

Minutes of the Town of Farmington
Regular Town Council Meeting
December 8, 2020
Zoom Webinar Meeting due to the COVID19 Pandemic

Attending:

C. J. Thomas, Chair
Joe Capodiferro
Brian F. X. Connolly
Christopher Fagan
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. Firefighters of the Year – John Driscoll

The proclamation for John Driscoll was postponed until the January 2021 meeting.

2. Proclamation

Jay Tulin, Chair of the Human Relations Commission introduced a video in honor of Human Rights Day 2020, and Mr. Fagan read the following proclamation:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS , December 10, 1948 is the date that the General Assembly of the United Nations approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declaring that “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world;” and

WHEREAS, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights calls for all people and governments at all levels to promote and respect the rights that it recognizes remembering that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Farmington and the Farmington Human Relations Commission are committed to ensuring the human rights of all Farmington residents, protecting them from discrimination, and encourages equality of treatment of all people, regardless

of race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, age, economic status, national origin or ancestry, political opinion or physical, mental, intellectual or learning disability ; and

WHEREAS , 2020 is the 72nd anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and an opportunity for the Town of Farmington to commemorate this event and recommit itself to the broader achievement of human rights for all residents .

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that on behalf of the Town Council and the residents of Farmington, I, Town Council Chair C.J. Thomas, proclaim December 10, 2020 as Human Rights Day in the Town of Farmington and encourage all residents to work together in the coming year to advancing progress towards fulfilling the full range of human rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

DATED AT FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT this 8th day of December 2020.

C.J. Thomas, Chair
Farmington Town Council

Mr. Tulin, Chair of the Human Relations Commission presented Ruth Grobe with Farmington’s first Human Rights Award. This award shall be given annually to a Farmington or Unionville resident who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to furthering the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

3. Proclamation

Mr. Capodiferro read the following proclamation in honor of Ruth Grobe:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Ruth Grobe is a longtime Farmington resident who has dedicated herself to the betterment of her community through decades of advocating for social equality and justice, and

WHEREAS, Ruth Grobe received a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University and a Master of Social Work from the University of Connecticut and uses her education and expertise to work tirelessly for the needs of all of Farmington’s residents, and

WHEREAS, Ruth Grobe has worked for the Greater Hartford YMCA for over a decade and was the 2012 recipient of the Robert C. Knox, Jr. YMCA Distinguished Leadership Award for her dedication to helping the YMCA grow and prosper, and

WHEREAS, Ruth Grobe's civic engagement includes volunteering and supporting Town organizations such as New Horizons, the Community Chest, the United Way, and the Human Relations Commission, where she was the Chair for over twenty years, and

WHEREAS, Ruth Grobe established a unity network which provides information, education, and support to all of Farmington's diverse populations, and

WHEREAS, Ruth Grobe assisted in establishing the Citizens Coalition for Equal Access that advocates for Universal Design, and was instrumental in the installation of automatic entry doors at the Unionville Post Office to aid all residents that are either confined to a wheelchair or need help with heavier doors in having access to the Unionville Post Office, and

WHEREAS, in addition to the outstanding work she does in Farmington, Ruth is also committed to ServCorps, a volunteer service founded by her husband Richard, that focuses on the construction and restoration of homes in Connecticut and areas suffering from natural disasters.

NOW THEREFORE, the Farmington Town Council hereby commends Ruth Grobe for her tremendous work on behalf of the community and we hereby thank her for her selfless dedication and immeasurable contributions and commitment to the Town of Farmington and its residents. The Farmington Town Council hereby extends Ruth Grobe best wishes on her future endeavors.

DATED AT FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT this 8th day of December 2020.

C.J. Thomas, Chair
Farmington Town Council

Ms. Grobe thanked the Council for the recognition and expressed her fondness for the Town of Farmington.

Mr. Connolly read a citation in honor of Ruth Grobe from the Connecticut General Assembly sponsored by Farmington's legislators.

D. Public Hearing

There were no public hearings held.

E. New Items

There were no new items added to the agenda.

F. Public Comments

The Town Clerk read the following public comment into the record:

Council Members,

On Farmington Ave, across from Highwood Rd, there is numerous political signs on what I believe is public property. I wouldn't care, except one of those signs now has the word "Bullshit" emblazoned across it and Farmington Ave is a busy road used by many of the school buses, including those from Union Elementary. I don't feel this is appropriate. Please take care of this.

Also, as per Section 7, Part G of the zoning regulations, all temporary signs for an event must be removed no more than 2 days after the event. The election was one month ago. All political signs on public property should be removed. It's bad enough the sign features profanity that elementary age students, my children included, must drive by this every day, but these signs are in flagrant disregard to existing policy.

Please see to this.

JP Behrens of 3 Knollwood Road

Tim Kelly of 62 Westview Terrace asked if the Town had a plan for Covid-19 vaccine distribution.

Pierre Guertin of 12 Henley Commons asked the Council to make sure the Farmington High School Building Committee took the time to educate the public on the project and the process going forward before it went to referendum, especially in light of the project's time on pause due to Covid-19.

G. Reading of the Minutes

1. November 10, 2020 Regular Town Council Meeting

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to approve the minutes of November 10, 2020 Regular Town Council Meeting.

Adopted unanimously

H. Reading of Communications and Written Appeals

1. Correspondence from C.J. Thomas, Town Council Chair to Residents

The Chair summarized the letter recorded with these minutes as Agenda Item H-1.

I. Report of the Committees

1. UCONN Health Committee

2. Land Acquisition Committee

There was no report for Agenda Items I1 or I2.

3. Green Efforts Committee

Mr. Fagan reported the Committee had met on December 1, 2020 and had a presentation from Adam Teff, TitanGen a sustainability and energy consultant, who has worked with the Town of Farmington in the past. He presented how his company can assist with creating an Energy Plan for Farmington, energy data management, energy conservation and renewable energy. They talked about the spring Clean-up Day, which was scheduled for April 24, 2021 and continuing the Green Efforts newsletter. They planned to be on the January Town Council agenda for a presentation from Sustainable Connecticut. Their next meeting was scheduled for January 5, 2021.

4. Farmington High School Building Committee

Mr. Fagan reported the Committee asked for consensus to take the Committee off pause. It was the consensus of the Council to take the Committee off pause in January of 2021. The Committee planned to continue the timeline of June 2021 for State of Connecticut Building Grant submission. He requested the Committee be on the January 26, 2021 Town Council Agenda to present the project and the budget for the project. The Committee planned to review the public survey results to determine next steps in February.

5. Racial Equality Taskforce

Mr. Giannaros reported the Taskforce had had meetings on November 12th and 19th to update and discuss their goals and timeline. They planned to present their goals and timeline to the Town Council in January. They had had an informal meet and greet on December 2, 2021. They were in the process of planning a December meeting.

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

The Chair reported the Farmington Historic District Commission were in favor of the plans but asked there be no conduit under the sidewalk. The Chair asked for Council consensus to remove the conduit from the bid process. It was the consensus of the Council to remove the conduit from the process.

J. Report of the Council Chair and Liaisons

1. Chair

The Chair wished the public a happy holiday season.

2. Board of Education Liaison

Mr. Fagan reported the Board of Education had met the previous evening and had had 180 attendees. The Board discussed several issues Covid-19, the High School mascot and Columbus Day calendar changes. Nilda Irizarry, Principal of Irving A. Robbins Middle School reported on how the school was addressing inclusivity and equity issues. Kim Wynn, Assistant Superintendent reviewed updates to the Strategic Plan. A budget update was given.

3. Economic Development Commission Liaison

Mr. Giannaros reported the Commission had met November 18, 2020 and voted to send a positive referral for the JRF Management LLC & Kaoud Real Estate Development LLC for the Midpoint project at the old McCallum building site to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. He told the Council the project would support the Council's Strategic Goal to attract young professionals to Farmington. The next meeting was scheduled for January 13, 2021.

4. Farmington Historic District Commission

Mr. Connolly reported the Commission had received a presentation from the Town Council Farmington Village Ad Hoc Committee and approved two temporary certificates of appropriateness for 25 Hatters Lane. The next meeting was scheduled for January 19, 2021.

5. Housing Authority

There was no report for Agenda Item J-5.

6. Human Relations Commission

Mr. Capodiferro reported the next meeting was scheduled for January 11, 2021. Presentations from the Anti-Defamation League and the Jewish Federation were planned.

7. Library Board

Mr. Palumbo reported the Library was currently using lobby pick-up only.

8. Town Plan and Zoning Commission Liaison

Mr. Capodiferro reported the JRF Management LLC & Kaoud Real Estate Development LLC had been approved by the Commission at its last meeting.

9. Unionville Historic District Commission

Mr. Giannaros reported that Lisa Johnson had been re-elected Chair of the Commission. The status of the Study Commission expansion report and options for an educational seminar in the spring were discussed. The next meeting was scheduled for January 7, 2021.

10. Unionville Village Improvement Association Liaison

There was no report for Agenda Item J-10.

11. Water Pollution Control Authority

Mr. Capodiferro reported the next meeting was scheduled for the following evening.

12. Other Liaisons

The Chair suggested the public go to the Unionville Museum's light show, and the Museum had been encouraging the entire area to decorate for the holidays.

K. Report of the Town Manager
a. Personnel Update

The Manager reviewed the following report:

The Town's Highway & Grounds Superintendent, Scott Zenke recently retired after sixteen years of service to the Town. I'm happy to announce that our Highway Foreman Jim Ruzbasan has been promoted to Highway and Grounds Superintendent. Jim has been with the town for 26 years, starting as an Operator I at the Water Pollution Control Facility. Jim worked at the treatment plant as an Operator II and Collection System Supervisor, before becoming the Highway Foreman in 2016. Prior to the Town of Farmington, Jim worked as a truck driver/laborer and later a heavy equipment operator/crew foreman for various construction companies. Jim's technical skills and experience are an asset to the Highway and Grounds Division and the Town as a whole.

The Manager reported she was working with the Farmington Valley Health District and awaiting any changes from the Governor to decide if any changes to the Town's current Covid-19 policies needed to be made. The Town routinely had 10%-15% employees out due to Covid-19 either ill or quarantining.

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 (Langston)
2. Plainville Area Cable TV Advisory Council (Bernier)

There were no appointments for Agenda Items L-1 or L-2.

3. Unionville Historic District & Properties Commission **Alternate**

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) that Ann Wuelfing be appointed to the Unionville Historic District & Properties Commission as an alternate for a balance of a three-year term beginning immediately and ending September 30, 2023.

Adopted unanimously

4. Metropolitan District Commission (Solomonides)

No action was taken on Agenda Item L-4.

M. Old Business

There was no Old Business conducted.

N. New Business

1. To authorize the Town Manager to sign a contract with Stryker for the purchase of three (3) LUCAS devices, one (1) for each main fire station, for a multi-year commitment of five (5) years.

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to authorize the Town Manager to sign a contract with Stryker for the purchase of three (3) LUCAS devices, one (1) for each main fire station, for a multi-year commitment of five (5) years.

Adopted unanimously

2. To adopt the attached resolution authorizing the Town Manager to execute an application for State financial assistance with the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant.

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to approve the motion recorded with these minutes as Agenda Item N-2.

Adopted unanimously

3. To approve property tax refunds.

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

NAME	REASON	AMOUNT
ARI Fleet Lt. LTD	Assessor adjustment	\$2,486.53
Bhatt Sujay	Assessor adjustment	\$117.37
Debari Brien J	Assessor adjustment	\$7.41
Enterprise FM Trust	Assessor adjustment	\$1,662.16
Freeman Silvia & Anthony	Assessor adjustment	\$85.14
Honda Lease Trust	Assessor adjustment	\$480.95
JP Morgan Chase Bank	Assessor adjustment	\$484.30
Kal Farmington LTD	Assessor adjustment	\$14,424.61
Kumar Sunil	Assessor adjustment	\$247.25
Lease and Rental MGMT	Assessor adjustment	\$474.29
Lynch Bonita J	Assessor adjustment	\$151.98
MCM Communications LLC	Assessor adjustment	\$316.34
MCM Holdings LLC	Assessor adjustment	\$296.20
Nasiakos Nicholas & George	Assessor adjustment	\$37.79
RRReview	Assessor adjustment	\$24.87
Saade Abdallah	Assessor adjustment	\$34.65
Sookram Dularie	Assessor adjustment	\$158.03
State of Connecticut	Assessor adjustment	\$1,963.18

Toyota Lease Trust	Assessor adjustment	\$578.98
USB Leasing	Assessor adjustment	\$332.61
Weeks Dianna	Assessor adjustment	\$30.90
Wilkie Donna G	Assessor adjustment	\$66.96
Total	Assessor adjustment	\$24,462.50

Adopted unanimously

O. Executive Session

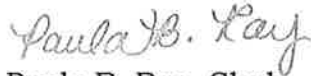
There weren't any Executive Sessions held.

P. Adjournment

Motion was made and seconded (Mastrobattista/Capodiferro) to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Adopted unanimously

Respectfully submitted,



Paula B. Ray, Clerk



November 23, 2020

Dear Farmington Residents,

On behalf of the Employees and Town Council of Farmington, we would like to wish you all a happy and safe Thanksgiving. As with so much in 2020, what "happy and safe" looks like will be a bit different from past years.

Connecticut is experiencing an increase in COVID-19 cases and Farmington is no exception. For the reporting period ending 11/14/2020, Farmington experienced a case rate of 17.6 per 100,000 population, resulting in a "red alert" designation. We are confident that everyone will do their part to keep our community safe and healthy.

Large gatherings with family and friends can increase the chances of getting or spreading COVID-19, or the flu. The safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving this year is to stay home with people in your household, celebrate outdoors, or celebrate virtually. If you do plan to spend Thanksgiving with people outside your household, we've created a [Thanksgiving Guide](#), with tips from the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to make your Thanksgiving holiday safer.

Residents should also keep in mind the following:

- Remember the 3W's: **W**ear a mask, **W**atch your distance (6 feet), **W**ash your hands;
- Stay home when you have symptoms of illness and seek testing. The symptoms of COVID-19 can look like many other illnesses, so it is important to get tested;
- Isolate when you have been quarantined due to close contact.

Testing is available in many locations throughout Connecticut. Those experiencing symptoms should contact their primary care provider. Anyone who does not have a primary care provider should call 2-1-1 or visit the [CT Testing Locator](#) to locate the nearest testing site. **Free drive-thru testing is available every Thursday from 11am-3pm at Tunxis Community College.**

Let's continue to work together to limit the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Thank you and be well,

C.J. Thomas
Town Council Chair

Kathleen A. Blonski
Town Manager



MOTION:

Agenda Item N-2

To adopt the attached resolution authorizing the Town Manager to execute an application for State financial assistance with the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant.

NOTE: The Town of Farmington was awarded \$128,205.00 in grant funds from the State of Connecticut Department of Community and Economic Development for the 2020 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) for the construction of a Municipal Campus Outdoor Meeting Pavilion.

/Attachment

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
(AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER)
CERTIFIED RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

I, Paula B. Ray, Town Clerk, certify that below is a true and correct copy of a
(Name of Official) (Title of Official)

resolution duly adopted by the Town of Farmington
(Name of the Applicant)

at a meeting of its Town Council
(Governing Body)

duly convened on December 8, 2020 and which has not been rescinded or modified in
(Meeting Date)
any way whatsoever and is at present in full force and effect.

(Date) (Signature and Title of Official)

SEAL

WHEREAS, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 4-66g,
(State Statutory Reference)

the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development is authorized to extend financial assistance for economic development projects; and **WHEREAS**, it is desirable and in the public interest that the Town of Farmington make an application to the State for
(Applicant)

\$ 128,205 in order to undertake the Municipal Campus Outdoor Meeting Pavilion
(Name and Phase of Project)
and to execute an Assistance Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE
Town Council
(Governing Body)

1. That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the state financial assistance imposed by
Connecticut General Statutes Section 4-66g
(State Statutory Reference)

2. That the filing of an application for State financial assistance by
The Town of Farmington
(Applicant)
in an amount not to exceed \$ 128,205 is hereby approved and that

Kathleen A. Blonski, Town Manager

(Title and Name of Authorized Official)

is directed to execute and file such application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decisions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of

the Town of Farmington

(Name of Applicant)