

**AVON TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
April 21, 2020**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 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 MEETINGS: March 30, 2020 Special Meeting

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept the minutes of the March 30, 2020 Special Meeting as drafted.

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

V. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE - None

VI. COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL

Mr. Speich reported that he assisted with distribution of PPE at the Public Works facility and delivered food to a client through Social Services; and thanked Alan Rosenberg, Director of Social Services for assisting residents during this pandemic and is a great asset to the Town.

Mr. Weber expressed disappointment regarding spring sports seasons being cancelled, in particular for the seniors, and recognized Avon Youth Lacrosse for issuing refunds to families from apparel/equipment purchases.

Mr. Polhamus extended condolences to two families who lost a loved one in Avon from COVID-19. He also suggested formal recognitions and/or proclamations to various people/groups who have helped during this pandemic; our community has bonded.

Mr. Bernetich hopes to get people back to work as soon as possible; getting worried for people who don't have ability to get through this without food, rent, and lights.

Chairperson Maguire shared that so many people have gone above and beyond and recognized Gifts of Love. She highlighted the first bell ringing event held last Friday evening and shall continue until the pandemic is over; it was a nice gesture for our frontline workers. She noted that the budget has been a lot of work behind the scenes with the Town Manager and the Superintendent of Schools and hard decisions will have to be made.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

19/20-53 Executive Order 7S: Property Tax Deferral and Low Interest Rate Programs

The Town Manager reported that regarding the tax deferral program, any taxes due July 1st would now be due by October 1st; there is an option for Council to condition the deferral on an application process and criteria established by the Office of Policy and Management but not something he would recommend; instead apply it uniformly across all taxpayers; the deferral would be at 0% interest, an approximate cost in lost interest of \$26,000. He added that with the Low Interest Rate Program, for delinquent taxes due between April 1st and June 30th there would be a reduction in the interest charge from 1.5% per month to 0.25% per month; it will impact a relatively small number of taxpayers, about 2% or 571 accounts; the cost would be approximately \$6,000 in lost revenue. He noted that we should have more than sufficient cash available to meet our needs in the interim. Chairperson Maguire noted that these two programs have already been adopted by several of our surrounding communities. He expressed thanks to the Peg Colligan-Finance Director, Grace Tiezzi-Assistant to the Town Manager, Deb Fioretti-Collector of Revenue, and Rachel Massih-Assistant Collector of Revenue for their good work on this.

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

Be it Resolved, that the Avon Town Council, acting pursuant to Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7S, approves the Town of Avon's participation in the State of Connecticut Suspension and Modification of Tax Deadlines and Collection efforts as follows:

1. The Town Council approves the Deferment Program as set forth in Executive Order No. 7S, provided that the provisions shall apply to all Avon taxpayers; and
2. The Town Council approves the Low Interest Rate Program as set forth in Executive Order No. 7S.

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

VIII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/MISCELLANEOUS

Misc. A: Moody's Annual Comment: The Town Manager highlighted Moody's Annual Comments on Avon; he credited Peg Colligan, Finance Director, and her team; he noted Moody stating that Avon's credit position is outstanding. He added that we will be going out to the market to issue approximately \$3.9 million in general obligation bonds for the AHS Synthetic Turf Field and Track Improvement Project and a small portion for the Town and Public Safety Communication System Replacement Project. He noted that we will go through a more thorough review with Moody's sometime in May. He added that the use of Unassigned Fund Balance is one of the most important factors that the credit rating agencies look at; if there was ever going to be a time to use it to help smooth out any rough edges in a budget process this is probably the year. He noted that Avon has had AAA bond rating since 1998 and hold it in high regard. Mr. Speich noted with thanks that the Town Council, Board of Finance, and Town staff that have come before us have done a great job giving us a great financial picture for the Town and we need to keep that going forward. Peggy Colligan, Director of Finance, commented that we need to have a plan in place to restore Unassigned Fund Balance, it should be favorably interpreted and it is not expected to restore it in one year.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pending Claim/Litigation

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council enter into Executive Session at 5:37 p.m.

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

The Town Manager, the Assistant to the Town Manager, Clerk, and Town Engineer attended the session.

XI. ADJOURN

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

RESOLVED: That the Town Council adjourn the meeting at 6:12 p.m.

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

Attest: Jennifer Worsman, Clerk