

CITY COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING
May 6, 2021

Honorable Mayor, Joseph M. Cavo, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. via video conference.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & PRAYER

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Public Works Director Iadarola. Councilman DiGilio led all in prayer.

ROLL CALL:

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Roberto Alves, Emile Buzaid, Mike Esposito, Warren Levy, Frank Salvatore, Colleen Stanley, Robert Taborsak, Irving Fox, John Priola, Mike Henry, Vinny DiGilio, Paul Rotello, Fred Visconti, Jack Knapp, John Esposito, Farley Santos, Duane Perkins, Ben Chianese, Nancy Cammisa, and Richard Molinaro.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Elmer Palma was attending a school function and arrived at approximately 7:50 p.m.

PRESENT: 20, ABSENT: 1; AT 7:50 P.M.: PRESENT: 21.

ALSO PRESENT: Robert J. Yamin, Corporation Counsel; Les Pinter, Deputy Corporation Counsel; and David St. Hilaire, Finance Director.

PUBLIC SPEAKING Virtual

Mayor Cavo read public comments as follows:

- Margaret Mary Kearn, 25 Belmont Circle, Danbury, regarding the school budget.
- Mr. & Mrs. Juan Rivas, 59 Dana Road, Danbury Road, regarding the school budget.
- Joanne Calandrino, 16 Lake Road, Danbury, regarding the budget.
- Richard Jannelli, 18 Benson Drive, Danbury, speaking as a private citizen, regarding the school budget.
- Melvin Lynch, no address provided, regarding the school budget.
- Jean Hislop, 9 Madison Avenue, Danbury, regarding the school budget.
- Gladys Cooper, 1 Southern Boulevard, Danbury, regarding the school budget.
- Andrea Gartner, no address provided, regarding Item 5.
- Theresa Chaber, 14 Valley Road, Danbury, regarding the school budget
- Tom Brown, 10 Valerie Lane, Danbury, regarding Items 10 and 12.
- Oswaldo Chin, no address provided, regarding the school budget.

It was noted Councilman Palma joined the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Cavo made the announcements for the Month of May.

[MINUTES - Minutes of the Council Meeting held April 6, 2021 and Special Meeting, April 19, 2020](#)

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Perkins, to waive the reading of the Minutes as all members have copies and copies are on file in the Legislative Assistant's Office, amended to specify the Minutes of the April meeting and the April Special meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

[CALL TO SERVICE:](#)

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Taborsak, to accept the Call to Service for this meeting, having been postponed from the May 4, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. to May 6, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

[CONSENT CALENDAR](#)

1. [COMMUNICATION – Appointment to Housatonic Area Regional Transit Board of Directors](#)

[Receive the communication and confirm the appointment of Sharon Calitro to the Housatonic Area Regional Transit \(HART\) District Board of Directors.](#)

4. [COMMUNICATION – Permission – Disposal of Surplus Vehicles and Equipment](#)

[Receive the communication and declare the attached list as surplus and approve the request to dispose of these items at an online public auction in accordance with Section 2-211 of the Code of Ordinances.](#)

7. [RESOLUTION – Elderly and Demand Responsive Transit Service](#)

[Receive the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Mayor Joseph M. Cavo, to execute all necessary agreements and other documents related to the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation's matching grant for the enhanced regional municipal "Elderly and Demand Responsive Transportation" program coordinated through WESTCOG \(Western Connecticut Council of Governments\), with applications to this program made by Housatonic Area Regional Transit \(HARTransit\) on behalf of the City of Danbury and other regional towns, a 50% local match will be met through the adopted budget allocation to HARTransit.](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, and was seconded by Councilman Perkins, to adopt the Consent Calendar as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

1. [COMMUNICATION – Appointment to Housatonic Area Regional Transit Board of Directors](#)

**CONSENTED* - as received.

2. [COMMUNICATION - 33 Crosby Street - Renewal of Parking Lease Agreement](#)

A motion was made by Councilwoman Stanley, seconded by Councilman Knapp, to accept the communication and approve the license agreement between the City of Danbury and 33 Crosby Street LLC as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. [COMMUNICATION – Assignment/Lease Extension with Jay Earl Associates](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, seconded by Councilman Mike Esposito, to refer to an Ad Hoc with the Airport Administrator, Corporation Counsel, the petitioner, and to the Planning Commission. Hearing no objection, Mayor Cavo so ordered the Ad Hoc with Fox as Chair, Levy, and Visconti.

4. [COMMUNICATION – Permission – Disposal of Surplus Vehicles and Equipment](#)

***CONSENTED** - as received.

5. [RESOLUTION – Regional Greenway Study Grant](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Priola, seconded by Councilman Salvatore, to accept the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Joseph M. Cavo, Mayor of the City of Danbury, or Sharon Calitro as his designee, to sign the grant application and to sign any other documents associated with administering the grant if awarded including, but not limited to the final grant agreement, and any amendments thereto, and ratify any prior required actions taken in furtherance hereof. The grant is from the CT DOT for a Regional Greenway Study. The objective of the Study is to evaluate the feasibility of expanding the current Stillriver Greenway from Brookfield into Danbury and New Milford. The estimated cost of this study will be \$150,000 and the City's local match will be \$5,000 and this funding will be charged to 002.1220-5300.2010. Motion carried unanimously.

6. [RESOLUTION – 25 Miry Brook Road/Acquisition](#)

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mike Esposito to refer to an Ad Hoc with the Airport Administrator, Corporation Counsel, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Planning, and a report from Planning. Hearing no objection, Mayor Cavo so ordered the referral to the existing Ad Hoc Committee from November 2020 Item 5. with Levy as Chair, Fox, and Rotello.

7. [RESOLUTION – Elderly and Demand Responsive Transit Service](#)

***CONSENTED** - as received.

8. [RESOLUTION – Vaccine Equity Partnership](#)

Acting Director of Health responded to questions regarding details of what the grant will be used for in the way of funding partnerships.

A motion was made by Councilman Henry, seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to accept the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Joseph M. Cavo Mayor of the City of Danbury or Kara M. Prunty Acting Director of Health as his designee to apply for and accept funding from the State of Connecticut Department of Health through its vaccine equity partnership funding Program in an amount not-to-exceed \$970,000 with no local match required and to execute all contracts and agreements necessary to effectuate the purposes thereof, and to ratify any prior actions or applications in furtherance thereof. Motion carried unanimously.

9. [RESOLUTION – CT Health Foundation](#)

Acting Director of Health responded to questions regarding details of how this grant is being used to fund the community health workers and how the extended amount will be used in conjunction with Item 8. Ms. Prunty also responded to questions regarding vaccination rates and when the funds need to be spent by.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Cammisa, seconded by Councilman Santos, to accept the correspondence and adopt a Resolution that will allow the City of Danbury Department of Health and Human Services to apply for an extension for and accept the additional funding to continue contact tracing, education, and mass vaccinations related to COVID-19. The additional funding amount of \$100,000 being offered brings this total to \$225,000 for this program and must be fully expended by August 31, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

10. [RESOLUTION – School Construction Grant – Danbury Career Academy](#)

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, seconded by Councilman Visconti, to receive the communication and adopt the Resolution appointing a School Building Committee, accept a grant, and authorize schematic and final drawings and specifications for the Danbury Career Academy. Motion carried unanimously.

11. [REPORT - 2021 Neighborhood Assistance Act](#)

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to waive the reading of the Minutes as all members have copies and copies are on file. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Fox, seconded by Councilwoman Stanley, to receive the Committee of the Whole report and adopt the Resolution authorizing approved and listed agencies to apply for and receive funding in the form of tax credits from the State of Connecticut through the Neighborhood Assistance Act Program. The motion carried unanimously.

12. [REPORT - ORDINANCE & RESOLUTION – An Ordinance Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022 and a Resolution Levying the Property Tax for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, and was seconded by Councilman Mike Esposito, to waive the reading of the Budget Committee Reports and Minutes as all members have copies that are on file for review in the office of the Legislative Assistant and to reserve all proposed amendments to overall budget in the final discussion and vote. The motion carried unanimously.

A. [General Government I Budget Report](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, and seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to receive the positive recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee of General Government I and approve the Mayor's budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

B. [General Government II Budget Report](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Fox, and seconded by Councilman DiGilio, to receive the positive recommendation of the General Government II Committee and adopt the Mayor's budget as presented. The motion passed 20-1 with Councilman Perkins voting no.

C. [Education Budget Report](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, seconded by Councilman Knapp, to accept the recommendations of the Mayor's proposed Educational budget for 2021/2022 of \$137,387,375 and designate for the regular school budget health and welfare \$208,575. The motion passed 11-10 with Buzaid, Mike Esposito, Levy, Stanley, Fox, Priola, Henry, DiGilio, Palma, Knapp, Cammisa voting yes; and Alves, Salvatore, Taborsak, Rotello, Visconti, John Esposito, Santos, Perkins, Chianese, and Molinaro voting no.

D. [Public Works Budget Report](#)

A motion was made by Councilwoman Stanley, and seconded by Councilman DiGilio, to accept the meeting report and adopt the recommendations of the Committee (for the Public Works budget). The motion passed unanimously.

E. [Health & Housing, Public Safety, Welfare & Social Services Budget Report](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Priola, and seconded by Councilman Mike Esposito, to receive the Committee report of the Health & Housing, Public Safety, Welfare & Social Services and adopt the Committee's positive recommendation to approve the Mayor's budget as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

The Council discussed the amendment to the final motion below with additional comments by School Superintendent Sal Pascarella, Schools Finance Director Courtney LeBorious, Finance Director St. Hilaire, and Mayor Cavo.

A motion was made by Councilman Perkins, seconded by Councilman Chianese, to amend the final motion below to transfer up to \$4.3 million from the Fund Balance to the Education Budget for the purpose of fully funding the request from the Board of Education and said funds to be replenished from outside sources such as Federal or State Grants with the exact mechanisms to be determined by the amount and encumbrances that may be attached to the grants. The motion failed 10-11 with Alves, Salvatore, Taborsak, Rotello, Visconti, John Esposito, Santos, Perkins, Chianese, and Molinaro voting yes; and Buzaid, Mike Esposito, Levy, Stanley, Fox, Priola, Henry, DiGilio, Palma, Knapp, Cammisa voting no.

Councilmembers commented on the budget and the motion below.

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to adopt an Ordinance making appropriations for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, and a Resolution levying the property tax for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022. The motion passed 11-10 with Buzaid, Mike Esposito, Levy, Stanley, Fox, Priola, Henry, DiGilio, Palma, Knapp, Cammisa voting yes; and Alves, Salvatore, Taborsak, Rotello, Visconti, John Esposito, Santos, Perkins, Chianese, and Molinaro voting no.

13. [REPORT & ORDINANCE - An Ordinance Appropriating \\$3,000,000 for Public Improvements in The 2021-2022 Capital Budget and Authorizing the Issuance of \\$3,000,000 Bonds of the City to Meet Said Appropriations And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose](#)

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Rotello, to waive the reading of the Minutes as all members have copies and copies are on file in the Legislative Assistant's Office. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Salvatore noted he would abstain for reasons stated in the Minutes (as he is President of one of the Battalions). Councilman Santos requested future budgets delineate what roadwork and paving will be done. Councilman Visconti requested staff take a look at putting in sidewalks at Rogers Park from the school driveway to the driveway of the ballpark.

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, seconded by Councilman Rotello, to receive the report of the Committee of the Whole, and adopt the ordinance appropriating \$3,000,000 to public improvement projects in the 2021/2022 Capital Budget and authorizing the issuance of \$3,000,000 in Bonds of the City to meet said appropriation and, pending issuance thereof, the making of temporary borrowing for such purposes. The motion carried 20-0 with Frank Salvatore abstaining.

14. [REPORT & ORDINANCE - Senior Tax Freeze, Code of Ordinance, Section 44-53](#)

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to waive the reading of the Minutes as all members have copies and copies are on file in the Legislative Assistant's Office. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Chianese inquired whether the Tax Assessor is working on other programs, to which Mayor Cavo responded. Councilman Taborsak requested further details regarding any potential changes.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Stanley, seconded by Councilman Taborsak, to receive the Committee of the Whole report, and adopt the amendment to the Code of Ordinances Section Code Section 44-53, to extend the Tax Freeze Program for Elderly Homeowners through the filing of the October 1, 2021 Grant List. The motion carried unanimously

15. [REPORT & ORDINANCE - Governmental Entities, Code of Ordinance, Section 2-259](#)

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Rotello, to waive the reading of the Minutes as all members have copies and copies are on file in the Legislative Assistant's Office. The motion carried unanimously.

Finance Director St. Hilaire responded to Councilman Chianese's questions regarding the Charles Ives Authority transition, noting they are taking inventory of all assets. Councilman Rotello further discussed the performing arts facility noting it could exist under a different entity.

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, and seconded by Councilman Visconti, to receive the Ad Hoc Committee report of March 23, 2021 and recommend that it authorize the entities set forth in the Code of Ordinances Section 2-259A as proposed. The motion passed unanimously.

16. [DEPARTMENT REPORTS – Police, Fire, Health-Housing & Welfare, Public Works, Permit Center, UNIT, Elderly, Library,](#)

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Taborsak, to waive the reading of the Department Reports as all members have copies and copies are available in the Office of the Legislative Assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Chianese commended the work of the Public Works Department and inquired regarding a light fixture at South and Main Street. He commended the Police Department and requested a report on training hours; Deputy Police Chief McColgan stated he will provide that information. Councilman Chianese also

Mayor Cavo responded to Councilman Taborsak regarding the status of sale of the Super 8.

Councilman Rotello commented on a legal notice about the sewer plant and Public Works Director Iadarola responded to his related questions.

Deputy Police Chief McColgan responded to Councilman Perkins' comments regarding enforcement related to dirt bikes and quads. He also responded to comments about body cameras.

Councilman Santos commended the Police for resolving issues in his Ward. Public Works Director Iadarola responded to his questions regarding a list of paving projects and will provide a list for upcoming items as requested. He also responded to Councilman John Esposito's questions regarding the purpose of the 4th Ward's utilities that are painted and identified related to replacement of cast iron gas pipes.

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Perkins, to accept the Department Reports as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, seconded by Councilman Levy, to take from the Table Item 4. from the April 6, 2021 City Council Meeting titled Downtown Special Services District – Tax Levy and Resolution. Motion carried unanimously.

4. [RESOLUTION - Downtown Special Services District – Tax Levy \(From the April 6, 2021 City Council Agenda\)](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to adopt the communication and Resolution approving the tax rate for the Downtown Taxing District. Hearing no objections, so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Cavo extended all Committees with the following change: Item 7. from the April 6, 2021 Agenda - replace DiGilio with Levy as Chair due to a conflict, and add Knapp; Santos is also on the Committee.

A motion was made by Councilman Priola, and was seconded by Councilman Rotello, to adjourn the City Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Goor
Recording Secretary

Attest,
Joseph M. Cavo, Mayor