

MINUTES

TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SOUTH WINDSOR TOWN HALL

REGULAR MEETING
Monday, March 4, 2024
TIME: 7:00 P.M.

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Delnicki called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Members present: Mayor Audrey Delnicki
Councilor Richard Balboni
Councilor Michael Buganski
Councilor Carolyn Carey
Councilor Steven King Jr.
Councilor Toby Lewis
Councilor Elizabeth Pendleton

Others present: Michael Maniscalco, Town Manager
Richard Carella, Town Attorney
Scott Roberts, Assistant Town Manager
Bonnie Armstrong, Town Clerk
Dr. Kate Carter, Superintendent of Schools
Chris Chemerka, Director of Finance, S. Windsor Public Schools
Katherine Senerth, Executive Assistant

4. Mayor's Remarks

Mayor Delnicki reported on the following events:

Hartford Orthopedics Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting: The Mayor attended the grand opening on February 27th to welcome Hartford Orthopedics to South Windsor. They are located at 25 Buckland Road.

Eagle Scout Court of Honor: On Saturday, March 2nd, the Mayor attending an Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony for Isaac Gonzalez from Troop 186. His project was done at the Beth Israel Cemetery. With the help of fellow scouts, Isaac organized and collected photographic data and created a website to help families find their loved one's burial sites.

South Windsor Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony: On Saturday, March 2nd, the Mayor attended the South Windsor Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. It was a sold-out event. There were eight individual inductees and two posthumously and the boys 1991 Track Team as part of the Class of 2024.

Celtic Cultural Committee: The Committee is hosting the 2024 Saint Patrick's Day Parade in Hartford on Saturday, March 9th. This is the 52nd Annual St Patrick's Day Parade and the event will kick off at the State Capitol at 11am. South Windsor will be stepping off in the third position. The parade starts with the five C's and the City of Hartford. The South Windsor contingent will be led off by the South Windsor Police Honor Guard followed by Town and State dignitaries, two bands, the Windsor Locks Special Olympics Hockey Team, the American Legion and will end with the South Windsor Fire Department Honor Guard and Fire Department. Mayor Delnicki hopes that you can attend in person but if unable, you can also tune into CW20 or Live Stream on Fox61.com.

2024 Refuse & Recycling Schedule: The 2024 Hazardous Waste Collection Schedule is available on the Town website. Click on the Refuse & Recycling button, scroll down and click on the Hazardous Waste Collection link. The collection location is at 321 Olcott Street from 8am to 1pm. You will need to bring a photo ID (driver's license), tax bill or vehicle registration as proof of residency. Collection dates are once a month on Saturday except for the month of July; whereon July 17th there will be no hazardous waste collection.

5. Adoption of Agenda

Councilor Buganski made a **Motion to Adopt the Agenda** as presented. Councilor Lewis **seconded the Motion**.

Councilor Pendleton made a **Motion to Amend the Agenda** to remove Item 11. A. on the Consent Agenda and move it to New Business, Item 13. F. Councilor Pendleton stated the resolution does not require two meetings or two readings and should be listed under New Business and is appropriate under the Town Council Rules and Procedures.

Councilor Carey made a **Motion to Amend Item 13. C. Public Hearing Date** for the Small Cities Grant to read March 18, 2024.

Councilor King **seconded the Motion. MOTION CARRIES.**

Councilor Pendleton made a **Motion to move Item 13. F. up on the Agenda to after Item 5.** Councilor King **seconded the Motion.**

Mayor Delnicki asked for a roll call vote, the results of which are as follows; **2 ayes** (King & Pendleton), and **5 nays** (Balboni, Buganski, Carey, Lewis, Delnicki). **MOTION FAILS.**

6. Communications and Reports from the Town Manager

Mr. Maniscalco reported on the following

Governors Highway OSTA Application: At the last Town Council meeting a number of residents submitted a petition. The Town Clerk denied the petition due to not having enough signatures; however, I met with Chief of Police, Kristian Lindstrom who also holds the

responsibility for the Town of Legal Traffic Authority (LTA). Chief Lindstrom has submitted an application to the Office of State Traffic Authority (OSTA) to ask them to review and if appropriate, limit truck traffic on Governors Highway and whole area including Beldon Road. It is not known how long OSTA will take to review this request, but in other instances, I have experienced 90- 120 day wait times. They will likely perform traffic studies and speed monitors in. The Town will try to meet the needs of the residents. He also spoke with the Chief of Police to look at more targeted controls in the neighborhoods to help eliminate speeding.

Route 5 Safety Tour: The Department of Public Works and Planning and Zoning took part in a Route 5 safety tour with the State Department of Transportation. Given the frequency of automobile crashes in the area, staff are trying to work with the State to identify causes and solutions to make Rte. 5 safer. Those that travel on Route 5 frequently might see speed monitors in place.

Splash Pad Update: The Town is hopeful that the spray equipment for the Splash Pad will be delivered the first full week of March. Staff are also gearing up to start working on the project again as soon as the weather breaks. The temperatures must be above a certain temperature to apply the tough coat so the public can expect to see shade structures installed and tough coat applied when the temperatures allow.

Nevers Park Exercise Equipment: The Parks and Recreation Department installed a new exercise area at Nevers Park. This was funded in part through private donations and ARPA funds. The old exercise equipment has been removed as a result to it exceeding its useful life, and due to it causing a potential hazard to residents using the equipment. The plan is to complete the flooring portion of the exercise area and then install benches and stretching areas for residents throughout the trail. That should happen as soon as weather allows.

Route 30 Railroad Crossing: The Department of Public Works has been hard at work with State and Federal partners to elicit the replacement of the railroad crossing at Route 30. Mr. Maniscalco reported that funding from the railroad has officially been put in place and work on the replacement is expected to start around the 3rd week of May. The State Department of Transportation has committed to paving the area around the railroad crossing.

Questions from Council:

Councilor Carey is concerned that if the application was submitted to the Office of State Traffic Authority written in general terms of “the Governors Highway area” that it could impact the review and approval of the other specific roads. Mr. Maniscalco said that the application does outline the roads in that area that need to be reviewed which includes Governors Highway, Beldon Road and some other roads in the area as well.

Councilor King asked if it would be possible to put cameras where Ellington Road goes down Governors and where Route 5 goes to Governor’s Highway. Councilor King gave the example of a camera similar to the way and EZPass would work by capturing the license plate of tractor trailers and ticketing them. He also suggested that speed bumps may be able to be put in place to help with speeding.

Councilor King asked about the cost of the paving that the DOT is going to be doing at Route 30 railroad crossing. Mr. Maniscalco said that the Town doesn’t know what the State will pay

or when the work will be done. They have been told that it will be done but don't know when that will happen.

Councilor King asked for an update regarding the splash pad issue of if the work would be done by the Town or by a contractor. Mr. Maniscalco said that due to the contractual obligations that the Town has entered into, the splash pad company has requested that they move forward with the project using their subcontractor. They have told the Town that the project will be done this season which will be weather dependent. The equipment has not arrived. It was supposed to arrive this week but has not. This has been an issue throughout the entire project. They have been waiting for sprinkler heads since last year and have also recently been told that the splash pad slide is still in China. Councilor King asked if there were any repercussions and is there a no-go date. Mr. Maniscalco said that he and the Town Attorney have had a number of conference calls with the splash pad company and they have not been pleasant to work with. Mr. Maniscalco said he does not want to talk about it publicly at this point.

Councilor King commended the Police Department for applying for and using grant funds to fund the overtime for extra police officers to patrol for burglaries and vehicle break-ins and for not putting that financial burden on the Taxpayers.

Councilor King asked about the lower lot paving project at VMP which relates to the reconstruction project for Pleasant Valley Road. Councilor King questioned if this work were to be delayed, would it impact the swimming season. The Town Manager explained that the project is weather dependent but in terms of the bridge work, it should not impact residents. Crews should be able to work with one lane open and even possibly two lanes open.

Councilor King commented about the Human Services enrollment increase and the number of non-residents using the programs offered by Human Services. Councilor King asked the Town Manager to ask Andrea Cofrancesco what the impact is of the total 219 non-residents. Mr. Maniscalco said that he has talked with Andrea about this in the past and said because South Windsor's Community Center has become so popular with people from other communities, they have increased the non-resident use cost to help subsidize more of the services that residents are paying for.

The Town Manager reverted back to the question asked earlier by Councilor King regarding camera installation and issuing tickets for tractor trailer traffic on Governors Highway. Mr. Maniscalco stated that cameras can be put in but not at this time because those roads still allow truck traffic. Councilor King asked what the ordinance states. Mr. Maniscalco said that the ordinance states no truck traffic but it was determined by a previous Town Attorney that the ordinance isn't legal and can't be enforced. Mr. Maniscalco also touched on the speed bump question also asked by Councilor King. Mr. Maniscalco said that when they have installed speed bumps in that past, it caused major issues for the plow drivers and also in places where speed bumps are installed in residential areas, there have been complaints about the noise from cars speeding over and bottoming out or drivers angry that the speed bump is there so they lay on their horn causing a disturbance.

Councilor Balboni asked about an email that he received about the quality of the roads. He said that he drove down Kelley Road and Avery and noticed that the roads on Kelley Road from

Tri-City Plaza to the Welcome to South Windsor sign looks great but further down there is a lot of patching and spider cracks on Avery Road from Deming to Pheasant and then the road is good from Pheasant to Dart Hill. The resident feels that there is a political side to trying to do quantity over quality. Mr. Maniscalco said that the Public Works Department follows the State standard for paving because it is a State funded project. The Town also hires third party inspectors to inspect the work as it is being done. They also looked into the roads that the resident is speaking of. Some of the roads haven't been paved in 20 years so since the average life of a road is about 18 years, they are at the point where they will need to be paved. The Paving for Progress plan that was put in to place about two years ago where they conducted an assessment using a measurement tool to identify which roads should be prioritized. They are working to move this project forward. To date, the Town has only been able to use one year of the state funds and have four to five more years left to use those funds. Mr. Maniscalco feels that it is important to mention that we keep in mind that infrastructure is one of the Towns biggest assets so we need to pay attention to it, specifically the roads. Mr. Maniscalco also mentioned that because the Town uses a bidding process for most roads, it is important to note that the lowest qualified bidder does not always provide the best work.

7. Public Input for Items on the Agenda

Public Input shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes. When recognized by the Mayor, the speaker(s) shall approach the lectern, give their name and address. Speakers shall avoid personal attacks or impugning or alleging an improper motive to any person. The speaker(s) may address the Council on any item on the agenda. The speaker(s) shall limit their speaking time to five (5) minutes.

Joe Kennedy of 81 Alison Drive – Mr. Kennedy feels that the Council should focus on a zero percent tax increase with this year's budget. He feels that revenues generated should cover the wants and needs of the Town.

Tim Appleton of 161 Woodland Drive – Mr. Appleton spoke in support of Mr. Pare's nomination to Town Council (Item 13F). He will be a key voice on the Town Council for issues moving forward and with regard to the budget.

8. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Approval of the February 20, 2024, Town Council Meeting Minutes

BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Windsor Town Council hereby approves the minutes of the Regular Town Council meeting of February 20, 2024.

Councilor Pendleton made a **Motion to Approve** the minutes of February 20, 2024, as presented.

Councilor Carey made a **Motion to Amend** the February 20th Town Council Regular Meeting minutes stating that on *page 4, under item 9, 3rd paragraph, 3rd sentence should read: "current school enrollment and forecasted enrollment over the next five years"*.

Councilor King **seconded the Motion**, which was approved by unanimous voice vote. **MOTION CARRIES.**

9. Communication from Liaisons, Officers, and Boards Directly Responsible to the Council

Councilor Buganski reported on the Economic Development Commission meeting that he attended and said that there are two projects of sizable nature that are being discussed. They also discussed a refined approach to the business registry that was discussed at a past Town Council meeting.

Councilor King reported that at the Social Justice and Racial Equity Commission hosted Social Justice Day. It was a phenomenal event especially being the first and was also well attended. The community came together and the presentations were very informative.

Councilor Carey reported on the Planning and Zoning meeting and stated that they discussed the feedback that was received regarding the Plan of Conservation Development. The state requires that Towns update their Plan of Conservation Development every ten years. PZC also held a public hearing and has approved an expansion of a 5400 square foot existing building at 396 Burnham Road requested by Burnham Realty, LLC.

Councilor Balboni reported on the Patriotic Commission meeting that took place. Daria Plummer asked to remind everyone about the Patriotic Commission Essay Contest. The deadline for essay submissions is March 8th. All of the information is posted on the Patriotic Commission webpage.

Mr. Balboni also reported on the Banner Project and sad that they are looking for more nominees from residents, veterans that haven't been nominated or participated in the Banner Project previously. All of the information can be found on the Patriotic Commission webpage.

10. Reports from Committees

Councilor Pendleton asked what the status of the Clerk of the Council position. Mayor Delnicki stated that the Personnel Committee met and she has asked the Director of Human Resources to research the position through Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

11. Consent Agenda

[All items listed under this section are considered routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and be considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.]

A. First Reading

None.

A. Second Reading

None.

B. Miscellaneous

None.

12. Unfinished Business

None.

13. New Business

A. Discussion Item: Additional Early Voting Location (*Registrar of Voters, Sue Larsen & Sue Burnham to be Present*)

Sue Burnham and Sue Larsen, Registrars of Voters came forward to present. Sue Larsen explained that there are new State Statutes for early voting and explained that if a Town's population is 20,000 or above, they are able to have an additional voting location if desired. Both registrars feel that only one voting location is needed. They have also seen that voter turn out for primaries is only about 45% of registered voters.

Sue Burnham said that there will be an additional cost to add another voting location as it would cost an additional \$10,000.00 per additional location.

They want to let the public know that early voting for both the Democratic and Republican Presidential Preference Primaries will be held in the Council Chambers at the South Windsor Town Hall from 10am to 6pm on March 26th, 27th, and 28th as well as on Saturday, March 30th. There will be no Primary on March 29th due to Good Friday. The Primary will be held on April 2, 2024.

Sue Larsen said that the location for early voting needs to have access to the State of CT Voter Registration system. They have the capability to use the system at Town Hall. For the security of the ballots, the registrars wanted to make sure that the ballots would not have to be transported back and forth.

Mayor Delnicki asked what happens with the ballots after the voting has taken place. Sue Larsen said that the ballots are in a locked room that has a special key which also requires a combination in order to retrieve the key. Sue Burnham clarified that the ballots will not go into a tabulator but will go into a box. The process is similar to an absentee ballot except that you cannot show up on election day to change your vote like with an absentee ballot.

Councilor Pendleton asked who confirms the votes. Sue Larsen said that the Registrar's office and the Town Clerk confirms the votes.

Sue Larsen informed the Town Council that the process of deciding upon and getting consensus from the Town Council on whether to have an additional voting location will need to take place with the Town Council for every election or primary going forward.

Councilor Pendleton asked how much the budget would increase due to early voting. Sue Larsen said that the budget will increase 17% just due to early voting as this is an unfunded mandate.

The Town Council **agreed by consensus** that there is no need for an additional early voting location.

B. Discussion Item: Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Board of Education Budget Presentation
(Dr. Carter, Superintendent of Schools to be Present)

Dr Carter began her presentation to the Council (**Exhibit A**) with a map that reveals the most influential aspect of our budget story: South Windsor's status as an outlier. This map of Connecticut is color coded to reflect statewide school enrollment trends over a ten-year period between 2012 and 2022. Many towns on the map is shown in reds, oranges, and yellows...all representing districts that declined in enrollment during this time period, including districts that declined as much as 25%. South Windsor is the only town in the entire state that is shaded in purple indicating that it is the only town to increase its enrollment by a percentage greater than 10%.

Dr. Carter reviewed the numbers and stated that 19 towns decreased by 25% or more, 51 towns decreased by 15 to 25%, 39 towns decreased by 10 to 15% and; 46 towns decreased by 10% or less for a total of 155 out of 169 towns experiencing declining enrollment. There were 11 towns that increased up to 5% and only 2 towns increased between 5 and 10%, leaving only 13 towns out of 169 that experienced increasing enrollment under 10%. South Windsor stands alone as only one out of the 169 towns that experienced a greater than 10% increase in enrollment. Dr. Carter stated that the South Windsor Public School's status as an outlier is undeniable and must be the lens through which the proposed budget is viewed.

Dr. Carter explained that the proposed budget for FY 2025 is \$94,650,656 representing a 7.29% increase over last year's appropriation. She explained that the Board of Education has been reducing their reliance on reserves over the past several budgets. Last year, the expenditure plan included the use of one million dollars in reserve funds. Dr. Carter said that she has been very clear about the pitfalls of an over reliance on reserves, as the use of reserves can mask the true cost of running the school district. This year's proposed budget does not rely on any reserves. Thus, when comparing last year's expenditure plan to this year's proposed budget the increase is 6.09 %.

The overarching drivers of the budget increase fall into one of four categories: costs associated with contractual obligations and maintenance of operations, increasing enrollment, special education, and strategic planning. A detailed summary of the costs of the initiatives in all four categories can be found on page four in the budget book.

Dr. Carter pointed out that Another driver of all school district budgets is unfunded mandates. Historically school districts were required to implement transition programs for 18-21-year-olds who meet the special education criteria for programming beyond high school. In the past, a student exited the program upon his or her 22nd birthday. After recent changes to the law, if a student turns 22 after a school year has begun, then the student will receive services until the close of that academic year. Thus, a student who turns 22 in September, would not be exited and would qualify for services for the remainder of the academic year. The budget presented contains an additional \$118,000 for the continued services for young adults who would have exited earlier in the past.

Dr Carter went on to explain that the second unfunded mandate has been a controversial one. In June 2021, the Connecticut legislature passed the “Right to Read” legislation, which required all Connecticut school districts to purchase new reading programs, but the legislature limited the choices to only five programs. Mandating particular curriculum materials with such narrow options was unprecedented. There was a great deal of concern regarding the quality of these programs and the lack of information about student outcomes associated with these programs. This mandate has been widely contested by many school districts, and as a result, there were some additional programs added to the approved list and more flexibility regarding implementation.

Currently, there is \$102,000 in this budget to meet this mandate for our K-1 grades. There will be additional funding requests for grades 2-5 in future budgets. Dr. Carter said that it is important to note that prior to the state allowing for flexibilities, South Windsor did identify one of the five approved programs and purchasing that program would have cost the South Windsor taxpayer \$1,049,600. In response, staff submitted a 167-page waiver to the state with rationale for keeping some of the current resources. Because they were able to continue using some of their existing materials, and other less expensive products were added to the approved list of programs, they were able to avoid taking on such a staggering cost.

Dr. Carter said that they Board of Education started out with a budget of \$99,030,037 and reduced it by \$4.4 million. Dr. Carter explained that the first round of reductions they factored in retirement savings as well as an energy credit from Eversource. It also represents various cuts across all accounts. Those actions allowed them to reduce the budget by 1.5 million dollars, bringing the percentage increase down to 10.5%.

In the second round of reductions they cut new staffing and program requests and significantly reduced funds for building and sites, and made cuts to the technology budget. That translated to an additional reduction of over 2.8 million dollars, bringing the percentage increase down to 7.29%.

Dr. Carter went on to discuss the total K-5 and said that between 2015 and 2023 district enrollment has increased by 888 students. Today, demographers are projecting that South Windsor will increase by an additional 620 students by 2033. She also highlighted the increasing intensity of student needs such as those with special education and multilingual learner population.

Dr. Carter concluded the presentation with pictures of the youngest learners on their first day of school juxtaposed to the oldest learners at their graduation ceremony. Dr. Carter said that these photos remind us of the educational journey our students and families take with us from kindergarten through high school and said that along this journey there will be important milestones for our children and families, but we must face the reality that as more children move to South Windsor to join this journey and reach these educational milestones, more funding will be required. Dr. Carter thanked the Board of Education and the Town Council for their unwavering support of the South Windsor Public Schools.

Councilor King asked Dr. Carter for the GPA's for South Windsor's graduating seniors in comparison to other towns. Dr. Carter said she will get that information.

Councilor Pendleton requested that Dr. Carter get the budget numbers for last year and where they may come in next year from West Hartford in order to get a comparison of another Town where enrollment has decreased. Dr. Carter said that those numbers are included in the average of the 24 districts that reported. The 5.96% is the average increase for the 24 districts reporting in the Hartford region where the Superintendents proposed budget is an average of 5.96%.

Councilor Carey asked Dr. Carter if there was an avenue that is used to provide feedback to the legislature regarding the mandates. Dr. Carter said that the Connecticut Association of School Superintendents (CAPS) is very active with the legislature. Dr. Carter sits on the board for CAPS. The leadership meets very frequently with legislature.

Councilor Balboni spoke about the unfunded mandates and said that the two unfunded mandates that Dr. Carter spoke of in her presentation only made up less than .3% of the budget. He is curious what other unfunded mandates that the state is enforcing and asked if there was a list. Dr. Carter said that she would reach out to CAPS to see if there was a list available.

C. Resolution Setting a Time and Place for a Public Hearing to receive Citizen Input on a Small Cities Grant for Renovations and Upgrades to Flax Hill.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Windsor Town Council hereby sets **Monday, March 18, 2024 at 8:00 pm** in the Council Chambers of the South Windsor Town Hall, 1540 Sullivan Avenue, South Windsor, Connecticut as the time and place for a Public Hearing to receive citizen input on **a Small Cities Grant for renovations and upgrades to Flax Hill.**

Councilor Carey made a **Motion setting the time and place for a Public Hearing** to receive citizen input on **a Small Cities Grant for renovations and upgrades to Flax Hill on Monday March 18, 2024 at 8pm in the Council Chambers.**

Councilor Carey explained the reason for holding a public hearing for a Small Cities Grant and said that the Town Council must hold a public hearing in order to apply for any grants and this information has to be presented to the Town. Flax Hill has a need for renovations and

repairs which is why the Town Manager is applying for this grant and the reason for the public hearing.

Councilor Pendleton **seconded the Motion** which was approved by unanimous voice vote. **MOTION CARRIES.**

D. Resolution Setting a Time and Place for a Public Hearing to receive Citizen Input on the Proposed Board of Education Budget for Fiscal Year 2024/2025

BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Windsor Town Council hereby sets **Monday, April 1, 2024 at 8:00 pm** in the Council Chambers of the South Windsor Town Hall, 1540 Sullivan Avenue, South Windsor, Connecticut as the time and place for a Public Hearing to receive citizen input on the proposed Board of Education Budget for the Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

Councilor Balboni made a **Motion setting the time and place for a Public Hearing** to receive citizen input on the proposed Board of Education Budget for the Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

Councilor Pendleton **seconded the Motion** which was approved by unanimous voice vote. **MOTION CARRIES.**

E. Resolution Amending the Term Ending Date of the Approved Town Council Resolution dated February 21, 2023 Reappointing Jan Tarr (D) as a Member of the Housing Authority

WHEREAS, the Town Council Resolution dated February 21, 2023 reappointing Jan Tarr as a member of the Housing Authority had an incorrect term ending date of November 30, 2028

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby amends the previously approved Town Council Resolution Reappointing Jan Tarr (D) as a Member of the Housing Authority with a corrected term end date of November 30, 2027.

Councilor Lewis made a **Motion to Amend** the previously approved Town Council Resolution Reappointing Jan Tarr (D) as a Member of the Housing Authority with a corrected term end date of November 30, 2027.

Councilor Pendleton **seconded the Motion** which was approved by unanimous voice vote. **MOTION CARRIES**

F. Resolution Appointing Michael Pare (D) as a Member of the South Windsor Town Council Postponing Consideration of this Motion until the Town Council's Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting

BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Windsor Town Council hereby Appoints Michael Pare (D), as a Member of the South Windsor Town Council for a term ending November 10, 2025.

Councilor Pendleton made a **Motion to Appoint Michael Pare (D)** as a Member of the South Windsor Town Council and **Amending the Resolution** to *remove* the wording ***“Postponing Consideration of this Motion until the Town Council's Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting”***.

Councilor Pendleton said that this motion does not require to meetings so the resolution should not be postponed to the next meeting. The council rules states to fill the vacancy after the effective resignation date of the preceding councilor. Councilor Pendleton asked for clarification of her statement from the Town Attorney. Attorney Rich Carella stated that the council rules are silent in stating how or when a new councilor is appointed but the Charter that the vacancy must be filled. How and when it is done is up to the council as it is a matter of local concern; however, to leave the position unfilled does eventually become problematic.

Councilor Balboni stated that his decision to vote against this appointment tonight is not influenced by the previous council majority stance on denying approval to any candidate who lost in the most recent election. Councilor Balboni said that he applauds Mr. Pare for his contributions on the BOE and service to the Town. It is a noble act and deserves recognition. He also feels that is important to provide justification when the Council decides not to support an appointment. M. Balboni's reservations lie with his ability to constructively collaborate with the existing team. He feels that Mr. Pare's approach could shift our focus away from the local issues affecting South Windsor. He feels that the appointment should be someone who can positively contribute to shared goals.

Councilor Lewis stated that he does not have an educated opinion and would like more time to talk with Mr. Pare. He has only seen what has been displayed on social media and agrees with Councilor Balboni that some of the national issues don't belong in South Windsor.

Pendleton feels that Mr. Pare would be an asset to the Town Council and looks forward to working with him. She feels that his service on the Board of Education and service to the Town makes him a great candidate for the council seat.

Councilor King asked Councilor Pendleton if she would consider amending her motion to keep the wording ***“Postponing Consideration of this Motion until the Town Council's Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting”***. Councilor Pendleton said that she does not want to violate the council rules and asked Town Attorney, Rich Carella to clarify. Reviewing the Town Charter, Rich Carella said that it is clear that the Charter requires the vacancy be filled but the Town Council Rules and Procedures do not specify how to do that. Mr. Carella reviewed Article II, Section 3, Vacancies of the Town Council Rules and Procedures and said that it does not specify when you have to make the decision to appoint but said that the longer the council waits to appoint someone, they risk violating the Town Charter.

Councilor Balboni asked Mr. Carella what happens if the Council decides not to fill the position. Attorney Carella said that at some point, you are violating the Charter by not filling the position. Attorney Carella said that it needs to be filled expediently and urged the Town Council to work together to appoint a council member.

Councilor King **made a Motion to Call the Question.**

Councilor Pendleton made a **Motion to Appoint Michael Pare** (D) as a Member of the South Windsor Town Council and **Amending the Resolution** to *add* the wording ***“Postponing Consideration of this Motion until the Town Council’s Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting”*** back to the resolution to be considered at the next regularly scheduled Town Council meeting.

Councilor King **seconded the Motion**

Mayor Delnicki asked for a roll call vote, the results of which are as follows; **3 ayes** (King, Pendleton & Carey), and **2 nays** (Balboni and Buganski) and **2 Abstentions** (Delnicki and Lewis). **MOTION FAILS.**

14. Passage of Ordinance

None.

15. Public Input for Any Matter

Public Input for any other matter shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes. When recognized by the Mayor, the speaker(s) shall approach the lectern, give their name and address. Speakers shall avoid personal attacks or impugning or alleging an improper motive to any person. The speaker(s) may address the Council on any item. The speaker(s) shall limit their speaking time to five (5) minutes.

Alan Cavagnaro of 83 Pine Knob Drive – Mr. Cavagnaro spoke in support of the appointment of Michael Pare. He stated that the Council is using Mr. Pare as a political pawn and drawing out partisan divide. He is an experienced CFO which would provide an extensive background to the Council with the current budget cycle. When He has been an active voted community member since 2017 and served multiple terms on the Board of Education.

Tim Appleton of 161 Woodland Drive – Mr. Appleton spoke in support of Michael Pare’s appointment to Town Council. He stated that Mr. Pare has never uttered racist statements or anti-schematic statements. He has never violated the Municipal Code of Ethics. He feels that by using global and national politics to deny this appointment, those same national and global politics are being brought into the Town Council. He strongly urges the Town Council to reconsider Mr. Pare’s appointment to the Town Council.

Michael Pare of 1497 Main Street- Mr. Pare introduced himself and spoke about his appointment to Town Council and stated that he has 20 plus years in finance, served on the Board of Education for 3 terms and has worked with Mayor Delnicki on the Board of Education

and with Councilor Carey on the Human Relations Commission as well as with Councilor Pendleton and Councilor King. He has always acted in a bipartisan matter. He also said that there are national issues that affect residents in South Windsor and feels it is important for the Council to be willing to discuss it. Mr. Pare said that unity at the expense of silencing things that need to be discussed is not true unity. He said that he is always willing to work in a professional and cordial manner. He is happy to meet with anybody and share his phone number. Mr. Pare said that he will not shy away from using his First Amendment right to discuss things in his private life that are important to him and if that makes it so that the Town Council cannot vote for him then so be it. He appreciates the consideration.

Craig Zimmerman of 5 Amato Drive- Mr. Zimmerman spoke in support of Michael Pare's appointment to Town Council. He feels that Mr. Pare is a valued member of the community. Mr. Zimmerman said that when asked who the go-to person is on the Board of Education from a budget standpoint, it would be Michael Pare. The Superintendent and the staff would agree that Mr. Pare is at the top of the list of valued members of the Board of Education. Hopefully, the Town Council votes on someone who will add value to the Town Council and not someone who has opinions on who should be president or where there should be a war. Mr. Pare is qualified and would be a phenomenal member of the Tow Council.

16. Communications from the Council

None.

17. Executive Session

(Please invite Town Manager, Michael Maniscalco and Assistant Town Manager, Mr. Roberts and any other appropriate personnel deemed necessary).

None.

18. Adjournment

Councilor Lewis made a **Motion to Adjourn** the meeting at 9:15pm.

Councilor King **seconded the Motion** which was approved by unanimous voice vote.
MOTION CARRIES.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine J. Senerth
Executive Assistant