



Watertown Town Council

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
Vice President &
District C Councilor

Caroline Bays
Councilor At Large

Anthony J. Donato,
Councilor At Large

John G. Gannon,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis,
District A Councilor

Lisa J. Feltner,
District B Councilor

Kenneth M. Woodland,
District D Councilor

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M. MEETING WILL ONLY HAVE REMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION WITH PUBLIC ACCESS MINUTES

The Town Council of the City known as the Town of Watertown held a public meeting on Tuesday, June 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in accordance with the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G. L. c. 30A, § 20, relating to the 2020 COVID-19 emergency and to avoid group congregation, this meeting had only remote opportunities for participation with public access provided as follows:

ACCESS INFORMATION:

- A. The meeting was televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television): <https://wcatv.org/government-channel/>
- B. The Public was permitted to join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/92991331344>
- C. Public was permitted to join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 929 9133 1344 #
- D. Public was permitted to comment through email: vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov

1. ROLL CALL

Council President Sideris called to order a regular meeting of the Town Council at 7:05 p.m. in accordance with the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G. L. c. 30A, § 20, relating to the 2020 COVID-19 emergency and to avoid group congregation, through remote opportunities for participation with public access. Those present were Councilors Caroline Bays, Anthony J. Donato, John G. Gannon, Lisa J. Feltner, Angeline B. Kounelis, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present were Michael J. Driscoll, Town Manager, Attorney Mark Reich, and Marilyn W. Pronovost, Council Clerk.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC FORUM

Peter Centola – 25 Thurston Rd – Expressed his displeasure at some of the statements written on the sidewalk about the police during the protests. He agreed with the right to protest but felt some of the statements were unnecessary, untrue, and unacceptable.

4. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

[Minutes of the May 26, 2020 Town Council Meeting](#)

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the minutes as written; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

5. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Council President Sideris stated that there would be budget hearings now that it has been submitted. The schedule is

- June 23, 2020 – Tuesday 6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. – the Town Manager will provide the Budget Overview
- June 24, 2020 – Wednesday 6:00 p.m. – Councilors and the Public may ask questions regarding the budget. The Town Manager will prepare an executive summary regarding the changes
- June 29, 2020 – Monday 6:00 p.m. – There will be a Special Town Council Meeting where there will be a public hearing and vote on the budget.

Council President Sideris stated that the Town Council was deeply saddened by the death of Mr. George Floyd in Minneapolis. He was proud of the peaceful demonstrations in the Square protesting Mr. Floyd’s death. As public officials, the Town Council needs to review their individual roles and develop ways for the town to prevent a similar event occurring in the community. The Council needs to listen to the concerns of the community, ask the difficult questions, and take appropriate action. He felt that the Watertown Police provided well trained and compassionate policing and that the Police Chief has reached out to the community. He pledged that the Town Council would keep the lines of communication with the Police Department open and transparent regarding issues as the community moves forward.

6. MOTIONS, ORDINANCES, ORDER, AND RESOLUTIONS

Public Hearing and Vote on a Proposed Loan Order Authorizing the Town Treasurer, with the Approval of the Town Manager, to Borrow and/or Expend Monies in the Amount of \$103,455,000 Under and Pursuant to M.G.L. c.44, §7(1), or Pursuant to Any Other Enabling Authority to Pay Costs of [Constructing New Hosmer and Cunniff Elementary Schools](#), Including All Costs Incidental and Related Thereto. Any Premium Received upon the Sale of Any Bonds or Notes Approved by this Order, Less Any Such Premium Applied to the Payment of the Costs of Issuance of Such Bonds or Notes, May be Applied to the Payment of Costs Approved by this Order in Accordance with M.G.L. c.44, §20, Thereby

Reducing the Amount Authorized to be Borrowed to Pay Such Costs by a Like Amount

Mr. Driscoll provided background on the development of the school projects.

Vivian Varbedian, Owner's Project Manager from Hill International, stated that the bids went out for both the Cunniff and Hosmer Schools to ensure the minimization of costs and to obtain the best pricing. Documents of the bid were reviewed to ensure they conformed to the bid request. It was recommended that Brait Builders Corporation be awarded the bid for a cost of \$92,335,000 and include Alternative 1, the installation of a complete photo voltaic system for both schools to be connected to the utility system, for an additional \$2,620,000. In addition a construction contingency of \$7,400,000 and an owner's contingency of \$1,100,000 was suggested, bringing the total cost to \$103,455,000.

Bids for Testing and Inspection services are being evaluated. Equipment from both the Hosmer and Cunniff Schools are being moved. Traffic plans are ready for presentation to and review by the Traffic Commission. COREY inspections are being completed of the General Contractor, all contractors, and employees. A neighborhood meeting was held for the Cunniff School and a meeting for the Hosmer School will be held. A website is available and includes meetings and presentations regarding the project.

Mr. Scott Dunlap, AI3 Architects, LLC, stated that the Cunniff School will accommodate 385 students for the K-5 program, be 85,000 square feet, and should be open in the winter of 2021/2022. The Hosmer School has two components: the K-5 program serving 590 students and the Early Childhood Learning Center serving about 200 students. The Building will be 140,000 square feet and should open in the summer of 2022. Both schools will be net zero schools meaning they will generate sufficient power to offset the buildings' utility use. These schools will be the first true net zero schools in New England and both will be Gold LEEDS (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified, meaning they will exceed green and sustainable standards not only in the area but in the country as well.

The plans focus on creating innovative learning environments with maximum amount and flexibility of space to help students thrive. The emphasis will also assist in the response to new COVID-19 standards for schooling. There will be innovative spaces such as gardens, maker spaces, and media centers. The areas will allow students to spread out to do more independent study and work in groups with sufficient distancing. Each school will have a learning commons, and large multi-purpose space for activities, professional development, presentations, and speakers.

The energy systems are efficient especially the individual air source heat pumps for each classroom. These will help eliminate cross contamination between

spaces and will not rely on a central ventilation system. There will be LED lighting, occupancy sensors, wireless projectors, video surveillance, and voice amplification systems.

He commended the Town for the considerable public input over the three years of planning; for establishing high educational, sustainability, and community goals and achieving them; and for accomplishing all of this for a cost less than anticipated.

Council President Sideris thanked the School Building Committee for its tireless efforts and said this was an exciting night. The fruition of this project is a testament to all those involved – the public, teachers, school administration, School Committee, Town Council and Town Manager. He especially thanked Mr. Dunlap for working with the various segments of the community to come up with the plan and asked the Town Council for its favorable consideration of the Loan Order.

Mr. Driscoll spoke on the financing of the project stating that in FY21, the Town would be bonding \$64,000,000 and a later bond would be for \$46,000,000. The remainder would be borrowed when the Lowell School is ready for renovation.

The following items were then discussed:

- The owner's contingency is for items that were not previously envisioned but for which it would be desired to include
- The builder's contingency is for any change orders. As this project is for construction, there is a hope that it will not be completely expended
- There may be more reliance on the builder's contingency with the Lowell School because it is a renovation and it is uncertain if there are conditions that would affect the budget
- If there are funds left over, the Town Council could rescind that amount of the debt and then reallocate it back to the Town
- There is a line item of \$1,000,000 related to COVID-19 construction expenses; the amount was based on expenses for similar sized projects.

Council President Sideris opened the Public Hearing:

Jocelyn Tager – Robbins Road – Urged the Town Council to vote in favor of the Loan Order because it is a well thought out project that is environmentally friendly without requiring a budget override.

David Stokes – Lawrence Street – Stated that the buildings would be buildings that would provide state of the art learning facilities for the students and requested the Town Council's favorable vote on the Loan Order

John Portz – Robbins Road – School Committee Chair - Stated this project is both important and significant and is an investment in the community. He

thanked AI3, Hill International, the Town Council, and the Town Manager for their support and for making the project happen in a fiscally responsible manner.

Superintendent Deanne Galdston – Thanked all for their support of and commitment to this project. She stated the teaching faculty is looking forward to the new buildings and will provide a quality education to the students.

Mary Russo – [Disagreed that the community was sufficiently involved](#) in the planning, especially as it relates to the use of St. Jude's in Waltham.

James Mello – Strongly supported the building and stated this was a long time coming – the last school building in town was the Hosmer School when it was done in the 1950's – 60's.

Mary Russo – Stated that the costs of [leasing St. Jude's](#) have not been stated nor has there been a list of corrections made public

AnneMarie Clonan – Stated that the planning and the buildings are fine. She raised a concern regarding the quality of the education program in Watertown, the need to improve MCAST scores, the provision of a safe environment in the pre-school, and the town's investment in the program.

Superintendent Deanne Galdston – Stated the faculty is committed to providing the maximum use of the building to provide a quality education. She noted that the Hosmer School was a School of Distinction this year, one of fifty-two schools in the Commonwealth. Pre-school is a federally mandated program and services must be provided despite the challenge of COVID-19.

There being no other speakers, the public hearing was closed.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Town Manager, to borrow and/or expend monies in the amount of \$103,455,000 under and pursuant to M.G.L. c.44, §7(1), or pursuant to any other enabling authority to pay costs of constructing new Hosmer and Cunniff Elementary Schools, including all costs incidental and related thereto. Any premium received upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this order, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this order in accordance with M.G.L. c.44, §20, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion.

These items were brought up in the discussion that followed:

- Thanks were given to all who participated in the establishment of these buildings, especially the School Building Committee, the Town Manager, and the School Architect

- The community was commended for their close involvement with the process
- The facts that the schools are net zero energy use, Gold LEED certified, under budget, and within the fiscal requirements is to be lauded
- This project should address some of the inequities within the schools which historically had an impact on the school outcomes
- The design meets the educational needs of the students.
- The school projected population was is for the 2018 – 2028 school years and these projections were increased to anticipate any future changes
- There is a new website for the schools
- The parking at Hosmer will increase by about 10% and includes additional spaces at the school and on street parking
- The ability to fund three schools within the confines of Proposition 2 ½ is an achievement that is only due to the sound fiscal management of the Administration and past Town Councils who made hard financial choices to keep the Town fiscally sound

The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

7. NEW BUSINESS

There were no new business items.

8. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

There were no items from the Town Manager.

9. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION/REVIEW OF LIST OF PENDING MATTERS

There were no new requests for information.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Feltner mentioned that Police Chief Lawn has been returning phone calls to the community regarding their many concerns. She commended him for leading the Black Lives March in the Square, encouraged all to reach out with their concerns and questions, and suggested that community servicing become part of community policing.

11. PUBLIC FORUM

Jocelyn Tager – Robbins Road – Thanked the Town Council for a momentous vote to provide energy efficient schools. She commended them for doing the right thing and for their impressive leadership.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

ADDENDUM

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted by a vote of _9_ for, _0_ against, _0_ present on July 14, 2020.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President

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**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.
MEETING HAD ONLY REMOTE OPPORTUNITIES
FOR PARTICIPATION WITH PUBLIC ACCESS
LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

1. Minutes of the May 26, 2020 Town Council Meeting – Item 4
2. Agenda Item – Proposed Loan Order Regarding the Funding of the Construction of the Hosmer and Cunniff Elementary Schools – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – May 21, 2020 – Item 6
3. Additional Information – Proposed Loan Order Regarding the Construction of the Hosmer and Cunniff Elementary Schools – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – June 4, 2020 – Item 6
4. St. Jude's Cost Rush on Cunniff and Hosmer/Public Forum – Mary Russo to Town Council – June 9, 2020 – Item 6
5. Cost of St. Jude's – Mary Russo to Town Council – June 9, 2020 – Item 6