



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

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2021, AT 7:00 P.M. RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER MINUTES

The public may participate remotely using any of the public access methods listed below:

ACCESS INFORMATION:

- A. The meeting will be televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television): <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=3>
- B. The Public may join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/92991331344>
- C. Public may 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 may 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 the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Those present in Chamber were Councilors Anthony J. Donato, Lisa J. Feltner, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Those attending virtually were Councilors Caroline Bays, John G. Gannon, and Angeline B. Kounelis. Also present were Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, Steve Magoon, Director of Community Development/Assistant Town Manager, Thomas Tracy, Town Auditor/Assistant Manager for Finance, and Mark Reich, Town Attorney.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC FORUM

Barbara Ruskin – 140 Spring Street – She raised a concern regarding [a zoning compliance notice](#) she received regarding floral vegetation overgrowing onto the sidewalk impeding walkers trafficking the area. She maintained this was a ridiculous issue as the vegetation only grows for 1-2 months. There are other greater issues that need addressing such as the lack of snow removal that affects a walker's ability to use the sidewalk. She wondered what the council's oversight and enforcement role is in such matters.

Russ Arico – Fayette Street – He asked the public to get involved with the Charter Review Committee and review their actions, which he felt advance an extreme national movement.

Elodia Thomas - She supported Ms. Ruskin's concern and agreed there are other violations of greater import.

4. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting – [June 22, 2021](#)

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

Update on Process for Town Manager Search

Council President Sideris stated the Town Manager search would be a multi-step process. Because Mr. Driscoll has served for so many years, there is no one on the Town Council who has dealt with this process. The first step would be the establishment of an ad hoc subcommittee consisting of Council President Sideris, Vice-President Piccirilli, and Councilor Bays, Personnel and Town Organization Chair, who would create an RFP for a consultant to assist the Council in its selection process. The committee would like to move quickly to review the searchers who would facilitate community meetings and meetings with each councilor and individual department heads.

these matters were considered in the comments that followed the announcement:

- Timeline: Council President Sideris did not elaborate on a time frame but stated he hoped to have the RFP ready for the following week. There would be a meeting in the chamber; the zoom meeting would be bypassed in order to complete the RFP promptly. The public would be able to participate.
- Finances: At this moment, there was no need to consider money as this first part was only to consider RFP requirements
- RFP: The RFP language of the would be prepared by the subcommittee, distributed by it, and be consistent with the Uniform Procurement Act.

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

Proclamation Congratulating [Patricio Pino for Achieving Eagle Scout](#)

Councilor Piccirilli read the proclamation. He moved to accept the Proclamation; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll vote.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Public Hearing and Vote on a Proposed Order Establishing [Water and Sewer Rates and Charges for Fiscal Year 2022.](#)

Mr. Driscoll provided background on the matter. Mr. Tracy, Town Auditor and Assistant Town Manager for Finance, stated that a Fiscal Year 2020 study suggested significant increases in the rates for the next few years. FY 2021 saw rate increases of 7% for water and 9.5% for sewer rates. Due to COVID-19 and a change in DPW administration, there were no discussions with the consultants regarding rate increase recommendations. The Fiscal Year 2022 budget provided an appropriation of \$8,600,000, an increase of \$288,142, a 3.44% increase over the FY2021 water budget. The sewer budget had an appropriation of \$11,036,108, an increase of \$330,921, a 3.09% increase above the FY2020 budget. The administration felt it was prudent to ask for a 3.2% increase until it was able to meet with the consultant.

The rates for water increased by 3.2% over the current rates:

0-3,000 cubic feet of usage - \$5.15/100 cubic feet

3,001 – 30,000 cubic feet of usage - \$8.00/100 cubic feet

Above 30,000 cubic feet of usage and irrigation - \$12.62/100 cubic feet

The rates for sewer usage increased by 3.2% over the current rates:

0-3,000 cubic feet of usage - \$10.11/100 cubic feet

3,001 – 30,000 cubic feet of usage - \$13.07/100 cubic feet

Above 30,000 cubic feet of usage - \$17.50/100 cubic feet

Based on a home with a 5/8 meter using 2,500 cubic feet of water per quarter, the bill would be \$389.38, an increase of \$11.99/ quarter.

Council President Sideris opened the Public Hearing. There being no speakers, the Public Hearing was closed. Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the proposed Order establishing the water and sewer rates and charges for Fiscal Year 2022; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion.

In the discussion, it was mentioned:

- There would be a meeting in the first week of August to consider FY 2021 consumption of water
- There was a need to look for ways to provide relief to reduce the burden on people
- Asked if there was any increase of difficulty in making payments, Mr. Tracy stated he did not notice a significant problem, but he would be better able to determine this after the review of the budget at the end of the fiscal year.

The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

- B. 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 \$1,500,000 under M.G.L. c.44, §7(1), or Pursuant to Any Other Enabling Authority for the [Costs of Reconstructing Waverley Avenue](#) (Between Orchard and Belmont Streets), Including the Related Costs of Reconstructing, Improving and/or Installing Sidewalks, Curbing, Uphill Bicycle Lanes, Tree Plantings and All Other Costs Incidental and Related Thereto; That to Meet This Appropriation, and to Issue Bonds or Notes of the Town Therefor; and That 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. [Additional Information](#)

Mr. Driscoll provided background information on the request. Mr. St. Louis, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works, stated the upgrade would fit into the complete streets policy and provide an improved bicycle route for the north – south connection between Belmont Street and Orchard Street. Construction will begin in the fall. The payments would start in FY 2022 and end in FY 2026.

Council President Sideris opened the Public Hearing. There being no speakers, the public hearing was closed.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the proposed Loan Order authorizing the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Town Manager, to borrow and/or expend monies in the amount of \$1,500,000 under M.G.L. c.44, §7(1), or pursuant to any other enabling authority for the costs of reconstructing Waverley Avenue (between Orchard and Belmont Streets), including the related costs of reconstructing, improving and/or installing sidewalks, curbing, uphill bicycle lanes, tree plantings and all other costs incidental and related thereto; that to meet this appropriation, and to issue bonds or notes of the town therefor; and that 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. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

9. MOTIONS, ORDINANCES, ORDER, AND RESOLUTIONS

- A. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$390,000 From Various Fiscal Year 2021 Electricity and Gas Accounts to the Fiscal Year 2021 [ESCO Capital Project Stabilization Fund](#) Account.

Mr. Driscoll provided background on the transfer. There were nineteen accounts that had excess funds for utility needs amounting to \$390,000; these funds are being transferred to the ESCO Capital Project Stabilization Fund to pay down the debt service on energy efficiency projects incurred under the ESCO Agreement. Councilor Piccirilli moved to authorize a transfer of funds in the amount of \$390,000 from various Fiscal Year 2021 electricity and gas accounts to the Fiscal Year 2021 ESCO Capital Project Stabilization Fund Account; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

- B. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$30,000 From the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Council Reserve to the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Projects – I/T Department Account in order to move forward with a contract for the development of a [“311” Customer Service System](#).

Mr. Driscoll provided background on this matter. Mr. McClure, Chief Information Officer, stated he looked forward to this project because it is multi-faceted and will require the effort of all departments to make it a success. It will provide a customer service model for the community.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to authorize a transfer of funds in the amount of \$30,000 From the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Council Reserve to the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Projects – I/T Department Account in order to move forward with a contract for the development of a “311” Customer Service System; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. In the comments following, Councilors expressed their enthusiasm for an exciting and significant achievement to provide residents quality service. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

- C. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$500,000 from the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Council Reserve and the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Group Health Insurance Account to the Fiscal Year 2021 [New High School Stabilization Fund](#).

Mr. Driscoll provided background on this matter. Councilor Piccirilli moved to authorize a transfer of funds in the amount of \$500,000 from the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Council Reserve and the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Group Health Insurance Account to the Fiscal Year 2021 New High School Stabilization Fund; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

- D. Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$2,000,000 From the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Council Reserve to the Fiscal Year 2021 [Acquisition of Land/Open Space Stabilization Fund](#).

Mr. Driscoll provided background on this matter. Councilor Piccirilli moved to authorize a transfer of funds in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the Fiscal Year 2021 Town Council Reserve to the Fiscal Year 2021 Acquisition of Land/Open Space Stabilization Fund; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

- E. First Reading on a Proposed Ordinance [Amending the Town Manager's Compensation](#).

This is a first reading; the public hearing will be on August 10, 2021. The suggested salary for the Town Manager as of July 1, 2020 for FY 2021 will be \$217,415; the salary as July 1, 2021 for FY 2022 will \$221,765.

10. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- A. Committee on Economic Development & Planning Committee Report Regarding the [Appointment of Abigail Hammett to the Planning Board](#) for an Unexpired Term that Expires on February 15, 2022 – Lisa Feltner, Vice Chair

ACTION ITEM:

That the Town Council Confirm the Appointment of Abigail Hammett to the Planning Board for a Term that Expires on February 15, 2022.

Councilor Feltner read the Committee Report. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to confirm the appointment of Abigail Hammett to the Planning Board for an unexpired term that expires on February 15, 2022; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

- B. Committee on Human Services Report Regarding the [Reappointment of Dr. Barbara Beck to the Board of Health](#) for a Term that Expires on February 5, 2024

ACTION ITEM:

That the Town Council Confirm the Reappointment of Dr. Barbara Beck to the Board of Health for a Term that Expires on February 5, 2024.

Councilor Palomba read the Committee Report. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to confirm the reappointment of Dr. Barbara Beck to the Board of Health for a term that expires on February 5, 2024; Councilor Gannon seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

C. Committee on Economic Development and Planning Report Regarding [Policy Guidance on Possible Regulations and Zoning Rules for Firearms Businesses.](#)

Councilor Feltner read the Committee report. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

11. NEW BUSINESS

Referral to the Committee on Budget and Fiscal Oversight to Convene to Prioritize Spending of Federal Monies That Watertown Will Be Receiving in Accordance with the [American Rescue Plan Act.](#)

Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer to the Committee on Budget and Fiscal Oversight to convene to prioritize spending of federal monies that Watertown will be receiving in accordance with the American Rescue Plan Act; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

12. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Driscoll mentioned the Historical Society would hold a virtual event celebrating the annual July 16, 1776 meeting of the reading of the Declaration of Independence and treaty day. Details are provided on the Historical Society's website.

On Wednesday, the farmers market would be held from 2:30 – 6:30 pm rain or shine. This would be followed up by a free concert at Saltonstall Park each week until the first week of September.

The library's summer reading program would be held. Please check the website for the online calendar for events and related details.

A press release was sent seeking people to volunteer to serve on the Public Arts and Cultural Committee, a permanent advisory board to the town. Those who are interested should submit a letter of interest along with a resume or other information regarding their interest and experience by Thursday, August 12, 2021.

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

Councilor Palomba requested a summary of the purpose of the [American Rescue Plan funds](#); what the funds could and could not be used for; what limits there might be on its usage; and when the funds must be used by.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Palomba announced there would be an upcoming meeting regarding the climate action plan on July 27, 2021.

Councilor Feltner announced the Committee on Public Safety would be held on Monday, July 19 at 7:00 p.m. via zoom only. The Committee would discuss information regarding police services and what next steps should be considered.

15. PUBLIC FORUM

Leo Martin – Main Street – He thanked Mr. Driscoll for his years of service to Watertown and the Town Council for continuing their support to purchase open space which is desperately needed in this community.

16. RECESS OR 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 8:21 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 8 for, 0 against, 0 present on August 10, 2021.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President
s:/MWP

**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2021, AT 7:00 P.M.
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER
WITH REMOTE ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES**

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. Email Regarding Zoning Code Enforcement – Barbara and Jeremy Ruskin to Town Council – July 13, 2021 – Item 3
2. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting – June 22, 2021 – Item 4
3. Proclamation Congratulating Patricio Pino for Achieving Eagle Scout – June 26, 2021 – Item 6
4. Fiscal Year 2022 Water and Sewer Rates – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – June 17, 2021 – Item 8A
5. Agenda Item – Proposed Loan Order Regarding the Reconstruction of Waverley Street – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – June 16, 2021 – Item 8B
6. Additional Information – Proposed Loan Order Regarding the Reconstruction of Waverley Street – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – July 6, 2021 – Item 8B
7. Agenda Item – Transfer of Funds Request Regarding the ESCO Capital Project Stabilization Fund – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – July 6, 2021 – Items 9A
8. Agenda Item – Transfer of Funds Request Regarding the Development of a “311” Customer Service System – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – July 8, 2021 – Item 9B
9. Agenda Item – Transfer of Funds Request Regarding the Establishment of the New High School Stabilization Fund – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – July 8, 2021 – Item 9C
10. Agenda Item – Transfer of Funds Request Regarding the Establishment of the Acquisition of Land/Open Space Stabilization Fund – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – July 8, 2021 – Item 9D
11. Legal Notice Regarding the Ordinance Amending the Town Manager’s Compensation – July 9, 2021 – Item 9E
12. Committee on Economic Development and Planning Committee Report Regarding the Appointment of Abigail Hammett to the Planning Board – Lisa J. Feltner, Vice-Chair – June 28, 2021 – Item 10A

13. Committee on Human Services Report Regarding the Reappointment of Dr. Barbara Beck to the Board of Health – Anthony Palomba, Chair – June 8, 2021 – Item 10B
14. Committee on Economic Development and Planning Report Regarding Policy Guidance on Possible Regulations and Zoning Rules for Firearms Businesses – Lisa J. Feltner, Vice-Chair – June 23, 2021 – Item 10C
 - Firearms Restrictions in Zoning – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – May 20, 2021
15. Resolution/Order Regarding the Federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Referral – July 13, 2021 – Item 11
16. Request for Information Regarding the Federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA) – Councilor Anthony Palomba – July 13, 2021 – Item 13