



# City of Winooski

Vermont's Opportunity City

27 West Allen Street  
Winooski Vermont 05404  
802 655 6410  
[winooski.vt.gov](http://winooski.vt.gov)

## Winooski City Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 3, 2023, 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 and Liquor Control Board Minutes of 12.12.22

B. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant 12.29.22

C. Approval: Payroll Warrants 11.27.22 to 12.10.22, 12.11.22 to 12.24.22

D. 2023 Legislative Priorities for Winooski

### **VI. Council Reports**

### **VII. City Updates**

### **VIII. Regular Items**

A. Discussion: FY24 Budget Presentation: Public Works & Overall Capital Improvement Plan - Jon Rauscher, Public Works Director

B. Discussion: Chittenden County Public Safety Authority Update - Elaine Wang, City Manager

C. Discussion/Approval: Just Cause Eviction Charter Change Voter-Backed Petition

D. Discussion/Approval: All Hazard Mitigation Plan - Elaine Wang, City Manager

E. Discussion: Public Art Spending - Elaine Wang, City Manager

F. Discussion: Equity Update - Staff - Elaine Wang, City Manager

G. Discussion: Equity Next Steps for Council - Mayor Kristine Lott

**IX. Executive Session** - Pursuant to 1 VSA 313 1 E Pending or Probable Civil Litigation or a Prosecution, to which the Public Body is or may be a Party.

### **X. Regular Items**

A. Discussion/Approval: Adopt Settlement Resolution

### **XI. Adjourn**

## **MINUTES**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:02 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 Asst City Clerk; Paul Sarne, Communications Director; Angela Aldieri, Finance Director; Jenny Willingham, City Clerk; Jon Rauscher, Public Works Director; Ray Coffey, Community Services Director; Rick Hebert, Police Chief; John Audy, Fire Chief; Eric Vorwald, Planning & Zoning Manager.

### **Others Present:**

Town Meeting TV, Andrew Garami, Marielle Matthews, Winooski Partnership for Prevention; Chapin Spencer.

### **III. Agenda Review** – None

### **IV. Public Comment** – None

### **V. Consent Agenda**

- A. Approval: City Council and Liquor Control Board Minutes of 12.12.22
- B. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant 12.29.22
- C. Approval: Payroll Warrants 11.27.22 to 12.10.22, 12.11.22 to 12.24.22
- D. 2023 Legislative Priorities for Winooski

Councilor Oakleaf requested that a change be made to the minutes, under City Update. The City Manager referenced the recent fire located at 72 W Spring Street and it was at 72 E Allen Street.

**MOTION** Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Hurd to approve the City Council Minutes and Liquor Control Board Minutes as presented with the one address change listed above. Voted and passed 3-0. Councilor Renner abstained.

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to approve the Accounts Payable Warrant, Payroll Warrants and the 2023 Legislative Priorities as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

### **VI. Council Reports**

**Councilor Hurd** reported the next Inclusion & Belonging Meeting will be January 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm. The Safe, Healthy Connected People meeting will be January 10<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 pm.

**Councilor Oakleaf** reported that the Municipal Infrastructure met but not enough members attended for a quorum. There were a handful of concerned residents in attendance as well as a member of the Planning Commission. They do not have an approved work plan yet. VTRANS will hold a Public Hearing on January 12<sup>th</sup> regarding the Double Diamond Project at Exit 16.

**Mayor Lott** met with Burlington's Mayor Weinberg to discuss the Legislative Priorities. The Planning Commission's next meeting will be January 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Deputy Mayor Duncan** reported that the Housing Commission will meet on January 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Councilor Renner** thanked all those involved with the holiday display in the Downtown. It was very nice to see.

## VII. City Updates

- As you know, we are continuing the Fiscal Year 2024 budget meetings tonight! Community members are encouraged to get engaged in the process. To see the full budget and meeting schedule, please visit [winooskivt.gov/fy24](http://winooskivt.gov/fy24). Questions? Contact us at 802 655 6410 [budget@winooskivt.gov](mailto:budget@winooskivt.gov) or get in touch with me or your Councilors directly.
- Many thanks to the Public Works and Public Safety teams over the holiday break for their work to keep our streets and sidewalks safe during the winter weather events. Remember, you can sign up for our overnight parking ban alerts by texting 'Winooski' to 888 777 or by visiting [winooskivt.gov/parking](http://winooskivt.gov/parking). Also, many thanks to our partners at Green Mountain Power for their tremendous efforts getting our neighbors power back on and across the state.
- If you need COVID-19 Test kits, they are available for free at City Hall, the library, and the Senior Center during regular hours.
- Interested in running for local office on Town Meeting Day? The following terms are up for election:
  - Winooski City Councilor: 2-year term
  - Winooski City Councilor: 2-year term
  - Winooski School District Treasurer: 3-year term
  - Winooski School District Trustee: 3-year term
  - Winooski School District Trustee: 2-year term

Residents must file a Consent of Candidate form and petition with a minimum of 30 signatures (more are encouraged) by 5 PM on January 30, 2023. Forms can also be obtained at the City Clerk's Office. Visit the City Clerk's Office or [winooskivt.gov/vote](http://winooskivt.gov/vote) to get your Consent of Candidate form and petition sheets. File your form and petition at the City Clerk's Office ([27 W Allen St](http://27WAllenSt), M - F, 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM) Questions? Call or email the City Clerk's Office: 802 655 6410 / [clerk@winooskivt.gov](mailto:clerk@winooskivt.gov)

- Exit 16 DDI Public Meeting - The Vermont Agency of Transportation invites you to attend the Exit 16 Diverging Diamond Interchange public meeting on Thursday, January 12, 2023 - 6:30 PM at the Colchester Meeting House or via Zoom. To view the full meeting and project details, please visit [exit16ddi.vtransprojects.vermont.gov](http://exit16ddi.vtransprojects.vermont.gov). And for those of you who don't know, the core of the Exit 16 DDI project is to reconfigure the existing interchange at I-89 exit 16 in Colchester to Vermont's first Diverging Diamond Interchange. Winooski residents are also welcomed to attend our City Council meeting on January 9 for a presentation on this project provided by the Vermont Department of Transportation.

## **VIII. Regular Items**

### **a. Discussion: FY24 Budget Presentation: Public Works & Overall Capital Improvement Plan - Jon Rauscher, Public Works Director**

Mr. Rauscher presented the FY24 Proposed Budget for the Public Works Department, which includes the General Fund DPW, Water Fund, Sewer Fund and City Capital Fund. He walked the Council through a PowerPoint presentation stopping in-between funds to ask any questions. He highlighted the some of the projects focused on in FY23, those that are currently underway and the progress of each and what to look forward to in FY24. He spent a lengthy time going over each fund to ensure Council had a clear understanding of his intentions. Some concern was raised over the proposed FY24 water rate increase. Has there been any incentives researched to try and lower this increase? Discussions ensued. Council thanked Mr. Rauscher and staff for all their efforts putting forth this budget.

The Mayor called a recess at 7:22pm to reconvene at 7:27pm

Councilor Oakleaf had one last concern about underfunding some operational items with the DPW budget such as traffic calming. She would like to see \$5000 added to the budget for such.

**MOTION** by Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Renner to add \$5000 to the Capital Fund for evaluation of street calming to pay for a third-party consultant as laid out in the Traffic Calming Plan adopted in FY23. Voted 2-3, motion failed. Councilor Duncan, Councilor Hurd and Mayor Lott voted no.

The Mayor offered the Council the ability to bring up any questions they may have from previous budget presentations. She had one regarding the Community Services presentation. They had a conversation regarding the grant funded roles that would be continued in that budget. She would like to see the impact if we do not keep the grant funded services to the core services, we currently offer such as, Thrive, Library, Gardens, Senior Center meals, Pool, and Soccer.

**MOTION** by Mayor Lott seconded by Deputy Mayor Duncan to request seeing a scenario of what excluding those grant funds would do to the costs and delivery of those core services. Voted and passed 3-2, Councilor Oakleaf and Councilor Hurd voted no.

### **b. Discussion: Chittenden County Public Safety Authority Update - Elaine Wang, City Manager**

City Manager Wang began with an update on the timeline of events since the creation of the Regional Dispatch program. On Town Meeting Day back in 2018, Winooski and six other neighboring municipalities voted to form a regional emergency dispatch service available to all. As of October 2022, the members dropped down to five, Burlington, Colchester, South Burlington, Williston, and Winooski. Within the next couple of months several changes have occurred. The Williston Selectboard decided to include their fire dispatch services only, Colchester Selectboard voted to remove all CCPSA contributions from their FY24 budget. In December, the remaining municipalities discussed whether and how regional dispatch could continue. South Burlington's City Manager said they would be interested in providing dispatch services in the meantime; however, it will take a few months for them to produce a proposal. After consulting with the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Finance Director, City Manager Wang said it would be her recommendation to keep the contribution budgeted for FY24 in place.

### **c. Discussion/Approval: Just Cause Eviction Charter Change Voter-Backed Petition**

City Manager Wang said that we received a petition from the nonprofit Rights and Democracy group for a charter change to be placed on the March 7, 2023 ballot. This charter change deals with "just cause eviction" and will provide by ordinance, protection for residential tenants. After consulting with legal counsel, City Manager Wang said there are three technical adjustments to the warning, they are the reference to Vermont Charter needs to be changed to read 17 V.S.A. Section 2645, the reference to Acts of 1949, no 293 needs to be changed to Acts 2013 M-9 which applies to Winooski and finally the section that this change would fall under should be Section 304- General Powers, Section B. When the City accepts a charter change petition, 17 V.S.A. 2645 (a)(1) requires the city to hold two duly warned public hearings before the next vote; the first being 30-40 days before the vote and the second no later than 10 days after the first public hearing. With the Election being on March 7, it is not possible to hold these public hearings on the regularly scheduled Council meetings, therefore we will need to hold the first hearing between, Thursday January 26<sup>th</sup> and Friday February 3<sup>rd</sup>. After much lengthy discussion on dates and times, it was decided that Thursday January 26<sup>th</sup> at City Hall and Saturday February 4<sup>th</sup> at the O'Brien Community Center would be the best dates to hold the two required public hearings.

**MOTION** by Councilor Hurd seconded by Councilor Renner to approve the warning as presented with the three technical adjustments and to hold the public hearings on January 26<sup>th</sup> and February 3<sup>rd</sup> (mis-typed correct date should be February 4<sup>th</sup>) Voted and passed 4=0.

The next area of discussion evolved around what form of education and outreach would be done to notify the public about this charter change. Consensus was to put out an informational sheet, listing the process or outcome from this vote, the timeline for it to become in effect, any operational/financial impacts, data from the Landlord Registry program listing current number of rental units in the City. Staff will work on a draft, run it by the Inclusion & Belongings Commission and Housing Commission for their input and bring back the final draft to Council at their January 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**MOTION** by Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Duncan to approve the info sheet items, requesting translation of such, have interpretation services available for the Saturday meeting, run a draft by the Inclusion and Belonging and Housing Commissions and bring back the final version to Council at the January 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Voted and approved 4-0.

### **d. Discussion/Approval: All Hazard Mitigation Plan - Elaine Wang, City Manager**

City Manager Wang presented Winooski's All Hazard Mitigation Plan. She said this plan identifies specific natural, technological, and societal hazards that impact the City; prioritizes hazards for mitigation planning; and recommends goals and strategies to reduce losses from those hazards. Ms. Wang said there are not significant changes compared to the 2017 plan, but a few items include undergrounding existing overhead utilities along Main Street, which is currently included in the Main Street project plan; improving cybersecurity measures for city-wide networks, which is underway and finally airport noise mitigation, which is pending funding availability. Councilor Duncan mentioned his concerns regarding the F-35's and possible crash that could potentially happen and the influx of the ash borers putting our ash trees in grave danger. Councilor Renner had some clarification suggestions to the plan, and to add some positive highlights such as, Winooski's first female mayor or the success of the 100-year Celebration. Other

areas of concerns mentioned dealt with minor mapping changes and to update with the school solar installation.

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Hurd to approve the Resolution as provided. Voted and approve 4-0.

Mayor Lott asked if they need to approve the previous changes mentioned. Ms. Wang said it was not necessary, however Councilor Duncan requested to do so since he will not be running for re-election and would like to see the mentioned items acted upon.

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Hurd to make the following updates next year, Emerald Ash borer, F-35 crashes, Historical section be brought current, change the map on page 26 and page 28, note the school district solar installation, identify which church will be the emergency shelter and finally update the history section to end on a more positive note. Voted and passed 4-0.

**e. Discussion: Public Art Spending - Elaine Wang, City Manager**

Ms. Wang said there has been a concern about the appearance throughout our public art spaces with the increased tagging of graffiti. Whereas an art district is proposed in the Master Plan, it has not been a priority until now. Ms. Wang stated that studies have shown that murals can deter this kind of vandalism. She has been approached by one organization interested in beautifying the City. Back in 2006, a public art fund was established to justify this cause. The current balance of the fund is just over \$5500. Ms. Wang said the purpose of the agenda item is for the Council to decide whether to move forward with a public art initiative at this time by using the available funds and if so, would you like existing commissions to advise on how the funds should be spent? Discussion ensued on support of the fund, what do we want to see done, what commission(s) should be involved.

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to refer the proposal received to the Safe, Healthy Connected People Commission for their review and as a part of their review to determine if this is worth undoing and is this the right time to use these funds. Voted and approved 4-0.

**f. Discussion: Equity Update - Staff - Elaine Wang, City Manager**

Ms. Wang said the budget that she recommended for the FY24 included cutting the Equity Director position as a way of help get the tax rate down to 5%. Members of the public have voiced their concerns over this and have asked what this means for equity efforts going forward in the City. She said the most obvious impact is that we will not have access to someone on staff with expertise. However, this does not mean that our equity efforts will be paused. We have several areas in which our equity work is underway: Accessibility, Voice, Welcoming, Awareness as well as some miscellaneous areas. She proceeded to list a few from each category. Some discussion ensued.

**g. Discussion: Equity Next Steps for Council - Mayor Kristine Lott**

Mayor Lott said this item is on the agenda to give Council the ability to reflect on the recent equity training sessions that they attended. Our recent being a two-part session on Cultivating Tenants of Equity &

Inclusion. She would like to use this time to list the takeaways of what was learned and how can they support any future work. Each Councilor had the opportunity to share their thoughts. Finally, they discussed some potential next steps to move forward in their own equity efforts.

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Hurd to find that further discussion will put the City at a disadvantage and should be done in Executive Session. Voted and passed 4-0.

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to enter Executive Session at 10:03pm. Voted and passed 4-0.

## **IX. Executive Session**

**a. Pursuant to 1 VSA 313 1 E Pending or Probable Civil Litigation or a Prosecution, to which the Public Body is or may be a Party.**

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Renner to adjourn Executive Session at 10:14pm.

## **X. Regular Items**

**a. Discussion/Approval: Adopt Settlement Resolution**

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Renner to adopt the Settlement Resolution. Voted and passed 4-0.

## **XI. Adjourn**

**MOTION** by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Hurd to adjourn the City Council meeting at 10:15pm. Voted and passed 4-0.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sr Assistant City Clerk