



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, OCTOBER 27, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M. MEETING WILL ONLY HAVE REMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION WITH PUBLIC ACCESS AGENDA

The Town Council of the City known as the Town of Watertown held a public meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 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://cloud.castus.tv/vod/#/watertown/video/5f490e6f9e1d640008a803ae?page=HOME&type=live>
- B. The Public was permitted to join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/92991331344>
- C. The 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. The 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, Steve Magoon, Assistant Town Manager and Director of Community Development and Planning, Thomas Tracy, Town Auditor and Assistant Manager for Finance, and Marilyn W. Pronovost, Town Council Clerk.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC FORUM

Richard Kalish – 270 Pleasant Street – The state and community has made a commitment to use 100% renewable energy by 2050. Because buildings produce significant carbon emissions, we need to adopt a net zero stretch code. The state currently has two pieces of legislation in conference committee which local officials need to encourage the development of such a code to be appended to the Mass. Building Code. He requested the Council to sign a letter discussing these matters especially as it relates to the adoption of the net zero stretch code, increased public participation from diverse locations, and require energy experts to be part of the solution.

There being no other speakers; Council President Sideris closed the Public Forum.

4. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Council President Sideris stated he received the letter with the EEE Committee’s recommendation that the Commonwealth develop the net zero stretch code to be appended to the State Building code. The letter will be forwarded to the Council and will be considered at the next meeting.

He further stated that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee forwarded a letter seeking the Town Council’s support regarding the DCR closing of Greenough Boulevard in April and its benefits to pedestrians and cyclers. The letter will be forwarded to the Council and will be considered at the next meeting.

Council President Sideris stated that he observed the Clerk’s Office operations for early voting and it is successful with over 10,000 early votes cast. There have been no issues. The ballot box that holds 700 ballots is emptied several times a day. He commended the Town Manager’s Office for putting together a process to efficiently service the community.

5. PRESENTATIONS OF PETITIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AND SIMILAR PAPERS AND MATTERS

Confirmation of the Proclamation Congratulating [New Repertory Theatre](#) on Their Watertown Historical Moving Play: The Charles Lenox Experience

Councilor Piccirilli read the Proclamation. Councilor Piccirilli moved to confirm the proclamation congratulating [New Repertory Theatre](#) on their Watertown historical moving play: The Charles Lenox Experience; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing and Vote on a [Proposed Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget](#)

Mr. Driscoll stated that the revenue and expenditures increased by \$1,571,280 and comprises

- A new growth revenue increase of \$180,668
- An estimated Cherry Sheet and State aid increase of \$1,390,612
- A \$102,175 expenditure to develop a Climate and Energy Master Plan
- A \$10,000 expenditure for Temporary Part-Time Salaries for the November 3, 2020 Election
- A \$90,000 expenditure for the operation of the Commander's Mansion for the remainder of the year
- A \$1,369,105 deposit into the Town Council Reserve (those funds exceeding the above expenditures of \$202,175)
- With this change, the budget will increase to \$154,013,280

Council President Sideris opened the Public Forum. There being no comments, he closed the public hearing.

Councilor Piccirilli moved that the Council approve the proposed amendment to the Fiscal Year 2021 budget totaling \$154,013,280; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion.

In the discussion that followed, questions were raised regarding

- The rental for the elections [The allocation of \$2,000 was for an additional precinct-voting center at the Hellenic Center]
- What the Commander's Mansion was doing regarding events and COVID. [The Mansion registers all who come for contact tracing purposes; provides wrist bands to keep track of attendees; and sizes events to align with Board of Health and State regulations. The Mansion has been creative in marketing itself for events and has helped educate others on how to have an event. They are seeking to host small events. The remaining question is when to book larger future events]
- The status of the Energy Master Plan [Planning was delayed while the Town submitted a grant request to the State. The grant has not been received, therefore, the appropriation of \$102,000 is to work with the consultant who worked on the MVP Plan. An RFP listing the scope of the work is being worked on.]
- A concern related to the decision not to fund the recycling coordinator, the DPW communications and engagement director, and other requests

The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

7. MOTIONS, ORDINANCES, ORDER, AND RESOLUTIONS

A. First Reading on a Proposed Order Allocating the Property [Tax Levy Among or Between Property Classes for Fiscal Year 2021](#)

Mr. Driscoll stated this item would be considered at the November 10, 2020 Town Council meeting regarding the 175% tax burden shift from personal to commercial and industrial properties and a shift for residential property owners.

B. First Reading on a Proposed Order [Setting Optional Tax Exemptions for Fiscal Year 2021.](#)

Mr. Driscoll stated this item would be considered at the November 10, 2020 Town Council meeting regarding the setting of optional tax exemptions for Fiscal Year 2021. Moneys to pay for the exemptions are paid through the budget's Overlay account.

C. Resolution Approving the Acceptance of Gift of Tangible Personal Property of [100 Nonmedical Masks](#) for Use by Watertown Poll Workers and Election Officials Generally at the State Election on November 3rd from AIS, Through Their Non-Profit Program "Sew the Masks" in Partnership with the United Way of North Central Massachusetts.

Mr. Driscoll stated that AIS, an office manufacturer based in Leominster, through its non-profit program, Sew the Masks, donated 100 masks for use by election workers on November 3, 2020. He asked for the Council's favorable consideration in accepting the gift.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the gift of tangible personal property of 100 nonmedical masks for use by Watertown Poll Workers and Election Officials generally at the state election on November 3rd from AIS, through their non-profit program "Sew the Masks" in partnership with the United Way of North Central Massachusetts; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

D. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of \$12,000 from the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Council Reserve Account to the Fiscal Year 2021 [Charter Review Assistance Account](#)

Mr. Driscoll stated the funds were to be used to hire a consultant to assist with the Charter Review. A professional services agreement with the Collins Center was forwarded for Council review. He requested approval of the transfer.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to authorize a transfer of \$12,000 from the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Council Reserve Account to the Fiscal Year 2021 Charter

Review Assistance Account; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

8. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

A. Committee on Public Works Report Regarding the [FY 2021 Local Road Construction Program](#) – Vincent J. Piccirilli, Chair

ACTION ITEM: That the Town Council Approve Proceeding with the 2021 Road Program as Presented

Councilor Piccirilli read the Committee Report. He then moved to accept the report; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion.

Councilor Feltner pointed out that she attended the meeting and should be added to the list of attendees. Councilor Palomba stated the listing of the 2021 Road Recreation Program should be corrected to read 2021 Road Reconstruction Program.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to amend his motion to indicate Councilor Feltner attended the meeting and to correct the subtitle heading; Councilor Woodland seconded the amended motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve proceeding with the 2021 Road Program as presented; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

B. Committees on Public Works and Economic Development and Planning Report Regarding the Review of and Recommendations for the Implementation Plan of the [Parking Management Plan](#) – Vincent J. Piccirilli, Chair, Public Works; Kenneth M. Woodland, Chair, Economic Development and Planning

ACTION ITEM: That the Town Council Endorse the Actions for the Parking Plan Implementation per the Recommendations in the Joint Public Works and Economic Development & Planning Committee Report

Councilor Woodland read the Committee Report. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. After a brief discussion, the motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to endorse the actions for the parking plan implementation per the recommendations in the Joint Public Works and Economic Development & Planning Committee Report; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion.

During the discussion, Mr. Magoon clarified that any rates and hours changes would continue to be approved by the Traffic Commission and that

there will be a pay by phone option for parking without any additional cost to the Town.

The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

9. NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought before the Council.

10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Driscoll stated there three ways to cast a ballot. The deadline for requesting an absentee ballot is October 28, 2020 by 5:00 p.m. The ballot may be returned by mailing the ballot or dropping it off at the designated drop off box outside the Town Clerk's Office until 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 3, 2020. Early voting will continue until October 30, 2020. In-person voting may be completed at the voter's designated polling place from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. on November 3, 2020.

As of October 27, 2020, there were 13,255 vote by mail or absentee ballot applications that have been processed and mailed. Of these, 7,474 have been returned and 3,203 in person ballots have been completed. A total of 10,677 ballots have been cast representing 42% of the total number of registered voters.

Mr. Driscoll thanked all who helped: the Town Clerk's staff and other personnel.

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

Councilor Feltner requested information regarding Human Resources policies that would provide [flexibility to employees](#) due to COVID-19 concerns.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Gannon thanked all who have participated and any person who will participate in the election in any way for providing an essential public service.

Councilor Piccirilli reminded Councilors that the hearings for establishing the budget guidelines for FY 2022 would begin on November 2, 2020. He requested that Councilors provide him with their concerns by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 28, 2020.

Council President Sideris announced that the next meeting of the Charter Review Committee would be on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. He also thanked the Council for the funding of a consultant to assist the Committee.

13. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers at the public forum.

14. 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 8:14 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 November 27, 2020

Mark S. Sideris, Council President
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**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.
MEETING HAD ONLY REMOTE OPPORTUNITIES
FOR PARTICIPATION WITH PUBLIC ACCESS
LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

1. Proclamation Congratulating New Repertory Theatre on the Occasion of Their Watertown Historical Moving Play: The Charles Lenox Experience – October 26, 2020 – Item 5
2. Proposed Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – October 22, 2020 – Item 7A
3. Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Classification Hearing – November 10, 2020 – Board of Assessors – October 8, 2020 – Item 7A
4. Fiscal Note – Exemptions – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – October 22, 2020 – Item 7B
5. Agenda Item – Acceptance of Gift of Tangible Personal Property of 100 Nonmedical Masks for Use in the State Election on November 3, 2020 – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – October 22, 2020 – Item 7C
6. Agenda Item – Transfer of Funds Request Regarding the Hiring of a Consultant to Assist the Charter Review Committee – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – October 22, 2020 – Item 7D
7. Committee on Public Works Report Regarding the Fiscal Year 2021 Local Road Construction Program – Vincent J. Piccirilli, Chair September 24, 2020 – Item 8A
8. Committees on Public Works and Economic Development and Planning Report Regarding the Parking Management Plan – Vincent J. Piccirilli, Chair, Public Works, Kenneth M. Woodland, Chair, Economic Development and Planning – August 4 and September 30, 2020 – Item 8B
 - ~ Parking Plan Implementation – Laura Wiener, Senior Transportation Planner and Steve Magoon, Director of Community Development and Planning and Assistant Town Manager to Town Council, March 6, 2020
 - ~ Documentation Regarding Wells Avenue and the Wells Avenue Parking Lot – Councilor Angeline B. Kounelis
9. Request for Information Regarding Work Flexibility Arrangements for Town Employees due to COVID-19 – Councilor Lisa J. Feltner – October 27, 2020