



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, SEPTEMBER 22, 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, September 22, 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 7:00 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, 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 Driscoll, Town Manager, Thomas Tracy, Town Auditor and Assistant Manager for Finance, Mark Reich, Town Attorney, and Marilyn W. Pronovost, Town Council Clerk.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC FORUM

Deborah Peterson – Stated that she was encouraged with the previously approved Resolution committing the Town to 100% renewable energy. This commitment is evidenced by the two net zero schools to be constructed. She urged the Town to develop a [Climate Action Plan](#) and allow all to be involved in its preparation.

Ann Munson – Raised concerns over greenhouse gases that needs to be addressed in the Climate Action Plan. She would like to see the format that was used for the new schools implemented for the creation of the Climate Action Plan: [community participation](#) during the development of the plan

Susan Ladue – Stated she was pleased with the progress the Town is making on mitigating climate change; however, she is concerned about a structural organization regarding a climate plan. She would like to see people on a committee to monitor the Town's environmental progress and hold government accountable on its commitment to the process.

There being no other speakers, Council President Sideris closed the public forum.

4. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

[Minutes of the August 11, 2020 Town Council Meeting](#)

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

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Council President Sideris stated that in accordance with §5.1 of the Home Rule Charter, invitations would be sent to certain people to attend the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Overview at the October 13, 2020 Town Council Meeting. The Town Manager will address the Town's financial condition and its projected revenues and expenditures.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing and a 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 \$355,000 under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7(1) or Pursuant to Any Other Enabling Authority, and to Issue Bonds or Notes of the Town therefor; for the Purpose to Pay Costs of [Purchasing a New Ambulance for the Fire Department](#), Including the Payment of All Costs Incidental or 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 some background on the matter. Fire Chief Quinn stated the current ambulance has about 42,000 miles on it and has difficulty meeting state requirements for operation due to some weight issues. The vendor, Greenwood Apparatus, stated an ambulance has a 5-7 year service life, especially if it has a moderate to high volume, which Watertown's ambulance has. He noted that the volume for medical runs has increased steadily over the past five years; as a result, this has caused wear and tear on the vehicle.

There is an eight-month turnaround time from purchase to delivery. The purchase will assist with the replacement plan, reduce future maintenance costs, assist the Town retain its OEMS license, and meet inspection requirements. The current ambulance may be used as a backup unit, during maintenance periods to ensure continuous service to the Town, or as a second ambulance at certain events. Fire Chief Quinn asked for the Council's favorable consideration.

Mr. Driscoll stated the ambulance would be paid for over five years from Fiscal Years 2022 – 2026.

Council President Sideris open the Public Hearing; there being no speakers the Public Hearing was closed.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the loan order for the purposes of purchasing the ambulance. Attorney Reich stated that the agenda item was abbreviated and the language "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." should be added to the motion. Councilor Piccirilli then rephrased his motion to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Town Manager, to borrow and/or expend monies in the amount of \$355,000 under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7(1) or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the town therefor; for the purpose to pay costs of purchasing a new ambulance for the Fire Department, including the payment of all costs incidental or 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 Woodland seconded the motion.

In the discussion, the following matters were considered:

- ♦ Ambulance runs increased from 2,082 runs in 2016 to 3,281 in 2019
- ♦ The Fire Department's total call volume was 4,745 in 2016 and 6,170 in 2019
- ♦ The Town's ambulance was upgraded to ALS status in 2017 causing an increase in calls as it provided added service
- ♦ Prior to COVID-19, there were two ambulances available, one running out of the Main St. Station and the other out of Station 2; however with the onset of COVID-19, the Town is using only one ambulance due to staffing and space restrictions
- ♦ Some of the increase in call volume can be attributed to record keeping errors in the past and also to an aging and diverse community
- ♦ Initially with COVID-19, the calls were mainly COVID related causing the number of ambulance calls to be reduced as people were staying home; however, with the opening of the community, the volume has been increasing since June
- ♦ Having a second ambulance is something that will need to be considered after the COVID restrictions are eased; Stations 2 and 3 do not permit the use of a second ambulance due to current space and staffing restrictions
- ♦ The current ambulance will be housed at Station 3 and the new one will be at Station 1

The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

7. MOTIONS, ORDINANCES, ORDER, AND RESOLUTIONS

- A. First Reading 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 \$188,000 under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7(1) or Pursuant to Any Other Enabling Authority, and to Issue Bonds or Notes of the Town Therefor; For the Purpose to Pay Costs of [Repairing and Upgrading the Town Hall Elevator](#), Including the Payment of All Costs Incidental Or 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 issue regarding the repair and upgrade of the elevator. The matter will be taken up for a public hearing and vote at the October 13, 2020 Town Council Meeting.

- B. Referral to the Committee on Media and Public Outreach for a Follow-Up Review of the Final Report and Recommendations from the Committee's December 19, 2019 Meeting

Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer to the Committee on Media and Public Outreach a follow-up review of the Final Report and Recommendations from the Committee's December 19, 2019 meeting; Councilor Gannon seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There were no new business items brought before the Council.

9. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Driscoll stated that the final concert for the summer will be held on Wednesday, September 30, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. and will feature Southbound Train, a country music band.

He also stated that the second quarter real estate taxes would be sent out at the end of September.

Mr. Driscoll mentioned that he had the opportunity to wish Pat Farrell a happy retirement. Pat has completed 56 years of service to the community and has constantly helped Library patrons. He thanked for her many years of service and her tireless and diligent dedication to the community.

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

Councilor Piccirilli requested information regarding the [status of the Town's Climate and Energy Master Plan](#), specifically

1. Has the request for proposal for a consultant been developed, and if not, when is it expected to be done?
2. What is an estimated timeframe for the RFP to be published?
3. What is an estimated timeframe for holding forums to get input from the public?
4. What is an estimated timeframe for the Committees on Public Works and Economic Development & Planning to see a draft outline on the plan?

Councilor Gannon asked if the Town was taking advantage of opening and tabulating ballots received prior to the election date. He also asked if the drop off box located near the Town Clerk's office is the only one for the Town? If so, why was only one box used?

Councilor Feltner had [several requests](#)

- ~ Regarding the elections, how many voter registrations and mail-in ballots have been lost this season?
- ~ The Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines were activated over 5 years ago. She requested DCDP to provide an assessment report on the

progress made for the mixed-use developments such as “live-work-play” and pedestrian activation of the identified corridors.

- How do the more recent project applications for “labs/commercial” properties support this vision?
- Please provide a way to update our visioning process and plans
- ~ There is a concern that some Town meetings are not meeting the standards required under COVID-19 conditions
 - The September 22, 2020 Board of Assessors meeting did not list methods for connecting into the meeting remotely
 - There were access issues with a Housing Partnership meeting
 - The scheduled time for the 202-204 Arsenal Street meeting was posted incorrectly; the phone number for the meeting went to voice mail; and there was an inability to connect into the meeting
- ~ The Town website needs several updates
 - The zoning petition cases are not listed
 - Membership of the ZBA is listed incorrectly
 - Insufficient listings for meetings and related materials

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Feltner reminded people that if they were following a zoning case and the case is continued, abutters would not receive a notice of the continuation. If anyone wants updates, they should sign up for “Notify Me” on the Town’s website at <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/> to obtain agendas as a way to see what topics will be brought up at meetings.

Councilor Palomba reminded people that the deadline to apply for Emergency Rental Assistance is Thursday, September 24, 2020. Assistance is available for those financially affected by COVID-19. Anyone needing service should contact Robyn Rufo at Metro West Collaborative at 617-923-3505, ext. 5 or email her at robyn@metrowestcd.org.

Councilor Gannon reminded people that the last day to register to vote in Massachusetts is October 24, 2020 for the November 3, 2020 election and may be completed online, by mailing a voter registration post card, or in person.

12. PUBLIC FORUM

Jocelyn Tager – The Town has made great strides in working on [climate change problems](#). It must now move on to creating a 100% renewable solution for the community with a plan, a timeline, and oversight.

13. RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 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 October 13, 2020

Mark S. Sideris, Council President

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**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.
MEETING HAD ONLY REMOTE OPPORTUNITIES
FOR PARTICIPATION WITH PUBLIC ACCESS
LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

1. Statement Regarding the Climate Action Plan – Deborah Peterson – September 22, 2020 – Item 3
2. Statement Regarding Community Involvement in the Community Action Plan – Ann Munson - September 22, 2020 – Item 3
3. Minutes of the August 11, 2020 Town Council Meeting – Item 4
4. Agenda Item – Proposed Loan Order Regarding the Purchase of an Ambulance – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – September 3, 2020 – Item 6
5. Additional Information – Proposed Loan Order Regarding the Purchase of an Ambulance – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – September 17, 2020 – Item 6
6. Agenda Item – Proposed Loan Order Regarding the Repair and Upgrade of the Town Hall Elevator – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – September 17, 2020 – Item 7A
7. Request for Information Regarding the Status of the Climate and Energy Master Plan – Councilor Vincent Piccirilli – September 22, 2020 – Item 10
8. Request for Information Regarding Election Preparedness – Councilor John Gannon – September 22, 2020 – Item 10
9. Request for Information Regarding Elections, Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines, and Public Meetings Notices and Access – Councilor Lisa Feltner – September 22, 2020 – Item 10
10. Statement Regarding Climate Change and Continued Progress – Jocelyn Tager – September 22, 2020 – Item 12