

**Town of East Hampton
Town Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 9, 2024
Town Hall Council Chambers and Zoom**

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Dean Markham, Vice Chairperson Karen Wanat, Council Members Deborah Cunningham, Tim Feegel, Richard Knotek, Jack Solomon, and Jordan Werme and Town Manager David Cox.

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Markham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers and via Zoom.

Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Solomon, seconded by Mr. Knotek, to adopt the agenda as submitted. Voted (7-0).

Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting of March 26, 2024

A motion was made by Mr. Solomon, seconded by Ms. Cunningham, to approve the minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting of March 26, 2024 as submitted. Voted (7-0).

Public Remarks

Justin Kelly, 31 Lakewood Road, Chris Osterman, 15 Lakewood Road, and Nick Mougey, 73 Bay Road, commented on the Lakewood Road property tree cutting that has continued after a cease and desist and discussed the recent Planning & Zoning meeting.

Presentations

Clean Energy Task Force Presentation on Sustainable CT

Russell Kaplan, Chairman of the Clean Energy Task Force introduced Jessica LeClair from Sustainable CT who provided an overview of the resources and benefits of joining Sustainable CT. Sustainable CT is a voluntary program that aims to encourage, support and recognize the efforts of municipalities to enact sustainable, equitable and inclusive measures within their communities.

A draft resolution was reviewed but will be tabled until the next meeting with wording added to include the Town Manager/his designee to sign off on projects.

Bids & Contacts

Review and Possible Action/Rejection of Mowing Services Bid

The Town received bids for mowing services for municipal properties, cemeteries and educational facilities and fields. Management staff does not feel there would be a savings with an outside company mowing the educational facilities and fields, but there could be savings for town buildings and cemeteries. The recommendation is to reject the bids and work with the companies individually for mowing the town building properties and cemeteries. The cost for that work is below the bidding threshold for the town.

A motion was made by Mr. Solomon, seconded by Ms. Wanat, to reject all bids received for mowing services. Voted (7-0)

Review and Possible Action on Police Vehicle Maintenance/Towing Bid

Mr. Feegel recused himself from this item.

Each year the Police Department requests bids for vehicle maintenance and towing. One bid was received in response to the bid. There was a small increase in the costs compared to last year.

A motion was made by Mr. Solomon, seconded by Ms. Cunningham, to award the bid for Police Vehicle Maintenance/Towing to Belltown Motors of East Hampton. Voted (6-0)

Mr. Feegel returned to the meeting.

Resolutions/ Ordinances/ Policies/ Proclamations

Proclamation for Lions Club Choose Kindness Week

Tim Csere from the Lions Club was presented with the proclamation for Choose Kindness Week.

Continued Business

Sub-Committee Reports & Updates

Mr. Werme reported that the Board of Education hired Timothy Van Tasel as the new Superintendent of Schools to replace current retiring Superintendent Paul Smith as of July 1, 2024.

Discussion Regarding the Protection of the Lake Pocotopaug Watershed Area

The Council discussed the development protections in the Lake Pocotopaug watershed area.

A motion was made by Mr. Werme, seconded by Ms. Wanat, that the Town Council encourage the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency to place a one year moratorium on all applications for multi-structure development, clear-cut, or forest harvest activities within the Lake Pocotopaug Watershed so the Town Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, and other land use commissions can jointly review the existing regulations, policies, and procedures, and to determine if any alterations are appropriate, and ensure that adequate and proper enforcement measures are in place. Voted (7-0)

Mr. Solomon read a statement that will be included in the minutes filed in the Town Clerk's Office.

A motion was made by Mr. Solomon, seconded by Mr. Knotek, that the East Hampton Town Council request that: 1) Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) study the wetlands regulations and enforcement of them and recommend changes required to improve the ability of IWWA and the Town to prevent contamination of Lake Pocotopaug; 2) Planning & Zoning Commission study their regulations and enforcement of their actions and recommend changes required to improve the ability of Planning & Zoning and the town to prevent contamination of Lake Pocotopaug; 3) The Conservation Lake Commission should study the Town regulations and enforcement and recommend changes required to prevent the contamination of Lake Pocotopaug; 5) an attorney with expertise in land use and land use regulations be retained to review any regulation changes. Voted (7-0)

New Business

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding 2024-2025 Schedule of Fees and Charges

Mr. Cox presented the updated 2024-2025 Schedule of Fees and Charges. New fees were added related to certain fire safety related permits.

A motion was made by Ms. Wanat, seconded by Mr. Solomon, to approve the 2024-2025 Schedule of Fees and Charges as presented. Voted (7-0).

Review, Discussion and Possible Action on Board of Finance Recommended FY2024-2025 General Government, Board of Education, Debt Service and Capital Improvement Budgets

Chairman Markham reviewed the list of motions made by the Board of Finance regarding the budget, noting no actions would be taken tonight. One major reduction was for the Ambulance Service. Chairman Markham indicated he would be putting together a task force to review the Ambulance service and funding needs and would go back to the Board of Finance to look at funding, possibly a special appropriation. The Board of Finance was not opposed to looking at it later in the year.

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Police Chief Contract

The Town Council is asked to authorize continued employment of Police Chief Woessner beyond the expiration of his contract and to replace the contract with a standard letter of employment, the Employee Handbook and be subject to State Statute 7-278. Other non-union employees have held employment agreements and they have been allowed to expire and the employees remained with the Town under a letter of employment and the Employee Handbook.

A motion was made by Mr. Solomon, seconded by Ms. Cunningham, to authorize continued employment of the Police Chief with a standard letter of employment, the Town's Employee Handbook and subject to State Statute Section 7-278. This action pertains to the current Police Chief. Voted (7-0)

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Cox provided his written report for the Council members which will be included with the minutes filed in the Town Clerk's Office.

Appointments

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Ms. Wanat, to reappoint Jaime Krasnitski to the Library Advisory Board with a term through December 31, 2026. Voted (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Ms. Wanat, to appoint Kathleen Monroe to the Clean Energy Task Force with a term through December 31, 2025. Voted (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Ms. Wanat, to appoint Ann McLaughlin to the Town Cemetery Board with a term through April 30, 2028. Voted (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Mr. Feegel, to appoint Donna McLaughlin to the Town Cemetery Board with a term through April 30, 2028. Voted (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Ms. Cunningham, to appoint Sali Cosford Parker to the Town Cemetery Board with a term through April 30, 2028 and to the Design Review Board with a term through June 30, 2025. Voted (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Ms. Wanat, to appoint Mark Kimball to the Clean Energy Task Force with a term through December 31, 2025. Voted (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Mr. Feegel, to appoint Mark Cunningham as an alternate member on the Commission on Aging with a term through December 31, 2025. Voted (7-0).

Tax Refunds

A motion was made by Mr. Feegel, seconded by Ms. Wanat, to approve tax refunds in the amount of \$228.84. Voted (7-0).

Public Remarks

Bob Yenknor, 83 Spellman Point Road, thanked the Council for the motions made tonight regarding the watershed and noted the regulations need to be adhered to.

Chuck Yenknor, 65 Spellman Point Road, noted there is a lot of work to be done on the regulations and would like to see funding put in place for the legal fees.

Justin Kelly, 31 Lakewood Road, thanked the Council for the motions made regarding the watershed. He has some information on legal representation and environmental scientists on watersheds and lakes.

Communications, Correspondence & Announcements

March 2024 Board and Commission Summary

Council members received the March 2024 Board and Commission Summary.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Mr. Solomon, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05pm. Voted (7-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Cathy Sirois
Recording Clerk