

Remote Winooski City Council Meeting

Monday, May 4, 2020 @ 6 PM

- Attend online: <https://zoom.us/j/411567807>
- Attend by phone: +1 253 215 8782 US
- Meeting ID: 411 567 807
- Password:000285

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

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Agenda Review

IV. Public Comment

V. Consent Agenda

- Approval: City Council Minutes of April 20, 2020
- Approval: Payroll Warrant 4/5/2020 to 4/18/2020, Accounts Payable Warrant ending 4/29/20 and Subsequent to Payout for March 2020.
- Approval: TA60 Town Financial

VI. Council Reports

VII. City Updates

VIII. Regular Items

- Discussion/Approval: F-35 Resolutions – K Lott
- Approval: Chicken Permit: 156 Mallets Bay Avenue – J Baker
- Approval: Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Appointments – J Baker
- Approval: Winooski Small Business Loan Committee Covid-19 Relief Loan Application Recommendation Awards – H Carrington
- Discussion: Treasurer Quarter 3 Update – A Anastasia-Hill
- Discussion: COVID-19 FY20 Revenue Projections – A Aldieri
- Discussion/Approval: Policy Commission Discussion – K Lott

IX. Executive Session

- City Manager – Contract discussion to take place in Executive Session per 1 V.S.A. §313

(a) (3).

X. Adjourn

MINUTES



The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Councilor Myers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present:

Mayor Kristine Lott

Councilors: Amy Lafayette, Mike Myers, James Duncan, Hal Colston

Officers Present:

Jessie Baler, City Manager; Janet Brouard, Sr Asst City Clerk; Angela Aldieri, Finance Director; Heather Carrington, Community and Economic Director; John Audy, Fire Chief; Eric Vorwald, Planning/Zoning Director; Ray Coffey, Community Services Director; Paul Sarne, Communications Coordinator; Alex Anastasia-Hill.

Others Present:

Dr. Robert Ackland, Marguerite Adelman, Terry Zigmund, Josee Compton, Ethan Piette, Local Scout Troop.

III. Agenda Review

The Mayor said that she wanted to add an item to the Executive Session. She said this item was last minute and she feels it needs to be discussed tonight.

MOTION by Councilor Myers seconded by Councilor Colston to add an item to executive session concerning the negotiations of real estate purchase with Nedde Real Estate for the redevelopment of Lot 7D under Title 1, Section 313 (a)(1)(A). Voted and passes 4-0. The Mayor asked if there were any other changes.

IV. Public Comment – None

V. Consent Agenda

MOTION by Councilor Myers seconded by Councilor Lafayette to approve the consent agenda as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

VI. Council Reports

Councilor Duncan – Arbor Day was Saturday, was pleased to see the online celebration. He said we will celebrate sometime in the future.

Councilor Lafayette attended the Downtown Winooski board meeting. They are rolling out a new campaign called Winooski with Love. They are urging people to display green hearts in



their windows and doors to spark some joy and show solidarity throughout these trying times.

Councilor Myers said the Winooski Food shelf challenge was a huge success. He said they received \$1550.00 in food and monetary donations. He said that JJ's Market is willing to continue this through the month of May. He wanted to send out a huge thank you to the residents of Winooski. The Food Shelf was very grateful.

Councilor Colston said he continues to reach out to members of the community to see if they need support. He said he has helped numerous people and his offer still stands. He said the Senate has passed legislation to waive interest on late tax payment. The legislation attempts to offer relief to citizens affected by this pandemic. It is now on the Governor's desk.

Mayor Lott said she had the opportunity to speak in Montpelier on May 1st. She wanted to voice the issues residents of Winooski are facing. She attended the Mayor's Coalition to discuss relief issues that communities are facing.

VII. City Updates

- State Department of Taxes has selected Axiomatic from NH – Not NEMRC. They do not offer another financial platform. We will be reviewing this over the next year.
- April DRB hearing decisions are now posted on our website.
- Please remember to lock your vehicle. We are seeing some reports of folks going through unlocked cars.
- Construction – 10 people per job location. Fully open next week. Outside. Uninhabited building with a discrete door.
- Reports from the CBD extraction facility on Elm Street.
 - Per zoning, categorized as "agricultural use" and therefore they are exempt from our regulations regarding odors.
 - From a Code perspective, based on our review of their operations, there is not "public health" violation.
 - In other words, while the smell is bothersome, it is not dangerous.
 - We are taking a partnership approach with them to developing some solutions.
 - End of their drying season. 2 months of drying left. Next year done primarily in the winter, which tends to eliminate more of the odor.
 - Looking at exhaust options, etc.
- Covid-19 Update
 - Continue to maintain essential services and all who can are working from home.



In order to mitigate the financial impacts on the City (86), we have furloughed 21 staff as of 4/26

- We are requiring masks of all who come in to do by-appointment business with the City. This likely will continue as we open up. We are exploring options to provide masks for those who don't have them – so as not to create a barrier for people to do business with the City.
- Safety Plan and Training
 - Issued a Safety Plan to all staff
 - Staff have completed the required the VOSHA training
 - Encourage Council to do the same: labor.vermont.gov/VOSHA
- Resources at winooski.vt.gov/covid-19
 - What's going on at the City as well as resources listed by
 - Businesses and Employees
 - Families and Childcare
 - Federal/State/Local Support
 - Food Security
 - Health and Safety
 - Multilingual/Translation
 - Seniors & Older Vermonters
 - Volunteering
 - Downtown Winooski - #winooskiwithlove
 - Let's come together to show our love and our hope!
 - Display a green heart 🍷 in your windows to say "From Winooski, With Love!"
 - This is one way we can all spread a little joy to our friends, neighbors, first responders, and frontline workers.
 - <http://downtownwinooski.org/winooskiwithlove/>

VIII. Regular Items

- a. Discussion/Approval: F-35 Resolution –K Lott

The Mayor said we are here again tonight with two proposed Resolutions. She said the Council has signed resolutions pertaining to the F-35's in the past, however these two resolutions are in light of the recent pandemic. Councilor Duncan said he has received several comments and concerns from citizens regarding the intense noise associated with the training sessions during the state-wide social distancing and stay-at-home order. His draft calls on the Governor to halt all training flights to reduce anxiety placed on our residents during this global emergency and to dedicate such resources towards reducing the local impacts of this pandemic. There were a few members of the community present to



voice their concerns over the continued flights. After considerable conversation, the Mayor said while she agrees with the content of these resolutions, she feels we need to prioritize what we are asking for. The Food shelf activity has more than doubled, Small businesses are struggling. We need to focus on keeping our residents housed, fed and employed. She thinks these resolutions are counterproductive. Councilor Lafayette echoes what the Mayor said. She feels it to be due diligent that these were brought to the Council in light of the many emails received. She worries it might have a negative outcome. The F-35's are not going to stop flying so she feels this fight will not be the best use of our time. Councilor Colston agrees. His major concern is the mitigation piece. He feels we need to focus our energy on mitigating the noise. Councilor Myers agrees however he supports the F-35's. Councilor Duncan know this won't have a "real world" impact but he feels we owe it to our residents to voice their concerns. He said they just want this suspended through the pandemic. He thanked everyone and the Council for putting this on the agenda tonight. The Mayor called for a motion.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Colston to approve his version of the F-35 Resolution as presented. Voted 2-3. Mayor Lott, Councilors Myers and Lafayette voted no.

b. Approval: Chicken Permit: 156 Mallets Bay Avenue – J Baker

Mr. Vorwald said that we have a request to approve a chicken permit for the owners at 156 Mallets Bay Avenue. Mr. Vorwald said this application has been reviewed and it has been determined that no permit is needed for the proposed accessory structure since there is no other structures on the property and the proposed structure is less than 100 square feet in size, which qualifies as being exempt from zoning under Section 6.13. Staff recommends approval of the request.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Lafayette to approve the request for Chicken Permit at 156 Mallets Bay Avenue as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

c. Approval: Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Appointments – J Baker

The City Manager said that the CCRPC has requested that the Council approve representatives and alternates to their committees. She said all applicants are currently serving. They are simply looking for re-appointments.



MOTION by Councilor Colston seconded by Councilor Myers to approve the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission appointments as presented. Votes and passed 4-0.

d. Approval: Winooski Small Business Loan Committee Covid-19 Relief Loan Application Recommendation Awards – H Carrington

Ms. Carrington said in response to the intense impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Winooski business community, City Council approved adapting the Winooski Small Business Loan Program to provide businesses with emergency loans to assist them in difficult time. Ms. Carrington said the committee has received four loan requests. The Committee met on April 30th to evaluate applications based on previous established criteria and guidelines. The Committee recommends approval of loans to three of the four applicants in the full amount. Ms. Carrington said there is \$158,500 remaining for future loan requests.

MOTION by Councilor Colston seconded by Councilor Duncan to approve the Winooski Small Business Loan Committee Covid-19 Relief Loan Application Recommendation Awards as presented. Voted and passed 4-0.

e. Discussion: Treasurer Quarter 3 Update – A Anastasia-Hill

Mr. Anastasia-Hill presented the Council with the 3rd Quarter financial update. He walked the Council through the City's current state. He said they don't appear to be in financial difficulties as of yet. They will have to see where the projections are after the 4th round of property tax collections are in. He said in comparison to last year's revenue, we seem to be on track. It is his intention to give more frequent updates in the future to keep the Council up to speed throughout this pandemic. Councilor Lafayette thanked him for the update and was glad to see that we are better than we thought. The Mayor also thanked him and looks forward to future updates.

f. Discussion: COVID-19 FY20 Revenue Projections – A Aldieri

Ms. Aldieri said that one major item to consider in this time of financial crisis is the impact on revenues. She said she has performed an analysis on revenues to date and compared them to history and what the impact of various levels of tax delinquency would have on City reserves. Ms. Aldieri walked the Council through her projections, see attached spreadsheet. She did a conservative, mid-range and worst-case scenario. She said we currently right on cue. We have been proactive with reducing expenditures in anticipation of revenue shortfalls. She said time will tell. She will know more in the next 10 days when property taxes are due. She said we have seen significant payments so far, that she



doesn't seem to think it will put us in grave danger. Based on her projections and past delinquent tax history, she believes that we could fully fund any shortfall this year by using reserves. The Mayor thanked Ms. Aldieri for all her in depth work, she said it will be important to keep tabs on this and looks forward to future updates.

g. Discussion/Approval: Policy Commission Discussion – K Lott

The Mayor said that the City's Policy Commissions were cancelled in the middle of March for the foreseeable future due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Council Liaisons have talked with their Commission Chairs and Staff Liaisons about next steps. Some of the concerns were, is the critical policy work that we wish to move forward in the existing commission workplan? Does staff have the capacity to support commission meetings, given the reduction in staff? Do commission members wish to continue with remote meetings? And finally, do residents have the ability and capacity to remotely engage in these discussions? She said she's looking for responses from other Council members to these questions. She said that the Planning Commission is very interested in continuing. Councilor Myers said that the Infrastructure Commission is interested. They have a tentative remote meeting set for May 14th. Councilor Duncan said the Housing Commission is not interested at this time, but a few on the Charter Commission are in favor. Councilor Lafayette said that Community Service will not meet, since most of their services have been suspended. The Mayor said it sounds like there is interest to continue the Commission work. She would entertain a motion.

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Colston to reconvene Commission Meetings remotely. Voted and passed 4-0.

IX. Executive Session

MOTION by Councilor Duncan seconded by Councilor Lafayette move to find that premature general public knowledge regarding ongoing negotiations of real estate purchase for the redevelopment of Lot 7 D would clearly place the City at a substantial disadvantage, because the City risks disclosing its negotiation strategy if it discusses these negotiations in public. Voted and passed 4-0.

MOTION by Councilor Colston seconded by Councilor Myers to enter into executive session to discuss negotiations of real estate purchase with Nedde Real Estate for the redevelopment of Lot 7D under the provisions of Title 1, Sections 313(a)(1)(A) of the Vermont Statutes and invite into executive session the City Manager and Community and



Economic Development Officer and to also discuss the City Manager's contract. Voted and passed 4-0.

X. Adjourn

MOTION by Councilor Myers seconded by Councilor Colston to adjourn the City Council meeting at 8:19 pm. Voted and passed 4-0.

ATTEST: _____
Sr. Asst City Clerk

