

Minutes of the June 9, 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 Tuesday, June 9, 2025, at 7:00p.m. in the City Council Chambers 3rd floor. Chairman Pascale called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Council Members Present: Meli Garthwait, Brian Laucks, Edward McMillian, Ruby Melton Gary Donovan, Dawn Callahan, Christopher Vargo, Jr., Katherine Tucker, and Steven Johnstone, Nicholas Pascale and Anne Heffernan. Absent: Sarah Ackbarali and Kathleen Mueller. Also present: Paul Dorsi, Corporation Counsel, Dave Taylor, Assistant Finance Director, Phil Sissick, Commissioner of Public Works, Sheila Carmon, Health Director, John Carrano, Commissioner of Human Resources, Coralie Carrone, Youth Services Coordinator, Diane Dietman, Director of Youth and Family Services, Alyssa Eckstein, LCSW, Alyssa Granato, Community Health Coordinator, and Ron Dumas, CDA Housing Specialist.

7:05-7:28 p.m. PUBLIC SESSION

See City's website for remarks.

Chairman Pascale called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:28 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilwoman Tucker made a **MOTION to APPROVE** the Regular Meeting minutes from the May 12, 2025, meeting, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman McMillian. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.** Councilwoman Callahan and Councilman Laucks abstained.

Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE** the Regular Meeting minutes from the May 27, 2025, meeting, which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.** Councilwomen Melton and Callahan abstained.

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

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

Communication B: from the Community Development Administration regarding approval of the Program Year 51 Neighborhood Assistance Program budget; West Haven Child Development Center, Inc.-\$15,000.00, Ward Heitmann House Museum Foundation, Inc.-\$24,500.00 and West Haven Community House-\$20,000.00.

Communication C: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an application to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for funding up to \$2,000,000 to undertake the School Streetscapes and Safety Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement.

Communication D: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an application to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for funding up to \$2,500,000 to undertake the Wagner Pedestrian Bridge Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement.

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Communication E: from the Finance Director Gormany and Public Works Commissioner Sissick, requesting an authorization to add LOCIP project name "Paving" in the amount up to \$927,000.00 to the Capital Improvement Plan within the FY 2024-2025 Capital Budget.

Communication F: from the Finance Director Gormany and Public Works Commissioner Sissick, requesting an authorization to add LOCIP project name "Paving" in the amount up to \$345,000.00 to the Capital Improvement Plan within the FY 2025-2026 Capital Budget.

Communication G: from Finance Director Gormany, regarding a bid waiver for purchase of used vehicles valued at \$35,000.00 or less for FY 2025-2026.

III. COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Health, Welfare and Safety Committee called to order at 7:32 p.m.

HEALTH, WELFARE AND SAFETY COMMITTEE, Councilwoman Tucker, Chairwoman, Councilwoman Meuller (absent), Councilman McMillian, Councilwoman Heffernan, Councilwoman Garthwait

Presentation by Health & Human Services regarding upcoming initiatives. **See City's website for remarks.**

Health, Welfare and Safety Committee closed at 8:22 p.m.

Finance Committee called to order at 8:23 p.m.

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

Communication B: from the Community Development Administration regarding approval of the Program Year 51 Neighborhood Assistance Program budget; West Haven Child Development Center, Inc.-\$15,000.00, Ward Heitmann House Museum Foundation, Inc.-\$24,500.00 and West Haven Community House-\$20,000.00. **-Public Hearing to be set for June 23, 2025 at 6:50 p.m.**

Councilman Johnstone presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance to the entire Council regarding **Communication C** from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an application to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for funding up to \$2,000,000 to undertake the School Streetscapes and Safety Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Councilwoman Tucker presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance to the entire Council regarding **Communication D** from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an application to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for funding up to \$2,500,000 to undertake the Wagner Pedestrian Bridge Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Johnstone. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Councilman Johnstone presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance to the entire Council regarding **Communication E** from the Finance Director Gormany and Public Works Commissioner Sissick, requesting an authorization to add LOCIP project name "Paving" in the amount up to

\$927,000.00 to the Capital Improvement Plan within the FY 2024-2025 Capital Budget, which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Tucker. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Councilwoman Tucker presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance to the entire Council regarding **Communication F** from the Finance Director Gormany and Public Works Commissioner Sissick, requesting an authorization to add LOCIP project name "Paving" in the amount up to \$345,000.00 to the Capital Improvement Plan within the FY 2025-2026 Capital Budget, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Councilwoman Tucker presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance to the entire Council regarding **Communication G** from Finance Director Gormany, regarding a bid waiver for purchase of used vehicles valued at \$35,000.00 or less for FY 2025-2026, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Finance Committee closed at 8:48 p.m.

Legislative Matters Committee called to order at 8:48 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE, Councilman Vargo, Chairman -Committee members: Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Tucker, Councilwoman Melton and Councilman Johnstone

Communication C, from the April 28, 2025 agenda, from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an ordinance amending Chapter 178 of the Code of the City of West Haven: Posting of Bills. Public Hearing to be set for June 23, 2025 at 6:55 p.m.

Legislative Matters Committee closed at 9:01 p.m.

IV: UNFINISHED BUSINESS: -None.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS-9:01 p.m.

Clerk to read Communication A into record

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

Communication B: from the Community Development Administration regarding approval of the Program Year 51 Neighborhood Assistance Program budget; West Haven Child Development Center, Inc.-\$15,000.00, Ward Heitmann House Museum Foundation, Inc.-\$24,500.00 and West Haven Community House-\$20,000.00. -Public Hearing to be set for June 23, 2025 at 6:50 p.m.

Communication C: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an application to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for funding up to \$2,000,000 to undertake the School Streetscapes and Safety Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement. Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.****

RESOLVED, that the City of West Haven may make an application to the Connecticut Department of Economic

and Community Development for up to \$2,000,000 to undertake the School Streetscapes and Safety Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement;

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 on behalf of the City of West Haven and to do and perform all acts 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.

Communication D: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an application to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for funding up to \$2,500,000 to undertake the Wagner Pedestrian Bridge Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement. Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

RESOLVED: that the City of West Haven may make an application to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for up to \$2,500,000 to undertake the Wagner Pedestrian Bridge Project and to execute an Assistance Agreement;

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 on behalf of the City of West Haven and to do and perform all acts 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.

Communication E: from the Finance Director Gormany and Public Works Commissioner Sissick, requesting an authorization to add LOCIP project name "Paving" in the amount up to \$927,000.00 to the Capital Improvement Plan within the FY 2024-2025 Capital Budget. Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Tucker. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

Authorization to add LOCIP project name "Paving" in the amount of \$926,918.73 to the Capital Improvement Plan within the FY 2024-2025 Capital Budget.

BE IT RESOLVED: That the City of West Haven, by and through its Finance Director, is authorized to obligate LOCIP funds in the amount of \$926,918.73 to LOCIP project name "Paving," and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City of West Haven, by and through its Finance Director, is authorized to add LOCIP project name "Paving" to the FY 2024-2025 Capital Improvement Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That such funds shall be used in accordance with LOCIP Grant guidelines for the paving of City streets, within the City of West Haven.

Communication F: from the Finance Director Gormany and Public Works Commissioner Sissick, requesting an authorization to add LOCIP project name "Paving" in the amount up to \$345,000.00 to the Capital Improvement Plan within the FY 2025-2026 Capital Budget. Councilman Vargo made a

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

Authorization to add LOCIP project name "Paving" in the amount of \$341,411.40 to the Capital Improvement Plan within the FY 2025-2026 Capital Budget.

BE IT RESOLVED: That the City of West Haven, by and through its Finance Director, is authorized to obligate LOCIP funds in the amount of \$341,411.40 to LOCIP project name "Paving," and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City of West Haven, by and through its Finance Director, is authorized to add LOCIP project name "Paving" to the FY 2025-2026 Capital Improvement Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That such funds shall be used in accordance with LOCIP Grant guidelines for the paving of City streets, within the City of West Haven.

Communication G: from Finance Director Gormany, regarding a bid waiver for purchase of used vehicles valued at \$35,000.00 or less for FY 2025-2026. Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Melton. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

WHEREAS: The City Council has received a request (attached) from Philip J. Sissick, Commissioner of Public Works; Robert Orifice, City of West Haven Fleet Superintendent; and Michael Gormany, Finance Director, for a waiver of the City's purchasing requirements and competitive bidding process in connection with the purchase of certain used vehicles for a purchase price of \$35,000 or below.

WHEREAS: Chapter 42-15 of the West Haven Code provides that the "City Council shall have the authority to waive the bidding and RFQ requirements of this chapter on all contractual services and professional services . . . upon a determination by the Council that such waiver of bid or RFQ is in the best interests of the City of West Haven."

WHEREAS: The request submitted by the Fleet Superintendent indicates that 1) The bidding process for vehicles normally takes one month or more to complete; 2) This hinders the ability of the City to purchase quality used vehicles as the market is highly competitive, and quality used vehicles generally sell fast once offered for sale; 3) There is a present need to purchase vehicles for several City departments; and 4) The ability to purchase used vehicles under \$35,000 will result in significant cost savings compared to the cost of purchasing new vehicles.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That waiver of all bidding and RFQ requirements of Chapter 42 of the West Haven code in connection with the purchase of used vehicles for the City of West Haven with a purchase price of \$35,000 or below is hereby waived for fiscal year 2025 - 2026

FURTHER RESOLVED: That all purchases of used vehicles will comply with existing procurement policies, including the conducting of due diligence to ensure fair pricing and vehicle quality, and all such purchases shall be reported to the City Council.

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 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 document.

LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE, Councilman Vargo, Chairman -Committee members: Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Tucker, Councilwoman Melton and Councilman Johnstone

Communication C, from the April 28, 2025, meeting, from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an ordinance amending Chapter 178 of the Code of the City of West Haven: Posting of Bills. Public Hearing to be set for June 23, 2025 at 6:55 p.m.

VI. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS

Councilwoman Garthwait thanked Captain Romano, the Mayor and Chief Perno and Corey from Audubon for choosing West Haven to receive grant. Councilwoman Melton shared some of the updates on projects provided by Economic Director, Steve Fontana. Councilman McMillian said that the Washington School COE is expected in the next couple of weeks and that Superintendent Cavallaro's contract is extended for 2 years. **See remarks on City's website.**

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Pascale referred the Registrar of Voters issue concerning the name of positions to Corporation Counsel for a legal opinion. Councilman Laucks said it needs to be done prior to the next council meeting and Councilwoman Garthwait wondered why they were being called Assistant Registrars as they work at the polls. Councilman Vargo would like to refer out to Joann Callegari who put the name of the title in the budget. Councilwoman Garthwait asked Joann Callegari why she did not come to the meeting. She stated that she met with Mayor Borer and thought that's all she had to do. Councilwoman Garthwait and Councilman Laucks both stated that an employee should not lose their job and Councilman Laucks said that he felt hoodwinked and not told that a person would be losing their job. **See remarks on City's website.**

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

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

The City Council meeting was ADJOURNED at 10:01 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.**