

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
February 1, 2022 - 7:30PM

Honorable Mayor, Dean Esposito, called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & PRAYER

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Sean Hatch. Councilman DiGilio led all in prayer.

ROLL CALL:

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Buzaid, Cavo, Eriquez, Knapp, Levy, DiGilio, Rotello, Visconti, Halas, Stanley, Fox, Palma, Henry, Britton, Santos, Perkins, Chianese, Cammisa and Molinaro.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Esposito and Masi.

PRESENT: 19, ABSENT: 2

ALSO PRESENT: Robert J. Yamin, Corporation Counsel; Les Pinter, Deputy Corporation Counsel; David St. Hilaire, Finance Director, and Jean Natale, Legislative Assistant.

PUBLIC INPUT

Tom Brown, 10 Valerie Lane, Danbury, commented on agenda items 6, 9, 16, 18, 22 and Department Reports (pages 116-126). He thanked the authors of the City Charter and Jean Natale for her service to the city.

Al Robinson, 7 Melrose Avenue, commented on agenda item 21.

Ken Gucker, 89 Padanaram Road, commented on agenda items 7, 8, 9 and 12. He congratulated Jean Natale on her retirement.

MINUTES - Minutes of the Council Meeting held January 6, 2022

A motion was made by Councilman Digilio, and was seconded by Councilman Perkins, to waive the reading of the Minutes as all members have copies and copies are on file in the Legislative Assistant's Office. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT CALENDAR

6. COMMUNICATION – 2022 Decennial Reapportionment

Receive the Communication and refer to the Majority and Minority Leaders the task of establishing a Reapportionment Advisory Commission as set forth in the City Charter Section 2-4.

11. COMMUNICATION – Request for Reprogramming of Funds – Hazard and Flood Mitigation

Receive the Communication and approve the reprogramming of funds into an account For Hazard and Flood Mitigation, totaling \$17,451.00 as requested by Emergency Management Director, Matt Cassavechia and certified by David St. Hilaire, Director of Finance.

16. RESOLUTION – PCLB Foundation Grant - Elderly Services

Receive the Communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Dean Esposito, Mayor of the City of Danbury or Susan M. Tomaino as his designee to apply for and accept funding from “The Peter and Carmen Buck Foundation” to assist in providing staffing, programs, services and resources for the City’s elderly clients for Fiscal Year 2022-23. The Maximum Current Year funding request is \$75,000.00 with no local match required.

19. RESOLUTION – Certification of Funds – Hoyle Tanner & Associates (HTA) Danbury Airport

Receive the Communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Dean Esposito, Mayor of the City of Danbury or Michael Safranek, Airport Administrator to enter into a contract with Hoyle Tanner and Associates for the purpose of conducting a design for Taxiway Charlie at a cost of \$83,106, pursuant to the Federal Aviation Administration grant application process where Federal and State Grants are to fund 97.5% of the total cost of the design only contract with the City being responsible for the remaining 2.5% or \$2,075.

20. RESOLUTION – Memorandum of Understanding – Salvation Army

Receive the Communication and adopt the Resolution authorizing Dean Esposito, Mayor of the City of Danbury or Matthew Cassavechia, Director of Emergency Management as his designee to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the Office of Emergency Management and the Salvation Army to establish a beneficial relationship between the two parties in the event of disaster, crisis, or other designated emergency.

22. AD HOC REPORT – Acceptance of Road – Corner Pond Road

Receive the Communication and approve the acceptance of the road known as Corner Pond Court, along with the easement and drainage facilities subject to the conditions as specified in the Ad Hoc Report in a form and substance satisfactory to the Office of Corporation Counsel. Additionally, the road bond is to be renewed, if all required and necessary documentation is not provided to the City on or before March 16, 2022.

A motion was made by Knapp, and was seconded by Perkins, to accept the Consent Calendar as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Chianese asked to remove item #19 from consent.

1. COMMUNICATION – Promotion – Police Department – Detective – Stabile

A motion was made by Councilman Eriquez, seconded by Councilman Perkins, to receive the communication and confirm the appointment and promotion of Police Officer Michelle Stabile to the position of Police Detective within the Danbury Police Department. Motion carried unanimously.

2. COMMUNICATION – Promotion – Police Department – Detective – Buonocore

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, seconded by Councilman Chianese, to receive the communication and approve the appointment and promotion of Police Officer Christina Buonocore to the position of Police Detective in the Danbury Police Department. Motion carried unanimously.

3. COMMUNICATION – Promotion – Police Department – Detective – Russotti

A motion was made by Councilwoman Stanley, seconded by Councilwoman Cammisa, to receive the communication and confirm the appointment and promotion of Police Officer Michael Russotti to the position of Police Detective in the Danbury Police Department. Motion carried unanimously.

4. COMMUNICATION – Promotion – Police Department – Sergeant – Rodriguez

A motion was made by Councilman Henry, seconded by Councilman Santos, to receive the communication and confirm the appointment and promotion of Police Officer Hector Rodriguez to the position of Police Sergeant in the Danbury Police Department. Motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATION – Promotion – Police Department – Sergeant – Relyea

A motion was made by Councilman Cavo, seconded by Councilman DiGilio, to receive the communication and approve the appointment of Officer Alexandra Relyea to the position of Police Sergeant within the Danbury Police Department. Motion carried unanimously.

6. COMMUNICATION – 2022 Decennial Reapportionment

**CONSENTED* - as received.

7. COMMUNICATION – Danbury Career Academy - Amended Bond Issuance and Funding Authorization/Ordinance Adoption

WITHDRAWN.

8. COMMUNICATION – Danbury Career Academy (“DCA”) - Appropriations & Related Matters

WITHDRAWN.

9. COMMUNICATION – Danbury Career Academy (“DCA”) – Purchase and Sale Agreement SC Ridge Condominium Unit(s)

WITHDRAWN.

10. COMMUNICATION – Approval - Collective Bargaining Agreement – Teamsters 677

Mr. Hilaire responded to Councilman Visconti regarding the cost of the pension benefit plan. The pension benefit plan cost amounts to \$65,000 (will amount to \$50,000 by the end of the contract) and the City will save \$15,000 (existing employee savings). Furthermore, he responded to Councilman Rotello regarding the defined contribution plan for new employees. The defined contribution plan has a 3% contribution cap.

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, seconded by Councilman Knapp, to receive the communication and adopt the resolution authorizing Mayor Dean Esposito to execute all documents necessary on behalf of the City of Danbury, related to the Danbury Board of Education and Teamsters Local Union #677; international brotherhood of teamsters, chauffeurs, warehousemen and helpers of America, for school lunch personnel. The negotiating successor collective bargaining agreement, for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024, which includes provisions negotiated by the City of Danbury, relating to the

City's pension plan, in the appropriation of such funds, as necessary to implement the agreement as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

11. COMMUNICATION – Request for Reprogramming of Funds – Hazard and Flood Mitigation

**CONSENTED* - as received.

12. COMMUNICATION – Tax “Freeze” Program for Elderly Homeowners

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, to refer this item to a public hearing, followed by a Committee of The Whole. Motion carried unanimously.

13. COMMUNICATION – Sewer Line Easement – Danbury Airport

A motion was made by Councilman Palma, to refer this item to an Ad Hoc. The Mayor appointed Councilman Knapp in the chair, along with Councilmen Henry and Rotello. Motion carried unanimously.

14. COMMUNICATION – State Mandated Parking Requirements

Ms. Calitro responded to Councilman Chianese regarding zoning regulations and provision impacts. She provided an overview of the current zoning regulations and incentives. The provision will require one parking space for a one-bedroom unit and two parking spaces for a two-bedroom or more unit. She requested approval from Council to opt out of the provision, to allow the City to review/amend parking regulations. Furthermore, she responded to Councilman Perkins regarding benefits of opting out. If Council agrees to opt out, the City will be able to review and amend regulations as the City sees fit.

Councilman Rotello commented if the ordinance does not pass, street parking issues will increase. To note, he supports Ms. Calitro's proposed ordinance.

Councilman DiGilio stated he supports Ms. Calitro's proposed ordinance. He thanked the Planning & Zoning Department for their hard work drafting the ordinance.

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, seconded by Councilman DiGilio, in accordance with the provisions of section 82 Public Act, general service 21-29 as amended, to opt-out regarding state mandated parking requirements. Motion carried unanimously.

15. COMMUNICATION – Appointment of Civilian Parking Violation Enforcement Officers

Ms. Pacific responded to Councilman Perkins regarding the positions job duties. The Civilian Parking Violation Enforcement Officers will provide street/garage patrol. To note, only three of the employees are full-time. Furthermore, she responded to Councilman Santos regarding the history of the Civilian Parking Violation Enforcement position with the City. The City previously had one full-time/two part-time employees.

She responded to Councilman Molinaro regarding the new equipment for snow emergency access. The new equipment will provide 24/7 access to the parking garages.

Mr. Pinter responded to Councilman Chianese regarding strengthening security. The Civilian Parking Violation Enforcement Officers provide quasi police security. Parking Officials provide only limited security, not police security. Furthermore, he responded to Councilman Perkins regarding expanding the job description to include residential issues and ticketing, he explained residential street patrol is part of the Police Department's jurisdiction.

A motion was made by Councilman Buzaid, seconded by Councilman Cavo, to receive the communication and approve the appointment of the following parking authority employees: Noel Cabrera, Thomas Cowen, Michael Lamanna, George Marasco, Richard Martinson, Mauro Ongaro and Rudy Rosario; to be Civilian Parking Violation Enforcement Officers. Motion carried unanimously.

16. RESOLUTION – PCLB Foundation Grant - Elderly Services

**CONSENTED* - as received.

17. RESOLUTION – Refunding of General Obligation Bonds

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, seconded by Councilman Rotello, to move to receive this communication and adopt the resolution effective until December 31, 2022; with respect to the authorization, issuance and sale of not exceeding \$7.5 million; City of Danbury, Connecticut general obligation refunding bonds as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

18. RESOLUTION – Authorization for Lease Financing - Fire Apparatus

Mr. Hilaire responded to Councilman Perkins regarding the previously discussed purchase agreement versus the new lease agreement. The project plan and performance agreement will be presented to Council for review, and the City will be receiving a promotional discount. To note, the City will own the Fire Apparatus at the end of the lease agreement. Furthermore, he responded to Councilmen Visconti and DiGilio regarding the cost savings with lease agreements. The City saves more money executing lease agreements compared to bonding for this kind of equipment.

A motion was made by Councilman Cavo, seconded by Councilman Visconti, to accept the communication and adopt the resolution with the City of Danbury, Connecticut, authorizing the execution and delivery of a lease purchase agreement with respect to the acquisition, purchase, financing and leasing of certain equipment. Authorizing the execution and delivery of documents required in connection there within and authorizing all other actions necessary to the consummation of the transactions contemplated by this resolution. Motion carried unanimously.

19. RESOLUTION – Certification of Funds – Hoyle Tanner & Associates (HTA) Danbury Airport

Mr. Safranek responded to Councilman Chianese regarding the contingency of the grant. The contract is for design services, construction will be all encompassed in the one grant application. To note, the FAA favors the proposed construction project. Furthermore, he responded to Councilman Rotello regarding other FAA matters and resolutions.

Mr. Hilaire noted the \$69,000 for the design phase is listed in the reallocation of fund balance.

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, seconded by Councilman Levy, to receive the communication and adopt the resolution authorizing Dean Esposito, Mayor of the City of Danbury or Michael Safranek, Airport Administrator, to enter into a contract with Hoyle Tanner & Associates, for the purpose of conducting a design for taxiway Charlie; at a cost of \$83,106, pursuant to the federal aviation administration grant application process; where federal and state grants, will fund 97.5% of the total cost of the design only contract, with the City being only responsible for the remaining 2.5% or \$2,075. Motion carried unanimously.

20. RESOLUTION – Memorandum of Understanding – Salvation Army

***CONSENTED** - as received.

21. REPORTS – Public Hearing - Disposition of City Property – 3 Post Office Street

Councilman Chianese questioned if the City is rushing to sell a valuable piece of property that is vital to the Downtown redevelopment. He suggested the City execute a land lease.

Councilman Rotello stated he supports Councilman Chianese's motion. He noted the parcel is a valuable piece of real estate property that contributes to the entertainment district.

Councilman DiGilio stated he does not support recommitting the item to an Ad Hoc, he noted, the City was unable to create something viable during the RFP process.

Councilman Perkins stated he supports recommitting the item to an Ad Hoc. He suggested the Council discuss utilizing the parcel to redevelop the Downtown area.

Councilman Santos stated he will be abstaining from voting on the two motions presented due to a conflict of interest.

Councilman Cavo stated he does not support recommitting the item to an Ad Hoc. He noted the project is vital to Main Street, and urged that the project move forward.

Martin Morgado, President & CEO of the Savings Bank of Danbury, responded to Councilman Perkins regarding the project plans. The building will be demolished to create green space with a parking lot and transformer. The property will be used to expand their business into the future. Furthermore, he responded to Councilman Rotello regarding the transformer design.

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, seconded by Councilman Levy, to waive the reading of the report as all Members have copies and copies are on file with the Legislative Assistant's Office. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp, seconded by Councilman Cavo, to receive the report from the Ad Hoc Committee and approve their recommendation to adopt the resolution for the transfer of 3 Post Office Street to the Savings Bank of Danbury, in accordance with the stated provisions and requirements, as presented to the Council at the December 4, 2021 meeting; and at a value not less than what the City paid for the purchase of the property. On roll call vote the motion passed (16 yes votes, 1 abstained and 2 no votes, 2 absent).

A motion was made by Councilman Chianese, seconded by Councilman Perkins, to recommit. On roll call vote the motion failed (3 yes votes, 1 abstained and 15 no votes, 2 absent).

22. AD HOC REPORT – Acceptance of Road – Corner Pond Road

***CONSENTED** - as received.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – Police, Fire, Health-Housing & Welfare, Public Works, Permit Center, UNIT, Elderly, Library, Dream Homes

Mayor Esposito responded to Councilman Rotello regarding fixing the Everbridge system. The City is working on making the system more efficient for the public to utilize. Lindsay from the Mayor's Office was called up to the podium and noted that residents can enroll to receive City emergency alerts online.

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Knapp, to waive the reading of the reports as all Members have copies and copies are on file with the Legislative Assistant's Office, as well as accept the reports as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

23. **EXECUTIVE SESSION – Discussion of Settlement**

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Levy, to go into Executive Session to discuss the settlement proposal in the matter of The Grasso Companies, LLC versus the City of Danbury. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Esposito, called the meeting back to order at 10:52p.m.

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, and was seconded by Councilman Levy, to authorize the Office of Corporation Counsel to settle the matter of The Grasso Companies, LLC versus the City of Danbury; in accordance with the discussion in Executive Session and to authorize and accept the certification of funds accordingly. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Esposito extended all Committees.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilman Rotello, and was seconded by Councilman Cavo, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:55 p.m.

Copies of Agenda Items are available in the Legislative Assistant's Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Martinez
Recording Secretary

Attest,
Dean Esposito, Mayor