

**TOWN COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING
Approved Minutes
February 2, 2021
7:00 p.m.**

Chairman Slapikas called to order the regular meeting of the Prospect Town Council @ 6:04 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, R. Blanc, P. Geary, M. Patchkofsky, L. Fitzgerald, S. Pilat, S. Lusas-Kolodziej, T. Graveline

Council Members Absent: none

Guests: Mayor Chatfield

Motion made by T. Graveline, seconded by P. Geary to move *Resignations* and *Appointments* earlier in the meeting. . **Unanimous.**

Resignations: J. Slapikas read letter from Kevin O’Leary resigning from the Inland Wetlands Commission.

Motion made by T. Graveline, seconded by P. Geary to accept the resignation. **Unanimous.**

Appointments: J. Slapikas read letter from the Democratic Town Committee appointing Kevin O’Leary to the vacancy on the Town Council left by P. Murray. **Motion** made by P. Geary, seconded by T. Graveline to accept the appointment. **Unanimous.**

T. Graveline in her capacity as a Justice of the Peace, swore Kevin O’Leary into the Town Council to fill the vacancy.

Kevin O’Leary introduced himself to the Council. He is a lawyer and partner in a family law firm in New Haven. He stated he is excited to work with the Council to help the community.

Mayor’s Report:

- The Mayor briefly discussed the Covid cases in town. The total is now up to 608 cases. They are in the process of trying to find a location to offer the vaccine in town for residents over 75 years old.
- Mayor Chatfield discussed the letter from the Grange. They are going to merge with the Valley 103 Grange in Naugatuck. The Mayor is trying to obtain the original podium from the property to use in the meeting room at the Town Hall. The Grange is Town Property.
- The Mayor mentioned a tentative agreement with the Police Union. He has not received a signed copy yet. When he receives it the Council has 30 days to approve it. The union attorney is reviewing it at this time.
- The Mayor stated he has not received the annual report; It will be coming tomorrow per his discussion with the accountant today. As soon as the Mayor receives the hard copies he will hand deliver them to the Council members. It will also be available online.
- The Mayor discussed the Public Works contract that was sent to the Council and approved August 15th. The Mayor sent the signed contract to the Council members.
- The Grand List was turned in last Thursday. The Mayor will forward further information this week. He will also schedule for the Assessor to attend a future council meeting to explain. This was a reevaluation year; the Town held 40 conferences with people who had questions about their assessment. The Board of Assessment Appeals is getting ready for a meeting in the next week or so.
- There was an onsite bid meeting for the Fire House roof with J. Slapikas last Wednesday. No bids were submitted so it has to be rebid.
- The Mayor still has not received an agreement for Murphy Road.
- The Mayor discussed the Sunday gatherings in front of the Town Hall. He receives calls and letters questioning. The police are there, they take photos of protestors and get licenses and names. This is State property but we are doing what we can to help keep it under control.

Motion made by R. Blanc, seconded by M. Patchkofsky to move the *Transfers* under Mayor’s Report. **Unanimous.** The Mayor also requested the *Transfers* be under his report in the future as well.

- **Transfers:**

- 2-2-2021-1

- \$5501 from Youth Summer Activities #7500-01 to Town Clerk-Clerical Asst. 5500-02

- \$1000 from Youth Summer Activities #7500-01 to Library-Asst. Librarian 7350-01

Motion made by R. Blanc, seconded by T. Graveline for discussion and possible approval.

J. Slapikas asked about clarification. Did we use all the money that was budgeted already? The Mayor stated that all the money has been used up. The \$5501 is going to the Clerical Assistant to finish paying for the fiscal year. T. Graveline asked for clarification as well. The Mayor further explained that the Town temporarily hired a retired Certified Town Clerk to cover while the Town Clerk

was on leave. She was paid out of this account as well. She is no longer working for the Town. The Mayor felt it necessary to have someone who is certified cover, especially during the election season. The Town Clerk's office was extremely busy with absentee ballots etc. M. Patchkofsky asked about BTE Substitute Staff line item in the budget. Could the monies have come from that line item to pay the assistant clerk and the covering? T. Graveline asked how much it actually cost for the Certified Town Clerk to fill in from Oct. to Jan. She would like a breakdown of where the money went that was budgeted for the Town Clerks office. J. Slapikas asked if there is any money left over in the Assistant Town Clerk line item since there wasn't a permanent Assistant Town Clerk working. He likes the idea of transferring the money from the BTE Substitute Line item 6200-00 to 5500-02 in the amount of \$5501. Motion amended. The \$1000 for the Assistant Librarian will be transferred from the Youth Summer Activities Director line item as originally discussed. **Unanimous.**

T. Graveline requested accounting expenditures for just the Town Clerks Office for the election season. The Mayor will get that information for the Council. He will also rewrite the transfer and send it out tomorrow.

➤ 2-2-2021-2

\$10,000 from Youth Summer Activities-Director #7500 to Office of the Mayor-Municipal Acct. Asst. #5000-07

Motion made by R. Blanc, seconded by S. Lusas Kolodziej for discussion and possible approval.

The Mayor is requesting a transfer from the Youth Summer Activities Director to the Office of the Mayor in the amount of \$10,000. P. Geary asked for clarification. The amount budgeted was \$10,000; now we need to transfer another \$10,000? P. Geary asked if the Town has received an invoice yet. The Mayor stated that we have not received an invoice. P. Geary wants to wait until we do receive an invoice. T. Graveline mentioned that Mike Batiste gathering information he prepared while he was our auditor seems like a conflict. He created the original report and now he is providing those reports to Bonadio. She also feels it is inappropriate to transfer money for a bill we "may" get. The Council requested monthly invoices in the past and it was also discussed at last meeting. M. Patchkofsky feels that if Mike Batiste is performing additional duties it should be laid out separately. We need to know what he is charging and whether it is on a hourly, weekly, or monthly basis. She explained that no one is debating paying Mike Batiste for the work he is doing. She does feel he has the Town's best interest in mind. The Council just wants more information, invoice for the work he is doing. T. Graveline stated we need documentation.

J. Slapikas & S. Lusas Kolodziej abstained. R Blanc in favor. M. Patchkofsky, P. Geary, T. Graveline, L. Fitzgerald S. Pilat & K. O'Leary opposed. **Motion denied.**

➤ 2-2-2021-3

\$2100 from Youth Summer Activities-Director #7500 to Treasurer-Asst. to the Treasurer #5400-01

Motion made by M. Patchkofsky, seconded by R. Blanc for discussion and possible approval.

The Mayor submitted a job description for the Assistant to the Treasurer. The transfer request is from Youth Summer Activities Director to a new line item for Assistant to the Treasurer. M. Patchkofsky asked if a new position is being created and if so does it need to be approved by the Union. The Mayor stated that since the position will be under 18 hours it will not be considered a union position. P. Geary asked why the Treasurer, a part time employee would be getting an assistant. The duties listed on the job description are typically duties that the Treasurer should be doing. P. Geary stated her preference would be to add more hours to the part time Treasurer as opposed to establishing a new position to do what the Treasurer should be doing. T. Graveline asked what the process and procedure is for creating a new position in the Town. The Mayor stated typically he would come to the Council and request new line item/ position and it is at the Council's discretion whether to approve or deny. The Assistant to the Treasurer would receive approximately \$100 per week and would be an employee of the Town of Prospect. He also mentioned that we can't add hours for the Treasurer because an elected official's salary cannot change during their term in office. M. Patchkofsky explained that in the past if the Mayor's office needed extra help the Council was in support of that. J. Slapikas stated that if the treasurer is in a situation where he can't perform all his duties or is not available; he would rather see someone there doing what needs to be done. M. Patchkofsky thinks the Council is just trying to go about this the right way.

J. Slapikas, S. Pilat, R. Blanc & S. Lusas Kolodziej in favor. P. Geary, T. Graveline, L. Fitzgerald & K. O'Leary opposed. M. Patchkofsky abstained. The abstention goes to the majority but since there is no majority the tie breaking vote goes to the Chairman of the Council. J. Slapikas voted yes. Motion approved 4-4 with the tie breaker by the Chairman. The name of the position will be *Assistant to the Treasurer*. This is now a permanent position until next year's budget. T. Graveline feels that this is only the second new position created since she has been on the Council. The Mayor thanked everyone for their time and apologized to J. Slapikas.

The Council discussed the vaccine for people 75 and older. J. Slapikas stated that Chesprocott has been doing great at getting people in. The process is nice and smooth.

T. Graveline stated that *Town Crew* did an amazing, outstanding job handling this storm. She had a pay loader on her street and the ability of that machine was phenomenal. The roads are in terrific condition. She would like this conveyed to the *Town Crew*. P. Geary agrees with T. Graveline. They did an exceptional job under extraordinary circumstances. P. Geary also mentioned Chesprocott schedules your second appointment for the vaccine for you; this is very helpful.

Public Participation: (5 Minute Time Limit)

- Public comments can be made virtually via <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/321983509>
- Comments can be made via telephone by pressing *6 on your device. Participants will be admitted to speak one at a time and can be seen and heard by Council members.

Chairman Slapikas confirmed multiple times that there were no Public Participants on the line.

Chair's Report:

- **Budget for the Council:** J. Slapikas stated that everyone received a copy of the Town Council Budget from the Mayor. T. Graveline mentioned that the Town should sponsor an FOI and Roberts Rules seminar. Everyone could use a refresher course as well as the new members of any town commission/council members. T. Graveline would like to include that in this year's budget. M. Patchkofsky stated this is a great idea. CCM has a lot of courses at no cost because we are members. We can also request any type of workshop and they come at no cost; we would just have to host it. M. Patchkofsky stated that she goes on their website to see what courses they are offering. J. Slapikas will follow-up and get everyone's emails on the list for CCM correspondence. M. Patchkofsky mentioned that the Council always encourages lowering budgets. She feels the Council should cut costs where they can as well. She recommended the Council members giving up their \$100/month payment. T. Graveline stated that the Mayor requested we put additional monies in the clerk line item for Special Meetings. T. Graveline feels we are going into a budget season that is going to mirror the one we had last year. J. Slapikas stated he will look into how much we paid for clerking during the budget season last year. P. Geary disagrees with the Council members giving up their salaries. She feels the Council members spend a lot of time and a lot of their own money copying, printing etc. So much goes on and she thinks \$100/month is an appropriate stipend and she would like to leave it there. M. Patchkofsky stated everyone should be compensated for work we are doing. If Rosalyn is still sending out correspondence she should be compensated as well. They don't want to take advantage of people.

T. Graveline would like to make a formal request when minutes are filed, at that point the minutes should be sent to all Council members same day. J. Slapikas stated that won't be issue at all.

Motion made by T. Graveline, seconded by S. Lusas Kolodziej to approve the Town Council Budget in the amount of \$16650. The Council can revisit during the budget workshops. **Unanimous.**

- **Bonadio Update:** J. Slapikas stated he did not have a video conference yesterday due to the weather. There were initially 61 line items Bonadio sent to the Town for information. Last time they spoke there were 11 outstanding items. At the moment there are 5 items. There was just a little miscommunication on what they were asking for. J. Slapikas is happy with what Bonadio Group is doing. T. Graveline asked about the written weekly report. J. Slapikas stated he did not receive a report from them this week. Last week's report was no change. T. Graveline asked if the Council will have an opportunity to meet with Bonadio Group before they issue their final report. J. Slapikas stated this was his plan. They would hold a virtual meeting in Executive Session with the Council. T. Graveline stated that T. Galvin asked her if all his letters are sent to Bonadio Group. J. Slapikas stated he does forward the information to Bonadio Group. They also received the letter from Carla Perugini Erickson re: Town Garage. The letter that is being read tonight will be forwarded to Bonadio Group as well. T. Graveline stated she feels that all letters should be read into the minutes.
- **Community Wellness Update:** J. Slapikas stated the letter was sent out to the Town groups. The Fire Dept. is interested. He did receive a few letters back with mixed responses. We did not receive a big response so far. The Community Wellness Meeting to establish the committee is on February 9, 2021.

Approval of Minutes:

- January 5, 2021: **Motion** made by R. Blanc, seconded by P. Geary to approve the minutes for the January 5, 2021 meeting. K. O'Leary abstained. **Motion carries** with 8 in favor & 1 abstention.
- January 19, 2021: **Motion** made by R. Blanc, seconded by S. Lusas Kolodziej to approve the minutes for the January 19, 2021 meeting. Motion amended to change the word "roll" to "position" on page 2; 1st full paragraph. K. O'Leary abstained. Motion carries with 8 in favor & 1 abstention.

New Business:

- **Refunds:** Totaling \$6070.81
Motion made by M. Patchkofsky, seconded by P. Geary to approve the 10 refund items for a total of \$6070.81. **Unanimous.**
- **Bids/Grants:** none

Correspondence:

J. Slapikas read letter from Tom Galvin.

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| 1. Agenda | 6. Tax Refunds | 12. Galen Lowell appointment |
| 2. Transfer 1 | 7. Grand List | 13. Region 16 letter |
| 3. Transfer 2 | 8. Firehouse Roof Bid | 14. Tom Galvin letter |
| 4. Transfer 3 | 9. Public Works Agreement | 15. Minutes of both meetings |
| 5. Asst. to the Treasurer | 10. Resignation letter | |
| Description | 11. Appointment letter | |

Motion made by S. Lusas Kolodziej, seconded by S. Pilat to place the correspondence on file. **Unanimous.**

Old Business: none

Subcommittees:

- *Land Use & Acquisition*: none. T. Graveline sent an email and made a phone call. No response as of yet. She will follow-up
- *Public Works Maintenance*: none
- *Sidewalk Task Force*: none
- *Pension*: none J. Slapikas appointed K. O'Leary to the Pension Committee.
- *Ordinance*: none
- *Salary Review*: There was a meeting tonight. M. Patchkofsky stated that they discussed the Assistant to the Treasurer Position and the Part Time Clerk Position in the Tax Office. They also discussed elected officials salaries and if there is any way to assign a range. P. Geary mentioned discussing the level of clerks and how they get placed on each level. A meeting was scheduled on 2/9/21 at 5 p.m. before the Community Wellness Meeting.
- *Town Buildings*: none other than the Grange Building discussed earlier. J. Slapikas appointed K. O'Leary to the Town Building Subcommittee. A meeting was scheduled on 2/10/21 at 6:30 p.m.

T. Graveline asked if there is any written bid policy that can be shared with the Council members. What is the process? She understands that it needs to go out to bid for over \$5000. What else is required? J. Slapikas stated he is unsure but he will look into it. M. Patchkofsky mentioned updating the bid and purchasing procedures since according to the Town Website they were updated last in 2011.

Adjournment: Motion made by S. Lusas-Kolodziej, seconded by R. Blanc to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. **Unanimous.**

Jeff Slapikas
 Jeff Slapikas, Chairman