

Minutes of the Town of Farmington
Regular Town Council Meeting
November 10, 2020

Present:

C. J. Thomas, Chair
Joe Capodiferro
Brian F. X. Connolly
Edward Giannaros
Peter Mastrobattista
Gary Palumbo

Kathy Blonski, Town Manager
Paula B. Ray, Clerk

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Presentations and Recognitions

1. Veterans' Day

The Chair read the following proclamation into the record:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the citizens of our country are justly proud of the men and women who have fought to defend the principles of liberty and freedom on which our nation was founded, and

WHEREAS, from the Revolutionary-era militias through today's sophisticated defense structure, American service members have defended our country in times of challenge, brought honor to the United States and created a solid foundation for its continued security, growth and prosperity, and

WHEREAS, despite the tremendous perils and pressures of wartime, our Armed Forces have defended the country with conviction and courage. In admiration of the strength of our convictions, other nations have looked to America for leadership, and our allies have always been secure in the knowledge that our proud country will not allow its principles and beliefs to be compromised, and

WHEREAS, the citizens of the United States will forever owe an immense debt of gratitude to our Veterans for the sacrifices they have made to secure the safety of our country, and

WHEREAS, as an expression of that gratitude, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed into law an act calling for the observance of Veterans Day on November 11th of each year, and in 1921 that date was originally designated as Armistice Day in remembrance of the end of World War I and as a perpetual reminder of the blessings of peace, and by 1954, the observance widened to honor the courageous Veterans of all foreign conflicts, and

WHEREAS, our Veterans reflect the preeminent qualities of patriotism and courage in all of us and continue to make countless contributions to military and civilian life. In addition, many men and women from the Connecticut National Guard are serving in Iraq or Afghanistan, or are scheduled to be deployed there shortly, along with many other Connecticut residents serving with the United States Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Farmington Town Council hereby thanks the many contributions and accomplishments of all our Veterans.

DATED AT FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT this 10th day of November 2020.

CJ Thomas, Chair
Farmington Town Council

2. Russ Nelson, Fire Chief, East Farmington Volunteer Fire Department

Mr. Capodiferro read the following proclamation into the record:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Russ Nelson has served the Town of Farmington as a Firefighter for 33 years at the East Farmington Volunteer Fire Department beginning his service on July 21st, 1987, and

WHEREAS, Russ Nelson, has held numerous social and line officer positions for the East Farmington Volunteer Fire Department, culminating his career as Chief of the Department from November 2004 through October 2020, and

WHEREAS, Russ Nelson, has continued to enhance the fire service within the State of Connecticut through his position as a Regional County Coordinate for Hartford County and a Task Force Team Leader for Taskforce 54 under the Statewide Fire Service Disaster Response Plan, and

WHEREAS, Russ Nelson, continues to be a leader through organizations within the fire service to include the Capital Regional Fire Chief's Association, where he was appointed as Vice President on July 1st, 2015, and

WHEREAS, Russ Nelson, has been a part of countless public safety events, lifesaving incidents, critical fire department decisions, civic and community activities as well as key behind the scenes personnel and administrative decisions, and

WHEREAS, Russ Nelson, as a leader in the Town of Farmington Fire Department, has made immeasurable contributions to the Town of Farmington and its residents such as fundraising for a regional burn building to enhance firefighter training, serving on numerous apparatus committees to ensure the department has the safest and most efficient equipment, and maintaining cherished special events such as the annual Easter flower sale, and

WHEREAS, Russ Nelson has always maintained a focus on the public good and acted to protect the public interest while donating countless hours of time, energy and personal commitment to better our community and enrich the lives of the residents of the Town of Farmington.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Farmington Town Council hereby commends Russ Nelson for his excellent work on behalf of the community and we congratulate him on his long years of dedicated service and leadership as Chief of the East Farmington Volunteer Fire Department. The Farmington Town Council hereby proclaims November 10th, 2020 as Russ Nelson Day in Farmington, Connecticut.

DATED AT FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT this 10th day of November 2020.

CJ Thomas, Chair
Farmington Town Council

The Council thanked Chief Nelson for his service to the Town, and the Chief thanked all the Councils for all the support they had given the volunteers over the years.

The Chair presented Chief Nelson with a citation from the State of Connecticut sponsored by Farmington's legislators.

C. Public Hearing

There were no public hearings held.

D. New Items

There were no new items added to the Agenda.

F. Public Comments

Tim Kelly of 62 Westview Terrace asked the Council for a financial accounting of how much money had been spent by the Farmington High School Building Committee on the project.

G. Reading of the Minutes

1. October 13, 2020 Regular Town Council Meeting

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2020 Regular Town Council Meeting with the following correction:

- Page 3, Public Comments, Jay Tulin change “International Rights Day” to International Human Rights Day.”

Adopted unanimously

H. Reading of Communications and Written Appeals

There were no communications or written appeals.

I. Report of the Committees

1. UCONN Health Committee
2. Land Acquisition Committee
3. Green Efforts Committee
4. Farmington High School Building Committee

There were no reports for the Agenda Items I-1 through I-4.

5. Racial Equality Taskforce

Mr. Giannaros reported the Taskforce had had a report from the Farmington School System at their October 21st meeting. They planned to discuss their goals and timeline at their December 12, 2020 meeting and to meet with the schools again sometime in the future to continue their discussion.

6. Village Center/Parson’s Property Ad-Hoc Committee

Mr. Mastrobattista reported the Council would have a discussion later in the meeting under New Business.

J. Report of the Council Chair and Liaisons

1. Chair

The Chair thanked the Town Clerk, the Registrars of Voters and the Town Staff for all the work they had done to make Election Day in Farmington a success for the Town’s voters. He thanked all the volunteers who had worked on the Election and the voters themselves. The Chair reported with the rise of Covid-19 Cases the Governor had rolled back the State from Level 3 to Level 2.1 and reminded everyone to be diligent in protecting themselves, that the Council would be discussing the Village Center Plan later in the meeting, that the Town had just received a grant from the State of Connecticut that would allow for a pavilion behind Town Hall and he wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

2. Board of Education Liaison

There was no report for Agenda Item J-2.

3. Economic Development Commission Liaison

Mr. Giannaros reported the Commission at their last meeting had elected Bill Wadsworth as Chair and Dan Kleinman as Vice Chair. They had issued a positive referral for Hayes Kaufman Farmington Associates' special permit for Health Care Diagnostics at 838 Farmington Avenue and a positive referral for JDA Development for a special permit and site plan for 784 Farmington Avenue. The next meeting was scheduled for November 18, 2020.

4. Farmington Historic District Commission

Mr. Connolly reported the Commission had approved temporary certificates of appropriateness for 17 Tunxis Street, the First Church Christ Congregational, 165 Main Street, 40 Colton Street and 103 Main Street. The Commission heard an update on their Study Report from the Interim Planner and expected a response from the State of Connecticut soon allowing a public hearing on the Study Report for the December 15, 2020 meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for November 17, 2020.

5. Housing Authority

There was no report for Agenda Item J-5.

6. Human Relations Commission

Mr. Capodiferro reported the Commission would be meeting on November 16, 2020 to finalize their presentation regarding International Human Rights Day for the Town Council and to finalize the needs assessment survey that would be going out to the public. The Commission was still working with the Farmington Village Ad Hoc Committee to address ADA issues.

7. Library Board

There was no report for Agenda Item J-7.

8. Town Plan and Zoning Liaison

Mr. Mastrobattista reviewed the report recorded with these minutes as Agenda Item J-8.

9. Unionville Historic District Commission

Mr. Giannaros reported the Commission had issued a certificate of appropriateness for 20 Elm Street and the next meeting was scheduled for November 12, 2020.

10. Unionville Village Improvement Association Liaison

There was no report for Agenda Item J-10.

11. Water Pollution Control Authority

Mr. Capodiferro reported the WPCA was also meeting that night.

12. Other Liaisons

There were no other liaison reports.

K. Report of the Town Manager

The Manager reviewed and answered Council questions regarding the following report:

a. Veterans' Day

A short social distancing ceremony will be held at the Farmington Town Hall, 1 Monteith Drive, in front of the Veterans Memorial Monument at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 11, 2020. If you have any questions regarding the ceremony, please contact Paul Krause at 910.376.5454.

b. Elections Update

Planning for Election Day began in the summer. The August 11, 2020 primary was the dress rehearsal for November. Staff worked with the Registrars of Voters and Town Clerk to ensure a safe poll plan as well as a safe absentee ballot counting process. We learned a lot about what is needed to run an election event in a COVID-19 world. While the turnout was low for the primary, the day was a success.

A presidential election is always a large undertaking. This year the COVID-19 pandemic made it especially challenging. Presidential elections have the largest voter turnout of any election event. A statewide mailing of absentee ballots brought a whole new challenge to the table. The Registrars of Voters, the Town Clerk's Office and a team of town staff worked diligently for months to be ready for Election day.

Supplies needed to be ordered, staff needed to be secured, and safe polling plans needed to be created. As with everything related to COVID-19 it was a fluid process and we were ready for quick pivots. Erica Robertson and Steve Hoffmann were tasked with assisting the Town Clerk and the Registrars of Voters in overall planning and safety measures. Devon Aldave rounded out the team with purchasing all the required COVID-19 supplies.

An election working group made up of the Registrars and their assistants, the Town Clerk, the IT department, and the staff team met weekly to ensure that everything needed was in place. The Police department provided a critical security and traffic control component. Despite the uncertainties and challenges, working together, we were able to complete a successful, albeit more expensive, election event.

In addition to a successful process for Election Day some other positive outcomes should be highlighted. This election required over 50 additional positions to be filled. These were directly related to COVID-19 precautions and absentee ballots. Recruiting

for poll workers in a normal year can be a challenge but getting so many more was going to be hard. That said, when the Town sent out a recruitment flyer town wide, the response was overwhelming. People from all over town wanted to be a part of the day. They wanted to make sure that our residents had a safe election experience. We had students from all grades at the high school working. There were mother and daughter teams, there were families volunteering their time. Some workers wanted to work the entire day, arriving at the polls before dawn and leaving after 8 pm. The moderator at the Community Center wrote to us and relayed positive stories of how well the public interacted and helped each other. A frail elderly couple were welcomed to the front of the long line. Student volunteers fixed a broken walker for one gentleman. She praised all the young people who assisted at the polls; seasoned poll workers enjoyed their insightful questions and willingness to help. Overall, we saw what makes Farmington so special – a compassionate community who comes together to help each other when the need arrives. Together, we can accomplish great things!

c. COVID-19 Update – Phase 2.1

On November 2, 2020 Governor Lamont announced that the State of Connecticut will roll back to Phase 2.1 of the re-opening plan. These rules are a modified version of the previously enacted Phase 2 rules, and will become effective on Friday, November 6, 2020.

The major changes that will occur under Phase 2.1 include:

- Restaurants will reduce to 50 percent capacity with a maximum of 8 people limited to a table;
- Restaurants and entertainment venues (i.e. bowling allies, movie theaters, arcades, etc.) will be required to close by 9:30 p.m., with the exception of food takeout and delivery services, which will be allowed to continue after 9:30 p.m.;
- Personal services, such as hair salons and barber shops, will remain at 75 percent capacity;
- Event venues will be limited to 25 people indoor, 50 people outdoor;
- Performing arts venues and movie theaters will have a capacity of 100 people; and
- Religious gatherings will be limited to 50 percent capacity or 100 people maximum.

The Governor is expected to issue an executive order implementing Phase 2.1 in the coming days. The Town of Farmington is also awaiting guidance from the Department of Economic and Community Development to provide businesses with further guidance on the changes.

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to accept the report of the Town Manager.

Adopted unanimously

L. Appointments

1. Building Code Board of Appeals

Motion was made and seconded Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) that Don Doeg be appointed to the Building Code of Appeals for the balance of a five-year term beginning immediately and ending September 30, 2024.

Adopted unanimously

2. Building Code Board of Appeals (Langston)

There was no appointment made for Agenda Item L-2.

3. Farmington Historic District

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) that Evan Honeyman be appointed to the Farmington Historic District Commission for the balance of a five-year term beginning December 1, 2020 and ending September 30, 2021.

Adopted unanimously

4. Plainville Area Cable TV Advisory Council (Bernier)

5. Unionville Historic District & Properties Commission **Alternate** (Wuelfing)

6. Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Management Plan (LFSWS) (Schlegel)

There were no appointments made for Agenda Items L-4 through L-6.

M. Old Business

There was no Old Business conducted.

N. New Business

1. To approve the Farmington Village Center/Parson's Property Ad-Hoc Committee phasing and design plan (phase 1) that was reviewed by the Town Council on September 10, 2020 for the replacement of sidewalks on Main Street/Route 10

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to approve the Farmington Village Center/Parson's Property Ad-Hoc Committee phasing and design plan (phase 1) that was reviewed by the Town Council on September 10, 2020 for the replacement of sidewalks on Main Street/Route 10.

Motion was made and seconded (Connolly/Giannaros) to amend the motion to include an add/alt to the project to include electrical conduit under the sidewalks.

Adopted unanimously
Adopted as amended unanimously

2. That a contract for the acquisition of four (4) Dell computer servers at a cost of \$19,890.00 each (\$79,560 Total) be awarded to Dell Marketing LP, of Round Rock TX

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) that a contract for the acquisition of four (4) Dell computer servers at a cost of \$19,890.00 each (\$79,560 Total) be awarded to Dell Marketing LP, of Round Rock TX.

Adopted unanimously

3. To award a contract for the purchase of Treated Road Salt for the 2020/2021 winter season to CARGILL, Inc. of Boston, MA at a purchase price of \$61.00 per ton

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to award a contract for the purchase of Treated Road Salt for the 2020/2021 winter season to CARGILL, Inc. of Boston, MA at a purchase price of \$61.00 per ton.

Adopted unanimously

4. That the Town acquire 28 new Lithium Ion battery powered golf carts from Club Car LLC of Evans, GA for Westwoods Golf Course and that the Town Manager and Town Treasurer be authorized to enter into a lease financing arrangement with De Lage Landen Public Finance LLC of Philadelphia PA for the leasing financing of the 28 golf carts

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) that the Town acquire 28 new Lithium Ion battery powered golf carts from Club Car LLC of Evans, GA for Westwoods Golf Course and that the Town Manager and Town Treasurer be authorized to enter into a lease financing arrangement with De Lage Landen Public Finance LLC of Philadelphia PA for the leasing financing of the 28 golf carts.

Adopted unanimously

5. To approve property tax refunds

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to approve the following property tax refunds:

NAME	REASON	AMOUNT
Acar Leasing LTD	Assessor adjustment	\$247.98
Ally Financial	Assessor adjustment	\$1,121.68
Amit Ranjan	Assessor adjustment	\$165.50
Ari Fleet LT LTD	Assessor adjustment	\$1,148.47
Atkinson Denise A	Assessor adjustment	\$47.61
Bachman lawrence	Assessor adjustment	\$53.57
Cab East LLC	Assessor adjustment	\$2,164.12
CCAP Auto Lease Ltd	Assessor adjustment	\$241.38
Corelogic	Overpaid	\$4,645.12
Encinas Luis C.	Assessor adjustment	\$191.60
Haworth S Flowers & Gifts LLC	Assessor adjustment	\$133.73
JP Morgan Chase	Assessor adjustment	\$23.13
Steve Lachance Construction LLC	Assessor adjustment	\$73.76
Lazarus Antoinette C	Assessor adjustment	\$256.71
Lux Brian F	Assessor adjustment	\$19.22
Motorlease Corporation	Assessor adjustment	\$1,815.11
Paris Jan R	Assessor adjustment	\$13.65
Partyka Michael	Assessor adjustment	\$556.00
Ramakrishnan Prabhu	Assessor adjustment	\$372.79
Toyota Lease Trust	Assessor adjustment	\$1,876.95
VW Credit Leasing	Assessor adjustment	\$791.82
Wheeler Robert	Assessor adjustment	\$487.51

Total		\$16,447.41
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Adopted unanimously

O. Executive Session

There was no Executive Session held.

P. Adjournment

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Adopted unanimously

Respectfully submitted,


Paula B. Ray, Clerk

Farmington Development Projects Report

November 2020

Recently approved development projects:

- A special permit for health care diagnostic use at the Epicure Plaza will be heard on November 9, 2020. The proposed tenant will be Lab Corp, it will provide medical diagnostic services. Monarch Jewelers is interested reducing their current retail space. If approved, Monarch Jewelers will be subdivided evenly between the two tenants. This project would retain Monarch Jewelers and bring a new medical laboratory to Farmington.
- On October 26, 2020 the TPZ approved JDA Development's project to construct a new building at 784 Farmington Avenue, to house a Chase Manhattan Branch. The project includes the construction of the new building, an ATM drive through in the rear of the property and the preservation and relocation of a historically significant building circa 1905. In addition to preserving and relocating the historic structure, the new building was vetted by the Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) and the design is in keeping with the architecture found in the Farmington Center.
- A Change of Zone, and a Special Permit were approved on October 26, 2020 to allow for the redevelopment of office space at 790 Farmington Avenue, in buildings 1 & 4, to convert residential space. The plans calls for 6 (1) bedroom units per building.
- On September 28, 2020 a site plan modification was approved to build 2, two story medical buildings rather than the originally approved single 66,000 sq. ft. building. The plan allows for the immediate construction of one building, and the second building will be constructed later.
- On September 14, 2020, at 240, 244, 248 Main Street, an application for special permit, site plan and waiver were approved to provide expansion of office, personal service and retail buildings. This project will provide renovations and improvements to the original buildings, and improved landscaping and a new sidewalks in front of the building.

Upcoming Applications at TPZ

- On October 26, 2020, Metro Realty presented an informal presentation of a proposed a luxury multifamily residential development to be constructed at 402 Farmington Avenue. Located in this area, there are over 4 million square feet of commercial office space, providing state of the art medical care, and bioscience research, as well as advanced manufacturing and technology companies. These companies employ thousands of highly trained medical personnel, researchers, scientist and young professional. Currently there are only 120 modern apartments in Farmington, so there is a high demand to provide housing in this area of town. This project proposes to build 150 high end apartments, with amenities, and 86 garages.
- On November 9, 2020, the TPZ will accept an application from JRF Management LLC & Kaoud Real Estate Development LLC- for change of zone of a +/- 24.85 acre site with existing industrial building from C1 and BR to Midpoint Development District with master plan and special permit for mixed use development including commercial and multifamily uses and structures, at 1371,

1349 Farmington Avenue and adjacent Lots 8218, 8237 Farmington Avenue. It is expected that a public hearing date of December 7, 2020 will be set.

Status on Approved Applications:

- New Ion Bank building on Route 4 in Unionville is scheduled to be completed by December 1, 2020
- Farmington Trails storage units and a new Thomaston Bank branch on Colt Highway received the CO on October 19, 2020
- A 55,000 square foot medical office building at 599 Farmington Avenue was completed in July 2020.
- A new building to house a Collinsville Bank branch at the Highland Park Market was completed on February 2020.