

**AVON TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
February 2, 2023**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Avon Town Hall, in the Selectmen's Chamber as well as via GoToMeeting by Chairman Polhamus. Members present: Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico. Mr. Weber was absent. A quorum was present.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Polhamus.

III. PUBLIC HEARING: None

IV. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS: January 5, 2023

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Mr. Indomenico, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept the minutes of the January 5, 2023 Meeting as drafted.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

V. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE - None

VI. COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL

Mrs. Maguire noted the great success from the Special Town Meeting to purchase fire apparatus; presentations were fantastic, questions and concerns were addressed, and the approval was overwhelming. She noted that Avon Dollars for Scholars is holding a fundraiser on February 22nd at Avon Prime Meats as well as a "Scenes of Avon" bag fundraiser throughout the month of February.

Ms. Ausiello echoed Mrs. Maguire's comments regarding the Special Town Meeting; there were a lot of kind words shared for our Fire Department which is great for the Town.

Chairman Polhamus echoed Mrs. Maguire's comments regarding the Special Town Meeting; it was great to have everybody on the same team.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

21/22-46 American Rescue Plan Act: Discussion re: Projects List

Chairman Polhamus noted the ARPA funding remaining balance as well as the number of Recreation and Senior Center projects listed under Possible Projects Identified and wondered if they might be able to tie together with the Recreation Master Plan update which is being requested in the FY 24 capital budget. The Town Manager noted that ARPA funds need to be committed by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026. Chairman Polhamus suggested having the Recreation Master Plan RFP document ready to go immediately after the FY 24 budget passes.

Ms. Ausiello agreed about a good portion of remaining ARPA funds being spent on Recreation and Parks projects as well as getting the Recreation Master Plan done, keeping in mind the property at 645 West Avon Road.

22/23-26 **FY 23/24 Budget Development**

The Town Manager noted that the Town Council's Budget Work Session is this Saturday, February 4th; the Town Manager's recommended budget includes a 3.29% mill rate increase, however the Grand List is now projected to be close to 0.77% versus 0.75% that was initially used when preparing the recommended budget. He noted that the Town's new Facebook page has information regarding the budget process.

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Ms. Ausiello, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council move agenda item 22/23-58 Appointment: Board of Education (R – 12/31/2023) up to the first item under New Business.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

22/23-52 **Communication from Avon Friends for Equity (FFE) group regarding regional Juneteenth event**

Chairman Polhamus noted that this event was brought to his attention as his wife is on the Steering Committee with the Avon Friends for Equity group, therefore he recused himself. Kim Stevenson, a founding member with Avon Friends for Equity and Nicole Kodak, lead organizer of the Juneteenth event, provided an overview regarding the Juneteenth event scheduled for Saturday, June 17th at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center who will be the 501(c)3 partner; it is a multi-town celebration with Simsbury, Avon, Farmington, and Canton; seed funding of \$2,000 is being requested by each town. Ms. Kodak noted that this will be the third Juneteenth event, the second one in-person; and the first time collaborating with four towns; Farmington and Simsbury have already approved their seed funding; Canton is expected to approve it as well; talent performers are being secured; and they would like to have talent from each of the high schools. She noted that the vision would be to hold this event every year but rotate where we host it. She added that there will be five tents on site, one for each town, and one with youth engagement/educational materials as well as an exclusive food vendor. In response to a question from Mrs. Maguire, Ms. Kodak responded that last year the event was held on the lawn at the Simsbury Public Library. In response to a question from Ms. Ausiello, Ms. Kodak responded that this event would be advertised on social media, word of mouth, some local media press, and the libraries. In response to a question from Ms. Ausiello, Ms. Kodak responded that this is a Town committee appointed by the Simsbury Board of Selectmen and partnering with members/groups from other towns. Mrs. Maguire inquired whether the Committee looked at Avon's Community Events Grant Program for this event. Ms. Kodak responded that she was not aware of such program; they asked individuals in the other towns which has been very successful thus far. The Assistant Town Manager noted that Avon's Community Events Grant Program states that our Grant Program requires an IRS-designation as a tax exempt and the event must be held within the limits of the Town of Avon. Mrs. Maguire commented that it sounds like a very educational event, and she looks forward to it. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Indomenico, Ms. Kodak responded

that if the Committee falls short on funding, they will scale back the talent; all participating school districts are able to apply for the CREC grant; and if there is a surplus in funds raised it could go towards next year's Juneteenth event or hire more talent for this year's event. The Town Manager noted that if Council approves the \$2,000 seed funding request, the Town will absorb it in the operating budget. Mr. Indomenico appreciates the idea of building a greater Farmington Valley community and supports the seed funding request of \$2,000.

On a motion made by Mr. Indomenico, seconded by Ms. Ausiello, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve the Town of Avon contributing no more than \$2,000 for the Farmington Valley Celebrates Juneteenth 2023 event planned for June 17, 2023 at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.

Mr. Indomenico and Ms. Ausiello voted in favor, Mrs. Maguire voted nay, and Mr. Polhamus abstained. Motion carried: 2-1-1.

22/23-53 Zoning Regulations Update

Hiram Peck, Director of Planning and Community Development, reported that the Town did not receive any responses when the RFP went out the first time; we revised the RFP and sent it out again and received two qualified responses; a determination was made that SLR International Corporation would be the best fit for this job for a variety of reasons. Chairman Polhamus noted that SLR International Corporation is the same firm that will be doing our Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan.

a) Contract Recommendation

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council award a contract to SLR International Corporation of New Haven, CT to complete a comprehensive update of the Avon Zoning Regulations in an amount not to exceed \$95,000.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

b) Supplemental Appropriation (ARPA), \$45,000

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council hereby recommends that the Board of Finance amend the FY 22/23 Budget by increasing:

REVENUES

American Rescue Plan Act Grant, Intergovernmental, American Rescue Plan Act Grant Revenue, Account #50-0330-44037 in the amount of \$45,000.00 and increasing:

APPROPRIATIONS

American Rescue Plan Act Grant, Town CIP-Facilities, Zoning Regulation Revision-ARPA. Account #50-4829-53446 in the amount of \$45,000.00 for the purpose of allocating funding received through the American Rescue Plan Act towards supplementing the funding available for the Town's comprehensive zoning regulation revision process.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

22/23-54 Discuss Acquisition & Leaseback of Property located at 645 West Avon Road

The Town Manager provided a brief presentation (which is attached and made part of these minutes). He noted that this would be a similar approach that we took to the other property we purchased at 503 West Avon Road. He noted that the appropriation does not require a Special Town Meeting because the amount is below the threshold. The Clerk noted that regarding the critical path timeline, Town Council's April meeting date will need to be rescheduled due to a holiday conflict.

22/23-55 Appropriation: Pavement Management, \$750,000

The Town Manager provided a brief presentation (which is attached and made part of these minutes). Chairman Polhamus commented it would be great to keep making progress on this. The Town Manager noted that we just submitted a grant application through the LOTCIP program for the section of Country Club Road from West Avon Road down to Old Farms Road.

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Mr. Ausiello, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council hereby favorably recommend to the Board of Finance, an appropriation not to exceed \$750,000, from General Fund, Other Financing Sources, Assigned to Road Improvement, Account # 01-0390-43931 and transfer from Account # 01-8700-58000, General Fund, Other Financing Uses, Interfund Transfers Out

To

Account # 02-4831-53003, Capital Projects Fund (Facil & Equip), Town CIP-Facil/Road Overlay, Road Surface Improvements and Account # 02-0390-43918 Capital Projects Fund (Facil & Equip) Other Financing Sources, Interfund Transfers In, in the amount of \$750,000, for the purpose of road improvements.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

22/23-56 Sick Leave Accrual-Police Lieutenants

The Town Manager received a recommendation from the Director of Human Resources and Chief of Police to raise the accrual hours of sick time for the two police lieutenants who are not part of the police bargaining unit; this recommended benefit would bring them in line with the other officers in the Police Department. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Indomenico, the Town Manager responded that when one of these lieutenants leaves our employment, the payout of unused sick leave is listed under the Town's personnel rules; the policy union contract has a payout limit as well.

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Ms. Ausiello, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve an exception to Chapter 8, Section 8-4(b) of the Personnel Rules and permit the Town Manager to allow Police Lieutenants to accumulate 240 days of sick leave (or 1,800 hours).

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

22/23-57 Approval of Real Estate Tax Refund, \$3,490.42

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve a real estate tax refund to CoreLogic in the amount of \$3,490.42.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

22/23-58 Appointment: Board of Education (R – 12/31/2023)

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council appoint Nicole Russo to the Board of Education to fill a vacancy with a term to expire on December 31, 2023.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

Ms. Russo thanked the Town Council for this opportunity, and she looks forward to working with the Board of Education.

22/23-59 Resignation: Town Council Representative-Farmington Valley Health District

The Town Manager noted that Maura Shea has been a great board member with the Farmington Valley Health District Board, and she will be missed.

On a motion made by Ms. Ausiello, seconded by Mrs. Maguire, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept with regret the resignation of Maura Shea as Town Council Representative-Farmington Valley Health District.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

22/23-60 Community Events Grant Awards – Avon Soccer Club and Avon Youth Lacrosse

The Town Manager noted that two applications were received during the application period for events occurring between March 1, 2023 and June 30, 2023: Avon Youth Lacrosse (May 21st Tournament at Fisher Meadows) and Avon Soccer Club (May 27th-28th Tournament at Fisher Meadows). He added that over the last few years we have offset ambulance coverage and/or part of the police coverage for the Avon Memorial Day Soccer Tournament through the General Fund Recreation and Parks Budget. The Assistant Town Manager noted that there is \$15,000 allocated in this grant program and an additional \$5,000 for the veterans' events annual expenses. Mrs. Maguire commented that these are great events for our Town.

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Mr. Indomenico, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council award \$2,050 to Avon Youth Lacrosse to support their annual Falcon Fest Lacrosse Tournament and award \$7,500 to Avon Soccer Club to support their annual Avon Memorial Day Soccer Tournament through the Community Events Grant Program.

Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

IX. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/MISCELLANEOUS

Misc. A: Purchasing Update: The Town Manager reported that regarding that the Ladder and Pumper Truck have been ordered; bids are being prepared for West Avon Road Sidewalks Phase I and Avon Free Public Library Courtyard Restoration, and Old Farms Road Phase I.

Misc. B: Construction Update: The Town Manager reported that regarding the Public Safety Communications System Project, he recommended Council look at the CT Siting Council web site under pending applications and view everything that has been submitted to date; we do not expect a public hearing being required by the Siting Council; and everything should come together by May including Siting Council approval and updated pricing from Motorola which he expects to be very favorable with the State taking over the cost at the Landfill site. He noted that with the Old Farms Road Project, we will soon turn our attention to design for the east-west section. He noted that the Town's Bicycle Friendly Community application has been submitted with regards to Connectivity Improvement Projects.

Misc. C: ARPA Project Updates: No additional highlights were provided.

Misc. D: Fisher Farm Lease Agreement Extension w/ Sub Edge Farm: The Town Manager reported that we are coming up on three years in the current agreement with Sub Edge Farm and it has an option for a two-year extension which we will be executing; they are great. In response to a question from Chairman Polhamus, the Town Manager responded that Sub Edge Farms has been leasing from Avon since 2014.

XI. ADJOURN

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Ms. Ausiello, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

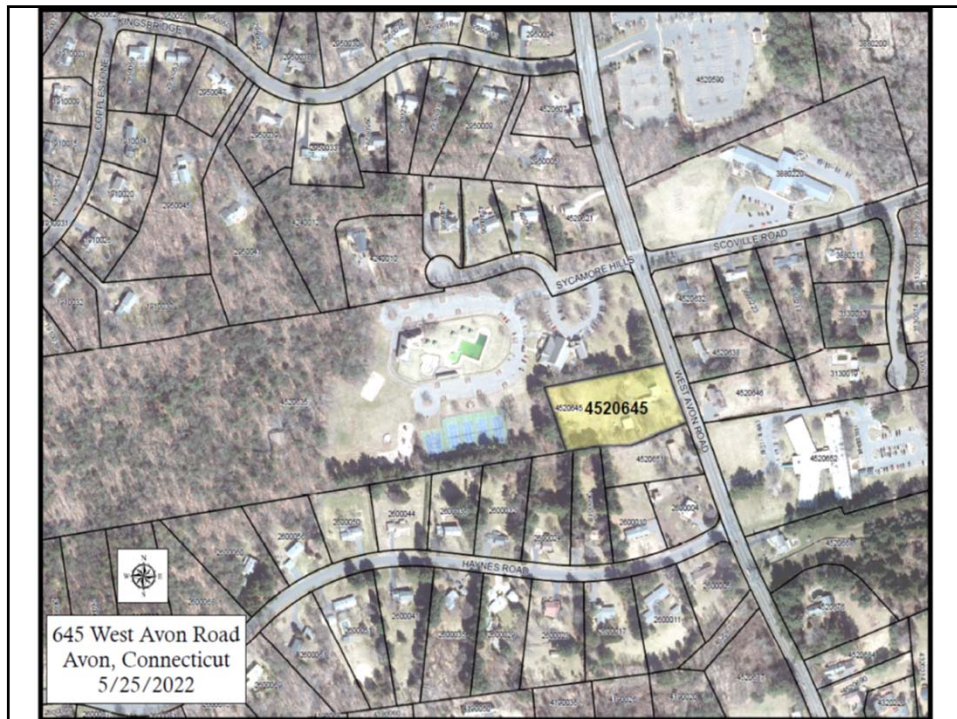
Mmes: Maguire, Ausiello, Messrs: Polhamus and Indomenico voted in favor.

Attest: Jennifer Worsman, Clerk

645 West Avon Road

- 1.91-acre property zoned R30
- Purchase price \$335,000; soft costs \$40,000
 - Total cost \$375,000
 - Appropriation from unassigned general fund balance with reimbursement included in FY24 CIP.
- Leaseback with a one-year term
 - Rental of \$8,400 (equivalent to annual property tax payment)
- To be acquired for general municipal use with no restrictions.
 - Property adjacent to Senior Center and Sycamore Hills, creating an opportunity for future expansion of the complex.
- Expect to close in June or July 2023.
- Plan to demolish the house and restore the property

1



2