

## CITY COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING

December 1, 2020

Honorable Mayor, Mark D. Boughton, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. via video conference.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & PRAYER

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Legislative Assistant Natale. 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, Vinny DiGilio, Joseph Cavo, Paul Rotello, Fred Visconti, Elmer Palma, Jack Knapp, John Esposito, Farley Santos, Duane Perkins, Ben Chianese, Nancy Cammisa, and Richard Molinaro.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**PRESENT: 21, ABSENT: 0**

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

### PUBLIC SPEAKING

Mayor Boughton read the following letter into the record:

- Tom Brown 10 Valerie Lane, Danbury, regarding Item 12 Department Reports related to leaf bag and brush removal.

### MINUTES - Minutes of the Council Meeting held November 5, 2020

*A motion was made by Councilman Cavo, and was seconded by Councilman Perkins, to waive the reading of the Minutes as all members have copies and copies are on file for review in the office of the Legislative Assistant.* The motion carried unanimously.

### CONSENT CALENDAR

2. COMMUNICATION – Appointments to GERC, Sec 2-259, Code of Ordinances

Receive the communication and confirm the appointments of City Council Members Warren Levy, Vinny DiGilio and Paul Rotello, as well as confirm the reappointments of citizens Alan T. Boyce and Mark S. Chory to serve on the Government Entities Review Committee.

3. COMMUNICATION – Appointment to the Tarrywile Park Authority

Receive the communication and confirm the appointment of Edward Prybylski to the Tarrywile Park Authority.

9. RESOLUTION – Police Department ‘Click It or Ticket’ Grant

Receive the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Mayor Mark D. Boughton, or Patrick Ridenhour, Chief of Police, as his designee to apply for and accept grant funding made available through the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation Division of Highway Safety "Click it or Ticket" Seatbelt Enforcement Program in an amount not to exceed \$17,500.00, no local match is required.

10. Reports – Renewal of Sanitary Sewer – 28 & 30 Tamarack Avenue

Receive the reports from the City Engineer and the Planning Commission and approve the request for a time extension for the approval previously granted in April of 2017 by the City Council for the installation of a sanitary sewer extension to serve the properties located at 28 & 30 Tamarack Avenue, (Tax Assessor’s Lot Numbers I 11127 & I 11126) for a period of eighteen months subject to compliance with the standard Public Works/Engineering Department requirements for public sewer main extensions and all final plans and documents to be approved as to form and content acceptable to the Office of Corporation Counsel.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Acting Health Director Prunty provided a briefing on COVID-19 noting the City, State, and Country are in the second wave of the pandemic. Cases have been increasing; the 14-day average is 86.3 per 100,000 with a 11.4 positivity rate. Connecticut is under Phase 2.1 reopen guidelines. There is a confidential link to complaints with follow-up education regarding compliance with follow-up checks and measures are taken from there. There were 230 checks conducted in November with several follow-up visits. Contact tracing is continuing. Preparations for the vaccine are being made which is expected to arrive this month. Critical infrastructure employees and first responders will be the first to receive the vaccine. Further information will be provided when available. Free testing continues. The #Doyourpart campaign has been launched encouraging citizens to practice proper hygiene and maintain social distancing. She responded to Council questions regarding what information collected from other areas show with regard where case percentages are coming from. It appears there are not large outbreaks related to bars and restaurants in Danbury, rather from get-togethers with known persons. Reinspection fees have been issued. The State allows up to a \$10,000 fine; however, the City has not used that to date. Protocols for larger big box stores and grocery stores were discussed. She responded to questions regarding staffing, grants, and a volunteer pool they are working with. She urged any complaints be brought to her. Effects on small businesses are given through feedback from Health Departments. Homeless and employees at the Super 8 are tested every month with no significant issues to report.

Mayor Boughton responded to Council questions noting he would be hesitant to post non-compliant businesses as that could result in a false sense of security. He will work with Ms. Prunty to provide a list to the City Council every two weeks of all the stops that the COVID Compliance Officer has made. It was requested that report include mapping. Perhaps if a fine or egregious situation is encountered, that information could be made available. City Hall is only open to the public by appointment. He also mentioned that big box stores are going with 50% capacity, but they have a high capacity to begin with. The City is looking for additional contact tracers. Outreach will be worked on for Federal credit for employees out with COVID, as well as 50% of wait staff wages available from the State. The extensive paperwork involved was discussed. He responded to Council questions regarding what is happening with the schools. Mayor Boughton answered questions regarding the increase in out of state license plates that have been seen lately. Reporting questions were answered.

Emergency Management Director Cassavechia discussed a number of tasks forces and the COVID surge including plans, protocol strategy, and protecting first responders and critical infrastructure.

1. [COMMUNICATION – Appointments to the Police Department](#)

**A motion was made by Councilwoman Stanley, seconded by Councilman Rotello, to receive the communication and confirm the appointment of Joseph Ahlstrin to the position of Police Officer in the City of Danbury.** Motion carried unanimously.

**A motion was made by Councilwoman Stanley, seconded by Councilman Santos, to receive the communication and confirm the appointment of Dustin Conrad to the position of Police Officer in the City of Danbury.** Motion carried unanimously.

2. [COMMUNICATION – Appointments to GERC, Sec 2-259, Code of Ordinances](#)

**\*CONSENTED** - as received.

3. [COMMUNICATION – Appointment to the Tarrywile Park Authority](#)

**\*CONSENTED** - as received.

4. [COMMUNICATION – Extension of Collective Bargaining Agreement – City and Fire Union](#)

It was noted Councilmen Cavo, Visconti, and Mike Esposito will be recusing themselves from this item.

**A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, seconded by Councilman Salvatore, to receive the communication and approve the extension of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City and the Fire Union Local 801 International Association of Firefighters AFL-CIO from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2024, and as stated by Mayor Boughton, approve the funding for said contract.** Motion carried 18-0; Councilmen Cavo, Visconti, and Mike Esposito recused.

Councilmen Cavo, Visconti, and Mike Esposito rejoined the meeting.

5. [COMMUNICATION – Request for Assignment of Fund Balance – Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020](#)

Finance Director St. Hilaire responded to Council questions regarding fund balance use and the current state of the budget, notably the effect COVID is continuing to have on revenue. He noted we are following best practices recommended by the accountants, rating agencies, and GFOA. Mr. St. Hilaire responded to questions regarding the Board of Education funds.

**A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, seconded by Councilman Rotello, to receive the communication and approve the request for the assignment of fund balance for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2020 as follows: \$3,480,000 of assigned fund balance for capital projects as outlined; \$3,461,353 of assigned fund balance for the Board of Education as outlined; \$30,000 of assigned fund balance for debt service; \$175,000 of assigned fund balance for litigation; and \$75,000 of assigned fund balance for authorities as listed.** Motion carried unanimously.

6. [COMMUNICATION – Request for Extension of Sewer – 5 Great Pasture Road](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Priola, to refer to the City Engineer and Planning for reports. Hearing no objection, Mayor Boughton so ordered.

7. [RESOLUTION – White Street and Locust Ave. Intersection Improvement](#)

Public Works Director Iadarola responded to questions regarding estimated construction start-up and timeline; he responded that plans are in final draft and all easements are drafted.

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, seconded by Councilman Santos, to receive the Agenda Item 7-4 and adopt the Resolution for traffic safety improvements along the White Street corridor and authorize the Mayor, Mark D. Boughton, to execute the projected authorization letter and all other related documents or actions necessary to effectuate the execution; authorize the City through the Corporation Counsel's Office to acquire property interest in accordance with the State law by negotiation or eminent domain. Motion carried unanimously.

8. [RESOLUTION – Local Bridge Program – DOT](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Fox, seconded by Councilman Priola, to receive the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing the Mark D. Boughton, Mayor, to sign the preliminary application for repairs and rehabilitation to Bridge 34021 Franklin Street Extension over Mercers Pond Brook, Richter Drive on Unnamed Brook and Middle River Road Bridge over Unnamed Pond at West Lake, all within the City of Danbury, and to sign the commitment to fund if one is issued for these bridges, and to schedule a public information meeting should the project go forward. Motion carried unanimously.

9. [RESOLUTION – Police Department ‘Click It or Ticket’ Grant](#)

\**CONSENTED* - as received.

10. [Reports – Renewal of Sanitary Sewer – 28 & 30 Tamarack Avenue](#)

\**CONSENTED* - as received.

11. [Report – Public Hearing – Long Ridge Road](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Cavo, and was seconded by Councilman Perkins, to accept the Committee's report and adopt the Resolution to authorize the paving and and improvements to the scenic portion of Long Ridge Road. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Police Chief Ridenhour responded to Councilman Rotello that the only trend that is an issue is vehicle break-ins with citizens leaving cars unlocked with keys inside. He also responded to Councilman Santos regarding suspects, arrests, target hardening, and home security systems.

Superintendent Day responded to Councilman Rotello regarding reservoir levels.

Councilman Palma requested a robocall go out before leaf pickup. Mayor Boughton noted that may work as long as it is a call letting citizens know we are in the area without committing to a specific street as schedules can change depending on other issues. Public Works Director Iadarola responded to Councilman Salvatore's suggestion that the City be quadrented by the Public Works areas. He noted he will put together a description of how the program works for the citizens. Mr. Iadarola noted how COVID has affected the program.

Mayor Boughton noted he would provide Councilman Chianese with a report put together by Police Chief Ridenhour regarding drug overdoses by the Super 8 Motel. Police Chief Ridenhour stated there was one overdose the last time statistics were run, but he has not seen anything of significance on the daily reports. Fire Chief Omasta noted there were more drug overdose calls at the Super 8 motel prior to it becoming a homeless shelter, Councilman Visconti concurred.

In response to Councilman Taborsak, Mayor Boughton and Acting Health Director Prunty provided an update on activities, statistics and negotiations by the State (not the City) at the Super 8 being used as a homeless shelter.

Councilman Chianese commented on the Spruce Mountain problem with Eversource and the condition of underground lines and inquired regarding the radio tower. Fire Chief Omasta responded that the Spruce Mountain Tower is up and running, and there are long-term issues that need addressing finding another site to replace Spruce Mountain. Mayor Boughton added that there was a conversation about Park Avenue and Pleasant Street repaving issues and alleged replacement of gas lines.

***A motion was made by Councilman Cavo, and was seconded by Councilman Santos, to waive the reading of the Departmental Reports, as all members have copies and copies are available for review in the office of the Legislative Assistant as well as online.*** The motion carried unanimously.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Boughton extended all Committees.

***A motion was made by Councilman Rotello, and was seconded by Councilman Visconti, to adjourn the City Council Meeting.*** Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Goor  
Recording Secretary

Attest,  
Mark D. Boughton, Mayor