

Minutes of the August 25, 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, August 25 2025, at 7:00p.m. in the City Council Chambers 3rd floor. Acting Chairman Vargo called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Council Members Present: Meli Garthwait, Brian Laucks, Gary Donovan, Sarah Ackbarali, Dawn Callahan, Christopher Vargo, Jr., and Steven Johnstone, Ruby Melton and Anne Heffernan. Absent: Edward McMillian, Katherine Tucker, Kathleen Mueller and Nicholas Pascale. Also present: Mayor Dorinda Borer, Paul Dorsi, Corporation Counsel, Michael Ajello, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Michael Gormany, Finance Director, Michael Todd Taylor, Deputy Corporation Counsel and Chief Joesph Perno.

6:50 p.m.- PUBLIC HEARING- Finance Committee- Communication J, from the July 28 agenda, from Abdul Quadir, City Engineer regarding a bond ordinance for the planning, design, and construction of Dawson Avenue pump station and East Avenue pump station in the amount of \$29,800,000.

CANCELLED-rescheduled for September 8 agenda.

6:55 p.m.- PUBLIC HEARING-Legislative Matters Committee- Communication I, from the July 28 agenda, from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an ordinance amending Chapter 97 of the Code of West Haven, Fair Rent Commission. **HELD.**

Councilman Vargo asked for moment of silence for Traymont Tucker (nephew of Councilwoman Tucker) who was killed working on I95 in Greenwich.

6:58-7:34 p.m. PUBLIC SESSION

See City's website for remarks.

Acting Chairman Vargo called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 28, 2025. **HELD.**

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

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

Communication B: from Paul Dorsi, Corporation Counsel, to request that the City Council pass a resolution approving a sidewalk encroachment that will allow for a handicapped accessible ramp to be built at the commercial establishment located at 179 Union Avenue.

Communication C: from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding a proposed New Ordinance Amending the Code of the City of West Haven to Include Chapter 85, an Ordinance Concerning the Illegal Use of Motorized Recreational Vehicles and Street Takeovers.

Communication D: from Michael Gormany, Finance Director regarding an authorization to increase the fiscal year 2025-2026 paying LOCIP allocation as previously adopted by the City Council from \$100,000 to \$441,411.37 per the actual grant received from the state of Connecticut.

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TOWN AND CITY CLERK

Communication E. Them Michael Gormany, Finance Director regarding Budget Transfer for Allingtown Fire Department ("AFD") in the amount Three-Thousand, Five-Hundred and Thirty-Two Dollars and Zero Cents for the Fire Marshal beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026.

III. COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Council-as-a-Whole called to order at 7:42 p.m.

Council-as-a-Whole -**Communication C:** from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding a proposed New Ordinance Amending the Code of the City of West Haven to Include Chapter 85, an Ordinance Concerning the Illegal Use of Motorized Recreational Vehicles and Street Takeovers. **Public Hearing set for September 8, 2025 at 6:55 p.m.**

Council-as-a-Whole closed at 8:15 p.m.

Finance Committee called to order at 8:15 p.m.

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

FINANCE UPDATES

Finance updates from Michael Gormany, Finance Director. -Mr. Gormany gave an update. Mayor Borer reported that 2018 Payroll Taxes were not filed properly or timely with the IRS, creating a \$700,000.00 obligation to the City. There is a pending lawsuit (unrelated to the IRS issue) with reserves set aside. **See City's website for remarks.**

Councilman Johnstone presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance to the entire Council regarding **Communication D**, from Michael Gormany, Finance Director regarding an authorization to increase the fiscal year 2025-2026 paving LOCIP allocation as previously adopted by the City Council from \$100,000 to \$441,411.37 per the actual grant received from the state of Connecticut, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. 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 Michael Gormany, Finance Director regarding Budget Transfer for Allingtown Fire Department ("AFD") in the amount Three-Thousand, Five-Hundred and Thirty-Two Dollars and Zero Cents for the Fire Marshal beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026, which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Finance Committee recessed from 8:49p.m. to 8:51p.m.

Councilman Vargo made a **MOTION to AMEND Communication J from the July 28 agenda**, changing the amount from \$29,800.00 to \$32,900.00 which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Ackbarali and Councilman Laucks. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

Communication J from the July 28 agenda, as AMENDED, from Abdul Quadir, City Engineer regarding a bond ordinance for the planning, design, and construction of Dawson Avenue pump station and East Avenue pump station in the amount of \$32,900,000. **Public Hearing scheduled for September 8, 2025 at 6:50 p.m.**

Finance Committee closed at 8:56p.m.

Legislative Matters Committee called to order at 8:56 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE, Acting Chairwoman Melton, -Committee members: Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Tucker (absent), Councilman Vargo and Councilman Johnstone

Communication I from the July 28 agenda, from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an ordinance amending Chapter 97 of the Code of West Haven Fair Rent Commission. **HELD.**

Legislative Matters Committee closed at 9:15 p.m.

Public Lands Committee called to order at 9:15 p.m.

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

Councilman Johnstone presented a **MOTION** to recommend the acceptance to the entire Council regarding **Communication B**, from Paul Dorsi, Corporation Counsel, to request that the City Council pass a resolution approving a sidewalk encroachment that will allow for a handicapped accessible ramp to be built at the commercial establishment located at 179 Union Avenue. which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Callahan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY viva voce.**

Public Lands Committee closed at 9:19 p.m.

IV: UNFINISHED BUSINESS- FY2025-2026 BUDGET-Registrar of Voters Personnel.

Paul Dorsi, Corporation Counsel, is waiting for information from the State of Connecticut.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS-9:19 p.m.

Clerk to read **Communication A** into record

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

Communication D: from Michael Gormany, Finance Director regarding an authorization to increase the fiscal year 2025-2026 paving LOCIP allocation as previously adopted by the City Council from \$100,000 to \$441,411.37 per the actual grant received from the state of Connecticut. Councilwoman Ackbarali made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Heffernan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY. (Councilwoman Callahan not present).**

WHEREAS: The City Council adopted a budget for fiscal year 2025-2026 anticipating LOCIP funds in the amount of \$620,000; of which \$100,000 was allocated for road patching and paving;

WHEREAS: The actual LOCIP grant received from the State of Connecticut is in the amount of \$961,411.37;

WHEREAS: The City of West Haven desires to utilize the excess grant funds to increase the allocation for road paving and patching for fiscal year 2025-2026 from \$100,000 to \$441,411.37; and

WHEREAS: LOCIP regulations mandate that a municipality's legislative body must approve any project utilizing LOCIP grant funds within a capital improvement plan, and that such approval be documented in certified minutes of the required meeting.

BE IT RESOLVED: That the City of West Haven, by and through its Finance Director, is authorized to allocate and obligate additional LOCIP funds in the amount of \$341,411.37 to project name "Road Patching / Paving," and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That such funds shall be used in accordance with LOCIP entitlement guidelines for road pathing and paving projects that are within the City of West Haven that are on-going or in the planning stage.

Communication E. from Michael Gormany, Finance Director regarding Budget Transfer for Allingtown Fire Department ("AFD") in the amount Three-Thousand, Five-Hundred and Thirty-Two Dollars and Zero Cents for the Fire Marshal beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026. Councilwoman Ackbarali made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilman Johnstone. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

RESOLVED: That the City Council of the City of West Haven hereby approves transfer of funds from account number 11000010-56010 Unallocated Contingency Fund (Allingtown Fire Department) to account number 19500010-51000 Regular Wages (Allingtown Fire Department) in the amount of \$3,532.00 for the purpose of funding a contractually mandated merit raise for the Fire Marshal.

Communication J from the July 28 agenda, from Abdul Quadir, City Engineer regarding a bond ordinance for the planning, design, and construction of Dawson Avenue pump station and East Avenue pump station in the amount of \$32,900,000. **-Public Hearing to be set for September 8, 2025 at 6:50 p.m.**

LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE, Acting Chairwoman Melton, -Committee members: Councilman Laucks, Councilwoman Tucker (absent) , Councilman Vargo and Councilman Johnstone

Communication I from the July 28 agenda, from Mayor Dorinda Borer regarding an ordinance amending Chapter 97 of the Code of West Haven Fair Rent Commission. **HELD.**

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

Communication B: from Paul Dorsi, Corporation Counsel, to request that the City Council pass a resolution approving a sidewalk encroachment that will allow for a handicapped accessible ramp to be built at the commercial establishment located at 179 Union Avenue. Councilman Donovan made a **MOTION to APPROVE** which was which was **SECONDED** by Councilwoman Callahan. All in favor. **MOTION passed UNANIMOUSLY.**

WHEREAS: Calf Realty Associates, LLC, the owner of the real property known as 179 Union Avenue, has submitted a plan to the West Haven Planning and Zoning Commission requesting approval for a sidewalk entrance ramp to the commercial establishment on the premises known as Zuppardi's Apizza, which planned entrance ramp will encroach upon the City of West Haven's public sidewalk right-of way abutting its property, and

WHEREAS: Pursuant to Chapter 206 – Streets and Sidewalks – of the Code of the City of West Haven; and Section 7-148 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the City of West Haven, by and through this legislative body, regulates to keep open and safe for public use and travel and free from encroachment or obstruction the streets, sidewalks and public places within the city limits, and

WHEREAS: Calf Realty Associates, LLC, has sufficiently shown through its plan - which plan was studied, reviewed, and approved by the required city officials and departments - that such ramp will not impede normal public pedestrian travel or otherwise affect normal use of the City sidewalk,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the City Council of the City of West Haven hereby approves the plan as presented to this Council by Calf Realty Associates, LLC, to install an entrance ramp to the commercial establishment on the premises known as Zuppardi's Apizza located at 179 Union Avenue, West Haven, Connecticut, encroaching upon the City's public sidewalk right-of-way upon the following terms and conditions:

- 1) It shall be the absolute responsibility of Calf Realty Associates, LLC, and any future owners of interest in such property to maintain the entrance ramp in good condition and within compliance with all applicable building code provisions.
- 2) Calf Realty Associates, LLC, shall be responsible for repairing the surrounding sidewalk to its current condition after construction of the ramp.
- 3) Calf Realty Associates, LLC, shall indemnify the City of West Haven from any and all claims for damages arising from the use or placement of the ramp including, but not limited to, claims of personal injury and loss of any kind.
- 4) Calf Realty Associates, LLC, and its successors in interest to the property and ramp, shall maintain adequate insurance for such claims for damages arising from the use or placement of the ramp, and shall have listed on such policy the City of West Haven as a named ensured and loss payee for such claims.

VI. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS- Councilman Johnstone spoke regarding the successful Soliciting Ordinance and handed out an update from Captain Romano on procedure for the Ordinance regarding Posting of Handbills. Councilwoman Callahan reported people complained about people going into backyards to solicit and to be diligent. Councilman Vargo recognized the hard work by all in putting the ordinance together. **See remarks on City's website.**

VII. NEW BUSINESS-Councilwoman Garthwait thanked individuals from Sandy Point "Neighbors for Neighbors". She asked the Mayor for an update on The Havens, who stated that that developers are evaluating value for the acreage. Councilman Vargo spoke about the Handbill Ordinance. Councilwoman Callahan spoke about the cleanup on Marginal Drive on the First Saturday of every month at 9:00 a.m. She thanked the Mayor and Rick Fontana for the camera installation. Councilwoman Callahan mentioned a fundraiser at City Hall for Veteran's taking place on August 30th. Mayor Borer stated that parking will be turning off parking for the Sandy Point event. She stated the Savin Rock Festival was successful, and there would be one more Acoustic Sunday night on September 7th. She mentioned a 2.4-million-dollar grant for neighborhood upgrades around Savin Rock School. Councilman Vargo attended the opening of Washington School. **See remarks on City's website.**

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

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

The City Council meeting was ADJOURNED at 9:49 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.**