

**AVON TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
September 2, 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. She also requested a moment of silence to remember our thirteen fallen soldiers who recently passed away as well as for the family of CT State Police Sgt. Brian Mohl who passed away from Storm Ida floodwaters.

III. PUBLIC HEARING:

**16/17-51 Amendment of Cellular/Wireless Lease Agreement for Property Located at
277 Huckleberry Hill Road for Town and Public Safety Communications
System Replacement Project**

Chairperson Maguire noted that a Neighborhood Information Session was held on August 19th; several questions were asked by the neighbors and Town staff is working on addressing those and will have another Information Session later in the month; therefore, we would like to postpone the public hearing to the next Town Council meeting scheduled for October 7th.

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council move the Public Hearing regarding the Amendment of Cellular/Wireless Lease Agreement for Property Located at 277 Huckleberry Hill Road for Town and Public Safety Communications System Replacement Project to the October 7, 2021 meeting. Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Speich, Polhamus, Weber, and Bernetich voted in favor.

IV. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING: July 29, 2021

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept the minutes of the July 29, 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. Speich acknowledged the American Legion baseball team from Avon who won the State Championship. He acknowledged Jamie DiPace who will be inducted into the CT State Firefighters Association Hall of Fame on September 23rd and suggested the Town recognize Mr. DiPace with a proclamation; he has been Fire Marshal, Fire Chief, Firefighter; the nomination is well-deserved and we should be proud that he once worked for the Town. He inquired about the

status on a bench at Fisher Meadows in memory of Steve Kushner or perhaps the Town could do something at the Avon Village Center since he was a vital part of that project as well. He requested a car break-in summary with their monthly report from the Avon Police Department.

Mr. Bernetich echoed Chairperson Maguire's sentiments regarding the thirteen servicemen who lost their lives in Afghanistan and Sgt. Mohl who passed away assisting others. He noted the amount of work the Avon Volunteer Fire Department (AVFD) has done over the last month – hurricane standby by volunteers overnight, the fire in New Hartford, coverage in Burlington for their line of duty death, back-to-back vehicle accidents, and sixteen service calls last night helping resident – and tipped his hat to the AVFD for their volunteer service. Chairperson Maguire responded that the AVFD has gone above and beyond, they are volunteers and have been on call nearly 24/7; we appreciate everything they have done and we thank them.

Mr. Weber noted the opening of Whole Foods in the middle of an unfortunate amount of water yesterday and expressed thanks to the Carpionato Group and Town staff for shepherding that project along; having that space open and being part of the community is just getting started. He expressed condolences for the victims involved in today's plane crash in Farmington. He expressed thanks to the teachers and administrators for an on-time opening and for hopefully what will be a smooth school year; please drive safe as the kids are out there again.

Mr. Polhamus noted that he has heard positive comments regarding Whole Foods; great job by all. He received a picture of Fisher Meadows from today; please be careful out there. He echoed sentiments regarding the Avon Volunteer Fire Department's service. He noted that a few Town Council candidates are online tonight; you get a chance to contribute and lead a community but you get to learn about underlying threads that make up the web of our community and expressed good luck to all. He spent time working with the Platt family; Morgan is an Avon High School senior who leads a fundraising campaign every year for pediatric cancer awareness month; she is a brain cancer survivor; they are organizing a CT Cares lawn sign campaign; and it is a great story. He noted that last week's Board of Education meeting was a tough one to watch; the unmask our kids group was present and there was disrespectful discourse; and commended the Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools for the work they have done keeping the schools open and keeping the kids safe.

Chairperson Maguire inquired about the flooding at Fisher Meadows and the fields and the Town Manager responded the water recession timeline will be a function of the weather over the coming days but it is not uncommon in this area. The Town Manager noted that Tillotson Road was closed for a bit and we had major flooding in Building #1 in the Avon Room at Town Hall. Chairperson Maguire noted that the Platt family is amazing and an inspirational story over the years. She shared that Lights On Avon will hold a dedication on September 10th at halftime at the football game; Bike Walk Avon Town Council Ride the Town bicycle ride on September 23rd with a rain date of September 24th starting at the Sperry Park kiosk at 5:00 p.m.; and a 9/11 Remembrance on the Town Green at 8:30 a.m. She noted that Whole Foods grand opening was incredible; Phase I looks spectacular and is just as anxious as Carpionato Group to move onto Phase II; expressed thanks to Town staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission who worked so hard to bring this to fruition; it is a great addition to our Town.

VII. OLD BUSINESS – No items were discussed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

21/22-14 Approve Proclamation: Avon Lions Club 70th Anniversary Celebration

Chairperson Maguire recognized Heidi Zacchera who was in attendance tonight. Chairperson Maguire read aloud the following proclamation.

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

WHEREAS, the Avon Lions Club is a member of Lions Club International, the world's largest service club organization with 1.4 million members, in 46,000 clubs, in more than 200 countries and geographical areas; and

WHEREAS, the Avon Lions Club is one of the fifty-three clubs across Hartford and Litchfield Counties that make up District 23B. In fiscal year 2020-2021, the 1,750 Lions of District 23B volunteered over 13,764 hours and donated \$152,612 to various local and international causes, and;

WHEREAS, the Avon Lions Club, established on June 18, 1951 by Raymond J. Zacchera, is celebrating seventy years of service by countless members who chose to dedicate their time and talents to better our community and to provide assistance to those in need, and;

WHEREAS, the members of the Avon Lions Club are always on a mission to serve and have undertaken dozens of fundraisers and service projects over the last seven decades including, but not limited to, pasta suppers, breakfasts, flea markets, auctions, food drives, blood drives, pediatric vision screenings, river clean-ups, a medical equipment lending locker, and a scholarship program for high school seniors, and;

WHEREAS, all of these activities benefit local, regional and international charities that align with the Lions' four major service areas: saving sight, supporting youth, meeting humanitarian needs and developing local leaders. The Avon Free Public Library, Avon Social Services, the Avon Fuel Bank, the Avon Food Pantry, Gifts of Love, the Farmington Valley VNA, FAVARH, Avon Dollars of Scholars, and Meals on Wheels are just a few of the local charities that have benefited from the initiatives of the Avon Lions Club over the years, and;

WHEREAS, for the last seventy years, the Avon Lions Club has lived its motto, "We Serve," each and every day. It has been said that, "where there is a need, there is a Lion." The Avon community is proud to know that the Lions are always here to provide support to those most in need of assistance through charitable giving and service activities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Avon Town Council, on behalf of the residents of Avon, Connecticut, does hereby proclaim September 8, 2021 as Avon Lions Club Day in Avon, Connecticut in commemoration of the Lions' 70 years of contributions and service to the Avon community.

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

Heidi Zacchera thanked Town Council. She noted that if there is anything we can do to help the Town or help within the Town, please reach out to the Avon Lions Club. Chairperson Maguire asked Ms. Zacchera to extend their thanks and gratitude to the Avon Lions Club.

21/22-15 Transfer of Appropriation: Fisher Meadows Field Expansion Project, \$217,836

Chairperson Maguire noted that when we started this project we used funding from capital improvements, Open Space Fees Fund, and the Fisher Meadows Special Revenue Fund; much of

the project was done in-house resulting in a lower total project cost so approval of this request would transfer the remaining funds back into the Open Space Fees Fund.

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council favorably recommends to the Board of Finance to amend the FY 21/22 budget by transferring, from Capital Projects Fund (Facil & Equip), Town CIP-Facilities, Fisher Meadows Field Expansion, Account #02-4829-53407, to Capital Projects Fund (Facil & Equip), Other Financing Uses, Interfund Transfer-Out, Account #02-8700-58000, the amount of \$217,836 for the purpose of reimbursing the Open Space Fees Fund for funding used towards the Fisher Meadows Field Expansion Project in Fiscal Year 16/17.

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

21/22-16 Acceptance of Gift: Avon Police Association, \$275.00

Chairperson Maguire noted that this is a donation from the Avon Police Association for a Family Movie Night at Sycamore Hills Recreation Area.

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept the gift of \$275.00 from the Avon Police Association, in accordance with Section 4.3.2(l) of the Town Charter.

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

21/22-17 Resignation: Board of Education (R – 12/31/2021)

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept with regret the resignation of Bogdan Oprica from the Board of Education.

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

21/22-18 Appointment: Board of Education (R – 12/31/2021)

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council appoint Jennifer Das to the Board of Education to fill a vacancy with a term to expire on December 31, 2021.

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

21/22-19 Appointment: Building Code Board of Appeals (R – 12/31/2023)

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council table agenda item 21/22-19 Appointment: Building Code Board of Appeals (R – 12/31/2021) to the October 7, 2021 meeting.

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

21/22-20 Appointment: Committee on Aging (D – 12/31/2021)

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council table agenda item 21/22-20 Appointment: Committee on Aging (D – 12/31/2021) to the October 7, 2021 meeting.

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

IX. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/MISCELLANEOUS

Misc. A: Purchasing Update: The Assistant Town Manager noted we are scheduling interviews regarding the RFP AVFD Facilities & Apparatus Master Plan and expressed thanks to Mr. Speich, Fire Chief Bruce Appell and AVFD Board President Mike Galliher for their assistance; we awarded a contract to Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc. (PAST) for the nomination for the historic designation for the Brian D. Jones Paleoindian Site; the Avon Clean Energy Commission has paused their efforts related to charging stations on Town property while further research is done; the Green Bank will advertise an RFP on/around September 10th; and we have secured a landscaper to install landscaping at the Avon High School turf field and track sometime this fall.

Misc. B: Construction Update: The Town Manager highlighted the following: the geothermal system is wrapping up at the Avon Free Public Library with patio restoration work being completed next; bike improvements are underway or will be shortly including installation of beacons, fencing work, and a mural painted on the Route 44 underpass; we have done paving work on fourteen roads this year, as much as our capital budget allows.

Misc. C: American Rescue Plan Act: The Town Manager noted that we have received \$2.7 million out of \$5.4 million overall; we have an internal Town staff group brainstorming ideas for fund usage; he is leaning towards a recommendation to use as much as we can for pavement management and there is language in the guidelines which states that when you are calculating the foregone revenue because of COVID-19 you can use that revenue for a broad range of municipal purposes including infrastructure, maintenance and replacement and has been interpreted to include broad paving management; we have discussed the idea of doing a pavement management bond but we can expand our reach of possible capital projects with the ARPA funds. He noted that he plans to have the Director of Public Works and BETA Consulting come in for the next meeting to conduct a presentation.

Misc. D: Town Council Flag Policy: The Town Manager noted that we continue to work with the Town Attorney on this item and will have it ready for discussion at the next meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Speich, the Town Manager responded that the new Emergency Operations Center was not used during Storm Ida. He noted that the room is complete and ready for use.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Real Estate

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council enter into Executive Session at 7:43 p.m.

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

The Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and Clerk 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 7:53 p.m.

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

Attest: Jennifer Worsman, Clerk