COMMON COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MARCH 26, 2024
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIA TELECONFERENCE

ALL COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING TO APPROVE EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS OR TO ACCEPT BIDS AND OTHER PROPOSALS REQUIRING THE EXPENDITURE OF CITY FUNDS ARE SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone, Zoom, and/or the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings

Members of the public who are unable to attend the meeting in person may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who are unable to attend the meeting in person and wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the “raise your hand indicator” and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to provide public comments are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Irene Dixon at idixon@norwalkct.gov with the subject line “Public Comment” to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Dixon called the Roll:

Council at Large:	Mr. Gregory Burnett	Mr. Joshua Goldstein
	Mr. Johan Lopez	Ms. Nora Niedzielski Eichner

	Ms. Barbara Smyth	
District A:	Ms. Nicol Ayers	Mr. Jalin Sead
District B:	Mr. Dajuan Wiggins	Ms. Darlene Young
District C:	Ms. Melissa Murray	
District D:	Ms. Heather Dunn	Mr. Doug Sutton
District E:	Mr. James Frayer	Ms. Lisa Shanahan

At Roll Call there were fourteen (14) Common Councilmembers present and one (1) absent (Ms. McMurrer). A Quorum was present.

Also present were Mayor, Harry Rilling; City Clerk, Irene Dixon and Corporation Counsel, Mario Coppola.

II. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting: March 12, 2024

The following corrections were made to the minutes:

Page 3: Ms. Dunn spoke in opposition to the appointment of Ms. Formanek to the Board of Assessments Appeal (alternate) due to concerns of misrepresentation of her background.

Page 4: comments attributed to Ms. Niedzielski Eichner were made by Ms. McMurrer.

Page 11: comments attributed to Ms. McMurrer were made by Ms. Niedzielski Eichner.

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

III. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Public participation comments are not verbatim and represent a summarization of statements unless otherwise noted. Speakers are Norwalk residents unless otherwise noted.

Ms. Lisa Briton commented on the appointment of Jared Schmitt, as the new Chief Financial Officer and pointed out challenges he will face in this position and offered her support.

IV. **MAYOR**

A. RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

There were no resignations announced this evening.

APPOINTMENTS:

Jared D. Schmitt, Chief Financial Officer

Mayor Rilling announced the appointment of Mr. Schmitt and reviewed his background and accomplishments.

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF JARED D. SCHMITT AS CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Mr. Goldstein asked Mr. Schmitt to speak about how he looks at Norwalk's challenges. Mr. Schmitt explained that he plans to meet with all staff reporting to him within the first 60-90 days to get a sense of the process and see if any controls are lacking. In addition he will look to see how best to utilize staff. He added that one of the first things he will do will be to get a good fiscal understanding of the City's finances and the capital projects.

Ms. Niedzielski Eichner asked about his capital plan in Fairfield. Mr. Schmitt explained he met with the municipal financial advisors and looked at the cap on borrowing and the ratio of debt service to the budget so he could keep it at a reasonable level. She also asked how his experience in Hartford contributed to his work as a CFO in a municipality. Mr. Schmitt said he has management experience and gained a lot of understanding and honed his skills by audits.

Mr. Burnett explained he had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Schmitt and discuss his interest in Norwalk and his background. Mr. Burnett said he was impressed by Mr. Schmitt's management style and spoke in support of the appointment.

Ms. Ayers asked Mr. Schmitt about his experience in bringing grants to Fairfield. Mr. Schmitt reviewed his experience in grants and added that when he was in Fairfield, he hired a part-time grant writer.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

MAYOR'S REMARKS:

Mayor Rilling announced that he was joined by Common Council Members Mr. Burnett and Mr. Sutton to celebrate that new Customer Service Center with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Mayor Rilling announced the Norwalk Earth Day Festival on the Green, Saturday, April 27, 2024. He thanked the Norwalk Historical Society for holding the Easter Egg hunt to be held at Mill Hill.

Mayor Rilling wished those who celebrate, a very happy Easter.

V. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

A. RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

There were no resignations or appointments announced this evening.

VI. **REPORTS: DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

A. CORPORATION COUNSEL

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

1. AUTHORIZATION FOR DISCUSSION: SETTLEMENT: LISA MELILLO V. CITY OF NORWALK – FILE NO. A28131.
EXECUTIVE SESSION

2. AUTHORIZATION FOR DISCUSSION: SETTLEMENT: ISMAILA SONKO V. CITY OF NORWALK – FILE NO.
A33667 EXECUTIVE SESSION

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. CONSENT CALENDAR:

Ms. Young announced that this evening's Consent Calendar was being read by Ms. Murray.

**** MS. MURRAY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CONSENT CALENDAR:**

VI.A.1, VI.A.2, VII.A.1, VII.A.2, VII.B.1, VII.B.2, VII.B.3, VII.B.4, VII.B.5., VII.B.6, VII.C.1

VII. COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEES

A. RECREATION, PARKS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

1. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH ROWAYTON SCHOOL PTA FOR THE USE OF ROWAYTON SCHOOL AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS FOR THEIR ROWAYTON SCHOOL CARNIVAL 2024 EVENT TO BE HELD FRIDAY, MAY 3 AND SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2024 FROM 4:00 PM TO 10:00 PM. SET-UP TIME BY SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2024 AT 7:30 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN BY MONDAY, MAY 6, 2024 AT 5:00 PM. RAIN DAY SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2024. APPROXIMATELY 700 PEOPLE.

2. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH NICE FOR THE USE OF OYSTER SHELL PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS FOR THEIR 8TH ANNUAL NICE FESTIVAL EVENT TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JULY 6, 2024. SET-UP TIME FRIDAY, JULY 5,2024 AT 6:00 AM WITH TEARDOWN BY SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2024 BY 9:00 AM. APPROXIMATELY 500 PEOPLE.

B. FINANCE AND CLAIMS COMMITTEE

1. ACCEPT AND APPROVE THE REPORT OF THE CLAIMS COMMITTEE DATED: MARCH 2024.

2. FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY: NARRATIVE ON TAX COLLECTIONS DATED: MARCH 2024.

3. FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY: MONTHLY TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORTS DATED: FEBRUARY 2024.

4. APPROVE PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR LICENSE AGREEMENT ODEEN'S OHGC, LLC FOR RESTAURANT SERVICES AT OAK HILL PARK.

5. APPROVE A REDUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF $657,000 FROM THE POLICE COMMUNICATIONS CONSOLE ACCOUNT #0921-5777-C0638 FOR FY 2023-24 TO PURCHASE EIGHT (8) VEHICLES FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

6. APPROVE AND INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT OF $657,000 IN THE POLICE CARS AND VANS REPLACEMENT ACCOUNT #0924-3010-5777-C0665 TO PURCHASE EIGHT (8) NEW VEHICLES (6 PATROL VEHICLES AND 2 ELECTRIC VEHICLES).

C. LAND USE AND BUILDING MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE A SOLE SOURCE AGREEMENT WITH GABRIELLI TRUCK SALES OF MILFORD FOR THE PURCHASE OF A 100% ELECTRIC FORD CARGO VAN FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED $61,675.00. FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS: ACCOUNTS NO. 09195010 5777 CO623 09235010 5777 CO814 16026400 433 60

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

VII. **COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

A. RECREATION, PARKS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH TRIBALL CHAMPIONSHIP USA, LLC FOR THE USE OF VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS FOR THEIR TWO ROADS TRIBALL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JULY 19, 2025 FROM 10:00 AM TO 6:30 PM. SET-UP ON FRIDAY, JULY 18, 20225 AT 12:00 PM WITH TEAR-DOWN ON SUNDAY, JULY 20, 2025 BY 12:00 PM. APPROXIMATELY 1,000 PEOPLE.**

Mr. Stowers, Director of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs and Jerimiah Schwartz, representing Two Roads Triball were present. Mr. Stowers explained that Triball is a relatively new sport and the company is bringing this event to Norwalk to promote the sport. He added that in 2019 a tournament was held in Norwalk. One of the reasons they are seeking approval today, is because they need time to seek sponsors and meet conditions from the City of Norwalk.

Mr. Burnett asked if a rain date was chosen and if any structural changes would be needed at Veteran's Park. Mr. Schwartz said they chose a rain date for the following week, and they will return Veteran's Park to its original state.

Ms. Smyth asked if Norwalk teams would be represented. Mr. Schwartz said there are 12 co-ed teams and Connecticut will be represented.

Ms. Ayers said she did not vote in favor in Committee, but since doing research, will vote in favor this evening.

Ms. Dunn explained that the Norwalk Arts Festival is typically held the same weekend as the proposed rain date.

Mr. Sead asked if it will be safe for the players at Veteran's Park after it rains. Mr. Stowers noted the other teams that play at Veteran's Park.

Ms. Dunn asked if they are an LLC. Mr. Schwartz said they are an LLC and, in a week, will register as a CT LLC.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MS. DUNN)**

VIII. **RESOLUTIONS FROM COMMON COUNCIL**

There were no resolutions presented this evening.

IX. **MOTIONS POSTPONED TO A SPECIFIC DATE**

There were no postponed motions this evening.

X. **SUSPENSION OF RULES**

There were no suspension of the rules this evening.

XI. **ADJOURNMENT**

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ADJOURN**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
Irene Dixon, City Clerk