

Minutes of the February 24, 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, February 24, 2025 at 7:00p.m. in the City Council Chambers 3rd floor. Acting Chairman Vargo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Council Members Present: Edward McMillian, Gary Donovan, Christopher Vargo, Jr., Dawn Callahan, Kathleen Mueller, Brian Laucks, Katherine Tucker, Ruby Melton, Meli Garthwait and Steven Johnstone. Absent: Nicholas Pascale, Anne Heffernan and Sarah Ackbarali. Also present: Mayor Dorinda Borer and Deputy Corporation Counsel Mike Ajello.

A moment of silence was held in observance of the passing of Douglas Kidd, employee of the City of West Haven Assessor's Office.

7:02p.m. to 7:17 p.m. Public Session

See City's website for remarks.

Acting Chairman Vargo called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilman Laucks made a **MOTION to APPROVE** the Regular Meeting minutes from the February 10, 2025, meeting, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman McMillian. Councilwoman Melton abstained. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

Communication A: from the Tax Collector regarding Overpayment of refunds for February 2025.

Communication B: from Cathy Conniff, Assistant Planner, requesting authorization under section 57.3 of the Zoning Regulations allowing the Planning and Zoning Commission to review and act on application made by the owner of the 509 Campbell Avenue to replace the exterior lighting to be constructed in a public right-of-way.

Communication C: from Stephen Fontana, Director of Economic Development, regarding approval of the purchase and sale agreement with Ideal Group LLC for the sale of city owned property located at 561 Main Street (Stiles School).

III. COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Public Lands Committee called to order at 7:19 p.m.

PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE, Councilman Donovan, Chairman -Committee members: Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Callahan, Councilman Vargo and Councilman Johnstone

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Communication B:

Councilman Callahan presented a **MOTION** to recommend the approval to the entire Council regarding **Communication B** from Cathy Conniff, Assistant Planner, requesting authorization under section 57.3 of the Zoning Regulations allowing the Planning and Zoning Commission to review and act on application made by the owner of the 509 Campbell Avenue to replace the exterior lighting to be constructed in a public right-of-way which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Johnstone. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Communication C: from Stephen Fontana, Director of Economic Development, regarding approval of the purchase and sale agreement with Ideal Group LLC for the sale of city owned property located at 561 Main Street (Stiles School). -**A Public Hearing to be set for March 10, 2025 at 6:45 p.m.**

Councilman Laucks presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance of the letter from the Planning and Zoning Commission to the entire Council regarding **Communication C**, from the January 27, 2025 agenda, from Mayor Dorinda Borer's request to refer the proposal from Ideal Group, LLC ("Ideal"), for the redevelopment of Stiles School, to the West Haven Planning and Zoning Commission which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Johnstone. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Public Lands Committee closed at 7:39 p.m.

IV: UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS-7:39 p.m.

Clerk to read Communication A into record

PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE, Councilman Donovan, Chairman -Committee members: Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Callahan, Councilman Vargo and Councilman Johnstone

Communication B: from Cathy Conniff, Assistant Planner, requesting authorization under section 57.3 of the Zoning Regulations allowing the Planning and Zoning Commission to review and act on application made by the owner of the 509 Campbell Avenue to replace the exterior lighting to be constructed in a public right-of-way. Councilwoman Donovan made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Johnstone. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

WHEREAS: Altschuler Building, LLC, owner of the real estate known as 509 Campbell Avenue, West Haven, has successfully applied for and received ARPA funding to improve the façade of this commercial property in downtown West Haven; and

WHEREAS: Altschuler Building, LLC has submitted a plan to the West Haven Planning and Zoning Commission requesting approval of outdoor lighting that will extend from the building and over-hang in the airspace above the City sidewalk abutting its property, and

WHEREAS: Altschuler Building, LLC has sufficiently shown by its plan that such lighting apparatus will be placed at a height that will not impede pedestrian traffic or otherwise affect normal use of the City sidewalk; and

WHEREAS: Article 4, Section 57.3 of the West Haven Zoning Regulations provides: No application shall be reviewed by the Commission or Commissioner of Planning and Development that requests any projection or construction into the public right-of-way, street or sidewalk . . . without prior approval of such project or construction by the City Council of the City of West Haven.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the City Council of the City of West Haven, in accordance with Article 4, Section 57.3 of the West Haven Zoning Regulations, hereby authorizes the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Commissioner of Planning and Development to review and act on the plan as presented by Altschuler Building, LLC to install outdoor lighting that will extend from the building and over-hang in the airspace above the City sidewalk abutting its property at 509 Campbell Avenue, West Haven.

Communication C: from Stephen Fontana, Director of Economic Development, regarding approval of the purchase and sale agreement with Ideal Group LLC for the sale of city owned property located at 561 Main Street (Stiles School). **A Public Hearing to be set for March 10, 2025 at 6:45 p.m.**

Communication C, from the January 27, 2025 agenda, from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding a request to refer the proposal from Ideal Group, LLC ("Ideal") for the redevelopment of Stiles School to the West Haven Planning and Zoning Commission. Councilwoman Donovan made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

VI. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS

Councilwoman Callahan received email asking the City of West Haven to open a compost site on one Saturday per month. She also thanked Public Works for helping with loose manhole covers and potholes in district 6.

See remarks on City's website.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Councilwoman Garthwait reported that the final day of voting for the K9 officers to win a grant is February 28th. The website can be found on her City Council page. The clean-up for Marginal Drive is scheduled for Saturday. Councilman Vargo recognized that Sheila Carmon, Director of Health and John Carrano, Commissioner of Human Resources as both very responsive and helpful to resident's concerns. Councilwoman Tucker announced the West Haven's Celebration of Black History Month and award ceremony will be held on February 26th in the Harriet North room. Councilman McMillian and Mayor Borer Congratulated Councilwoman Tucker on her achievements with the West Haven Black Coalition. Other award recipients were Levi Jordan, Sr. and Carroll E. Brown. Councilman Johnstone observed the 1-year anniversary of his heart attack. He said that diet matters and encouraged everyone to take care of themselves and that everyone should get a physical exam in honor of Heart Month. He also inquired about the timetable for the Savin Rock Conference Center property. The mayor said it would be about 15 months. Mayor Borer is anticipating progress at the upcoming MARB meeting, re-iterating that the City has almost met the criteria to exit MARB oversight and she announced that a Health Fair for City Employees is scheduled for February 27th from 10-2.

Mayor Borer revisited a comment from the earlier Public Speaking about the tragic domestic violence murder of a woman and child. She stated that silence during the comments does not mean that we are not saddened by the horrific crime and that she checked with the Police Department in real time and learned there were no prior calls to that residence no one was aware of the situation to be able to intervene beforehand.

See remarks on City's website.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

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

The City Council meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 8:01 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.**