

**AVON TOWN COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 1, 2021**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. via GoToMeeting by Chairperson Maguire. Members present: Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Bernetich, Speich, Polhamus, and Weber. A quorum was present.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Maguire.

**III. PUBLIC HEARING:** None

**IV. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING:** March 4, 2021

On a motion made by Mr. Speich, seconded by Mr. Bernetich, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council accept the minutes of the March 4, 2021 Meeting as drafted. Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Speich, Polhamus, Weber, and Bernetich voted in favor.

**V. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE** - None

**VI. COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL**

Mr. Bernetich stated Happy Spring!

Mr. Speich thanked the Town Manager and the Director of Police Services for doing the Arch Road and Old Farms Road intersection study from a traffic standpoint and as a result a few signs have been installed. He noted the Town Manager's article, "Coffee with Brandon Robertson" in the Avon Life. He is pleased to see finishing work being done at Avon High School and looks forward to seeing the buffering design. He shared that a blood drive will be held at Company #1 tomorrow.

Mr. Weber thanked Pine Grove School and Ms. Antonelli and Ms. Bogoian regarding the Read Across America event; he received great thank you notes from the first graders. He echoed Mr. Speich's remarks about the Town Manager's article. He noted what a great Town this is to live in and love the people in this town and the businesses and the community and is reminded how thankful he is to live in a town like this.

Mr. Polhamus shared a few thank you notes received from the students following Read Across America; it was a lot of fun and is a great program. He complimented Jennifer Bennett at the Senior Center and the work they have been doing for our seniors; they are doing a great job!

Chairperson Maguire echoed Mr. Polhamus' remarks regarding Jennifer Bennett. He expressed thanks Erica Robertson, the Town Manager's wife, and to Jennifer Worsman for volunteering at the vaccination clinics. She noted that Bike Walk Avon has a Town Council bike ride scheduled

on May 5<sup>th</sup>; there will also be a clean-up day on April 24<sup>th</sup>. She shared that the Avon Greater Together Committee is accepting grant applications from non-profit registered as a 501-3c through May 14<sup>th</sup>; the group has been invited to the May 6<sup>th</sup> meeting with an update. She reported that she met with Mark Massaro, Little League President and Town's Eversource liaison, and there is an idea about getting a softball field under the lights, potentially at Sperry Park, utilizing an existing field there and then building a new baseball field; there is support within their organization and looking into fundraising; more to come on this. Mr. Speich noted that some towns use a field as multi-use with inter-changing pitching mounds between baseball and softball.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

### **20/21-24 Appointment: Central Regional Tourism District (12/31/2021)**

On a motion made by Mr. Speich, seconded by Mr. Polhamus, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council table agenda item 20/21-24 Appointment: Central Regional Tourism District (12/31/2021) to the May 6, 2021 meeting.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Bernetich, Weber, Speich, and Polhamus voted in favor.

### **20/21-27 FY 21/22 Budget Development**

Chairperson Maguire noted that we will have the Board of Finance Budget Public Hearing on Monday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. virtually; the Board of Finance Budget Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. virtually; and the Annual Budget Town Meeting is scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m., which may be in-person and would also be livestreamed; and the Budget Referendum is scheduled for May 12<sup>th</sup>. She added that residents still have an opportunity to submit questions/comments on the budget.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **20/21-62 LoCIP Authorization**

Chairman Maguire noted that this money is generally used for road overlay projects; we had anticipated receiving \$127,104 but the State only gave us \$110,702. She inquired how the State arrives at these numbers. The Town Manager responded that there is some kind of formula used; it is a revenue to our LoCIP special revenue fund; and we only spend what we receive.

On a motion made by Mr. Weber, seconded by Mr. Speich, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to apply for a LoCIP grant in the amount of \$110,702.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Bernetich, Polhamus, Speich, and Weber voted in favor.

### **20/21-63 Approve Resolution: State Historic Preservation Grant for Brian Jones Paleoindian Site**

Chairperson Maguire reported that over a year ago we received a presentation regarding the findings from the Old Farms Road Bridge Project site; we are looking to consider being a candidate for a designation as a State archeological preserve which establishes State protections over the site.

The Town Manager noted that the archeologists are really excited about this site; what they are finding at this site is going to rewrite the scholarly understanding of Paleolithic Indian activity in New England into the Midwest; the State Historic Preservation Office has 100% funding available to hire a consultant to do the report necessary to get this designation, subject to RFP process. He noted that we go through the process, get the report done, and make a determination on whether or not we want to apply towards the designation. He added that the designation would impose stricter penalties on those might engage in unauthorized digging at the site but also opens additional avenues for grant funding to the Town. He noted that the layer that the archeologist are trying to access is buried about five feet down. His recommendation is to proceed with the study. In response to a question from Mr. Weber, the Town Manager responded that we want to keep it fairly narrow in scope. The Assistant Town Manager noted that the grant is due by May 1<sup>st</sup> and the State Historic Preservation Office Commission meets on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and the consultant RFP process would be a summer task.

On a motion made by Mr. Polhamus, seconded by Mr. Speich, it was voted:

**RESOLVED**, that Brandon Robertson, as Town Manager of Town of Avon, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of the Town of Avon a certain contract with the State of Connecticut, Department of Economic and Community Development, and to affix the seal of the Town of Avon.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Speich, Bernetich, Polhamus, and Weber voted in favor.

**20/21-64     Approve Resolution: Explanatory Text for Annual Town Meeting, May 3, 2021**

On a motion made by Mr. Speich, seconded by Mr. Polhamus, it was voted:

**RESOLVED**: That the Town Clerk be, and she hereby is, authorized and directed to prepare and distribute an explanatory text with respect to the proposed budget for the Town for the fiscal year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, as recommended to the Town by the Board of Finance, in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of the Town and Section 9-369b of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Speich, Weber, Polhamus, and Bernetich voted in favor.

**20/21-65     Set Poll Hours: 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Town Meeting Referenda  
May 12, 2021, June 2, 2021 (if necessary), June 23, 2021 (if necessary)**

On a motion made by Mr. Speich, seconded by Mr. Weber, it was voted:

**RESOLVED**: That the Town Council approve the extension of the polling hours of the Town Meeting Referendum from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on May 12, 2021, June 2, 2021 (if necessary), and June 23, 2021 (if necessary).

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Speich, Weber, Polhamus, and Bernetich voted in favor.

Chairperson Maguire inquired how long ago we ran the polls from 12:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**20/21-66     Supplemental Appropriation: Permit Tracking Software, \$84,100**

Chairperson Maguire reported that the Town's current software, GeoTMS, is outdated; Town staff did extensive research and an in-depth review to select OpenGov for the new permit software system. The Town Manager noted that the system primarily serves the Building Department,

Engineering Department, and the Fire Marshal's Office. The Assistant Town Manager noted that there will be annual fees to license the software and will be reflected in budget requests starting with the FY 23 budget. She noted that it is a web-based system and it will now enable us to take credit card payments.

On a motion made by Mr. Weber, seconded by Mr. Polhamus, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council favorably recommends to the Board of Finance an appropriation not to exceed \$84,100.00 from Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund, Other Financing Sources, Unassigned Fund Balance, Account #03-0390-43913 to Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund, CNREF: Town, Permit Tracking Software, Account #03-4930-53452, for the purchase and implementation of a new permit software system.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Bernetich, Weber, Polhamus, and Speich voted in favor.

**20/21-67      Supplemental Appropriation: Absentee Ballot Clerks/2020 Election, \$10,087**

On a motion made by Mr. Speich, seconded by Mr. Weber, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council hereby recommends that the Board of Finance amend the FY 20/21 Budget by increasing:

**REVENUES**

General Fund, Intergovernmental, Absentee Ballots, Account #01-0330-43425 in the amount of \$10,087.00 and increasing

**APPROPRIATIONS**

General Fund, Records and Vital, Temporary Part Time, Account #01-1601-51014, in the amount of \$10,087.00, for the purpose of increasing funding to cover the cost of the hiring staff to process absentee ballots for the 2020 election.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Weber, Polhamus, Speich, and Bernetich voted in favor.

**20/21-68      Supplemental Appropriation: Community Connectivity Grant – Phase I, \$29,130**

Chairperson Maguire noted that the Bike Walk Avon group is very excited about these beacons that will be installed around Town; this is part of a larger grant that we received for the Old Farms Road Project. In response to a question from Mr. Polhamus, the Town Manager responded that this is the first time that we have used this grant money. Mr. Weber shared concerns regarding the crosswalk on Arch Road, particularly traveling east; flashing beacons would be ideal there in the future. Mr. Speich agreed. The Assistant Town Manager responded that we could look into adding this location. Chairperson Maguire requested looking for additional grant funding for more locations.

On a motion made by Mr. Speich, seconded by Mr. Polhamus, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council hereby recommends that the Board of Finance amend the FY 20/21 Budget by increasing:

**REVENUES**

Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund, Intergovernmental, Community Connectivity Grant, Account #03-0330-43674 in the amount of \$29,130.00 and increasing

**APPROPRIATIONS**

Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund, CNREF: Town, Community Connectivity Grant, Account #03-4930-53444 in the amount of \$29,130.00, for the purpose of installing user-activated rapid flashing beacons at four trail crossings.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Polhamus, Speich, Weber, and Bernetich voted in favor.

**20/21-69      Temporary Waiver of Permit Requirement and Disposal Fee for Brush at Landfill/Transfer Station**

Chairperson Maguire reported that Chapter 51, Article 4 of the Town of Avon Code of Ordinances governs the operation of the transfer station. She noted that we have waived the fee for brush permits following large storms in the past; this will waive the fee on several Saturdays so residents can get rid of brush without paying an extra fee. The Town Manager noted that this is for residents with or without a landfill permit. In response to a question from Mr. Weber, the Town Manager responded that the Town ordinance is outdated and should be reviewed to decide on potential future offerings to residents.

On a motion made by Mr. Weber, seconded by Mr. Speich, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council temporarily waive the fee for residential brush disposal at the Landfill/Transfer Station on the following Saturdays: April 24, 2021, May 1, 2021, May 8, 2021, and May 15, 2021.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Bernetich, Weber, Polhamus, and Speich voted in favor.

**IX.      TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/MISCELLANEOUS**

**Misc. A: Purchasing Update:** The Assistant Town Manager noted there are a number of items going to bid/RFP over the coming months. She noted that a draft of the AVFD Facilities Master Plan has been shared with Mr. Speich.

**Misc. B: Construction Update:** The Town Manager noted that regarding the Public Safety Communication System Project, he would like to invite Tom Kline and John Zematis to the next Council meeting to provide a presentation/update. Mr. Bernetich suggested looking into FirstNet from AT&T and looking into other technologies as they become available. The Town Manager noted that Police Department renovations are still proceeding; we are in design for the Old Farms Road Project; we are going out to bid for Cider Brook Bridge Replacement; Schoolhouse No. 3 improvements are underway; Rails-to-Trails improvements continue; and athletic lighting at Avon High School should be energized over the next two weeks. He noted that we have a preliminary buffering plan that we are in the process of getting quotes for; and a sewer contractor gave us fill at a good price for the site.

**Misc. C: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):** The Town Manager reported that Avon will receive \$1.8 million in municipal aid and \$875,000 for education; we have not seen good guidance yet from the Department of Treasury regarding usage.

**Misc. D: CT Water Rate Case:** The Town Manager reported that we have a public hearing coming up; we retained Day Pitney to assist with this; a letter was submitted to PURA; we are only one of two towns (Bloomfield) to submit a letter.

**X. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to 1-200 6 (c) to Discuss Matters of Security Strategy**

On a motion made by Mr. Weber, seconded by Mr. Polhamus, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council enter into Executive Session at 8:10 p.m.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Bernetich, Weber, Speich, and Polhamus voted in favor.

The Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Clerk, Glenn Grube- IT Committee Chair/Library Director, and Joe Buccheri-Cooperative Systems attended the session.

**XII. ADJOURN**

On a motion made by Mr. Speich, seconded by Mr. Polhamus, it was voted:

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Bernetich, Speich, Polhamus, and Weber voted in favor.

Attest: Jennifer Worsman, Clerk