



City of Winooski

Vermont's Opportunity City

27 West Allen Street
Winooski Vermont 05404
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winooski.vt.gov

Winooski City Council

Remote and In-Person Meeting

Tuesday September 6, 2022, at 6 PM

- Attend online: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84364849328>
- Attend by phone: 1 646 558 8656
- Webinar ID: 843 6484 9328
- Attend in-person: Winooski City Hall ([27 West Allen Street](#))

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Agenda Review

IV. Public Comment

V. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval: City Council Minutes of 08/08/22
- b. Approval: Payroll Warrants 07/24/22-08/6/22, 08/07/22-08/20/22,
- c. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrants as of 08/08/22 and 08/31/22
- d. Approval: Bank Account Signatory Update- A Aldieri
- e. Approval: Removal of Commissioner – Winooski Commission for Inclusion & Belonging
- f. Approval: Event Permit – Pinegrove Terrace Block Party

VI. Council Reports

VII. City Updates

VIII. Regular Items

- a. Discussion: Champlain Water District Bond Vote Overview – E Wang
- b. Discussion: Reappraisal Process Overview – E Wang
- c. Discussion/Approval: Assessor's Office Errors & Omissions – E Wang
- d. Discussion/Approval: Downtown Winooski MOU – E Wang
- e. Approval: Commissioner Appointment SHCP Commission – R Coffey
- f. Approval: Committee Member Appointment-Winooski Memorial Library Committee – R Coffey
- g. Approval: Development Review Board Member Appointment – E Vorwald
- h. Approval: Commissioner Appointment-Municipal Infrastructure Commission – J Rauscher
- i. Discussion/Approval: Community Services Dept Scholarship Fund Fundraising Campaign – R Coffey
- j. Discussion/Approval: Housing Initiative Director Job Description – E Wang
- k. Discussion: Eviction Protection Policy – T Renner, J Duncan
- l. Discussion/Approval: COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Guidelines – E Wang
- m. Approval: City Manager Performance Summary – K Lott
- n. Discussion: Strategic Vision Goal Update (All) – E Wang

IX. Executive Session - E Wang/J Rauscher/A Aldieri

Executive Session Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. Section 313 (E) Pending or Probable Civil Litigation or a Prosecution, to which the Public Body is or may be a Party.

X. Executive Session – E Wang/R DiPalma

Executive Session Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §313 (a)(1)(F), confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body.

XI. Adjourn

MINUTES

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Deputy Mayor Duncan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present:

Mayor Kristine Lott

Deputy Mayor James Duncan

Councilors: Bryn Oakleaf, Aurora Hurd, Thomas Renner

Officers Present:

Elaine Wang, City Manager; Janet Brouard, Sr Assr City Clerk; Angela Aldieri, Finance Director. Paul Sarne, Communications Manager; Jon Rauscher, Public Works Director; Eric Vorwald, Planning & Zoning Manager; John Audy, Fire Chief; R Coffey, Community Services Director; Jenny Willingham, City Clerk; Nate Eddy, Library Director.

Others Present:

Town Meeting TV, Joe Duncan, Nate Pion, Champlain Water District; Ted Nelson, Courtney Brown, Vermont Appraisal Company; Meredith Bay-Tyack, Winooski Downtown; Grace Pfeil, Lauren Read, Suzanne Blain, Anna Bell, Elise Carlson, Thomas Locatelle.

III. Agenda Review

The City Manager said that the first item in Executive Sessions will not be needed tonight.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to remove Item IX. Executive Session. Voted and passed 4-0.

Councilor Duncan motioned to move item e on the Consent agenda to item o to Regular items so that the reasons behind the removal can be discussed.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Renner to move item e on the Consent agenda to item o on the Regular items. Voted and passed 4-0.

IV. Public Comment

Grace Pfeil appeared before the Council to speak on behalf of the Just Cause Eviction. Being a renter herself, she has felt the effects. She hopes the Council will take time to explore this and form a committee, to then get it on the ballot in March. The Mayor thanked her for her concerns and said this is an item on the agenda and they will speak more about it then.

Suzanne Blain requested that the Council investigate the process of adding units to properties within the City, specifically cottages. She admits the process is quite complex, currently being required to file a conditional use permit when it should be as simple as zoning permit. She recently appeared before the Planning Commission to voice her concerns and was referred to the City Council. The Mayor thanked her for her concerns and will talk with staff.

Thomas Locatelle appeared in support of Grace and her concerns regarding the Just Cause Eviction Policy Protection.

V. Consent Agenda

a. Approval: City Council Minutes of 08/08/22

MOTION by Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Hurd to approve the City Council Minutes of 08/08/22 as presented. Voted and passed 3-0. Councilor Duncan was absent from the meeting.

b. Approval: Payroll Warrants 07/24/22-08/6/22, 08/07/22-08/20/22,

c. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrants as of 08/08/22 and 08/31/22

d. Approval: Bank Account Signatory Update- A Aldieri

f. Approval: Event Permit – Pinegrove Terrace Block Party

MOTION by Councilor Renner seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to approve the Payroll Warrants, Accounts Payable Warrants, Bank Account Signatory Update and Event Permit – Pinegrove Terrace Block Party as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

e. Approval: Removal of Commissioner – Winooski Commission for Inclusion & Belonging

This item was moved to item o under the Regular Items

VI. Council Reports

Councilor Hurd – attended the August SHCP meeting, in which their primary concerns were to review the COVID recovery Grant Guidelines. The Inclusion and Belongings Commission held their first meeting. Future meetings will be held on the 2nd Thursday of every even month. Some things that were discussed were, rotating the chair and secretary positions at every meeting, assigned who would become the ambassadors to each commission. They gave thanks to Jenny Willingham for a successful Primary Election. They also wanted to thank Ray Coffey and his team for another successful year.

Councilor Oakleaf - the Municipal Infrastructure Commission did not meet; their next meeting will be September 15th. The CSWD ballot has been printed and ready. You will need to request a ballot; they will not be sent automatically. The rover will be coming to Winooski on September 10th at the Senior Center. Please check the City's website or Front Porch Forum for more information.

Mayor Lott – the Planning Commission will meet this Thursday at 6:30 pm, it will be a remote meeting. The interviews for the Airport Director are done, however no candidate has been selected yet. She put a shout out that Town Meeting TV is looking for a Representative.

Councilor Duncan – none

Councilor Renner – mentioned that the Winooski Pride Event will be held on September 17th

VII. City Updates

- RAISE grant and bridge project estimated timeline
(Grant funds must be obligated by June 30, 2026, and expended by September 30, 2031)
Vtrans target schedule
 - Now to 2025: preliminary engineering, right-of-way clearance, environmental review, utility coordination, public outreach.
 - 2025-2027: (Assuming Design—Build project) complete final design, Contract Award
 - April 2027: Start construction
 - June 2030: potential bridge closure (lateral slide construction)

- August 2030: Bridge open to traffic
- November 2030: substantial completion
- COVID wastewater detection trends and masking
- 9.3 Community Block Party was a success – thanks to all who attended
- 2022 Myers Memorial Pool Season has ended – thanks for a great season!
- Thrive After School Registration now open – winooski.vt.gov/thrive
- Champlain Water District Special Bond Vote
 - Tues Sept. 13 7 AM – 7 PM @ Champlain Water District
 - 403 Queen City Park Road South Burlington
 - champlainwater.org
- Rethink Runoff looking for volunteers to clean up Morehouse Brook in Winooski on Saturday September 24 – meet @ Landry Park
 - Full details @ volunteer sign up @ rethinkrunoff.org

VIII. Regular Items

a. Discussion: Champlain Water District Bond Vote Overview – E Wang

Joe Duncan and Nate Pion from Champlain Water District gave a brief overview of the bond vote on September 13th, the purpose of and a breakdown of project costs. Mr. Duncan said the project is broken down into two areas: Replacement of a filter water tank and repairs to the raw water parallel transmission main. CWD plans to construct the two anticipated projects within the next 5-10 years without any grants, however with this federal grant we will be able to construct both projects with only meeting the 20% funding requirement. CWD is required to bond for the total projected cost amount of 8.37M even though we will only be paying back 1.7M (which represents 20% of project costs). Mr. Pion wanted to make clear that there will be no CWD rate increase because of these two projects. Councilor Oakleaf asked if there was a minimum of voters needed to pass the bond. Mr. Duncan said no just a majority of all communities one way or the other is all that's needed. The Mayor thanked both Mr. Duncan and Mr. Pion for their attendance tonight.

b. Discussion: Reappraisal Process Overview – E Wang

The City of Winooski has contracted with the Vermont Appraisal Company to perform a City-wide reappraisal. Mr. Nelson, owner said they began in June by mailing out the first round of inspection notices. We are starting on the east side of town working our way west. Courtney Brown will be doing most of the inspections. Councilor Renner asked what happens if someone doesn't allow you into the property. Courtney said she will check MLS for recent sales data and look to see if they have pulled any recent permits for interior renovations. Usually all it takes is a simple phone call with the property owner to get the information she needs. She will treat them as they arise.

c. Discussion/Approval: Assessor's Office Errors & Omissions – E Wang

Mr. Nelson said when real estate or personal property is omitted from the Grand List by mistake, or an obvious error is found, the Listers must get the approval of the Council to rectify such errors. Mr. Nelson gave an overview of the adjustments brought before the Council. There are seven accounts that need adjusting; The change in grand list value will be an increase of \$1,115,109 resulting in a City revenue increase of \$13,261.99. The Council's only concern was if the two properties that had increases, were they allotted the same ability of grievance. Mr. Nelson said yes, both properties were mailed notices and given the opportunity to appeal the change on Friday, September 2 from 8am -12pm.

Neither party showed up.

MOTION by Councilor Renner seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to approve the Assessor's Office Errors & Omissions as presented. Voted and passed.3-0. Councilor Hurd abstained.

d. Discussion/Approval: Downtown Winooski MOU – E Wang

Meredith Bay-Tyack, Executive Director of the Winooski Downtown Association came before the Council to discuss the attached Memorandum of Understanding between the Association and the City of Winooski. The Downtown Winooski has been an organization since 2007. The current MOU was designed by the association board of directors and city staff back in 2018. Both parties felt it time to update the goals and objective, scope of services and responsibilities. Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Councilor Renner seconded by Councilor Hurd to approve the Downtown Winooski MOU as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

e. Approval: Commissioner Appointment SHCP Commission – R Coffey

Ray Coffey recommends appointing Elise Carlson to the Safe, Healthy, Connected People Commission with a term expiring on June 30, 2024. Elise said she has a Master's Degree in Public Health and multiple years of experience so she can support the City's Strategic vision for initiatives related to public health and safety.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to approve the appointment to the SHCP Commission as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

f. Approval: Committee Member Appointment-Winooski Memorial Library Committee – R Coffey

Nate Eddy, Library Director recommends appointing Lauren Read to the Library Committee with a term expiring on June 30, 2025. Lauren has been a resident of Winooski for the past 8 years and is a frequent patron and would love to give back to the community.

MOTION by Councilor Hurd seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to approve the appointment to the Winooski Memorial Library Committee as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

g. Approval: Development Review Board Member Appointment – E Vorwald

Mr. Vorwald said that with the recent departure of Kevin Lumpkin, Elsie Goodrich was promoted to a full-time member thereby opening a vacancy for an alternate to the board. Jordan Matte has been a resident of Winooski for years and has expressed an interest in helping Winooski move forward to ensure that Winooski remains a desirable place to live, work and visit. Mr. Vorwald said this appointment will fill the only vacancy left on the board.

MOTION by Councilor Renner seconded by Councilor Duncan to approve the appointment to the Development Review Board as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

h. Approval: Commissioner Appointment-Municipal Infrastructure Commission – J Rauscher

Mr. Rauscher said the Municipal Infrastructure Commission currently has one regular member vacancy. He recommends the appointment of Michelle Metzler to the Commission for a one-year term.

MOTION by Councilor Renner seconded by Councilor Duncan to approve the appointment to the Municipal Infrastructure Commission as presented. Voted and passed 3-0, Councilor Oakleaf abstained.

i. Discussion/Approval: Community Services Dept Scholarship Fund Fundraising Campaign – R Coffey

Mr. Coffey said according to the City's Financial Policies adopted by Council in 2021, all requests for fundraising efforts must be authorized by City Council at a public meeting. Mr. Coffey said staff is seeking approval to conduct a fundraising campaign to replenish the Community Services Department's Scholarship Fund. He said the funds were depleted due to high demand for the Myers Pool this summer. He gave an overview of the activities planned. Some discussion ensued.

MOTION by Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Renner to approve the Community Services Dept Scholarship Fund Fundraising Campaign as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

The Mayor called a 5-minute recess. The meeting will reconvene at 7:30 pm

j. Discussion/Approval: Housing Initiative Director Job Description – E Wang

City Manager Wang gave an overview of the position. She said this position will research, develop, and help implement initiatives that are in line with the City's housing goal and Council's housing-related policy priorities and strategies. This position is a spin off from the previous Community and Economic Development Officer position with a greater expansion in housing related aspects and less grant writing capacity. The grants writing portion will be discussed at a later date whether to outsource it. Discussion ensued with thoughts and concerns from Council.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Hurd to approve the Housing Initiative Director Job Description as presented with striking the last sentence of the purpose stating what the position will **not** serve as. Voted and passed 4-0.

k. Discussion: Eviction Protection Policy – T Renner, J Duncan

City Manager prefaced the discussion of this item by saying that before this becomes a ballot item, we must first do a lot of background work, then have 2 public hearings 30 days apart from each other. Therefore, not leaving enough time to have ready for the November Election and will be tight for the March one too. Lengthy discussion proceeded, with several pros and cons from the Council. Finally, after a unanimous decision, Council decided to wait for the housing position to be staffed before moving forward with this policy.

I. Discussion/Approval: COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Guidelines – E Wang

City Manager Wang introduced this item and there have been a lot of changes made since the last version brought to Council. We had an external entity view the document and suggested changes were given. The Mayor expressed her concern over the section pertaining to eligibility considerations, Section 2 A, specifically allowing unregistered, unincorporated charitable or mutual aid organizations that serve Winooski residents. She doesn't feel comfortable awarding funds to organizations that maintain a personal checking account. She said the purpose of these guideline are to maintain transparency and to limit the risk for fraud. Other Council members agreed. Councilor Oakleaf brought up that she was uneasy with the second bullet in that same section that refers to providing services. She would like to eliminate that last part that says, "or will provide services" She feels these funds are intended to provide relief from COVID and not to be used for future intent to provide services. The Mayor added that the words "Pre-existing could be added to beginning to now read "Pre-Existing Organizations that have provided, are currently providing, or will provide" The last change that is recommended refers to the extension period in Section 4 D. It mentions allowing for an extension, but Council would like to see it defined. The Mayor said since this item is on the agenda for approval, and we can't vote in the negative, she is asking for a vote to the question "Do you support including the wording in Section 2 A that pertains to Unregistered, Unincorporated Charitable Organizations? Yes 0, No 5

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Renner to approve the COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant guidelines with the following changes.

- 1) Strike the first sentence in Section 2 A that allows for Unregistered, Unincorporated Charitable or mutual aid organizations that serve Winooski residents.
- 2) In the same Section 2, next bullet item, add the words "Pre-existing" to the beginning of the sentence to now read "Pre-existing organizations that have provided, are currently providing, or will provide services:"
- 3) In Section 4 D, direct staff to define the extension period.

Voted and passed 4-0.

m. Approval: City Manager Performance Summary – K Lott

The Mayor outlined the review process from the evaluation form, council discussion and summary statement of compiled results. She said the Council is pleased with Elaine's high level of performance and achievement in her initial weeks in the role of City Manager.

MOTION by Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Renner to approve the City Manager Performance Summary as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

n. Discussion: Strategic Vision Goal Update (All) – E Wang

City Manager Wang presented this update. She walked though each item and where it currently falls on the progress timeline. No comments from Council.

o. Approval: Removal of Commissioner – Winooski Commission for Inclusion and Belonging

This item was moved to the Regular Items from the Consent portion of this agenda. It was felt that discussion was necessary to justify the reasoning behind this request for removal. Councilor Hurd said multiple attempts were made to contact this commissioner to no avail.

An informational binder was never picked up at Clerk's office and a meeting was held with a no show. Councilor Hurd recommends removal of such commissioner and open the search for another candidate.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Hurd to approve the removal with the understanding that if the commissioner wishes to remain a member they can, Voted and passed 4-0.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Hurd Pursuant 1 V.S.A. Section 313 (1) (F), confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body, feel that further discussions should be held in Executive Session. Voted and passed 4-0.

IX. Executive Session - E Wang/J Rauscher/A Aldieri

Executive Session Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. Section 313 (E) Pending or Probable Civil Litigation or a Prosecution, to which the Public Body is or may be a Party.

This item was removed in Agenda review

X. Executive Session - E Wang/R DiPalma

Executive Session Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §313 (a)(1)(F), confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Renner to enter Executive Session and to invite City Manager Elaine Wang and Attorney Robert DiPalma at 8:53 pm. Voted and passed 4-0.

XI. Adjourn

MOTION by Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Duncan to adjourn the meeting at 9:54pm Voted and passed 4-0.

ATTEST: _____
Sr. Asst City Clerk