

CITY COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING

January 5, 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 Deputy Corporation Counsel Attorney Pinter. Councilman Palma 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, 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: 20, ABSENT: 0, 1 Vacancy

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 Cavo read the following letters into the record:

- Tom Browne, 10 Valerie Lane, Danbury, regarding Item 13 Department Reports related to Police Department Body Cameras and Health & Human Services related to COVID-19 vaccination questions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Cavo noted there will be a Ribbon-Cutting at the Ellen Levy Animal Control Facility on Thursday at 11:30 a.m. Mayor Cavo requested a moment of silence for Frank Salvatore's mother, Carol.

MINUTES - Minutes of the Council Meeting held December 1, 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 office of the Legislative Assistant. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Note: This Item was pulled from the Consent Calendar:

3. COMMUNICATION – Appointment to the Danbury Museum Board of Trustees

8. RESOLUTION – Department of Aging and Disability Services – Senior Center

Receive the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Mayor Joseph M. Cavo, or Susan Tomanio, Director of Elderly Services, as his designee to apply for and accept grant funding made available through the State of Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability State Unit on Aging through the CARES Act in an amount not to exceed \$2,500.00, this funding to be used to assist Senior Centers to continue to provide critical services during the COVID-19 pandemic, no local match is required.

9. RESOLUTION – ALA Dream Literacy Initiative - Library

Receive the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Mayor Joseph M. Cavo, or Katie Pearson, Library Director, as his designee to apply for and accept grant funding made available through the American Library Association (ALA) through its American Dream Literacy Initiative Grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00, this funding to be used by the Danbury Library to initiate English literacy and basic education, and workforce development, no local match is required.

10. RESOLUTION – American Library Association Grant

Receive the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Mayor Joseph M. Cavo, or Katie Pearson, Library Director, as his designee to apply for and accept grant funding made available through the American Library Association (ALA) in partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History through its "Revisiting the Founding Era" program in an amount not to exceed \$500.00, this funding to be used by the Danbury Library to develop informative programs about the American Founding Era (1774-1797) for adults and children, no local match is required.

11. RESOLUTION – Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant

Receive the communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Mayor Joseph M. Cavo, or Kara Marie Prunty, Acting Director of Health, as his designee to apply for and accept grant funding made available from the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health through the Torrington Area Health District through its Public Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) grant program and to sign the related Memorandum of Agreement effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$47,960 for the first year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

Councilman Chianese requested Item 3 be pulled from the Consent Calendar. Hearing no objections, Mayor Cavo so ordered.

A motion was made by Councilman Fox, and was seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to adopt the Consent Calendar (with the removal of Item 3). The motion carried unanimously.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Acting Health Director Prunty provided a briefing on COVID-19 noting the 14-day average of new cases is 73.6; the positivity rate is 11.5 percent. Group 1a vaccination has begun; 430 individuals have been vaccinated. It is hoped Group 1a will be complete at the end of January when Group 1b will begin vaccinations. She will make more details on Group 1b available as soon as she receives it.

1. COMMUNICATION – Appointment to the City Council

A motion was made by Councilwoman Stanley, seconded by Councilman Levy, to receive the communication and approve the appointment Michael Henry as City Councilman of the Third Ward. Motion carried unanimously.

2. [COMMUNICATION – Election of Council President](#)

Nominations for Council President were made as noted follows:

Councilman Knapp, seconded by Councilwoman Stanley, nominated Councilman Vinny DiGilio as Council President.

Councilman Visconti, seconded by Councilman Perkins, nominated Councilman Paul Rotello as Council President.

It was noted that Councilman Henry was already sworn-in.

A motion was made by Councilman Chianese, seconded by Councilman Palma, that nominations be closed. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, seconded by Councilwoman Stanley, to nominate Councilman Vinny DiGilio as Council President. Motion carried 11-10, with Alves, Salvatore, Taborsak, Rotello, Visconti, John Esposito, Santos, Perkins, Chianese, Molinaro voting no.

Note: This Item was pulled from the Consent Calendar:

3. COMMUNICATION – Appointment to the Danbury Museum Board of Trustees

Councilman Chianese noted the appointment is to the Authority, not just the Board of Trustees. Mr. Pinter clarified the appointment is to the Authority acting as the Board of Trustees.

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, seconded by Councilman Palma, to receive the communication and confirm the appointment of James Beschle to the Danbury Museum Board of Trustees. Motion carried unanimously.

4. [COMMUNICATION – Appointment to the Police Department](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Mike Esposito, seconded by Councilwoman Stanley, to receive the correspondence and approve the appointment of Christopher Ogrinc to the Danbury Police Department. Motion carried unanimously.

5. [COMMUNICATION – Lease Agreement – Tango Yankee, LLC](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, seconded by Councilwoman Stanley, to refer to an Ad Hoc consisting of the Airport Administrator, Director of Planning, Director of Finance, Corporation Counsel and report from the Planning Commission. Hearing no objections, Mayor Cavo ordered the Ad Hoc Committee with the following Councilmembers: Knapp as Chair, Priola and Visconti.

6. [COMMUNICATION – Certification of Funds – CMAQ Application \(Combined with Item 7.\)](#)

A motion was made by Councilman Priola, seconded by Councilman Rotello, to receive the communication and approve the request for \$250,000 which has been certified as available to be transferred

from SNAPP 2020.3001-7000.0501 Paving, Drainage, and Road Improvements, to be utilized as the City's 20% match for the attached CMAQ Grant Application Program. See combined motion below.

7. RESOLUTION – Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

Deputy Corporation Counsel Pinter responded to questions regarding the process.

A motion was made by Councilman Salvatore, seconded by Councilman Rotello, to combine Items 6. and 7. for the purposes of both requests. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Works Director Iadarola and Finance Director St. Hilaire responded to Council questions regarding the program and the funding.

A motion was made by Councilman Fox, seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to receive the combined communication of Items 6. and 7., and adopt the Resolution authorizing Mayor Joseph M. Cavo or his designee, the Director of Public Works/City Engineer, to apply for and receive grant funds pursuant to the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, and to take such actions and execute any agreements as may be required in accordance with the program, and to approve the certification of availability of funds of \$250,000 to be transferred from the SNAPP 2020.3001-7000.0501 Paving, Drainage, and Road Improvements. Motion carried unanimously.

8. [RESOLUTION – Department of Aging and Disability Services – Senior Center](#)

**CONSENTED* - as received.

9. [RESOLUTION – ALA Dream Literacy Initiative - Library](#)

**CONSENTED* - as received.

10. [RESOLUTION – American Library Association Grant](#)

**CONSENTED* - as received.

11. [RESOLUTION – Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant](#)

**CONSENTED* - as received.

12. [Reports – Request for Renewal – Sewer Main Extension - 5 Great Pasture Road](#)

Public Works Director Iadarola responded to questions regarding the process as relates to road maintenance.

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, and was seconded by Councilman Salvatore, to approve the request for an 18-month extension for a sewer main extension at 5 Great Pasture Road, subject to the normal 8 steps, plus additional steps as outlined by City Department Heads. The motion carried unanimously.

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

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Perkins, to waive the reading of the Departmental Reports, as all members have copies and copies are on file with the Legislative Assistant. The motion carried unanimously.

Police Chief Ridenhour responded to questions regarding bike patrol schedules, which vary, and the in-dash and body camera status. He also responded to questions regarding the downtown area. Councilman Levy noted falling crimes rates over the past few years.

Public Works Director Iadarola responded to questions regarding Hearthstone Castle cleanup at Tarrywile. He responded to Councilman Rotello who requested the status of the gas line from the Rizzo Project to Wooster Heights, to Pleasant Street, to Park Avenue. Mr. Iadarola responded to questions regarding an ADA program in the sitting area in the Chambers.

Tax Collector Ferguson responded regarding the tax deferral program and Executive Order 9-R.

Acting Health Director Prunty responded to questions regarding homeless numbers and negotiations on the Super8. She also responded regarding vaccine dosage numbers and monitoring.

Marc Dillon, Community Relations & Project Management, responded to questions regarding on-going negotiations between the State and Pacific House and the CDBG process.

Councilmembers congratulated Joe Cavo on becoming Mayor of Danbury and Vinny DiGilio on becoming Council President.

Superintendent of Public Services responded to questions and provided details about the Christmas Tree pickup program.

Information Technology Manager Gentile responded to questions regarding an app related to citizens reporting potholes.

Public Relations Coordinator O'Brien responded to questions regarding getting information out about moving cars in snow events.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilman Rotello, and was seconded by Councilman Salvatore, to adjourn the City Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Goor
Recording Secretary

Attest,
Joseph M. Cavo, Mayor