectman Nordell, and Town Treasurer O’Toole at 9:00 p.m.

Nordell moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: None

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/Muska/Nordell/DeSousa
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

LET THE RECORD SHOW the Recording Secretary signed out virtually at 9:00 p.m.

First Selectman Bowsza announced the Board is coming out of Executive Session at 9:28 p.m. He questioned if there was any further business to come before the Board of Selectmen? Seeing none, he called for a motion to adjourn.

13. **ADJOURNMENT:**

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Nordell moved/Baer seconded/DISCUSSION: First Selectman Bowsza noted the motion is non-debatable.

VOTE by rollcall: In Favor: Baker/Muska/Nordell/DeSousa
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

Respectfully submitted

Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Board of Selectmen

ATTACHMENTS:

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting – February 18, 2021
ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
MEETING MINUTES**

- A – Black History Month Proclamation
- B - Letter regarding Senate Bill 697, An Act Concerning Certain Municipal Agreements to
Fix Assessments
- C - Selectman's Report – First Selectman Bowsza
- D - Selectman's Report – Deputy First Selectman DeSousa
- E- Selectman's Report - Selectman Nordell
- F - Selectman's Report - Selectman Muska
(Selectman Baker's Report is included in the Meeting transcription)

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS: During Black History Month, we celebrate the many achievements and contributions made by African Americans to our economic, cultural, spiritual, and political development; and

WHEREAS: Black History Month grew out of the establishment, in 1926, of Negro History Week by Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History; and

WHEREAS: the Black History Month 2021 theme, "Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity" explores the African diaspora, and the spread of Black families across the United States; and

WHEREAS: the observance of Black History Month calls our attention to the continued need to battle racism and build a society that lives up to its democratic ideals; and

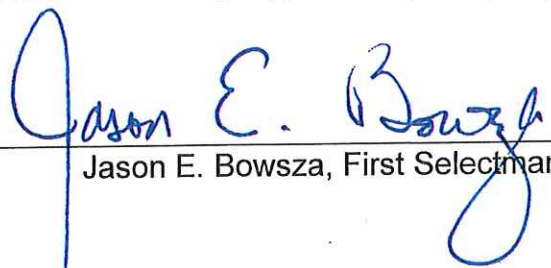
WHEREAS: the Town of East Windsor continues to work toward becoming an inclusive community in which all citizens—past, present, and future—are respected and recognized for their contributions and potential contributions to our community, the state, the country, and the world; and,

WHEREAS: the Town of East Windsor is proud to honor the history and contributions of African Americans in our community, throughout our state, and nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, in recognition of African Americans – past and present – in our community I, Jason E. Bowsza, First Selectman of the Town of East Windsor, Connecticut, do hereby proclaim February 2021 to be

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

I encourage all citizens to celebrate our diverse heritage and culture and continue our efforts to create a world that is more just, peaceful, and prosperous for all.



Jason E. Bowsza, First Selectman





BA 2/18/2021 Attachment B 6B

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR

FIRST SELECTMAN JASON E. BOWSZA

February 2, 2021

Senator Cassano, Representative McCarthy Vahey, Senator Hwang, Representative Zullo, and distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee:

I want to thank you for raising Senate Bill 697, *An Act Concerning Certain Municipal Agreements to Fix Assessments*. This bill raises an issue important to my community, and I submit this testimony **in support** of the bill's adoption.

Several years ago, my community adopted an ordinance to delegating the local board of selectmen the power to enter into tax abatements without each abatement having to come before a Town Meeting¹. East Windsor recognized that many towns had embraced tax abatements as a means of encouraging economic development, and determined that our community could benefit from them, as well.

Because of the way the statute is currently written, East Windsor is at a competitive disadvantage in comparison to communities with mayor/council or council/town manager forms of government. This disadvantage has been made especially clear while attempting to navigate the pandemic.

It seems reasonable to assume that the statutes would not want to vest tax agreement authority within one chief executive out of concerns of potential corruption, but in communities with a selectmen/town meeting form a government, the executive authority is a board of selectmen, not any one individual. Passage of this bill would allow towns with this form of government to delegate fixed assessment authority to boards of selectmen, whereas the statute currently prohibits that.

I also want to submit testimony in **support** of Senate Bill 698, *An Act Concerning the Online Publication of Legal Notices by Municipalities*. Passage of this bill would save towns in Connecticut significant local dollars in advertising costs. The pandemic has shown us that there are different ways of conducting routine business, including noticing open government actions and events. We have all learned to adapt to the Zoom environment, which suggests that publication of legal notices on municipal websites could certainly be a reasonable part of our new normal.

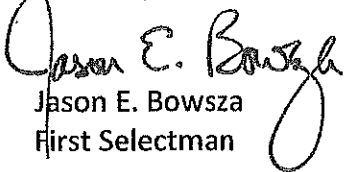
¹ East Windsor Town Ordinance 16-1

Page Two (2)

Finally, I would like to ask the committee to consider revising the underlying statute addressed in House Bill 6106, *An Act Concerning the Property Tax Exemption for Certain Renewable Energy Sources and Nonresidential Hydropower Facilities*. Exempting grid-scale solar developments from municipal taxation should be limited to those instances where the municipality and the development establish either a tax stabilization agreement or a power purchase agreement. This would serve as a means of ensuring that there is a municipal benefit to hosting grid-scale solar developments. East Windsor has one such project currently sited that approached the Town under the prelude of economic development, only to immediately appeal and litigate the personal property tax levy, specifically citing this statute². Some meaningful economic benefit to the municipality should be available for hosting grid-scale solar developments.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments on the above referenced bills.

Sincerely,


Jason E. Bowsza
First Selectman

Cc: Senator Saud Anwar – 3rd District
Representative Jaime Foster – 57th District
Representative Carol Hall – 59th District

² LSE Canes Venatici, et al. v. Town of East Windsor

BN 2/18/2021 Attachment C

First Selectman's Report – February 18, 2021

I am very pleased to report that the Town is hosting a COVID vaccination clinic in East Windsor tomorrow, Friday, February 19th. We have partnered with the North Central District Health Department, the Town of Vernon and Priority Urgent Care. We will be administering about 100 doses of vaccine. In order to get the vaccine, people must register for appointments ahead of time. The Town can help with that by asking residents to call East Windsor Social Services at 860-623-2430. We will be maintaining a wait list moving forward, as well. We will host local clinics in Town as often as possible, but that will be predicated on the availability of vaccine supply. In addition to the partners that I mentioned earlier, I want to thank and recognize our local fire departments, our police department, the East Windsor Ambulance Association and our very dedicated town staff who have helped set this program up.

Our partnership with the Town of Vernon will also allow for a very limited number of appointments at the Vernon COVID Vaccination clinic this Saturday, February 20th. Only people eligible under the state's COVID vaccine distribution plan are eligible at either clinic. That includes medical first responders, healthcare personnel, long-term care facility residents and residents over the age of 65 years old.

In order to maintain our partnership in this multi-town collaborative with Vernon, we are seeking volunteers to help staff a regional call center. The call center is located in the Rockville Public Library, located at 52 Union Street in Vernon. If anyone can make a regular commitment to help staff the call center, it will help continue the Town of East Windsor's access to vaccine through the collaborative. If you can help with the call center, please reach out to my office at 860-698-1334.

I also want to share that the Town of East Windsor will be partnering with Southern Auto Auction, the Hunger Action Team and USDA to offer a Farmers to Families Food Box pick up. We will be distributing free boxes of perishable food items on Thursday, February 25 and Friday, February 26 from 9am to 2pm while supplies last. The distribution point will be the Southern Auto parking lot located at 5 Phelps Road. This is a first come, first serve event. All households are eligible, but only one box per household. This is a drive-through service – please remain in your vehicles and please make sure there is room in your trunk. We are also looking for volunteers for this event. Anyone interested in volunteering can call 860-698-1450.

We are also now offering assistance with tax preparation through AARP for returning Senior Center clients. This is a free service offered to senior citizens in our community to help them complete their filings at no charge.

Yesterday, I was very pleased to join UConn's T2 Center to talk about ways to stay connected with the community during the pandemic. Other panelists included transportation professionals, council of government representatives, and private consultants, and we all agreed that the changing circumstances have led to new urgency in terms of constituent engagement. It was really my pleasure to join them.

The Town also has a need for volunteers to serve on boards and commissions in the community. We currently have vacancies in a number of spots, including:

- Agriculture Commission
- Beautification Commission
- Permanent Building Commission
- Capital Improvement Planning Commission

- Diversity Council
- Economic Development Commission
- Elderly Commission
- Ethics Commission
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Agency
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Planning and Zoning
- Water Pollution Control Authority

Anyone interested should reach out to my office or the Town website to fill out an application. Appointments are made by the Board of Selectmen.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason E. Bowsza
First Selectman

per 2/18/2021 Attachment D

February 18, 2021

Deputy First Selectman's Liaison Report

Well, if you're tired of the cold and snow just hold onto the thought that Spring is only 29 days away.

Our budget workshops are in full force!

February 8, 2021 – Budget Workshops

February 9, 2021 – I attended the Planning and Zoning meeting via zoom.

February 10, 2021 – Meet with First Selectman Bowsza on the Budget reports. I needed clarification on the Budget Report issued.

February 11, 2021 – I attended the Police Commission meeting via zoom.

February 16, 2021 – I attended via Zoom the EDC meeting where the Election of Officers was voted on. Gilbert Hayes – Chairman Robert Lyke Vice-Chairman and Jim Richards – Secretary

February 16, 2021 – Budget Workshops

February 17, 2021 – I attended the EWHHA meeting briefly as they had an Executive Session that was lengthy. The residents of Park Hill were recipients of Covid related necessities from the Rotary Club. They also received a box of food from the Lyons Club for each of the 84 households.

February 18, 2021 – Budget presentation and Board of Selectmen meeting.

North Central Health District media campaign "Change the Script" to combat the ongoing prescription overdose epidemic has been implemented. Complimentary facemask and brochure were issued to the Board. I have placed them in your mail slot at the Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marie E. DeSousa

Marie E. DeSousa, Deputy First Selectman

BN 2/18/21 Attachment E

Selectman Nordell's report 2/18/21

On February 10th I attended the Police Commission Meeting. This meeting consisted of budget presentations just like our meeting tonight. I believe the Police department has a great concept in their presentation of incorporating a sworn officer as also a social worker to help address the mental health calls that the police deal with on a regular basis. This is a unique and proactive concept that has a huge return in investment for a small increase to the Police budget.

During the budget workshop process and various Boards and Commissions we have heard several comments in support of funding transportation next year for the vocational agricultural programs. I hope the board of finance and board of education are taking these requests seriously. I strongly believe these programs allowing students to attend schools like Suffield to get an enhanced education in these fields not offered here in town are crucial. Programs like these have been offered for many years and I think the value and end result of the students who attend these programs are exceptional.

SW 2/18/2021 Attachment F

Selectmen's Report - February 18th, 2021

The Warehouse Point Fire Commissioners met on February 8th, 2021, which was at the same time as our first Budget Workshop, so I was unable to attend. However, I did follow up with Chief James Barton and there were fifty four calls in the month of January. The addition to Station One was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission at their January 26th, 2021 meeting. The Fire District has since applied for a building permit and after approval from the Building Inspector can begin construction.

The Board of Education met on February 10th, 2021. Broad Brook Elementary School Principal Laura Foxx gave the Board a Literacy Update and Darryl Roulliard gave a Curriculum Report about the i-Ready Diagnostic. Participation rates have gone up significantly, but it is important to note that students at home are not participating at the same rate as students in school.

The Board should be ready to vote on their FY 2021-2022 Budget at their next meeting on February 24th, 2021. Three changes were made in their budgetary favor, reducing the increase in their insurance line from 8% to 5% and reducing lines Special Education Transportation and Private and State Tuitions, bringing their overall increase down to 2.9%.

Last night, I attended the Board of Finance meeting. Michael VanDeventer of Mahoney Sabel gave a presentation on the Town's FY 2019-2020 Audit. Some highlights include: Revenues were \$673,185 more than budgeted, primarily driven by favorable variances on property taxes and related interest. Expenditures were \$1,016,183 less than budgeted. There was a surplus of \$517,133 reported by the School District. No instances of budgetary noncompliance were identified. The Auditor did discover three bank deposits not recorded as revenue in the Cafeteria Fund, which is still being investigated. School Superintendent Dr. DeBarge and School District Business Manager Andy Paquette were not present in the meeting for comment.

Finance Director Amy O'Toole reported that the Town's tax collection is at ninety percent, noting that those who don't escrow their taxes through their mortgage were extended until April 1st, 2021.

The Town of East Windsor, the East Windsor Hunger Action Team and Southern Auto Auction will be distributing free boxes of perishable food items through the USDA Farmers to Families Food Box Program on February 25th and 26th, 2021 in the Southern Auto Auction parking lot from 9:00AM - 2:00PM or while supplies last. This will be done as a drive up pickup service. All households are eligible, one box per household and you must have room in your trunk!

There are vacancies on several Town Board and Commissions. If you are interested in serving your community and getting involved in your local government, please contact the First Selectman's Office.

Submitted With Sincerity,

Sarah A. Muska, Selectman