

TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
Unapproved Minutes
MEETING DATE: January 5, 2021
6:00 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING

*This meeting can be viewed live at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/959067197>
Public comments can be made virtually via <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/959067197>
via email to towncouncil@townofprospect.org if submitted prior to 11 a.m. on December 15, 2020
or by voice during the meeting by calling in any of the following:*

One-touch: tel: +1 877 568 4106

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Chairman Slapikas called to order the regular meeting of the Prospect Town Council @ 6:00 p.m. The meeting was a Virtual Meeting by video conference via GoToMeeting as authorized by Executive Orders 7B and 7I. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Organizer of Virtual Meeting Present: J. Slapikas

A roll call for attendance was taken by Chairman Slapikas.

Via Online: J. Slapikas, P. Murray, R. Blanc, P. Geary, M. Patchkofsky, L. Fitzgerald, S. Pilat, S. Lusas-Kolodziej, T. Graveline

Council Members Absent: None

Guests: Prospect Fire Chief, William Lauber

Mayors Report: none (Mayor Robert Chatfield was not in attendance)

Public Participation: (5 Minute Time Limit)

- *Kathryn Zandri*- a resident of Prospect stated that she feels the agenda has less information on it than in the past. There is usually a list detailing the money transfers. She feels that more detail is helpful for the tax payers. She is aware that according to the Freedom of Information Commission it is not required that you list details but they are pushing towards requiring more information on agendas in the future. J. Slapikas stated there are no transfers which is why nothing is listed today. Kathryn was happy to hear this.

Chairman's Report:

- *Food Drive* January 16, 2021: J. Slapikas thanked everyone for signing up to volunteer. He would like to see 2 people at a time for 7 hour shifts. He also asked for more time from volunteers if possible. P. Geary asked where the food bank is located. J. Slapikas stated approximately 30% is at the Senior Center and 70% at the Brundage House in the kitchen. The Food Pantry is separate and is stored at the Police Station. T. Graveline explained that her understanding is the Food Pantry is for citizens to go and get items as needed. The Food Bank is overseen by the town and people have to contact Lucy at the Senior Center or the Mayor's office to arrange pick up etc. T. Graveline mentioned that she doesn't have a truck but she does have an SUV with lots of cargo space. She is happy to load food on her day off if needed. M. Patchkofsky asked if we know what is needed for donations. J. Slapikas stated he will have the list beforehand and copies will be handed out.
- *Bonadio Group Update:* J. Slapikas stated things are moving along well. They requested 20-30 items from the town; the majority has been given to them. They got a little behind during the holidays. Adam from Bonadio Group will have a call with J. Slapikas tomorrow morning. They are looking to get back in and make a schedule. They interviewed 3 departments and have met with the Mayor's office multiple times. They plan to go into the Town Hall at the end of this week beginning of the following week. The preliminary work was done by the end of December as promised. Bonadio Group has not requested any big ticket items at this time. J. Slapikas will continue to update the Council.

- P. Geary asked when the Council will be receiving the past years fiscal audit and annual report. J. Slapikas did ask for this information and he will follow up. He also asked for information on the general fund balance etc. but has not received an answer as of yet. He speaks with the Mayor on a daily basis. P. Geary asked for an update on the number of Police Officers. J. Slapikas stated that he had a discussion with Nelson and one additional officer has been hired. The number of officers will go back up to 19 by April or May. J. Slapikas stated that as of now we are covered on all shifts including evenings. T. Graveline mentioned her request of a breakdown of expenditures from the Police Overtime Account related to salaries and purchases. J. Slapikas did discuss this with the Mayor and Nelson. This will be addressed further at the January 19th meeting with the monthly reports from all departments.
- M. Patchkofsky stated that she had a conversation with Chief Lauber regarding one of the recent calls in town. There was concern because originally we thought no Prospect Police Officers were on because none responded to the call. The Mayor, who spoke with Nelson, informed M. Patchkofsky that with the new laws that were passed police officers aren't dispatched to a call if there aren't specifically weapons in the house or some type of immediate/ domestic threat. There were two officers on the night of this specific call; however they weren't dispatched due to the new laws. Counselors are to respond to these types of calls. J. Slapikas reiterated that as of July 1, 2020 the new legislature is these types of calls, where there is no domestic violence and or firearm or threat to any being the police are not to be called. The Prospect Fire Dept. was there. The call was made by a counselor. Chief Lauber explained that in the past the Fire Depts. Protocol is to not go inside until the police arrive and secure the site. Chief Lauber will be meeting with the Mayor, J. Slapikas etc. to come up with a new protocol to handle these types of situations. Chief Lauber stated there was a miscommunication during the specific call, a counselor was already on site but the Fire Dept. was not aware. This was a psychiatric/depression call. Chief Lauber stated they do not want to put the EMS personnel in harm's way. There needs to be more open communication to ensure there is absolutely no threat before entering. There will be increased training by the Fire Dept. regarding deescalating these type of situations. L. Fitzgerald agrees with M. Patchkofsky; The Council needs to look at the specific law a little more. He thought a counselor typically goes in with the police. P. Geary was concerned that the Prospect Police weren't responding and then heard the State Troopers weren't sending anyone either. She thought the first responders were left there with no protection. She hopes everyone is on the same page after further communication.
- FOIA hearing took place on Dec 18th, 2020 with J. Slapikas, the State and Town Attorney. The hearing went well. Mr. DiMuzio (Nichole) requested information dating back over 25 years. A 52 page packet with all the information was sent to him on January 6th.
- J. Slapikas read correspondence: *Authorizing Resolution of the Prospect Town Council Regarding State of CT Dept. of Emergency Management and Homeland Security*. Motion made by T. Graveline, seconded by S. Lusas-Kolodziej to approve the resolution. Motion amended to change the word "duty" to "duly". L. Fitzgerald explained that this is the Town's safety plan for local emergencies. Unanimous.

Approval of Minutes:

- Motion made by R. Blanc, seconded by M. Patchkofsky to approve the minutes from the 12/15/2020 meeting. T. Graveline recommended a correction to the middle of page 2: *The town is down 2 officers to 16*. Motion amended to make correction. Unanimous.
- Motion made by T. Graveline, seconded by L. Fitzgerald to approve the minutes from 12/21/2020 special meeting. Unanimous.

Transfers: none

Tax Refunds: Motion made by M. Patchkofsky, seconded by S. Lusas-Kolodziej to approve tax refunds in the amount of \$1,709.84. Unanimous.

Resignation:

Motion made by M. Patchkofsky seconded by L. Fitzgerald to accept the resignation of Council Member Paul Murray effective February 1, 2021. P. Murray explained that when he decided to run for the Town Council it was very important to him that he would do what's best for the Town. Currently he is spending more and more time in Florida. This makes it difficult for him to be able to do his job the proper way. The virtual meetings have been nice. This was a difficult decision but the right one for the Town. He explained he really enjoyed working with everyone. He feels everyone works really well and on a bipartisan basis. Everyone on the Council really does have the Town's best interest in mind. Every decision that was made what was best for the citizens of Prospect. He thanked the Council for the opportunity. J. Slapikas thanked him for everything he has done with the Pension Committee etc. P. Murray brings a lot to the table for the Council. L. Fitzgerald thanked P. Murray as well for the hard work with the Pension Plan. T. Graveline reiterated P. Murray brought a lot to the Council table. She appreciated his background, knowledge, willingness to jump in, his demeanor, ideas and opinions. P. Geary agrees. M. Patchkofsky stated it was really great working with him and he will be missed. S. Lusas -Kolodziej agreed. Unanimous.

Correspondence:

J. Slapikas and M. Patchkofsky put together a draft "Wellness Letter" that will be sent out to the community in the near future. The Council discussed reworking the letter and making some corrections. J. Slapikas asked the Council members to write up how they would like to see the letter read and it will be discussed at the next meeting. T. Graveline feels this is a good opportunity to utilize the Prospect Pages which is delivered to every home. M. Patchkofsky stated they geared the letter towards specific departments in town. She is concerned they will receive an overwhelming response and there will be too many residents who want to actually be on the committee. She reminded the Council of a survey they had discussed to help get the community express their opinions and thoughts. P. Geary understands not wanting an overwhelming response but also doesn't want to eliminate anyone who could make a positive impact and may have wonderful/creative ideas. P. Geary mentioned the street sign decorator for example. She was not part of any department in town. She just came up with the idea. T. Graveline thinks the Council should come up with a list of recipients. She also mentioned the Committee coming up with the survey as opposed to the Council. M. Patchkofsky wants to make it clear that the Town Council is putting together the Committee for the community; but it will be the members of the Committee who decides what their purpose and goals are. This will be discussed further at the Jan 19th meeting. P. Geary would appreciate getting correspondence earlier than the day of the meeting.

New Budget Format: M. Patchkofsky discussed with the Mayor and Mayors office; the new budget format will be different. There will be more details with transfer lines etc. Each sheet is password protected. The Mayor was concerned that it doesn't have as many years back fiscally. They usually average out the last 3 years. T. Graveline agrees that 3 years back makes sense. She would also like to see "expended" instead of "adopted" if they can't fit both. She mentioned putting all transfers in one column and just noting a negative sign/parenthesis if transferred out and plus sign if transferred in. The Council discussed ways to save space. P. Geary asked to switch order to have transfers before the expended column, and then the expended column will reflect what was expended after the transfer. T. Graveline asked to change column title to "expended to date" for the budget column we are currently in. The Council would also like to see a column to note the date of approval at the start of each line item.

Motion made by S. Lusas-Kolodziej, seconded by L. Fitzgerald to accept the submitted correspondence and place on file. Unanimous.

Subcommittees:

- *Land Use and Acquisition*-T. Graveline has no update on either.
- *Ordinance*- J. Slapikas stated there is nothing as of right now.
- *Public Maintenance*- Nothing as of right now.

Brief discussion that the budget will be submitted to the Council by March 10th.

Tentatively set meeting date to discuss salary reviews on Wed. Jan 13th at 5:30 p.m.

- *Sidewalk Task Force*- T. Graveline stated they aren't at the bid process yet. They have gone back and forth a couple of times. The last she saw the Council of Governments will be doing a final look over, then after their blessing it goes out to bid. Hopefully spring is still the target.
- *Town Buildings*-M. Patchkofsky stated the Mayor was going to update her on this; she will double check with him. Discussion on the maintenance schedule. This should be done ahead of time instead of waiting until there is an issue or immediate need.
- *Pension*-P. Murray stated that everything is moving forward.

P. Murray asked about the people picketing on the corner of Rt. 68 and 69. Do they need a permit? J. Slapikas stated he questioned this as well and was told it is State of CT property and they are exercising their right.

J. Slapikas mentioned therapeutic horseback riding. They also discussed virtual bingo on Facebook. These things might be something good for the Town to try and do. J. Slapikas also mentioned having some local musicians live stream a concert. This can be discussed as part of Community Wellness.

Motion made by S. Lusas-Kolodziej, seconded by R. Blanc to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m. Unanimous.

Jeff Slapikas
Chairman-Town Council

TOWN CLERK
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2021 JAN - 8 AM 8:43

PROSPECT, CONN
TOWN CLERKS OFFICE
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