

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD  
FEBRUARY 27, 2023**

[Stream Recording of Meeting here](#)

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Town of Fairfield was held on Monday, February 27, 2023, at the Education Center, Kings Highway, Fairfield, Connecticut and via Webex.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00P.M. by Moderator Mark McDermott.

PRESENT: 36                      ABSENT: 4                      VACANCY: 0

PRESENT: Bateson, Furey, Ruggiero, Longo, Gerber, McCormack, Perham, Steele, Durrell, Galdenzi, Lambert, Pistilli, Karson, McCabe, Spolyar, Zezima, Barahona, Garskof, Siebert, Wolk, Berecz, Gale, Graceffa, Havey, Kuhn, McDermott, Vergara, Wackerman, Choniski, Ference, Brown, Horton, Astarita, Britton , Sparacino, Tallman

ABSENT: Iacono, Meyers, Georgiadis, Scinto

**ITEM NO. 1 ON CALL: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Moderator Mark McDermott led the Body in the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence.

**ITEM NO. 2 ON CALL: APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 23, 2023**

**MOTION:** Elizabeth Zezima, District 4, moved to amend the minutes by deleting the addendum to the State of the Town Address by the First Selectwoman, duly seconded.

**VOTE:** The motion to delete the addendum was approved with 34 in favor and 2 abstentions (Durrell, Astarita).

**VOTE:** The minutes were approved as amended.

**ITEM NO. 3 ON CALL: REPORT FROM THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE**

This item was heard in Committee.

**ITEM NO. 4 ON CALL: AUTHORIZATION OF FIRST SELECTWOMAN BRENDA KUPCHICK TO ENTER INTO A GROUND LEASE FOR 75 YEARS WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY TO BUILD FOUR UNITS OF AFFORDABLE HOME OWNERSHIP HOUSING AT 244 GREENFIELD STREET**

Andrew Graceffa, District 6, moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**VOTE:** This item was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**ITEM NO. 5 ON CALL: APPROVAL OF CONTRACT NEGOTIATED BETWEEN THE TOWN AND THE UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION (UPSEU) UNIT #222 (TOWN HALL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION) CONCERNING CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING JUNE 30, 2025**

Lisa Havey, District 6, moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**VOTE:** This item was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**ITEM NO. 6 ON CALL: AMENDMENTS TO CELL TOWER LEASES FROM NEW CINGULAR WIRELESS PCS, LLC 100 AT REEF ROAD AND DISH WIRELESS, LLC AT 3965 CONGRESS STREET**

Laura Karson, District 4, moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**VOTE:** This item was approved with 35 in favor, 1 opposed (Vergara).

Steve Berez, District 6 moved to take Item Number 8 out of order, duly seconded and carried unanimously.

**ITEM NO. 8 ON CALL:** APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$760,000 FOR THE COSTS RELATED TO USES OF THE CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND AND THE CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND

Jill Vergara, District 7, moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

**VOTE:** This item was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**ITEM NO. 7 ON CALL:** APPROVAL OF BOND RESOLUTION ENTITLED, “A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$7,255,022 FOR THE COSTS OF CERTAIN NON-RECURRING CAPITAL PROJECTS AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION”

Elizabeth Zezima moved this item as distributed with the Call, duly seconded.

Josh Garskof, District 5, moved to amend the bond resolution by removing the funding for two new pickleball courts, duly seconded.

Mr. Garskof said this is a dense neighborhood and a small park without sufficient room for more pickleball courts and there are drainage questions. He supports repairing the existing courts.

Ed Bateson, District 1, spoke against the motion, saying it is better to have pockets of courts rather than having a couple all over town. We have been assured that the drainage issues will be taken care of.

Steve Berez, District 6, said that other parks in town are better able to handle the addition of pickleball courts, not Tunxis Hill.

Jeff Steele, District 2, said adding recreation amenities is good for all residents.

Jennifer Barahona, District 5, said she has no confidence in the drainage study and she supports finding other places for the courts.

Karen McCormack, District 2, referred to the response from Town Engineer Bill Hurley. The courts will not be signed off until any drainage issues are addressed.

Jill Vergara, District 7, said this section of town is already overdeveloped and this is the only open space in the area.

Michelle McCabe, District 4, supports creating courts in other locations, and said that Mr. Hurley did not address this specific issue.

Melissa Longo, District 1, pointed out how popular the sport of pickball has become and we should not deny our citizens the additional courts. She questioned where else courts could be spread all over town.

Rep. Vergara said seventy sites in town have been identified.

Marcy Spolyar, District 4, said that in accordance with the master plan the neighbors should have input. She does not support the additional courts.

Hank Ference, District 8, asked for input from Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese.

Director of Recreation Anthony Calabrese pointed out that Tunxis Hill is the third largest park in town and is an ideal spot for additional pickleball courts. He said it would be short-sighted to cut the two additional courts from this location.

Sharon Pistilli, District 3, asked where Mr. Calabrese would suggest additional courts, to which he replied the next possible location would be Dwight School.

Karen McCormack, District 2, said that this motion is overstepping and micromanaging Parks and Rec. She urged the body to defer to Mr. Calabrese and his crew.

Laura Karson, District 4, said this is not micromanaging; it is doing our job. The residents are worried about flooding.

Ed Bateson, District 1, thanked the Rec Director for his diligence. It is time to move forward, and give the people what they want.

Speaking against the motion to remove the two pickleball courts were Jim O'Brien, Betsy Hume, Steve Shepard, Bill Dannhauser, Lisa Pirelli and Danielle Orcutt.

**VOTE:** The motion to reduce the bond resolution by \$225,000 for the cost of two pickleball courts failed with a vote of 14 in favor, 22 opposed.

**IN FAVOR:** Gerber, Perham, Galdenzi, Lambert, Karson, McCabe, Zezima, Garskof, Berecz, Havey, Vergara, Wackerman, Brown, Horton

**OPPOSED:** Bateson, Furey, Ruggiero, Longo, McCormack, Steele, Durrell, Pistilli, Spolyar, Barahona, Siebert, Wolk, Gale, Graceffa, Kuhn, McDermott, Choniski, Ference, Astarita, Britton, Sparacino, Tallman

**VOTE:** The bonding resolution was approved with 36 in favor.

**ITEM NO. 9 ON CALL:** AMENDMENTS TO THE NOISE ORDINANCE

The Moderator reported that the noise ordinance amendments has been referred to the Legislation and Administration Committee.

**MOTION TO RECONSIDER:** Jeff Steele, District 2, moved to reconsider the vote on the minutes of the previous meeting, duly seconded.

Mr. Steele said that the addendum to the State of the Town address should not be deleted as it is part of the record.

Elizabeth Zezima, District 4, asked if the addendum was included in the submission of the address to the Town Clerk or if it was submitted after the adjournment of the meeting.

Mr. Steele said the addendum was part of the address but wasn't read into the record for the benefit of time.

**MOTION:** Motion to move the question was duly seconded and carried with a vote of 34 in favor, 2 opposed (Havey, Vergara).

**VOTE:** The motion to reconsider the vote on the minutes failed with 14 in favor, 22 opposed.

**IN FAVOR:** Bateson, Furey, Ruggiero, Longo, McCormack, Steele, Durrell, Gale, Choniski, Ference, Astarita, Britton, Sparacino, Tallman

**OPPOSED:** Gerber, Perham, Galdenzi, Lambert, Pistilli, Karson, McCabe, Spolyar, Zezima, Barahona, Garskof, Siebert, Wolk, Berecz, Graceffa, Havey, Kuhn, McDermott, Vergara, Wackerman, Brown, Horton

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth P. Browne, CMC, MCTC  
Town Clerk

Prepared by:  
Ann Roche  
Asst. Town Clerk