

Minutes of the January 13, 2025 Regular Meeting of the West Haven City Council in the Council Chambers 3rd floor, West Haven City Hall

The Regular Meeting of the West Haven City Council was held on Monday, January 13, 2025 at 7:00p.m. in the City Council Chambers 3rd floor. Chairman Pascale called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Council Members Present: Nicholas Pascale, Edward McMillian, Gary Donovan, Christopher Vargo, Jr., Dawn Callahan, Meli Garthwait, Brian Laucks, Ruby Melton, Katherine Tucker, and Anne Heffernan. Absent: Sarah Ackbarali, Kathleen Mueller and Steven Johnstone. Also present: Mayor Dorinda Borer, Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent-West Haven Board of Education, Jeff Grandy, Steve Fontana, Economic Development Director, Nicole Timiac (of Starlift) and Michael Gormany, Finance Director.

7:04p.m 7:07p.m. Public Session

See Video on the City's website for comments.

Chairman Pascale called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilman Donovan made a **MOTION to APPROVE** the Regular Meeting minutes from the December 9, 2024, meeting, which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to AMEND** Communication D1 and D2 on the January 13, 2025 agenda. Communication D1 will be eliminated and Communication D2 will be "Communication D", which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Donovan. Councilman Laucks abstained. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chairman Pascale **APPOINTS** Councilwoman Meli Garthwait to all Committees for minority representation.

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

Communication A: from the Tax Collector regarding Overpayment of refunds for December 2024.

Communication B: from Chief Joseph Perno regarding Animal Shelter donations.

Communication C: from Michael Ajello, Deputy Corporation Counsel, regarding a West Haven Community Block Grant Application for \$5,150 for respite care for disabled children and siblings during parent support group meetings.

Communication D: from Michael Gormany, Finance Director, regarding an ordinance authoring the issuance of \$26,289,900 bonds plus additional financing costs of the City of West Haven to meet certain fiscal 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 capital budget appropriations and the making of temporary borrowings for such purposes.

Communication E: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding a resolution authorizing the City of West Haven to enter into a Real Property Tax Incentive Agreement with Starlift Equipment Company, Inc.

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Communication F: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding the appointment of Dominic Broccoli to the Senior Citizen Commission for a term of one (1) year.

III. COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Finance Committee called to order at 7:11 p.m.

FINANCE COMMITTEE, Councilman Vargo, Chairman- Committee members; Councilwoman Ackbarali (absent), Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Tucker, Councilman Johnstone (absent), and Councilwoman Garthwait

FINANCE UPDATES

1. YTD Budget Review – Michael Gormany, Finance Director-Mr. Gormany provided updates regarding collections monitoring, trending on par with last fiscal year at a 98% collection rate with a forecasted surplus for this fiscal year. Allingtown Fire Department is trending on budget. **See remarks on the City's website.**
2. MARB Meeting update-No scheduled meeting for January, but a Special Meeting has been scheduled for January 27, 2025 due to the bonding required for a February 2025 completion. **See remarks on the City's website.**

Communication B: Councilwoman Garthwait presented a **MOTION** to recommend the approval to the entire Council regarding Animal Shelter donations which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Communication C: Councilwoman Garthwait presented a **MOTION** to recommend the approval to the entire Council regarding a West Haven Community Block Grant Application for \$5,150 for respite care for disabled children and siblings during parent support group meetings. which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Communication D: from Michael Gormany, Finance Director, regarding an ordinance authoring the issuance of \$26,289,900 bonds plus additional financing costs of the City of West Haven to meet certain fiscal 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 capital budget appropriations and the making of temporary borrowings for such purposes. **Public Hearing to be scheduled for January 27, 2025 at 6:55 p.m.**

Finance Committee closed at 8:32 p.m.

Personnel & Civil Service Committee called to order at 8:32 p.m.

PERSONNEL & CIVIL SERVICE: Councilwoman Melton, Chairwoman- Committee members: Councilman Laucks, Councilman Vargo, Councilman Donovan, Councilman Johnstone (absent) and Councilwoman Garthwait

Communication F: Councilwoman Garthwait and Councilman Vargo presented a **MOTION** to recommend the approval to the entire Council regarding the appointment of Dominic Broccoli to the Senior Citizen Commission for a term of one (1) year which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Personnel & Civil Service Committee closed at 8:36 p.m.

Tax Deferral Committee called to order at 8:37 p.m.

TAX DEFERRAL: Councilman Donovan, Chairman- Committee members: Councilwoman Heffernan, Councilman Johnstone (absent), Councilwoman Melton, Councilwoman Callahan, and Councilwoman Garthwait

Communication E: Councilwoman Melton presented a **MOTION** to recommend the approval to the entire Council regarding a resolution authorizing the City of West Haven to enter into a Real Property Tax Incentive Agreement with Starlift Equipment Company, Inc. which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Tax Deferral Committee closed at 8:44 p.m.

IV: UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS-8:44 p.m.

Clerk to read Communication A into record

FINANCE COMMITTEE, Councilman Vargo, Chairman- members; Councilwoman Ackbarali (absent), Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Tucker, Councilman Johnstone (absent), and Councilwoman Garthwait

Communication B: from Chief Joseph Perno regarding Animal Shelter donations. Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Tucker. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

Resolved: The West Haven Police Department has received the following donations totaling \$ **1,732.75** to the Animal Shelter. Per Connecticut Statutes 7-148(c) (3) (A&B) and General Order 98-04, we are forwarding these donations for approval. The City Council approved the following motion at a regular meeting held on January 13, 2025.

RESOLVED: The City Council of the City of West Haven hereby approves the Animal Shelter Donations to be deposited into the Animal Shelter Donations account # 10100000-28285.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Check Number</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1. Robert L McBride	1148	\$50.00
2. Money Order	19-692269323	\$10.00
3. Angela Russo	662	\$100.00
4. Maryann Luczak	5336	\$300.00
5. Paul S Palumbo	4061	\$20.00
6. Nancy B Dautel	431	\$30.00
7. Karen Ligammari	178	\$25.00
8. Daniel B. Drummond	654	\$200.00
9. Do Good Feel Good, Inc.	1019	\$150.00
10. Angela Russo	684	\$100.00
11. Linda M Kaminsky	5455	\$25.00
12. Assetmark	1343106	\$300.00
13. First Congregational Church	114501	\$422.75

Communication C: from Michael Ajello, Deputy Corporation Counsel, regarding a West Haven Community Block Grant Application for \$5,150 for respite care for disabled children and siblings during parent support group meetings. Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

WHEREAS: The City of West Haven Community Development Administration has grant funds available for its 51st Program Year [July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026] F.Y. 25-26 through the Community Development Block Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS: The West Haven Youth and Family Services desires to apply for a portion of such funds; in particular \$5,150.00 for its Parent Support Groups Respite Care for special needs children and siblings.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That Diane Dietman, as Director of Youth and Family Services of The City of West Haven, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents related to this Resolution on behalf of the City of West Haven and to do and perform all acts and things which she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

See remarks on the City's website

Communication D: from Michael Gormany, Finance Director, regarding an ordinance authoring the issuance of \$26,289,900 bonds plus additional financing costs of the City of West Haven to meet certain fiscal 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 capital budget appropriations and the making of temporary borrowings for such purposes. **Public Hearing to be scheduled for January 27, 2025 at 6:55 p.m. First Read done by Chairman Vargo.**

PERSONNEL & CIVIL SERVICE: Councilwoman Melton, Chairwoman- Committee members: Councilman Laucks, Councilman Vargo, Councilman Donovan, Councilman Johnstone (absent) and Councilwoman Garthwait

Communication F: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding the appointment of Dominic Broccoli to the Senior Citizen Commission for a term of one (1) year. Councilwoman Melton made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Garthwait. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

RESOLVED: That the City Council of the City of West Haven hereby approves the appointment of Dominic Broccoli to the West Haven Senior Citizen Commission for a term of one (1) ear to commence on the date of the passage of this resolution.

TAX DEFERRAL: Councilman Donovan, Chairman- Committee members: Councilwoman Heffernan, Councilman Johnstone (absent), Councilwoman Melton, Councilwoman Callahan and Councilwoman Garthwait

Communication E: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding a resolution authorizing the City of West Haven to enter into a Real Property Tax Incentive Agreement with Starlift Equipment Company, Inc.

Councilman Donovan made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

WHEREAS: The City of West Haven wishes to encourage industrial/commercial development, promote real property Grand List growth, expand local job opportunities, and stimulate economic activity for the benefit of the residents of the City, and

WHEREAS: To support such efforts the State of Connecticut, under Connecticut General Statutes Section 12-65b, authorizes municipalities to enter into real property tax incentive agreements that defer real property taxes on improvements made by property owners who redevelop eligible properties, and

WHEREAS: The proposed tax incentive agreement will support commercial development at 829 First Avenue, West Haven, CT with a 5000 square foot addition to an existing commercial and industrial building.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the City Council of the City of West Haven hereby approves and authorizes the City to enter into a Real Property Tax Incentive Agreement with Starlift Equipment Company, which will freeze the real property's current assessed value for the Grand List of October 1, 2024. Thereafter, the property's assessment based upon the improvements that Starlift Equipment Company makes thereon will be phased-in according to the following schedule: 2025 Grand List Year – current assessment plus thirty-three percent (33%) of the assessed value of the improvements; 2026 Grand List Year – current assessment plus sixty-seven percent (67%) of the assessed value of the new improvements; 2027 Grand List year – current assessment plus 100% of the assessed value of the new improvements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the agreement shall become null and void should Starlift Equipment Company sell the property within the phase-in period; upon delinquency in the payment of real estate taxes due; and upon unreasonable delay in the completion of the planned improvements. This agreement will apply to real property only and shall not affect the assessment of personal property.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Dorinda Borer, as Mayor of The City of West Haven, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents related to this Resolution on behalf of the City of West Haven and to do and perform all acts and things which she deems necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents.

VI. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS

Councilwoman Tucker read an update from the November meeting of the Opioid Settlement Committee. Councilwoman Heffernan provided an update on the Allington Library project, the Black building has been purchased with ARPA funds. Councilwoman Melton reported that Restaurant Week is being organized and will take place April 8th through April 11th. Councilman Vargo shared that the Church on the Green hosted a Black Coalition Celebration in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. There is a Rotary Club dinner scheduled for February 15th. Councilwoman Garthwait reported that \$1,140.00 was collected along with pet food on December 21st for the Animal Shelter. She thanked

Councilwoman Ruby Melton, Michelle Caprio, Paul Mulligan and Cathy Herbert. She asked for volunteers for the January 18th bottle sort event. Councilwoman Callahan asked for an update on the overnight warming shelter at 689 Campbell Avenue, Mayor Borer said it was a great success. The Mayor would like to allocate a small portion of the grant money for bus passes. Also, people may donate individually wrapped packages of food. **See remarks on City's website.**

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE** the applications of Community Development Block Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funds for the 51st Program Year [July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026] F.Y. 25-26 of WHINC consisting of \$7,200.00 for its Spanish Speaking Sibshop at WHINC (formally known as West Haven Clinic); \$8,500 for its WHINC Social Club for disabled teens and young adults; and \$10,050.00 its WHINC Support Program for Families of Children with Special Needs which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Tucker. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

WHEREAS: The City of West Haven Community Development Administration has grant funds available for its 51st Program Year [July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026] F.Y. 25-26 through the Community Development Block Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS: The West Haven Youth and Family Services desires to apply for a portion of such funds; in particular \$7,200.00 for its Spanish Speaking Sibshop at WHINC (formally known as West Haven Clinic).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That Diane Dietman, as Director of Youth and Family Services of The City of West Haven, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents related to this Resolution on behalf of the City of West Haven and to do and perform all acts and things which she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

WHEREAS: The City of West Haven Community Development Administration has grant funds available for its 51st Program Year [July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026] F.Y. 25-26 through the Community Development Block Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS: The West Haven Youth and Family Services desires to apply for a portion of such funds; in particular \$8,500 for its WHINC Social Club for disabled teens and young adults.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That Diane Dietman, as Director of Youth and Family Services of The City of West Haven, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents related to this Resolution on behalf of the City of West Haven and to do and perform all acts and things which she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

WHEREAS: The City of West Haven Community Development Administration has grant funds available for its

51st Program Year [July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026] F.Y. 25-26 through the Community Development Block Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS: The West Haven Youth and Family Services desires to apply for a portion of such funds; in particular \$10,050.00 its WHINC Support Program for Families of Children with Special Needs.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That Diane Dietman, as Director of Youth and Family Services of The City of West Haven, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents related to this Resolution on behalf of the City of West Haven and to do and perform all acts and things which she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

Councilman Vargo thanked Mayor Borer regarding the Church Steeple project. Councilwoman Tucker announced a Black Heritage Celebration on February 26th in the Harriet North Room at 11:00 a.m., with a reception following in the lower level of City Hall. Mayor Borer spoke about the IT system breach and how the city mitigated it by shutting everything down, rebuilding all the systems. The forensic team is still completing their report which will be forthcoming. A flood hardening wall surrounding the Water Pollution Plant will be constructed (cost \$10,000,000.00). Bids for Downtown area planting (due 1/16), Masonic Temple due 1/17), North End Field (due 1/21) and erosion and sand management, will be in soon. GPS has been installed in City vehicles to track fuel consumption, driver performance, speeding, etc. taking effective January 2nd. A report is expected in February on the Lake Street project with 20% of the design now completed. The Debonair project is progressing and has passed the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning and Zoning. The Kelsey (Conference Center) project is also progressing. An engineering report is pending on The Stiles School project. All City officials and employees have been assigned phot ID badges as new security measure implemented by the City of West Haven. As of December 31st, the City has complied with all ARPA obligations. A 1.8 million grant application is in for a Community Investment Fund to upgrade the area around the VA Hospital. Work on new tennis courts and pickle ball courts has begun. The City has hired John Carrano as Commissioner of Human Resources and has extended offers to the key positions of Health Director, Assistant Engineer and Community Development Administration Manager. **See remarks on City's website.**

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Callahan made a **MOTION to ADJOURN** which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

The City Council meeting was ADJOURNED at 9:39 p.m.

Nicholas Pascale
Chairman of the Council

Stacy Riccio
Clerk of the Council

Carlotta M. Serrini
City Council Administrator

****These minutes are subject to City Council approval.**