

**Town of East Hampton
Town Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 23, 2024
Town Hall Council Chambers and Zoom**

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Dean Markham, Vice Chairperson Karen Wanat, Council Members Richard Knotek, Jack Solomon, Deborah Cunningham (attended via Zoom) and Jordan Werme and Town Manager David Cox.

Absent: Brandon Goff

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. Werme, to adopt the agenda as submitted. Voted (6-0).

Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting of January 9, 2024

A motion was made by Mr. Werme, seconded by Mr. Solomon, to approve the minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting of January 9, 2024 as submitted. Voted (6-0).

Public Remarks

Ryan Baldassario, 19 Sunset Drive, is the Chairman of the Brownfields Redevelopment Agency. He wanted to briefly update the Council members on the initial scope of work and estimated cost for the assessments in the Village Center. Both budgets are separate for both grants, EPA would be \$22,230 and DECD would be \$6,500. Mr. Baldassario is hoping the Council members will approve of the budget. The EPA grant is a community grant, while the DECD grant only covers two of the brownfields properties. Community outreach plans are being discussed for the near-future.

Presentations

- a. **Presentation of the Board of Education Quarterly Financial Report:** Paul Smith, Superintendent, presented the report to the members. The Council members received a copy of the report in their meeting packets to review. The school system is still in a deficit situation. There is a budget and hiring freeze for the schools, except for hiring replacements and filling open spots. The cost of living and prices are increasing, but the State budget is still being eroded year after year. Outplaced student costs were reviewed and discussed with the Council members. The State reimburses 76% of what is paid out for outplaced students above 4.5 times our standard per pupil cost. The number of outplaced students has jumped from 8 to 14 between years.

Bids & Contracts

- a. **Consideration of a Contract Award for Brownfield Assessments in the Village Center:** The Brownfields Agency brought their initial scope of work and estimated costs to the Council members to review and discuss.

A motion was made by Mr. Solomon, seconded by Mr. Werme, to approve the two scopes of work and estimated costs with VHB in the amount of \$28,730. Voted (6-0).

Resolutions/ Ordinances/ Policies/ Proclamations

None

Continued Business

- a. **Sub-Committee Reports & Updates:** The Appointment Sub-Committee has held a meeting to discuss their process for appointing new members to fill the boards and commissions. The terms that have expired at the end of 2023 are being handled as well. The sub-committee will contact the members that have expired terms to ensure they want to renew their term with the board or commission in which they served. The sub-committee has a 90-day time period to renew the expired terms for each member. There are 25 members whose terms have expired, 24 full member vacancies, and 12 alternate spots. The members reviewed their procedures, the application process, and discussed looking into future appointments. There was a suggestion to include a question to the application asking the applicant if they have attended the meetings of the commission or board they want to join. This would help to encourage people to attend the meetings to get more information and a feel for the board or commission. There was discussion of establishing a standing meeting for the sub-committee one hour before the Town Council meeting at the beginning of the month. There were also suggestions of advertising for all the vacancies for each board and commission. There could be advertisements included in the Events magazine.

The Board of Education meeting was held, and the members want to thank the Superintendent and the members on their thought out plan on executing a budget for the schools. The next Board of Education budget meeting will be held on February 12th.

New Business

None

Town Manager's Report

There was major road damage earlier in the month during the bad storms that passed through. The bridge and culvert on Wopowog Road past Tartia Road were lost from being washed out. The town is figuring out the cost of replacing the culvert, the estimated cost of replacing would be \$750,000. The engineering firm has been engaged with and started to work on a plan for the project. It was mentioned to the Capital Committee and the road paving may need to be pushed back to prioritize fixing the bridge and culvert. The fire department will be loaning their Engine apparatus to Portland for approximately six months. The Chiefs from both town departments will be coordinating the loan. Portland's plan is to order a new Engine and have it delivered within six months if possible. The second tax installment is due by the end of the month on February 1st.

Appointments

The members appointed to the Town Water Committee were announced, included in the meeting packet, and will be formalized next meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Knotek, seconded by Mr. Solomon, to appoint alternate Derek Johnson to full member position on the Conservation Lake Commission. Voted (6-0).

Tax Refunds

A motion was made by Ms. Wanat, seconded by Mr. Werme, to approve the tax refunds in the amount of \$7,594.49. Voted (6-0).

Public Remarks

None

Communications, Correspondence & Announcements

None

Executive Session**Strategy and Negotiation Regarding Collective Bargaining**

A motion was made by Ms. Wanat, seconded by Mr. Knotek, to recess the meeting and enter into executive session. Voted (6-0).

Adjournment

The Council returned from Executive Session at 9:01pm and adjourned the meeting with no actions taken.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katrina Aligata
Recording Clerk