

Remote Winooski City Council Meeting
Monday, January 11, 2021 at 6 PM

- Attend online: <https://zoom.us/j/97975939386>
- Attend by phone: 1 646 558 8656
- Webinar ID: 942 6319 4812
- Watch live or recorded via Town Meeting TV
- View our Remote Meeting Procedures and Public Comment Request Form at winooski.vt.gov or call 802 655 6410

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Agenda Review

IV. Public Comment

V. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval: City Council Minutes of 1/4/21
- b. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant as of 1/8/2021 and Subsequent to Payout for November, 2020.

VI. Council Reports

VII. City Updates

VIII. Regular Items

- a. Discussion: Town Meeting TV Annual Presentation – J Baker
- b. Discussion: Act 164 Overview-Regulation of Cannabis and Potential Consideration for a Future Ballot Item – J Baker & E Vorwald
- c. Discussion: Winooski Partnership for Prevention Presentation – K Lott
- d. Discussion: FY22 Budget: Public Safety Presentation (Code Enforcement, Police, Fire and Dispatch) – J Audy & R Hebert
- e. Approval: Regional Dispatch Update and Fund Balance Request for Fit-up – J Baker

IX. Adjourn

Mayor Kristine Lott - klott@winooski.vt.gov
Councilor Hal Colston - hcolston@winooski.vt.gov
Councilor Jim Duncan - jduncan@winooski.vt.gov
Councilor Amy Lafayette - alafayette@winooski.vt.gov
Councilor Mike Myers - mmyers@winooski.vt.gov
Jessie Baker, City Manager - jbaker@winooski.vt.gov



MINUTES

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Councilor Colston led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present:

Mayor: Kristine Lott

Councilors: Hal Colston, James Duncan, Amy Lafayette and Michael Myers

Officers Present:

Jessie Baker, City Manager; Janet Brouard, Sr Assistant City Clerk; Angela Aldieri, Finance Director; Heather Carrington, Economic Development Director; Paul Sarne, Communications Coordinator; Eric Vorwald, Planning & Zoning Manager; Ray Coffey, Community Services Director; John Audy, Fire Chief; Rick Hebert, Police Chief; Phoebe Townsend, Human Resources Director; Erika Bailey, Captain/Fire Marshal; Liam Keating, Captain/Fire Marshal

Others Present:

Kevin Harms, Town Meeting TV; Meghan O'Rourke, Town Meeting TV; Eli Harrington, Robert Millar, Lily Deware, Kevin Lumpkin, Rep to Town Meeting TV; Dillon Lovell, Kate Nugent, Winooski Partnership for Prevention Director, Adrienne Bombard, David Rugh, V Mazzuca, Steven Berbeco, Jane Henderson, Bryn Oakleaf, Molly Schnieider

III. Agenda Review – None

IV. Public Comment – None

V. Consent Agenda

MOTION: by Councilor Myers seconded by Councilor Duncan to approve the City Council Minutes of 1/4/21 as presented. Voted and passed 3-0. Councilor Lafayette abstained.

MOTION: by Councilor Colston seconded by Myers to approve the Accounts Payable Warrant as of 1/8/21 and the Subsequent to Payout for November 2020 as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.



V. Council Reports

Mayor Lott – In light of last week's event, she wanted to first thank our community for being a culture that is welcoming and respectful, she said these are trying times and she is proud how our residents are managing. She met with Mayor Weinberger, Legislative Council, Winooski School District and Councilors to discuss a variety of topics to include; Legislative briefing, Pandemic Response, Housing Stability, Vaccine Distribution efforts, Regional Dispatch status, Policing issues and finally Airport issues. It was a great meeting and we continue to move forward in a positive direction.

Councilor Lafayette – She attended the Downtown Association meeting in late December. At that meeting they welcomed 3 new members as well as said good bye to 3 outgoing members. She wanted to thank Kelsey Adams, Paige Feeser and Ann Vernon. The 3 have worked hard to make the Association what it is today. They will be greatly missed but she looks forward to the 3 new members views and ideas.

Councilor Duncan – He said he is shocked and speechless in light of last week's incident. He is proud of how our community is staying strong and the work they continue to do. He attended the meeting at the school with various officials and students to discuss the action items presented. It was a productive meeting and look forward to more recruitment to the panel in the coming weeks.

Councilor Myers – None

Councilor Colston – He too was shocked and disturbed with last week's incident at the Capital. He said the Legislature is diligently working to pass a resolution condemning this behavior. He said it is important for us all to reach out to our neighbors, especially those who are different and show them what a supportive community we are and continue to be.

VII. City Updates

COVID Update

- Since December 13th, we have seen 197 new COVID cases in 87 households in the City. 18 of those cases were associated with Our Lady of Providence.
- What we are doing:
- Testing daily for the foreseeable future and at least through January.
 - At the OCC
 - 5 to 8 on Mondays. 9 to 3 all other days including Saturday and Sunday.



- Daily – can sign up at the VDH website or walk in. All information is on our webpage
- All materials are translated and there will be translators on site.
- Since 12/15 we have held daily “huddles” (minus Christmas Day and New Year’s Day) with staff from VDH, City, School, CHCB, UVMC, and community partners to coordinate efforts and ensure that our neighbors basic needs are met.
- Shifting focus to advocate specifically for vaccinations and understand what that will look like in our community.
- Chief Audy has also been working closely with OLP as they coordinate staffing, support, and PPE with the State of Vermont.
- The most important thing you can do is:
 - Not spend time with anyone outside of your immediate household
 - Wear a mask when in the presence of others
 - Socially distance
 - Wash your hands

Financial

- Tax Delinquency: Q1 = .65%; Q2 = 1.5%
- Utility Delinquency:
 - Water = Up \$15k from last year
 - Wastewater = Up \$20k from last year
 - Participated in the COVID-19 Arrearage Assistance Program to alleviate pressures for utility customers with past due balances. \$1,083 received as on six accounts.
- Secured \$166,567 in COVID-19-related grant funding – including fully drawing down our LGER funds. Our hope is that if this program is extended, we will be allowed to request additional funding.

Paycheck Protection Program opening another round this week with the new federal stimulus package. Re-opening for new borrowers and certain existing PPP borrowers. This round of the PPP continues to prioritize small businesses with authorization of up to \$284 billion toward job retention and certain other expenses through March 31, 2021.

Last Thursday, WINFD held its most recent Blood Drive

Thank you to Captain Erika Bailey who has taken this annual event on year after year. 42 Registered, of those 35 units were collected. We had 3 1st time donors!



School Safety and Security

On 12/21 and 12/29, the Chief, School Resource Officer and I participated in the School sponsored Safety & Security Community Forum. You can view the recordings of these meetings at www.wsdvt.org.

- The School Trustees discussed next steps and have assigned Liz Edsell and Steve Berbeco to outlining the next steps of the education and outreach portion of this effort leading to a decision by the School Trustees.
- We will continue to be engaged as invited.

Community Services Updates

- This Saturday, from 10 AM to 1 PM, join Recreation for cross country skiing at Gilbrook! Thanks to a partnership with the Catamount Trail Association we will have equipment rentals available at the park entrance off Gilbrook Road.
- Winooski Library "Fresh Reads" Raffle! Now through January 25th, 2021, anytime you check out an item from the library you'll be eligible to enter into our "Fresh Reads Raffle"! Enter for a chance to win one of three gift cards made possible by the generous support of Downtown Winooski. Simply make an appointment for a "Browse and Borrow" session at winooski.vt.gov/library or give us a call at 802 655 6424 to request materials for curbside pickup.
- The next round of Winooski Recreation and the Winooski Library's art kits will be released this week in celebration of MLK Day. We will have a virtual library reading of Last Stop on Market Place by Matt de la Pena. The activity will be to make a collage of your Winooski neighborhood. The kits will come with instructions for the craft, materials for the craft, a sheet on how to do good for your community and a sheet for parents about how to talk to kids about race. Kits will be available for curbside pick-up at the Winooski Library.

VIII. Regular Items

a. Discussion: Town Meeting TV Annual Presentation: J Baker

Ms. Baker said that Town Meeting TV is a critical partner as we continue to communicate to the public the activities of our elected and appointed Council and Commissions. She said Meghan O'Rourke is here tonight to present their FY21 Update and Budget Request. Ms. O'Rourke thanked the Council for their continued support and financial commitment to insure continued programming. She also wanted to thank Kevin Lumpkin. Kevin currently serves as your member representative from the City and we are very appreciative of his service. Ms. O'Rourke explained what Town Meeting TV does and who they support. She outlined the services provided to its partners and why it's a critical outlet for municipalities



to promote public awareness and participation. Mayor Lott thanked Ms. O'Rourke for her attendance in tonight's meeting and the continued support of their agency.

b. Discussion: Act 164 Overview-Regulation of Cannabis and Potential Consideration for a Future Ballot Item – J Baker & E Vorwald.

Mr. Vorwald addressed the Council with an Overview of Act 164. He said in October of 2020, Act 164 was enacted into law. Act 164 establishes a regulatory framework for the sale, manufacturing, and processing of cannabis. Through Act 164, municipalities have the option to "opt-in" through an affirmative vote of the residents there by allowing for cannabis related activities to occur with the municipality. Act 164 also establishes a Cannabis Control Board, that will be responsible for creating rules to regulate cannabis activities. These rules will be similar to liquor sales. Mr. Vorwald said he has prepared an informational memo outlining several aspects of Act 164, potential next steps for consideration, as well as draft language should you decide to move forward and place this on the ballot in March. See attached memo. Discussion continued with several comments made by public attendees and Council members. A majority of the Public comments were in favor of moving this item to the ballot in March. At this time, Council members feel this deserves more discussion so as we do not get "The Cart before the Horse" as Councilor Lafayette put it. Mayor Lott agreed and said we will re-visit this item at a future meeting.

c. Discussion: Winooski Partnership for Prevention Presentation – K Lott

Mayor Lott introduced Kate Nugent, Executive Director for Winooski Partnership for Prevention. She said Ms. Nugent wanted to come before the Council tonight to address their concerns with Act 164. Ms. Nugent has worked for many years focusing on strengthening and increasing awareness within the community. She is passionate about helping build and maintain an equitable framework upon which youth are able to create the future they seek. We strive to make prevention a priority here in Winooski through community education and engagement, youth empowerment, and policy change. She said their work specifically focuses on underage drinking, tobacco, marijuana use and prescription drug misuse prevention. Ms. Nugent provided a PowerPoint presentation on the effects of these vices and the Partnerships goals in raising awareness and harmful addictions. Mayor Lott thanked her for the presentation and her continued work throughout the community. The Council will take this information into consideration for future discussions on this topic.



d. Discussion: FY22 Budget: Public Safety Presentation (Code Enforcement, Police, Fire, and Dispatch) – J Audy & R Hebert

Chief Audy began with the Fire Department presentation. He walked the Council through the makeup of the department, organizational chart, departments focus, year in review, budget explanation and finally emerging issues looking to the future. He said 2020 was a challenging year looking back but is impressed how the department grew as a whole. As the pandemic took its toll, his department-maintained focus, providing services to the community in the safest manner. He outlined a list of services such as building permits issued, inspections performed, construction site visits, residential property complaints and all while responding to Fire calls. He said the increases in his budget mainly include the required salary increases, vehicle repairs, due to age of vehicles, and an increase to safety equipment to build up a rotating reserve of fire gear due to its shelf life and a high percentage of our gear is at or beyond its limitation. A couple of emerging issues continue to be with staffing. Maintaining a part time staff is challenging in itself, he is finding there are concerns with covering shifts. They are currently working on different models to alleviate such shortfalls. Chief Audy thanked the Council for their continued support. Chief Hebert was next to present his portion of the Public Safety Budget for the Police Department. He followed the same outline as Chief Audy; moving forward with the PowerPoint Presentation. He too said his department had an interesting year. He said they continue to focus on combining the 21st Century Policing Curriculum into their departments Strategic Plan by investing in improving their Community Policing Policies, Unconscious Bias, Cultural Diversity, and Officer Development. He pointed out many success stories that came in light of these trying times. Even though his officers are on the front line and have daily contact with the public, they still maintained their commitment to serving the people of this community. Chief Hebert wanted to personally thank the residents for all their thoughtful notes, baked goods and overwhelming support. Chief Hebert is hopeful that they will be able to continue with their Community Outreach Events. He feels they have been a driving force in bringing the community together. Despite these times, the department had many accomplishments over the last year, some needed altered efforts but the successes were abundant. Chief Hebert said as far as the budget is concerned, the only increase he is putting forward is the contractual required increases in the Salaries and Benefits Line Items. The remaining lines items are unchanged from FY21. Staffing remains an issue in the Police Department as well. Preparing our next generation of leaders is important. Chief Hebert said they are currently recruiting and he is pleased with the interest he is seeing. He said that he will continue to work with the Winooski School District on whether to fund their portion of the School Resource Officer position in FY22. He believes this is a vital role in both the school and the community. Officer Ziter has been doing a tremendous job and will continue his efforts, in some shape or form, despite the outcome. He said the CCPSA Board



continues to formulate recommendations to move to a regional service delivery system. He said the next item on tonight's agenda is a Fund Balance request for startup costs to fund such move. Chief Hebert thanked the Council for their continued support and guidance. Mayor Lott and Councilors commended both Chief Audy and Chief Hebert on a job well done.

e. Approval: Regional Dispatch Update and Fund Balance Request for Fit-up – J Baker

Ms. Baker said on Town Meeting Day in 2018, Winooski voted to create the Chittenden County Public Safety Authority (CCPSA) Since then, the Board has worked on infrastructure and implementation plans. This fund balance request will enable the next steps of the building fit-up changes to prepare for regional services. Ms. Baker wanted to say that if you approve this request, we will still have \$469,000 in un-reserved funds still available in our Fund Balance.

MOTION by Councilor Colston seconded by Councilor Duncan to approve Fund Balance Request for Fit-Up as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

IX. Adjourn

MOTION by Councilor Myers seconded by Councilor Duncan to adjourn the City Council Meeting at 9:33 p.m. Voted and passed 4-0.

ATTEST _____
Sr Assistant City Clerk

