

Town of Greenwich

Board of Selectmen Meeting

March 9, 2023

10 a.m.

Town Hall Meeting Room and via Zoom webinar

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.

a. Attendance

- a. First Selectman Fred Camillo - present
- b. Selectwoman Lauren Rabin – present
- c. Selectperson Janet Stone McGuigan – present

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular meeting of February 23, 2023

Upon a motion by Ms. Rabin and a second by Ms. Stone McGuigan, the minutes were approved unanimously.

- b. Special meeting of February 23, 2023

Upon a motion by Ms. Rabin and a second by Ms. Stone McGuigan, the minutes were approved unanimously.

3. First Selectman's Updates

First Selectman Camillo began by announcing that the original date and time of the March 23 Board of Selectmen meeting had been changed at the board's March 8 special meeting. The board voted at that meeting to move the date to March 22 at 1 p.m. Camillo said that the St. Patrick's Day parade was coming up on March 19 at 2 p.m. He discussed the parade route from Town Hall down Greenwich Avenue. Camillo said that Greenwich High School student Thomas McKinney was again leading a cleanup of the area on March 18 from 2 to 4 p.m. Camillo announced that Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz would be visiting town on March 15 at the Bush Holley House. He promoted a ribbon cutting for the reopening of the Curry and Hurry Restaurant on March 14 and noted on March 13 he would be taking part in a special recognition for the Greenwich High School varsity football team, which one the championship. Camillo noted they had done similar

ceremonies for the champion golf and soccer teams and he would be presenting them all with certificates. Camillo announced that the planned date for the parade of champions to honor all the GHS champion teams had been moved from June 3 to June 11. With the spring sports season about to begin, Camillo said he hoped that the baseball or softball team would also be able to be added to the parade for taking home a championship. Camillo said he would also be swearing in a new police officer on March 13 and on March 12 he would be visiting his kindergarten teacher, Ruth Wilson, to mark her 105th birthday, who he said is still on Facebook every day and sends in multiple emails to him every week. Camillo also urged everyone to attend the proclamation reading for Rare Disease Day on March 10, a tradition for the last four years with representatives from local organizations on hand.

4. Selectwomen's Updates

Selectwoman Rabin reported on the Central Middle School Building Committee's community forum which she said was well attended, with people mostly attending via Zoon. She said a lot of questions were asked and the committee wanted to show the community, especially neighbors of the school, some of the sighting of the new building and some of the new access points with the goal of improving the queuing of parents dropping kids along the school buses and the kids who walk to school. Rabin said there is a "ton of misinformation going out and about" with regard to the CMS project. She said a building has not been designed yet and there had been "all kinds of statements" about the square footage and the price of the square footage. She said the big issue is when the ed specs were designed for the project they were designed at a utilization of about 76 percent and architects typically design building utilization for around 65 percent. She said someone had reached out to her saying they couldn't believe the town was building the school without bathrooms or stairs and she said she didn't know how the press got that wrong and told people to "check your sources." She invited anyone who wanted to, to ask members of the building committee for the facts because it was things like stairways, elevators and bathrooms that made that extra square footage necessary. Rabin thanked the Board of Estimate and Taxation for all their hard work on the Budget Committee.

Selectperson Stone McGuigan said she was looking forward to the Greenwich Lions Club's annual pancake breakfast which would take place on March 11 at Greenwich High School. She also said that the Greenwich Sustainability Committee was still accepting nominations for its Sustainability Awards until March 17. She said nominations could be sent to sustainability@greenwichct.org and more information was on the Town website under First Selectman's committees.

5. Old Business

a. Greenwich Fire Department Plan Review Fee Ordinance

Fire Chief Joseph McHugh said he and Fire Marshal Chris Pratico and Assistant Town Attorney Aamina Ahmad met with the Representative Town Meeting's Legislative and Rules Committee and Town Services Committee about the approval of the fee schedule for the fire department's review of construction plans in Town. He said both committees approved endorsing the plan and there were some questions from the RTM's Finance Committee that he has been emailing with the committee's chair about. McHugh said he was looking forward to moving the plan forward "for the betterment of the Town of Greenwich." McHugh said he believed the item would be considered as a "first read" at the RTM's March meeting and then passed in April.

Camillo noted that the Board of Selectmen had heard the actual fee structure plan at its Feb. 23 meeting but not the language in the ordinance that was being presented by McHugh. He said there was time sensitivity necessitating a vote by the Board of Selectmen that day. Rabin asked whether there was a change in the ordinance and Ahmad told her that the ordinance language that had been presented to the Selectmen was the same that had been sent to the RTM. She said when McHugh and Pratico had previously met with the Board of Selectmen on this, there had been no ordinance language. She wanted to get it approved by the RTM and wanted the Board of Selectmen to review the language first. Ahmad said McHugh and Pratico had given the Selectmen "the details of the plan" and the details had not changed. They had just been put in the form of an ordinance. She said what had been presented to the Selectmen in the past was in the language of the ordinance.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board of Selectmen unanimously approved the ordinance language for the review fee to be implemented.

b. Proposal of new parking meter rates.

Parking Services Director Deputy Chief of Police Kraig Gray brought back the proposed rate changes that had first been discussed at the Board of Selectmen's Feb. 23, 2023 meeting. The two weeks in between meetings had been used to get resident feedback to the proposal. He said the Parking Services Department had received feedback as well as what the Board of Selectmen had received. Gray said that since the proposal was first presented and it was written about in local media, there had been an increase in interest in Central Greenwich parking permits and he wanted to make sure people knew the value of the permit, which he said provides "good financial benefit." He said the permit is \$720 a year and would

not be changed by the proposed parking meter rate change, which he said would make it “of even greater value.” He said the purpose of the proposed meter increase is “movement” and it is not meant to be a “magic wand” that would create more spaces. Instead it would create flow, he said, and would benefit the merchants and the shoppers during the height of the day.

Camillo told Gray “what you say makes a lot of sense” but his concerns were about making things cost prohibitive because he wanted people to go to Greenwich Avenue. He said most people would “not feel the cost increase” but said they had heard from people on fixed incomes who were concerned. Gray reiterated that he was trying to “create a value” to park in the long-term parking spaces and that was why he proposed it. He said it as an “encouragement to get off the Avenue” and park in the back spots.

Rabin said most of the feedback they received was negative toward the amount of the increase and said she would be “more comfortable” if the increase wasn’t as high. But she said she understood where Gray was coming from and what his goal was. She suggested considering a phased-in approach where there is a six-month evaluation period before putting in the full total of the proposed increase.

Stone McGuigan thanked everyone who sent in feedback on the parking meter fees and the outdoor dining policy and said it was why it was important to have two reads of an agenda item so they could hear from a wide range of stakeholders. She said she knew the parking meter and outdoor dining proposals were being presented separately but she found it “challenging” that it was not being presented together as part of a comprehensive plan. She said it was “not surprising that no one wants to see” the parking fees increase and she noted that fees had increased a few years ago already. She said she did not want to see parking fees should be thought of as a source of revenue for the town and did not want parking privileges to go “just to those who can afford to pay.” Stone McGuigan noted that many of the feedback emails they got said enforcement was the problem. She recalled that at the Feb. 23 meeting they were told that parking enforcement was not allowed to mark car tires with chalk to keep track of meter feeders but felt that parking enforcement had to have some idea of who the meter feeders were. She said she agreed with Rabin that the proposed increases might not have been large in terms of dollar amounts but were in terms of percentages. She said she generally believed increasing fees should be done more moderately. She said she was not prepared to approve any increase until the Town’s fees were compared with neighboring towns.

Gray raised a point of order to note that the money from fines do not go to the Town’s parking fund but rather the State’s general fund.

Camillo said he “totally agreed” with what Gray was suggesting but said he liked Rabin’s idea of a phased in approach because he felt people would look at the percentage of the proposed increase and not the dollar amount. Camillo said he liked the idea of having half of the increase be put in place and then see how it worked over the next six months to show the Town was taking public input into consideration while also giving the Town data to work with to see if it’s working. Camillo said he wanted to bring the matter up again at the next Board of Selectmen meeting so it could be presented again by Parking Services.

c. 2023 outdoor dining guidelines.

Town Administrator and COO Ben Branyan said the Town had been receiving comments about the proposal since the Feb. 23 Board of Selectmen meeting. He reminded the board that Planning and Zoning had done a survey in August 2022 where it got 2,200 responses with two data points of interest standing out. He reported that of the 2,200 survey responses, more than 2,100 of them were from Greenwich residents and that 63 percent of those who did respond said they enjoyed outdoor dining and didn’t mind the loss of parking. He said the survey results also showed that 69 percent of respondents said no when asked if retailers should have access to the parking nodes that restaurants have for outdoor dining. Branyan referred to what had been discussed at the Feb. 23 meeting and earlier in the March 9 meeting by Stone McGuigan about parking enforcement officers not putting chalk marks on the tires of those feeding parking meters. He said they do not mark the physical tire but chalk around the vehicle on the asphalt as part of enforcement. Branyan said he spoke to Town Director of Planning and Zoning Patrick LaRow and he was planning to step up their presence on the Avenue for enforcement. Branyan said there has also been discussion about painting the barriers used for the outdoor dining. He said they were “not opposed to” having the individual restaurants paint the barriers and they could work with Planning and Zoning on that. But he added there was no guarantee they would get the exact same barrier next year because they are multi-use and can be used by the Town for other purposes throughout the year. Branyan said they were trying to time the approval of the outdoor dining approval with the approval of the parking fees and the decision on outdoor dining could not be postponed given the season was set to begin April 3 and Planning and Zoning needed to work with the restaurants on the permitting process.

Camillo agreed there were some challenges for painting the barriers used by the restaurants and the Town was going to reach out as soon as the barriers were put in place in April. He said the Reimagine Greenwich Committee would go to the restaurants and try to get them to work with some ideas the committee had to beautify the barriers “so they don’t look like they came from a turnpike.”

Stone McGuigan said she had received feedback concerned about the potential loss of accessible parking spaces for people with disabilities for outdoor dining. Branyan said in the situations where accessible spaces were removed for outdoor dining, the spaces were reinstalled “as close as we could” to where they had been before. That statement was confirmed by Deputy Commissioner of Public Works Jim Michel and Stone McGuigan expressed relief that this was the case. She continued to say that she felt the Town was underpricing outdoor dining permits and that it could be increased without it being onerous but noted it would be reviewed annually by the Town so it could be adjusted. Camillo added that that the Town was shoring and tightening up the guidelines and the new proposal was more fair to everyone with the amount of seating that was allowed.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Camillo, the Board of Selectmen approved the outdoor dining guidelines. The vote was 2-0-1 with Camillo and Rabin voting in favor and Stone McGuigan abstaining.

- d. Board of Selectmen Review of ADA grievance from Alan Gunzburg and Stephanie Cowie.

Camillo said he met with Commissioner of Public Works Amy Siebert and Deputy Commissioner Jim Michel to look into how to make the Greenwich Avenue intersection at the center of the ADA grievance “more ADA compliant” and “make it the safest possible intersection.” Camillo said currently it is “the most dangerous one” and that the \$2.8 million grant for it passed every board and every committee for a year before the municipal improvement status was appealed to the Representative Town Meeting, where it was rejected. He said the money then went back to a pool and was claimed by other municipalities so the Town will be paying for it now. He said that was “too bad” but the improvements could not be pushed off. Camillo said he had been told by Department of Human Services Commissioner Demetria Nelson that the Town would have 12 to 24 months to bring the intersection to compliance but he felt that was a long time and there had been multiple people hit in that area. He said the Town had to move on it “a lot quicker” than 12 to 24 months. Camillo said he understood that Gunzburg and Cowie were willing to grant the Town more time on their grievance so more information could be gathered.

Assistant Town Attorney Aamina Ahmad said that Gunzburg and Cowie had not been aware that the item was back on the agenda after having been first discussed at the Feb. 23 meeting. She asked if the Board of Selectmen wanted to put it on another agenda so they could be at the meeting. Camillo said he believed Gunzburg knew that there was thought that had to be put into making the intersection compliant with the ADA while also looking nice. He said the Town needs to determine what it can be done, what it would look like and how much it would cost so it can be presented to the Board of Estimate and Taxation.

Camillo asked Michel if there was a timeframe for when more information would be available. Michel said they would do their best to get it to the Selectmen “as quickly as possible.” He said more ideas and answers would be received “in the next month or so” on what the improvements would be. Michel said he had reached out to Gunzburg and Cowie over setting up an internal working group to present ideas to them and make sure everyone was on the same page before going back to the Board of Selectmen. Michel also reported DPW’s ADA Transition Plan had been posted on its website and he would work with them about publicizing it.

Without Gunzburg and Cowie there, Ahmad said Camillo had the option of postponing the item until the Board’s March 22 meeting and then issuing a written decision. Camillo said he would speak to Ahmad about drafting that decision and when it would come before the board again.

6. New business

- a. Approval of appointment of Assistant Fire Chief Justin McCarthy.

McHugh introduced McCarthy as the potential successor to former Assistant Fire Chief Brian Koczak. He gave a brief rundown of McCarthy’s experience in the New Haven Fire Department and called him a “rising star” there that Greenwich was “very fortunate” to get. He said McCarthy had worked in several busy companies in New Haven and he was an assistant chief there so his knowledge, skill set and abilities would benefit the Town of Greenwich.

McCarthy said he was looking forward to serving the Town if appointed and thanked Camillo for the opportunity. Rabin said she did not have any questions but wondered about getting information about the candidate before a vote. Camillo said normally that was the case and this time, unlike with previous openings, he was not involved in the interviews or selection process. Camillo said he understood why and that McHugh had kept him up to date on everything. Camillo asked if they could get a bit of a bio and McCarthy said he was born and raised in Westport, where his father was a deputy fire chief. He said he had attended the University of New Haven and worked as a volunteer firefighter in Wilton before joining the New Haven department where he rose through the ranks to deputy chief.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board of Selectmen unanimously approved McCarthy’s appointment as deputy chief.

- b. Parking Services Mobile App Enforcement Violation Fee.

Director of Parking Services Deputy Chief Kraig Gray told the Board of Selectmen that this was largely a housekeeping item to make it easier for hearing officers when someone appeals a fine. He said the Town has been issuing tickets for time violations and this would make clear that the way it was accounted for was the mobile app.

Camillo said he would make the item a first read unless it was time sensitive and Gray said it was not. Camillo said he didn't think they were going to get a lot of feedback on this but wanted to stay consistent and wait until the next meeting to take a vote.

c. Residential permit parking for Josephine Evaristo Avenue.

Gray said this was a reversal of the existing residential parking program at the behest of residents in the area. Gray said the original signage for the ordinance was "not matching" so new signs were put in to match the ordinance. But Gray reported that residents weren't interested in it. He said based on that feedback, Parking Services reevaluated it and that he was "always interested in returning as much of the parking to the public as possible." Gray said they received "limited response" from the community after a letter was sent more than a month ago. The responses were only one for and one against continuing the program.

Sylvester Pecora, representing residents of Charles Street at the bottom of Josephine Evaristo Avenue, spoke and said they were looking to remove the signs and that it would benefit the community as a whole to do it. Gray said this would essentially take things back to the way it had been.

d. Modification of parking regulations on Bruce Park Avenue.

Gray said Parking Services and the town's Engineering Division had received complaints about safety hazards from traveling on Bruce Park Avenue. He said it was a "long brewing issue" and notices had been sent out to the community. Camillo said he had met with residents about this in November 2022 and he was very familiar with the road and the area. He said while driving there and going up the hill it can be "very hard to see."

Town Civil Engineer Michael Kiselak said DPW did a study after meeting with neighbors and it found there were blind spots until a driver reached the top of the curve. Coupled with the narrowness in the road and the on-street parking, DPW considered it a safety issue and wanted to eliminate the on-street parking for a limited stretch of the road. He said this would eliminate about seven parking spaces on the south side of the road.

Camillo said they would try and get public feedback from residents before the March 22 meeting. Being familiar with the area, Camillo said he agreed it was a

public safety hazard but was concerned about the loss of the parking spots for residents who needed places to put their cars. Kiselak said the parking spaces are “actively used” and every time he was out there he saw cars parked there but the recommendation was being made over the safety hazard.

Patty Thibault Hopper spoke in opposition to the change. She said her father bought a home on Bruce Park Avenue in 1962 and it has been in the family for 61 years. She said the two-family house is at the top of the hill and the family bought the house to rent it out and use as income. Her brother now owns the house and she said he uses the rent money collected for everyday use and for his own retirement. She showed pictures of the house and noted it did not have a driveway so for 61 years tenants had always parked in front. She said taking away the parking spots would have a negative effect on what can be charged for rent because, hurting her brother. She said rent would have to be decreased because there would be no place for tenants to park. She said as of now tenants have permits from the town to park there. Hopper said she and her family have never heard of anyone having a problem with the road. She said she checked with the police department’s records and there were 93 motor vehicle accidents over the last 10 years in the area. Hopper claimed after her family examined those records, they found no accidents in front of their house. She suggested lowering the speed limit down from 25 miles per hour and putting signs up telling drivers to go slow. She said that was a better solution than starting by removing the parking spots. Camillo said during the two-week public comment period there might be a way to go over possibilities. He said “public safety is always our main concern and always will be” but he didn’t want to hurt people through and thought there might be other options that don’t take away a person’s ability to park.

Kiselak said he in order to lower the speed limit, the State would have to approve it and he said generally the state did not go lower than 25 miles per hour. He said he was not sure what signage could be put up there but he would double check before the March 22 meeting.

Barbara Zappavigna spoke at the meeting and said she had lived 33 years on Bruce Park Avenue. She said people are speeding down the street and signage is not as prevalent as she thought it should be. She stated that seven parking spaces were a lot to take out because people were already struggling to find parking there. She said she was grateful the Town was looking at alternatives including ways to slow drivers down. Camillo said the Town wanted to address the problem without creating another one.

Jessica Wieneke spoke via Zoom and said she was a resident of Bruce Park Avenue and said there was no sidewalk in the area and there were a lot of young children in the neighborhood now and people walking to the train station. She said she and her neighbors had noticed a lot of commercial traffic in the Davis Avenue area and people parking there before they go to work.

e. Discussion of adoption of a fair rent commission.

Stone McGuigan told the Board of Selectmen that having an ordinance creating a fair rent commission is required under Public Act 22-30 and noted that while fair rent and affordable housing may be related issues, they should not be conflated for this discussion. She said the creation of a fair rent commission also had nothing to do with legislation in Hartford that would cap rent increases, which has been tabled. She said Public Act 22-30 was passed in 2022 and concerns rent stabilization not rent control. She explained that Public Act 22-30 requires towns with a population greater than 25,000 to adopt a fair rent commission ordinance no later than July 2023. Any ordinance would need RTM approval and since May's RTM meeting is dedicated only to approving a municipal budget, she cautioned that "it may already be too late to get an ordinance approved by July." Stone McGuigan said that while the law does not impose penalties on towns not in compliance, it would put the Town at risk when there was not compliance with State law. The commission's primary power, she said, would be to restrict rental charges in residential housing that are "so excessive as to be harsh and unconscionable." Stone McGuigan said it would not restrict rents generally and landlords would "remain free to charge whatever they want." She said action from a commission would be triggered only by a tenant complaint and only by a show by the tenant that the rental charge is harsh and unconscionable "according to a prescribed list of standards." She said she was not in favor of creating a commission strictly for the sake of creating a commission and that would not be the case here. Stone McGuigan claimed that, with a few exceptions, Connecticut tenants have no right to challenge a rent increase unless there is a fair rent commission in their town. The volunteer commission would be overseen by the Town's Department of Human Services.

Camillo said this was something he had been paying attention to since the law was passed. He said he had concerns about the law and noted his 11 years of experience in the state legislature and how he would see landlords come up there and "beg for some help" which he said would always be ignored by the legislature's Housing Committee. He said the landlords had people routinely not paying their rent for six to eight months and then moving onto the next house. Camillo said there was "a lot of abuse" and his concern about the law was that whatever commission was passed had to be balanced. Camillo also noted his recent experience helping two people in Town who were up to date on their rent but because rents have gone up he felt the landlord did not want them there anymore and, in one case, there was issue of maintenance of the house that had not been kept up. Camillo said this showed "it swings both ways" so he felt the commission "could have great potential to not only afford people a voice to air their grievances but to settle it before you go to court." If that happened, he said a commission could really serve the community well and he said he would rather

get this done sooner rather than later. He stressed that he wanted to make sure it was “fair and balanced and could be used for the good” because he wanted the Town to help people who were doing the right thing.

Town Attorney Barbara Schellenberg said she believed the ordinance would have to originate from the Town’s Department of Human Services or the Board of Human Services. She said a meeting took place the week prior to the March 9 Board of Selectmen meeting with Town Commissioner of Human Services Demetria Nelson, Town Administrator Ben Branyan and Town Director of Community Development Tyler Fairbairn to discuss it.

Rabin said her “small, small concern” was to make sure with all of the Town boards, commissions and committees that already existed she would want to make sure the ordinance addressed the overlap between them and state how a fair housing commission would work with Greenwich Communities or the Board of Human Services or other bodies. She said Greenwich had its own unique circumstances with all of its boards, commissions and committees.

Nelson said her department would use the “tool kit” from the state to create a framework for the ordinance but would “definitely tailor it to the needs of the Town.” She said she has reached out to neighboring towns that have fair rent commissions set up to find out the volume of what they dealt with and how the commissions were developed. Camillo and McGuigan said they hoped they would be able to get this passed by July but if not the State would at least be able to see that Greenwich was working on this.

f. Request for approval of 2023 Greenwich Town Party Parade

Scot Weicker, event manager for Greenwich Town Party, Inc. presented the idea for a new event related to the Greenwich Town Party. He said the parade would be in addition to the party on Saturday, May 27, 2023. He proposed a parade that would take place on Tuesday May 23, 2023 from 5:15 to 6 p.m. and said it would give the Greenwich Town Party the opportunity to “include even more of the community in the celebration.” He said the parade would “further the Greenwich Town Party’s non-profit mission of creating an annual celebration for the people of Greenwich.” He said the parade would promote the Greenwich Town Party’s three tenants, celebrate, community and participate. Weicker said there would be live music from local bands, including Greenwich High School and Brunswick, as well as other bands like the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. He said there be a couple floats and stilt walkers as well as community groups, non-profits and community organizations. Weicker said the parade details were still being worked out because they didn’t want to go too far without Board of Selectmen approval. He said the parade route would start at the Amogerone parking lot off of

Greenwich Avenue and they had been in touch with the Town's Parking Services Department about it. The staging would begin there and move down Greenwich Avenue until reaching Grigg Street where it would take a right to go down Grigg Street and then turn right onto Arch Street and a left onto Bolling Place. Then there would be a post parade party in the park by Havemeyer Field from 6 to 8 p.m. with live music and Greenwich licensed food trucks with free food being offered. Weicker said it would be an event of "food, fun and friendship."

Camillo said it was "exciting" and it reminded him of growing up when the Town would have a party in the fall on Greenwich Avenue. Weicker agreed and said that was "exactly the thinking" behind the event. Camillo called it a "wonderful idea."

Rabin said it was "totally exciting." She asked about confirmation from the Greenwich Police Department that the event was approved and that they were signing off on the road closure that would be needed for the parade to happen. Weicker said he had spoken to GPD about the route and that GPD Capt. James Bonney would be helping out because he was "so instrumental" in organizing the recent 125th anniversary parade for the police department. Weicker said he was in close contact with the GPD and other town departments. Rabin said she also wanted to make sure that Weicker was prepared for the event to be "oversubscribed" with more people coming than anticipated. Weicker said he believed they were prepared and GPD was planning on having 22 officers assisting that day in addition to private security that would be on sight.

Stone McGuigan said she agreed that the idea "sounded great" and she was looking forward to it. She noted that with the recent Chabad of Greenwich menorah lighting, the Board of Selectmen had waited to approve it until all the permits were in hand and she thought they would want to do the same thing here.

g. Request from Greenwich Town Party for use of Horseneck Lane Parking Lot.

Megan Sweeney, vice president of administration for the Boys and Girls Club of Greenwich, appeared via Zoom and made a request for the Greenwich Town Party to use the parking lot. The Boys and Girls Club currently has a lease with the Town for use of the building in the lot and wanted to allow the Town Party to use the lot on May 27 for the guest artists. Sweeney noted this arrangement had been done in the past when Neighbor to Neighbor had a lease for the building and the Boys and Girls Club would be closed that day so the spaces would not be needed by them.

Camillo said it sounded “very reasonable” but because it was a first read, they would wait to vote on it at the March 22 meeting. Weicker said he had a certificate of insurance in hand for the use of the lot.

h. Discussion of potential sister city partnership with Izyum, Ukraine.

Olga Litvinenko presented to the Board of Selectmen a proposal to establish the sister city relationship. She said she was born in Ukraine but her family moved to America when she was 3 where she grew up in Greenwich. She noted the invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops began on Feb. 24, 2022 and on March 1, the Town of Greenwich held a rally at Town Hall to stand with Ukraine and show solidarity. She said the sister city partnership would “solidify an everlasting relationship” and create an exchange of culture, knowledge and experiences. She said it would be “a very special relationship to always talk about. She said she chose Izyum because it was established in 1681 and is similar to Greenwich because it is a suburb of a major city. She said prior to the war its population was about 50,000 people with “a very immense culture.” She highlighted several ways she believed Greenwich and Izyum were similar in population, location and culture and said she believed it would be a great relationship that would also solidify how Greenwich feels about Ukraine and vice versa. She said there would be an exchange of symbolic items to “always have a piece of Greenwich in Izyum and always have a piece of Izyum in Greenwich.” There would be an exchange of flags and proclamations to be displayed in both places and other ideas that she said would soon be developed. She said she hoped to be able to make an official announcement about this on April 16 with the mayor of Izyum, Valerii Marchenko, present digitally.

Litvinenko then used her laptop to allow Marchenko to address the Board of Selectmen digitally. He did not speak English so Litvinenko served as translator as he said he was excited to enter into the sister city partnership especially with the cultural exchange aspect. He said he was “very, very grateful for all of this” and said Izyum had been occupied by Russian forces for six months but they are “finally getting on their feet.” Litvinenko translated for him saying this would be very special to them and expressed gratitude to the Americans who have helped and shown support during the war. He said through her that a sister city relationship with Greenwich would be the geographically longest one they have and he hoped it would be a very long relationship that everyone can learn from.

Camillo said if approved it would be the fourth sister city relationship he was aware of for Greenwich with one already in China and two in Italy. He said hoped to add Izyum to that in the coming months. He said he hoped eventually there would be people going back and forth and exchanging cultural ideas and traditions.

7. Public Comment

Town residents Candace Garthwaite and Jodi Stuart urged the Board of Selectmen to support the proposed \$375,000 allocation to have four dedicated pickleball courts at the new Eastern Greenwich Civic Center. Garthwaite said it was “such a great location” because there were no nearby neighbors and there was parking available as part of a whole recreational center. She said they were running into “bumps in the road” however with the BET because the Budget Committee was split on its vote to try and reduce the number by \$100,000. Garthwaite said the cut would “really derail the project” because the entire area was under construction and was being resurfaced so the time was now to get the courts on. She didn’t want to see the project have to wait years to get done and that a wait and later construction would be disruptive to the new civic center when it was finally done. Garthwaite also said the Town’s tennis courts “were in sorry shape” and noted that the Town’s Department of Parks and Recreation was putting together a study on the tennis courts.

Camillo said he was “totally supportive” of the \$375,000 he had put in the budget for the project and not for the proposed \$100,000 cut. He said he would speak to his friends on both sides of the aisle on the BET about it.

8. Appointments/Nominations

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Vivian Wu (R9) to a new term on the Board of Parks and Recreation expiring June 30, 2026. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Lile Gibbons (R7) to a new term on the Harbor Management Commission expiring March 31, 2026. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

9. Adjournment

At 11:59 a.m., Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to adjourn. Upon a second by Selectperson Stone McGuigan, the motion was approved unanimously.