



City of Winooski

Vermont's Opportunity City

27 West Allen Street
Winooski Vermont 05404
802 655 6410
winooski.vt.gov

Winooski City Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 6 PM

Attend in person: Winooski City Hall (27 West Allen Street)

Attend online: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84364849328>

Attend by phone: 1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 843 6484 9328

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Agenda Review

IV. Public Comment

V. Consent Agenda

A. Approval: City Council Minutes of 1.3.23, City Council and Liquor Control Minutes of 1.9.23

B. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant 1.11.23

C. Approval: Payroll Warrant 12.25.22 to 1.7.23

D. Approval: Annual Vermont Agency of Transportation Highway Certification

VI. Council Reports

VII. City Updates

VIII. Regular Items

A. Discussion/Approval: Just Cause Eviction Charter Change Timeline Issue and Vote Date Options – Elaine Wang, City Manager, Jenny Willingham, City Clerk

B. Discussion: Introduction of Proposed Changes to Sidewalk Use – Eric Vorwald, Planning and Zoning Manager

C. Discussion: FY24 Budget Presentation – Overall Budget Discussion – Elaine Wang, City Manager, Angela Aldieri, Finance Director, Leadership Team

D. Discussion: Strategic Vision Area Goal Update – All – Elaine Wang, City Manager

IX. Adjourn

MINUTES

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Deputy Mayor Duncan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present

Mayor Kristine Lott
Deputy Mayor James Duncan
Councilors Bryn Oakleaf, Aurora Hurd, Thomas Renner

Officer's Present

Elaine Wang, City Manager; Janet Brouard, Sr Asst City Clerk; Angela Aldieri, Finance Director; Paul Sarne, Communications Director; Eric Vorwald, Planning/Zoning Manager; Jenny Willingham, City Clerk; Jon Rauscher, Public Works Director; John Audy, Fire Chief; Rick Hebert, Police Chief, Ray Coffey, Community Services Director.

Other's Present

Town Meeting TV, Levi Bonnell, Andrew Garami, Andy Blanchet, Kyle Smucker, Maggie, Meghan Tedder, Andy Siki, Catherine Bergeon-Radoux, Thomas Fraga, Meredith Bay-Tyack, Winooski Downtown; Marielle Matthews, Rep Daisy Berbeco, Amanda Calder, Steven Berbeco, Elisa, Megan Downey, Kyle Keefe, James Strain, Bridget Mientka, Anne Mientka, Tom Proctor, Nick Brownell, Alecia Najman, Siegfried Boyd Isidro-Cloudas, Nora Aronds, Connor Daley

III. Agenda Review – None

IV. Public Comment

The Mayor asked if there were any comments from the public that are not pertaining to any item on the agenda tonight. Thomas Fraga approached the Council backed by several other Pinegrove Terrace residents in attendance to voice their concerns with the deterioration of the pumpstation. Levi Bonnell appeared via zoom and read a letter that outlined their concerns. Mr. Fraga said the Homeowners Association is willing to work with the City to come to some agreement on the current state as well as future maintenance. He said they are all here tonight to formally request to be put on the next City Council agenda to further discuss this issue. Mayor Lott thanked all those in attendance and said she will get with City Manager Wang to make it happen.

V. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval: City Council Minutes of 1.3.23, City Council and Liquor Control Minutes of 1.9.23
- b. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant 1.11.23
- c. Approval: Payroll Warrant 12.25.22 to 1.7.23
- d. Approval: Annual Vermont Agency of Transportation Highway Certification

MOTION by Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Renner to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

VI. Council Reports

Councilor Hurd – a special Inclusion & Belonging meeting was held to discuss Town Meeting Day items; City budget, how to share with residents. The Commission also reviewed the “Just Cause Eviction” draft. Discussion on the equity audit was tabled to the February 9th meeting. The Safe, Healthy Connected People Commission will meet on February 14th.

Councilor Oakleaf - CCRPC will meet tomorrow. They will be working on project recommendations. The Municipal Infrastructure Commission will meet on the 19th to continue their workplan and to discuss officer roles. Lastly, the Green Mountain Transit Board appointed their new General Manager.

Mayor Lott – Attended a joint meeting with Mayors to outline their legislative agenda for the coming months. The Planning Commission met to continue their work on creating incentives regarding historical preservation efforts.

Councilor Duncan – attended the Airport Commission meeting. The Housing Commission will meet this Thursday at 6:00 pm.

Councilor Renner – Will attend the Downtown Winooski meeting tomorrow.

VII. City Updates

- As you know, we’re continuing the Fiscal Year 2024 budget meetings tonight with the overall budget discussion. City Council will vote on the final proposed budget on Monday, January 23rd. After that, we’ll have a joint City/School budget presentation and community dinner on February 9th, **another joint City/School budget presentation held virtually (TBA)**, a recorded presentation from myself and the Mayor available on our website after February 10th, and the annual meeting held at the School District on the night before Town Meeting Day (March 6th). If you have questions, feel free to call or email: 802 655 6410 / budget@winooski.vt.gov. You can also reach out to any City Councilor or staff by visiting winooski.vt.gov/contact.

- Speaking of Town Meeting Day, if you are interested in running for local office on Town Meeting Day, note the deadline to file paperwork is 5pm on Monday January 30. There are two City Council seats up for election and 3 School District seats up for election. The two City Council seats are for 2-year terms, The School District seats are the Treasurer for a 3-year term, and two School District Trustee seats, one for a 3-year term and the other for a 2-year term. To appear on the ballot, you must be a Winooski resident and file a Consent of Candidate form, and a petition with a minimum of 30 signatures, to the City Clerk's Office, again by 5pm January 30. If you have any questions about this, contact the City Clerk's Office at 802 655 6410, clerk@winooski.vt.gov, or come into City Hall at 27 W Allen St.
- If you need COVID-19 Test kits, they are available for free at City Hall, the library, and the Senior Center during regular hours.
- The City of Winooski was sent a press release today by the Vermont Air National Guard who will be performing night flying from Tuesday, January 17 to Friday, January 20 and from Tuesday, January 24 to Friday, January 27 with two takeoff and landing periods scheduled between 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. There are no scheduled morning flights – their press release was shared on our City channels.
- A blood drive will be held at the Winooski Senior Center this Friday from 12 – 5:15 PM. All blood types are accepted, but the American Red Cross of Northern New England is in great need of type-o donations. To sign up, please see news updates section of our website at winooski.vt.gov.

VII. Regular Items

a. Discussion/Approval: Just Cause Eviction Charter Change Timeline Issue and Vote Date Options – Elaine Wang, City Manager, Jenny Willingham, City Clerk

City Manager Wang said this is brought back to you tonight due to staff finding out that after your meeting on January 3rd that we are out of compliance with state law on the timeline for responding to the petition. City Manager Wang said by State statute, not only does the first hearing on a voter backed charter change have to be held more than 30 days before the vote, it also must be warned 30-40 days in advance of the hearing date. So, at your Jan 3rd meeting I should have advised you to warn the first hearing for between Feb 2nd and Feb 12th instead of setting the hearing for Jan 26th and Feb 4th. After consulting with legal counsel, we have two options; hold the vote on March 7th as planned or hold the vote at a later date. Holding the vote on March 7th would require a validation vote to be held sometime in the future. We are still working on the timeline of such. Attached is a memo to City Council outlining the pros and cons of each option. Some discussion ensued and the Mayor recognized many in the audience that would like to speak on behalf of this petition. Several members of the public spoke to the importance and urged the Council to approve keeping this item on the March 7 ballot.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Hurd to approve keeping the Just Cause Eviction Charter Change on the March 7th ballot. Voted and passed 4-0.

b. Discussion: Introduction of Proposed Changes to Sidewalk Use – Eric Vorwald, Planning and Zoning Manager

Mr. Vorwald said staff has been working for the past few years on possible changes to the use of public sidewalk space. Mr. Vorwald gave Council some background information on how and why this came. Safety was a huge issue. Outreach was made to the business community in early December to get feedback. Staff will provide a general overview of the information received as well as providing recommendations on how to move forward. It is anticipated that a more detailed discussion will be needed, thus recommending bringing this discussion back to the January 23rd meeting. Mr. Vorwald highlighted some of the changes which raised a few questions from Council. Meredith Bay-Tyack, Downtown Winooski gave a huge thanks to staff for their work and hopes this will be a benefit to all.

The Mayor called a 5-minute recess to reconvene at 7:38 pm.

c. Discussion: FY24 Budget Presentation – Overall Budget Discussion – Elaine Wang, City Manager, Angela Aldieri, Finance Director, Leadership Team

City Manager Wang said since December you have had the opportunity to review the recommended budget set forth by staff and myself, focusing each week on a certain department. Staff has taken your suggestions brought this updated budget back for your review. Ms. Aldieri, Finance Director has also included a budget scenario tool for you to see the effects of adds & deletes when finalizing the budget. Mayor Lott thanked all for the hard work put into this budget. She said this has been the most challenging budget since her tenor here. The Mayor gave all Councilors the opportunity to voice their concerns, what the feel needs to be added/deleted. After lengthy discussion, the Mayor was pleased with presenting a budget increase of just slightly over 5%. Some hesitation was voiced to put forward this without adding back in the Equity Director. It was asked if we could use ARPA funds for such. Ms. Aldieri stated that it is against policy to use reserves for operations.

MOTION by Councilor Renner seconded by Councilor Oakleaf to approve the FY24 budget as presented with the following add/deletes; increasing the Housing Director position back to 40 hours, keeping the Youth Interventionalist position at 28 hours, maintain all the Community Services roles, except cutting the 2nd Circulation Assistant position, add interpreters at the polls and have interpretation services at all quarterly meetings. Voted and passed 3-0. Councilor Hurd voted no.

The Mayor asked if they need to vote on the Public Hearing. City Manager Wang said you could but not necessary.

MOTION by Councilor Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Renner to approve the Public Hearing for January 23, 2023. Voted and passed 4-0.

d. Discussion: Strategic Vision Area Goal Update – All – Elaine Wang, City Manager

City Manager Wang presented an update on the 2022-2023 Priorities and Strategies adopted by Council. We are currently proceeding as planned, with a few areas moving slower than anticipated but no threat of being paused. The Mayor asked if there were any concerns from Council. Hearing none, she said that brings us to the end of us meeting.

IX. Adjourn

MOTION by Council Oakleaf seconded by Councilor Renner to adjourn the City Council meeting at 9:24 pm. Voted and passed 4-0.

ATTEST: _____

Sr Asst City Clerk