

MINUTES

**Special Town Council Meeting: Road Bond
September 6, 2022, 7:00 PM
Town Hall Annex & Virtual**

&

**Coventry Town Council Meeting
September 6, 2022, 7:30 PM
Town Hall Annex & Virtual**

Video Link Of Meeting:

<https://coventryct.viebit.com/player.php?hash=Iv6U0jtV85wD>

- 1. Special Town Meeting, 7:00 PM: Resolution Entitled “Resolution Appropriating \$4,865,000 For The Planning, Design, Engineering, Construction, Reconstruction And Improvement Of Various Town Roadways, Culverts And Bridge Replacement, And For The Acquisition Of A Payloader Machine And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$4,865,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose:**

Lisa Thomas called the Special Meeting To Order at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, September 6, 2022

All in attendance stood for The Pledge of Allegiance

Thomas explained that the purpose of this meeting is for the Road Bond Resolution and Infrastructure Construction. Asked for Moderator nominations.

Nominated: Jill Reviczky-110 Wall Street

By: Carolyn Dowd, 302 Lake Drive

Seconded by: Elizabeth Bauer, 856 Dunn Road

Thomas asked for other nominations, there were none. Jill Reviczky was selected as Moderator

Moderator Reviczky read the Call of the Meeting, as asked by Town Clerk:

TOWN OF COVENTRY

NOTICE OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING AND NOTICE OF ADJOURNED TOWN MEETING

The electors and qualified voters entitled to vote in the Town Meetings of the Town of Coventry, are hereby notified and warned that a Special Town Meeting will be held at the Town Hall Annex (1712 Main Street, Coventry, Connecticut 06238) on Tuesday, September 6, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. (E.T.) for the following purposes:

1. To receive a communication from the Town Council with respect a resolution entitled “Resolution Appropriating \$4,865,000 For The Planning, Design, Engineering, Construction, Reconstruction And Improvement Of Various Town Roadways, Culverts And Bridge Replacement, And For The Acquisition Of A Payloader Machine And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$4,865,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose”.
2. To consider a resolution entitled “Resolution Appropriating \$4,865,000 For The Planning, Design, Engineering, Construction, Reconstruction And Improvement Of Various Town Roadways, Culverts And Bridge Replacement, And For

The Acquisition Of A Payloader Machine And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$4,865,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose”.

Pursuant to Section 9-3(e) of the Town Charter, such meeting will be adjourned by the Moderator to a Referendum vote at an Adjourned Town Meeting to be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 on the following question:

1. “Shall the resolution entitled ‘Resolution Appropriating \$4,865,000 For The Planning, Design, Engineering, Construction, Reconstruction And Improvement Of Various Town Roadways, Culverts And Bridge Replacement, And For The Acquisition Of A Payloader Machine And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$4,865,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose’ , as introduced and read at a Special Town Meeting held September 6, 2022, be approved?”
2. To transact any other business proper to come before the meeting. Copies of said proposed bond resolution are on file and open to public inspection in the office of the Town Clerk.

Dated at Coventry, Connecticut, this 23 day of August, 2022.

Signed by John A. Elssesser, Town Manager and Lori Tollmann Town Clerk

Moderator explained copies of this notice were posted on the Town’s sign post on Aug. 27, 2022, and a copy had been published in the August 22, 2022 issue of The Chronicle.

The Moderator stated that in accordance with Section 7-6 of the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, as amended, only an elector of the Town or a citizen of the United States of the age of eighteen years or more who, jointly or severally, was liable to the Town for taxes assessed against him or her, based on an assessment of not less than \$1,000 on the last completed grand list of the Town or who would have been so liable if not entitled to an exemption under subdivision (17), (19), (22), (23), (25) or (26) of section 12-81, may be entitled to vote at the meeting.

Item #1: To receive a communication from the Town Council with respect a resolution entitled “Resolution Appropriating \$4,865,000 For The Planning, Design, Engineering, Construction, Reconstruction And Improvement Of Various Town Roadways, Culverts And Bridge Replacement, And For The Acquisition Of A Payloader Machine And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$4,865,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose”.

*The Moderator asked that the following be communication from Town Council be incorporated into the minutes. *



Town of Coventry

1712 Main Street, Coventry, Connecticut 06238

Town Council

August 22, 2022

To the Legal Voters of
the Town of Coventry

At a special meeting of the Town Council held August 22, 2022, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED: That the resolution entitled "Resolution Appropriating \$4,865,000 For The Planning, Design, Engineering, Construction, Reconstruction And Improvement Of Various Town Roadways, Culverts And Bridge Replacement, And For The Acquisition Of A Payloader Machine And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$4,865,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose", a copy of which is attached hereto, is hereby approved and recommended for adoption by the legal voters of the Town at an Adjourned Town Meeting and Referendum to be held pursuant to Section 9-3(e) of the Town Charter.

Very truly yours,

Jonathan Hand
Secretary of the Town Council

Item #2: To consider a resolution entitled "Resolution Appropriating \$4,865,000 For The Planning, Design, Engineering, Construction, Reconstruction And Improvement Of Various Town Roadways, Culverts And Bridge Replacement, And For The Acquisition Of A Payloader Machine And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$4,865,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose".

Carolyn Dowd was called on to read the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$4,865,000 FOR THE PLANNING, DESIGN, ENGINEERING,
CONSTRUCTION, RECONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF VARIO US TOWN ROADWAYS,
CULVERTS AND BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, AND FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A PAYLOADER
MACHINE AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$4,865,000 BONDS OF THE TOWN TO MEET SAID
APPROPRIATION AND PENDING THE ISSUANCE THEREOF TI-IE MAKING OF TEMPORARY
BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE

RESOLVED:

Section I. The sum of \$4,865,000 is appropriated (A) for the planning, design, engineering, construction, reconstruction and improvement of (i) various Town roadways, including but not limited to, leveling, shimming, chip and crack sealing, intersection realignments, rebuilding, resurfacing, installing drainage, conduits, and related subsurface and infrastructure improvements, as more fully described in the "2022 Pavement Management Study" prepared by Stantec, dated January, 2022, as amended from time to time; (ii) culverts and bridge replacement including, but not limited to, roadway, structure, environmental compliance and traffic safety; (B) for the acquisition of a payloader machine; and (C) for administrative, printing, legal and financing costs related thereto, said appropriation to be inclusive of any and all State and Federal grants-in-aid thereof (collectively, the "Project").

Section 2. To meet said appropriation, \$4,865,000 bonds of the Town or so much thereof as shall be necessary for such purpose, shall be issued, maturing not later than the maximum maturity permitted by the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, Revision of 1958, as amended from time to time (the "Connecticut General Statutes"). The bonds may be issued in one or more series as determined by the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer, and the amount of bonds of each series to be issued shall be fixed by the Town Manager and Town Treasurer, in the amount necessary to meet the Town's share of the cost of the Project determined after considering the estimated amount of State and Federal grants-in-aid of the Project, or the actual amount thereof if this is to be ascertainable, and the anticipated times of the receipt of the proceeds thereof provided that the total amount of bonds to be issued shall not be less than an amount which will provide funds sufficient with other funds available for such purpose to pay the principal of and the interest on all temporary borrowings in anticipation of the receipt of the proceeds of the bonds outstanding at the time of the issuance thereof, and to pay for the administrative, printing and legal and financing costs of issuance of such bonds. The bonds shall be in the denomination of \$1,000 or a whole multiple thereof, be issued in fully registered form, be executed in the name and on behalf of the Town by the facsimile or manual signatures of the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer, bear the Town seal or a facsimile thereof, be certified by a bank or trust company, which bank or trust company may be designated the registrar and transfer agent, be payable at a bank or trust company, and be approved as to their legality by Robinson & Cole LLP, Attorneys-at-Law, of Hartford, Connecticut. The bonds shall be general obligations of the Town and each of the bonds shall recite that every requirement of law relating to its issue has been duly complied with, that such bond is within every debt and other limit prescribed by law, and that the full faith and credit of the Town are pledged to the payment of the principal thereof and interest thereon. The aggregate principal amount of the bonds of each series to be issued, the annual installments of principal, redemption provisions, if any, the certifying, registrar and transfer agent and the paying agent, the date, time of issue and sale and other terms, details and particulars of such bonds, including the approval of the rate or rates of interest, shall be determined by the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer, in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 3. Said bonds shall be sold by the Town Manager in a competitive offering or by negotiation, in his discretion. If sold in a competitive offering, the bonds shall be sold at not less than par and accrued interest on the basis of the lowest net or true interest cost to the Town. A notice of sale or a summary thereof describing the bonds and setting forth the terms and conditions of the sale shall be published at least five days in advance of the sale in a recognized publication carrying municipal bond notices and devoted primarily to financial news and the subject of state and municipal bonds. If the bonds are sold by negotiation, provisions of the purchase agreement shall be approved by the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer.

Section 4. The Town Manager and the Town Treasurer are authorized to make temporary borrowings in anticipation of the receipt of the proceeds of said bonds. Notes evidencing such borrowings shall be signed by the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer, have the seal of the Town affixed, be payable at a bank or trust company designated by the Town Manager, be approved as to their legality by Robinson & Cole LLP, Attorneys-at-Law, of Hartford, Connecticut, and be certified by a bank or trust company designated by the Town Manager pursuant to Section 7-373 of the Connecticut General Statutes. They shall be issued with maturity dates which comply with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes governing the issuance of such notes, as the same may be amended from time to time. The notes shall be general obligations of the Town and each of the notes shall recite that every requirement of law relating to its issue has been duly complied with, that such note is within every debt and other limit prescribed by law, and that the full faith and credit of the Town are pledged to the payment of the principal thereof and the interest thereon. The net interest cost on such notes, including renewals thereof, and the expense of preparing, issuing and marketing them, to the extent paid from the proceeds of such renewals or said bonds, shall be included as a cost of the Project. Upon the sale of the bonds, the proceeds thereof, to the extent required, shall be applied forthwith to the payment of the principal of and the interest on any such notes then outstanding or shall be deposited with a bank or trust company in trust for such purpose.

Section 5. The Town Manager is authorized in the name and on behalf of the Town to apply for and accept any and all Federal and State loans and/or any grants-in-aid of the Project and is further authorized to expend said funds in accordance with the terms hereof and in connection therewith, to contract in the name of the Town with engineers, contractors and others.

Section 6. The Town hereby expresses its official intent pursuant to §1.150-2 of the Federal Income Tax Regulations, Title 26 (the "Regulations"), to reimburse expenditures paid sixty days prior to and any time after the date of passage of this resolution in the maximum amount and for the Project with the proceeds of bonds, notes, or other obligations ("Tax Exempt Obligations") authorized to be issued by the Town. The Tax Exempt Obligations shall be issued to reimburse such expenditures not later than 18 months after the later of the date of the expenditure or the substantial completion of the Project, or such later date the Regulations may authorize. The Town hereby certifies that the intention to reimburse as expressed herein is based upon its reasonable expectations as of this date. The Town Manager or his designee is authorized to pay Project expenses in accordance herewith pending the issuance of Tax-Exempt Obligations, and to amend this declaration.

Section 7. The Town Manager and the Town Treasurer are hereby authorized, on behalf of the Town, to enter into agreements or otherwise covenant for the benefit of bondholders to provide information on an annual or other periodic basis to the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (the "MSRB") and to provide notices to the MSRB of material events as enumerated in Securities and Exchange Commission Exchange Act Rule 15c2-12, as amended, as may be necessary, appropriate or desirable to effect the sale of the bonds and notes authorized by this resolution. Any agreements or representations to provide information to the MSRB made prior hereto are hereby confirmed, ratified and approved.

Section 8. The Town Manager is hereby authorized on behalf of the Town, to enter into any other agreements, instruments, documents and certificates, including tax and investment agreements, for the consummation of the transactions contemplated by this resolution.

Section 9. This resolution shall become effective upon its approval by the Town electors and persons qualified to vote in Town Meeting at a duly warned Town Meeting and Adjourned Town Meeting and Referendum to be held pursuant to Section 9-1 and Section 9-3(e) of the Town Charter

The Moderator explained that under Section 9-3(e) of the Town Charter any resolution of the Town authorizing the issuance of bonds or notes of \$100,000 or more, after approval by the Town Council, must be voted on at a referendum to be held at an Adjourned Town Meeting or to be held in conjunction with the next regular election, as determined by the Town Council. Accordingly, the Moderator stated that the meeting would continue for purposes of discussion on the proposed resolution.

Bill Watkins (Director of Public Works) and Todd Penney (Town Engineer) were introduced as also being present for this Special Meeting.

Watkins presented a Power Point Presentation outlining the findings from the Stantec study, years 1 through 4 in regards to road work, total road amounts (in miles), and financing. The financing was broken down by year and highlighted grants, CT Water match, and bond amounts per year, as well as total projected road bond for the entirety of road work.

John Elsesser (Town Manager) reviewed options that were discussed with the financial planner. Explained that financial impact would most likely be delayed until 2024, allowing modest changes to debt schedule. A chart was reviewed that reflected the debt schedule over the course of several years, with the road bonds, and project costs added in. Elsesser continued that the debt would be steady at the beginning with a slight increase in 2024, and then a steady decline over time. Added that the increase would be modest at approximately \$55 per household. It was discussed that completing this road work is a good investment as it adds values to the houses, which helps grow our grand list. Unfortunately, there are no low interest rates anymore.

Watkins added that the treatments outlined were not written in stone as we will have more information on the final treatments needed once the surveying is complete.

Thomas asked for questions or comments from the audience: None

Thomas asked for questions or comments from the Council Members:

Marty Milkovic had comments regarding road totals, 117 total miles.

Thomas explained the pavement management study is online, on the Town website, and informed that the PowerPoint presentation will be added as well. Thomas also made a point to note that it is very costly for road repairs, but it is important to do for obvious safety reasons and it is reflected as a good investment for adding value to our homes.

Jon Hand added that when the pavement project was first introduced, it was because there were areas that needed to be taken care to fix and to bring the road to a certain threshold. In some areas, we would be gaining on the existing threshold, adding to the point of the project being a good investment. Watkins added that there are a mixture of treatments in the project that fix areas that need it, while adding value to other areas.

Milkovic questioned why Culverts were so expensive. Todd Penney, Licensed Engineer State of CT, Town of Coventry Engineer and Wetlands Agent, elaborated that there is an 18-foot span of a box beam construction, and those bridge constructions are expensive. He added that there are some that have significant cracking. Also noted that the technical term is a "Box Culvert" because they have a bottom, but they are just a variation on a bridge.

With no further questions or comments, Moderator Reviczky resumed and read information for Special Vote Meeting and Ballot information.

At the Adjourned Town Meeting and Referendum the question to be voted on shall be as follows:

"Shall the resolution entitled 'Resolution Appropriating \$4,865,000 For The Planning, Design, Engineering, Construction, Reconstruction And Improvement Of Various Town Roadways, Culverts And Bridge Replacement, And For The Acquisition Of A Payloader Machine And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$4,865,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose', as introduced and read at a Special Town Meeting held September 6, 2022, be approved?"

The ballot label for said question will read as follows:

"Shall the resolution making an appropriation of \$4,865,000 for the planning, design, engineering, construction, reconstruction and improvement of various Town roadways, culverts and bridge replacement, and for the acquisition of a payloader machine, be approved? YES or NO "

The Moderator further explained that the foregoing question would be submitted to the legal voters of the Town for a vote by optical scan voting machine on Tuesday, November 8, 2022, during the hours between 6:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. (E.T.); that the voting take place in the polling places established for voting districts 6:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. (E.T.); that the voting take place in the polling places established for voting districts # 1 and #2, and that voters entitled to vote by reason of Section 7-6 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, as amended, may vote at District #1, Absentee ballots will be available at the office of the Town Clerk as provided by law. The polling places are as follows:

District 1- G.H. Robertson School, 227 Cross St.

District 2- Coventry High School, 78 Ripley Hill Rd.

The Moderator then ordered the Town Manager and Town Clerk to prepare, post and publish a proper notice with respect to the voting at said referendum to be held at an Adjourned Town Meeting. Meeting adjourned to November 8, 2022.

Bill Zanko, 18 Miriam Drive motions to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Carolyn Arabolus, 132 N. Farms Road

Vote: Unanimously all in favor

Thomas adjourned the special meeting at 7:40 PM

2. Regular Town Council Meeting: Call To Order, Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order by Thomas at 7:43 PM. Noted that the meeting was starting late due to the preceding Special Meeting that just took place.

Members Present:

Lisa Thomas-Chairperson
Marty Milkovic-Vice-Chairperson
Matthew Kyer
Jonathan Hand-Secretary
Robyn Gallagher
John French

Members Absent:

Julie Blanchard
(Thomas expressed we were sending her Best Wishes)

Also Present:

John Elsesser-Town Manager (Remote)
Todd Penney-Town of Coventry, Town Engineer
Bill Watkins-Director of Public Works
Kevin Grindle-Design Engineer, Barton & Loguidice (Remote)

3.Pledge Of Allegiance:

All Council Members and Staff stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

4.Audience Of Citizens:

(30 Minutes - 5 minutes per person.)

McKenzie Rivers, 61 Miriam Drive, President of Coventry Softball:

Expressed frustration with status of Softball Field at Miller Richardson Park. Understands that the increase in bids is disappointing but just another hurdle to overcome. There has been outstanding support from the Softball Community and Town Council. Urged Town Council to move forward so that we can break ground on Softball Field construction.

No further audience members, Thomas closed Audience of Citizens portion of the meeting.

5. Acceptance Of Minutes:

1. August 15, 2022:

Motion: I move to accept the minutes of the August 15, 2022 meeting, with edits suggested by Lisa Thomas.

By: Milkovic

Seconded: Hand

Corrections:

- Kyer-Noted that he was absent from the meeting, and that is reflected in the role call, however his name is still listed in some of the voting sections. Kyer should be removed as a participating voter in any of the voting sections of the minutes.
- Pg. 1, AOC comments, notes that there is an attachment to the minutes document, but there is no attachment on the minutes. Thomas commented it was attached on the agenda (1st link), but will be added as an attachment to the minutes.
- Pg. 7, top of page, 3rd line, 2nd word, change “up” to “of”

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher, French

Against: None

Abstain: None

2. August 22, 2022:

Motion: I move to accept the minutes of the August 22, 2022 meeting.

By: Kyer

Seconded: Milkovic

Corrections: None

Vote:

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher, French

Against: None

Abstain: None

6. Consent Agenda:

All items listed with an asterisk (*) will be acted on by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Council member so requests, in which case, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

Motion: I move to accept the Consent Agenda.

By: Milkovic

Seconded: Gallagher

Discussion: None

Vote:

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher, French

Against: None

Abstain: None

**** Thomas asked for a motion to move item 8.A. of Unfinished Business, so it can be discussed now. ****

Motion: To move item 8.A. up in the agenda for priority discussion.

By: Gallagher

Seconded: Hand

Vote:

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher, French

Against: None

Abstain: None

8.A. 21/22-18: Consideration/Possible Action: Assignment Of American Rescue Plan Funding

1. Appropriation of \$150,000 for Softball Field

Motion: I move that the Town Council approve the use of a sum not to exceed \$150,000, from the American Rescue Plan Funds to allow the construction of the Softball Field as recommended by our consulting engineer and award the bid to the lowest bidder, Earth Dynamics.

By: Gallagher

Seconded: Hand

Discussion:

Penney and Watkins were available to walk through the planning and add to the discussion. Grindle was also available via Zoom for any additions.

Todd Penney, Licensed Engineer State of CT, Town of Coventry Engineer and Wetlands Agent- Opened bids on August 23rd. as projected. There were 5 bidders. Lowest was at \$584,850, highest was at \$866,430 which shows quite a range. We got 2 competitive bids, one from Earth Dynamics and one from an unknown contractor. Bidding results are online, and explained Kevin Grindle is here for back up to review the bids and to look at low bidder, reasons for the cost increase, and look at value engineering. Summarized the Sept. 1 memo from Barton & Loguidice. Earth Dynamics, was low bidder, is experienced with this type of work and has the man-power and equipment to do this project with contract timeline. Past projects with them, have been done on time and within budget. Recommends we award the project to Earth Dynamics. Penney summarized cost increase and how it was do to scope increase that changed from original plans to now.

Penney elaborated that there was:

- \$85,000 for transfer station demo
- \$ 36,000 for multiple electrical improvements, including re-routing and providing appropriate electrical facilities.
- (2) Monitoring wells for landfill were anticipated to not be in conflict, but they were. Additional \$15,000-\$20,000
- Bidding environment increased, as did pricing, due partially to an increase in petroleum costs.

Penney added that costs were reduced in a few different ways. The Score Board purchase was removed, alternatives to obtaining batting cage, and field was downsized, but still meets regulation for their use. The parking lot was downsized approx. 50%. Added that there is a \$10,000 contingency that is in place.

Elsesser did a quick rundown on the pricing. The memo included with agenda packet explained that Amanda Backhaus (Finance Director) recommends the \$22,960.54 portion of the bond can go to field construction. The softball girls raised \$25,000 through fundraising. Need to add in bond costs, legal costs, and

expenses leave balance available is \$359,809, still need \$150,000, including the contingency. Total costs as anticipated by the engineer are around \$500,000.

Thomas asked Council Members if there were any questions.

Gallagher questioned the color-coded chart. Grindle explained that the yellow color was a net reduction to existing plans, and the orange color was a net removal from the plans entirely. Gallagher asked about the batting cages, if those were included and if we have received estimates. Also questioned the removal of benches. Penney and Elsesser explained that there are 4 sets of bleachers at the Football Field at the top of the hill that are not in use, some are brand new. There are plans to relocate 2 sets of the bleachers to the new softball field.

French commented/stated on the fact we are lucky to have these funds due to the excessive increase in costs of planned projects. French questioned how we would've proceeded without the availability of these funds, as the project costs continue to increase. The softball field has raised in cost, and we aren't even getting the full field as planned. First it was the Library, then the Transfer Station, and now the Softball Field. Noted that as a business owner, he can't imagine quoting someone a price and then having it increase by large amounts, as it makes it look as though he did not do his due diligence. Added that the chart shows a reduction in the size of the field, and with this reduction will still meet regulations for tournament use.

It was indicated that the reduced field size would be regulation for youth tournaments not adults, but the purpose of the Miller Richardson Park has always been for the use of youth athletics only.

French re-iterated on how we were so off the mark with the pricing, and was unsure how to validate the additional spending.

Thomas stated that this is very similar to situations that they have been dealing with for years, and not unusual at all, especially with setbacks from the pandemic. Used the ambulance spending as a recent example and how we fell short then and did not recall French expressing the same concerns at that time.

French asked about the use of .5M from the State of Connecticut and why that could not be used. Thomas elaborated that we do not have those funds at this time, and is unsure of when we will have them. In order for the field to be available for play for the upcoming 2023 season, we need to move forward.

Gallagher added that while there are some similarities between Town Governments and private business, they are very different. With a private business you can easily pivot as schedules and timeframes are more stable. With Town Governments, items are discussed, estimates obtained, bids placed, referendums held, and then voted on. This is an extensive process where the timeframe can be anywhere from a year plus. In addition, the current financial climate is difficult and unprecedented. Taxpayers voted on the construction of the Softball Field last November, and we need to make it a priority to keep on schedule.

Milkovic agreed with Gallagher, and added that we have seen many problems related to the pandemic and supply chains, and while there is truth to the analogy, it is not equivalent. Thomas expressed that ARP funds were distributed to Towns specifically for these types of purposes.

French added that the Town Council gave him a very difficult time when he was pushing for the allocation of ARP funds for the ambulance and EMT services and the Council was discussing increasing the taxes on the taxpayers .5M. Explained that it was a struggle up until the last vote. Doesn't think that this can go both ways. Thomas added that the ambulance and EMT costs French pushed for were ongoing operating expenses, which

ARP funds should not be used for. Ongoing operating costs should be in the Town's operating budget. Otherwise, we would not be budgeting appropriately, and because of this it resulted in a heavy consequence of staff cuts because of the strict budget. Gallagher agreed that the purpose of the ARP funds is for large one-time expenditures, not operating costs. Operating costs need to be phased into the budget.

Vote:

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher

Against: French

Abstain: None

Thomas declared the motion passes. Thomas also clarified with Penney that the Score Board infrastructure will be there, just not the actual board at this time.

**** Thomas asked for a motion to move item 8.B. of Unfinished Business, so it can be discussed now while Todd Penney was still in attendance and offered his comments. ****

Motion: To move item 8.B. up in the agenda for priority discussion.

By: Hand

Seconded: Gallagher

Vote:

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher, French

Against: None

Abstain: None

8.B 22/23-11: Consideration/Possible Action: Repairs To Vietnam War Memorial Monument

Thomas explained that the Veterans Memorial and Events Commission came to the Council a couple meetings ago regarding concerns they had with the Vietnam War Memorial Monument.

Penney explained that himself, John Elsesser, and Bill Watkins meet every 2 weeks to go over projects, and this was brought to his attention. Penney went to look at the monument. He explained even though he is not a structural engineer, you can tell there is a shift in the base. He does not believe there is any imminent failure as there is enough base left that the monument is sitting on. He will be taking measurements as well and continue to monitor the condition/any additional shifting. Penney will inspect bi-weekly for the next 6 months, especially in the winter months as he believes the current condition and shifting is ice related. At this point there is no further action from a funding standpoint, and as he monitors he will present any findings to John Elsesser (Town Manager), Town Council and the Veterans Memorial and Events Commission. If, and when there are any progressions, he will have a spreadsheet for presentation for those persons/organizations to be reviewed on the appropriate agenda. He firmly believes this is nature driven as there is no physical damage.

Elsesser added that he has reached out to the monument company and waiting to hear back. He needs confirmation that the top is pinned, but the bottom is not. In the long term, if not addressed, it will move again so we may need a long-term grouting solution. We will know more, once the monument company gives him more information. The company's original solution was to get a crane to move it back in place. Wants the fix/solution to be permanent and safe.

Gallagher questioned if we can improve the drainage in the area to eliminate water intrusion. Elsesser explained that there is an engineer he has reached out to who specializes in water solutions. He is waiting feedback from him as Elsesser wants a more water permeable solution moving forward.

Milkovic questioned if the monument could be pinned externally. Elsesser explained that would ruin the aesthetics. Elsesser also added that the last time he was at the monument, he felt vibrations from truck traffic in the area, and thinks that this may be causing the shifting, or could be in combination with the ice. Elsesser will be reviewing best options once more information is available.

Thomas added that at this point, with Penney monitoring and others involved it seems like the whole team is aware and monitoring the situation as needed.

Elsesser added there is a long way to go before anything would happen with the monument and we have time to take action. In the meantime, we can slow the water intrusion now that we are aware of the problem. This matter will be brought back when it is needed, and funds are required. For now, there is no vote and the matter can be tabled.

Thomas appreciates those keeping on it, and we will stay on top of it but not have it on following agendas until needed. Thanked Veterans Memorial and Events Commission for their work on the matter, and bringing it to the Council's attention.

7. Reports:

7.A. Council Chairwoman: Lisa Thomas

- Had nice reception for Dan Carin, lead mechanic for the Town. Worked for Coventry for 40 years and has given a lot of time and commitment to the Town. At reception, he was gifted a street sign with his name.
- On Wednesday, September 21st, office hours will be at the Senior Center in the AM, not PM.
- Received email from resident expressing concerns on the blue/green algae bloom in the lake. Happy to see it has cleared up well. She was made aware that all the recent rain has been a big help. On Tuesday, September 20, 2022 the Lake Advisory Meeting is having a meeting to give report, answer questions/concerns.
- Received call from a resident with concerns regarding small signs on the Town right of ways. Explained they interfered with sight lines, and felt they ruined the aesthetics of the Town. Thomas asked that we be mindful where these are placed, whether they be commercial, political, or personal. Explained residents can do whatever they want with these signs on their own private property.

7.B. Council Members:

Milkovic: Reported that school is now in session and we should all be mindful of buses, students, and be more aware at crosswalks. Also, there is a new helpline for those who need help with mental health services, dial 989.

Kyer: Also commented that school is back in session. Very happy to see students, and it is the first time is has really felt like school again since September 2019. Also added that Arts on Main is coming up on Saturday, September 17, 2022.

Gallagher: Also reported on the start of school. Expressed appreciation and thanks to all those who put in efforts and care to get this year up in running. Asked for patience at this time during morning commutes as there is extra time spent saying goodbye to children on the way to school and getting them on the bus. This will be less so as the year goes on.

7.C. Finance Committee: Robyn Gallagher, Chairperson

No additional report.

7.C.1. *Minutes, Special Finance Committee Meeting, 9/15/22:

7.D. Steering Committee: Matthew Kyer, Chairperson

Kyer stated that the Steering Committee met on August 22, 2022, and reminded the Council that there was no meeting in July as it was canceled. Informed the Council that Steering accepted the resignation of Gregory Butler from CoventryVision, thanks him for service to the Town. Also discussed upcoming vacancies that will impact the Inland/Wetland Agency to establish quorum. Will be pursuing recruitment of members at next meeting. Also discussed a Municipal Flag Flying Policy, prompted by the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Shurtleff v. City of Boston*. Steering voted unanimously to bring the policy to Town Council for consideration, and that is to be discussed later in the agenda, and discussed roles and responsibilities in creating an RFP for recruiting a consulting firm to help with the recruitment of a new Town Manager. Last item Steering discussed was the potential opportunity to include the Town of Coventry in the production of videos to explain the budget process that could be made available for residents to view.

7.D.1.: *Minutes: 8/22/22 Steering Committee Meeting

7.E. *COVRRRA - John A. Elsesser

7.F. Town Manager - John Elsesser:

7.F.1. Projects Update:

Elsesser reported on the following:

- Construction projects are still moving. South Street is to be paved in the coming weeks and at Swamp Road we are working on alternatives to opening a 4-way intersection.
- Roofs are complete at the Middle School and High School for this phase. They have all been laid down, and there is only finishing flashing to be installed which will be finished in a couple weeks. The rest of the roof work for the High School will resume next year.
- The School Building Energy Efficiency Committee is working on/discussing further the HVAC and Ventilation issues.

Elsesser asked if there were any question on the project memo attached to the agenda. There were none.

7.F.2. COVID-19 Update:

Elsesser: Reported that COVID is still here and we have a lot of employees in and out. Some people are getting mild cases, some serious. He explained he is aware that a new booster has come out that is more aggressive with developing variants. Want to work on getting a clinic for the Town as soon as possible.

Thomas added that this continues to compound staffing and we are still experience staff shortages in a very competitive job market. This puts a strain on Town operations, and she asks for patience with staff.

7.F.3. 2022 CCM Convention:

Thomas indicated that this was added to the agenda as an FYI, and if anyone is interested in attending to sign up with Laura Stone or Amanda Backhaus.

7.F.4. * Notes From August 17, 2022 Staff Meeting

7.F.5. * Coventry Town Newsletter: Fall 2022

8. Unfinished Business:

All unfinished business items were moved up in agenda. No further items to discuss in this section.

9. New Business:

9.A. 22/23-14: Consideration/Possible Action: Municipal Flag Flying Policies

This policy explains that on Town Property, nothing other than Municipal flags or flags of the armed branches are flown. This is proposed to be in place as it is a slippery slope when allowing flags for specific organizations or belief systems to be flown on Municipal property. To avoid these situations where there would be a denial or conflict, the Steering Committee suggests that this policy be established. With establishment, it would outline and clarify which flags are allowed to be flown on Town property, and which ones are allowed at the Veteran's Memorial (as agreed to by Veteran's Memorial and Events Commission). Kyer read policy.

Thomas asked for elaboration on Town of Coventry and sister City of Coventry in England. Kyer explained that we have had an ongoing relationship with them and fly their flag from time to time and vice versa.

Thomas questioned the section in the policy that included flags to be flown for first responders, and if this will create a public forum, as the point of the policy is to remove that possibility. Thomas thinks it should be kept clean and clear and that it should explain that on Town/Government property Military and Fire/Police/EMS should be considered as part of the Government organizations.

Elsesser explained that is for the Council to decide. The policy attached on the agenda was drafted by the Town's attorney. Would not be a public forum as it is related to the only agencies allowed by the Council. The council should do whatever they are comfortable with, and know what Town and State flags are.

Kyer elaborated that the only flag Town Council will need to approve if brought forward is those of first responders.

Thomas explained she wants to avoid these decisions coming to Town Council, and the policy should be clear for both residents/organizations looking into this, as well as for the Municipal Governing bodies should they need to decide on the matter.

Hand suggested ending the section b in the policy at departmental flag and eliminating the remaining narrative regarding first responders. Thomas agrees but wants more information and thinks it is required to move forward.

Gallagher explained that even though it sounds silly, we should have a clear definition of what that means to the Town Council and Municipal Government. Elaborated on the point of flying flags for fallen heroes and that language needs to be added to narrow the exceptions.

Hand suggested it be tabled so that the Council can get more familiar, and he wants to learn more. Elsesser suggested it be sent back to Steering as this policy is outlined based on information from the Town's attorney.

French expressed concerns that this discussion has been elaborated further than expected. It was originally just flag poles, now its banners/bunting, etc.

Elsesser read the definition of Flag. Explained further that the attorney suggested that the Council leave room in the policy for the Council's discretion.

Kyer explained that the original purpose of this policy was to avoid a situation where a citizen asked to fly a specific flag on Municipal property. Now it has spread to Police Dept. and Fire Dept. flags and we have moved further away from the initial point. Agrees for it to be sent back to Steering so they can get back to original thoughts and clear up the policy.

10.Miscellaneous/Correspondence:

10.A.* Board Of Education: Agenda, 8/25/2022

10.B.* First Church Sanctuary Rededication: September 25, 2022

10.C.* Public Hearing, Town Of Tolland, 9/12/22: Proposed Amendments To Zoning Regulations

11.Adjournment:

Motion: I move that the council adjourn this meeting at 9:05 PM.

By: Hand

Seconded: Milkovic

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM by Thomas.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Archambault

Nicole Archambault, Minutes Clerk

***PLEASE NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Council at the next Council meeting.
Please see the next Council meeting minutes for approval or changes to these minutes.***