

Minutes of the March 23, 2022 City Council Special Meeting – West Haven City Hall, 355 Main Street, Harriett North Courtroom, 2nd Floor.

The Public Hearing/Special Meeting of the West Haven City Council was held on Wednesday, March 23, 2022 at 6:01 p.m. in West Haven City Hall, Harriett North Courtroom, 2nd Floor.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call Members Present were Council Members: Ronald Quagliani, Colleen O'Connor, Gary Donovan, Bridgette Hoskie, Meli Garthwait, Sarah Ackrabali, Robbin Watt Hamilton, Kathy Tucker, Victor Borrás, Robert Bruneau, Steven Johnstone, & Chairman Peter Massaro.

Also present were Mayor Nancy Rossi, Doug Coulter, Grants Coordinator & Scott Jackson, Director of Finance.

Absent were Council Member: Mitchell Gallignano.

Chairman Massaro called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

The clerk read the call of the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Chairman Massaro asked Doug Coulter to make his presentation on the ARPA Plan. Mr. Coulter made a power point presentation of the Mayor's proposed ARPA plan wherein he outlined the timelines for the commitment of the funds to be between 3-3-2021 to Dec. 31, 2024. He also explained that all of the invoices, bills, etc.. must be paid by 12-31-2026 or the funds will have to be given back. Audits are possible up to the year 2031. Reporting to be done on a quarterly basis. He stated that 106 people responded online with public input. Mr. Coulter also presented the Flow Chart and how each project will flow through each department.

Councilman Quagliani stated that he would like to hear from the Public first before the Council asks questions.

Public Input began with 7 members from the public speaking.

Leo Kelly – Tree Warden – spoke about planting minimum of 200 trees for 10 years.

Howard Horvath – spoke about small business aid & looking into electronic platforms for accountability to be easier

Elinor Slomba – spoke about the Art's Center.

Robin Parsons – spoke about the need for Effective Service Delivery processes throughout the City.

Fatima Edude – spoke about immigrant/refugee women's group need for housing assistance for those who are struggling.

Catherine Bushman – Asst. Director/Library – asked for further definition of Community Center to be added to Library.

Camilla – spoke about immigrant/refugee women’s group and struggling families being average of \$13,000 short of affording a 2 bedroom apartment.

Public Hearing was closed at 7:12 p.m.

Special Meeting – 7:12 p.m.

Chairman Massaro asked Scott Jackson, Director of Finance for his input. Mr. Jackson spoke about need for future representation of the programs and Council input.

Mayor Rossi spoke about being in contact with Dorinda Borer, State Representative and there was still an opportunity to address the concerns of the immigrant/refugee women’s group.

Councilman Quagliani stated that taking the ARPA plan in sections would be a good idea.

Councilwoman Hoskie stated to Doug Coulter that she is still waiting for the resident submissions that were received online. Mr. Coulter indicated that the Mayor had wanted to wait until her plan was presented first. Councilwoman Hoskie stressed that she wanted to reach everyone with this plan and how would the City get out the information and talk to the residents that haven’t been talked to before. She also stressed that she wanted to reach everyone in the community with food/shelter insecurities. Hoskie was also concerned that the Council was not included in all areas of the Flow Chart and that no money was supposed to be spent until a Fund Manager was hired. Chairman Massaro agreed with Councilwoman Hoskie and Hoskie was told that RFPs went out to hire for these positions.

Councilwoman Hoskie asked Doug Coulter who the City’s Project Manager is. Mr. Coulter stated that each project will get assigned to somebody. Councilwoman Garthwait asked if the name of the Attorney can be shared with the Council. Councilman Quagliani stated the need for a discretionary option to increase amounts or put in place reserves for any project. Mr. Coulter stated again that all money must be expended by end of 2024. Quagliani stated that he would like to prioritize the projects. Mr. Coulter stated that there is 14 million in the City’s account now and that Congress had been threatening to take away the 2nd round of funds and that it would be wise to have a priority list in mind.

Chairman Massaro stated that he would like to separate each one for approval at separate times and Mr. Coulter said that the Council in fact can do this, however, if they were to add any additional new item, that it must be vetted first to see if it qualifies under ARPA.

Scott Jackson ensured that there will be accountability and all payments will go through his office. Councilwoman O’Connor asked if all projects will go out to bid and Mr. Jackson replied that yes they would. Chairman Massaro explained that after the Council has approved the plan, then the ARPA Committee will send out the RFPs. Councilwoman Hamilton also spoke about the Council being more involved in the Flow Chart. Mr. Jackson stated that it is Doug Coulter’s responsibility to ensure timelines are being met. Mayor Rossi agreed that the Council will be actively involved.

COMMUNICATION G from the March 14, 2022 Agenda in regards to the expenditure plan for the ARPA funds provided to the City under the Corona Virus State and Fiscal Recovery Act was **HELD**.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Quagliani made a Motion to Adjourn, which was SECONDED by Councilwoman Hoskie. All were in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

ATTEST:

Peter Massaro, Chairman

City Council

Stacy Riccio, Clerk

City Council

These minutes are subject to City Council Approval.