

Minutes of the March 10, 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, March 10, 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, Anne Heffernan and Sarah Ackbarali, Edward McMillian, Gary Donovan, Christopher Vargo, Jr., Dawn Callahan, Kathleen Mueller, Brian Laucks, Katherine Tucker, Ruby Melton, Meli Garthwait and Steven Johnstone. Also present: Mayor Dorinda Borer, Deputy Corporation Counsel Mike Ajello, Stephen Fontana, Director of Economic Development, Fernando Pastore partner of the Ideal Group, Joseph Centofanti, Auditor from PKF O'Connor Davies.

6:52 p.m. to 7:05 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING -Public Lands Committee-Communication C, from the February 24, 2025 agenda, 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). Fernando Pastore, from The Ideal Group, spoke about the project and Mayor Borer thanked them for their interest in the city of West Haven. **See City's website for remarks.**

7:05p.m. to 7:12 p.m. Public Session

See City's website for remarks.

Chairman Pascale called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:13 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE** the Regular Meeting minutes from the February 24, 2025, meeting, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. Councilwomen Ackbarali, Heffernan, and Chairman Pascale abstained. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

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

III. COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Finance Committee called to order at 7:14 p.m.

FINANCE COMMITTEE, Councilwoman Ackbarali, Chairwoman- Committee members; Councilman Vargo, Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Tucker and Councilman Johnstone

FINANCE UPDATES

1. Presentation from Joseph Centofanti, PKF O'Connor Davies regarding Federal Single Audit and State Single Audit of the City of West Haven, Ct for the Year Ended June 30, 2024, FY 23 Annual Financial Statement for the Year Ended June 30, 2024 and Corrective Action Plan. Mr. Centofanti made a



presentation and explained the findings. Mayor Borer added that we have a healthy fund balance, are paying down our liabilities and have made progress on our significant deficiencies.

2. Finance updates from Michael Gormany, Finance Director. Mr. Gormany stated that we are 98% in tax collections. We are awaiting information on our credit rating.
3. MARB Meeting updates-Mayor Borer reported that the MARB subcommittee met. The City has been asking them to define "unsound financial practices" and concluded one issue is the Police pension. The next meeting is on March 21st and will be an Executive Session, which the City will not attend.
4. Neil Cavallaro-Discussion on West Haven Board of Education regarding FY25-26 budget-Discussion on the FY25-26 budget.

See City's website for remarks.

Finance Committee closed at 10:31 p.m.

Public Lands Committee called to order at 10:31 p.m.

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

Councilman Vargo presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance to the entire Council regarding **Communication C**, from the February 24, 2025 agenda, 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) which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Callahan. Councilmen Laucks and Johnstone abstained. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Public Lands Committee closed at 10:33 p.m.

IV: UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS-10:34 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 C, from the February 24, 2025 agenda, 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). Councilwoman Donovan made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwomen Callahan, Tucker and Councilman Vargo. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

RESOLVED: That the City Council of the City of West Haven hereby approves and authorizes the City of West Haven to enter into a purchase and sale agreement with Ideal Group, LLC, for the sale of the City owned real property know as 561 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut, which purchase and sale agreement shall be in

substantial and material compliance with the draft attached hereto as Exhibit A, and made a part hereof by reference; and

FURTHER RESOLVED: Dorinda K. 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 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, and:

FURTHER RESOLVED: That such approval and authorization conferred hereby is contingent upon approval by the Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB).

VI. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS

Chairman Pascale thanked Mayor Borer for standing firm with MARB. Councilman Donovan reported the Planning & Zoning meeting scheduled for March 11th is cancelled. The Kelsey will be on the next meeting agenda. Councilman Johnstone reported that 118 Police officers are active after 5 returned to work from injuries. Councilwoman Garthwait thanked Kathy and Rich Hebert for their help cleaning up Peck Avenue. The Bird Sanctuary cleanup is scheduled for March 23rd at 10:00 a.m. and there is a possibility of receiving a grant for Sandy Point for West Haven Police Department from the Audubon Society. She also mentioned that the WHPD K9 officers won a \$3,000.00 grant in the K-9 contest.

See remarks on City's website.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Vargo made a **MOTION to ADJOURN** which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

The City Council meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 10:44 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.**