

*City of Taunton  
Municipal Council Meeting Minutes  
City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA  
In the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers*

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*Minutes, March 7, 2023 at 7:01 O'clock P.M.*

*Regular Meeting*

*Mayor Shaunna L. O'Connell presiding*

*Prayer was offered by the Mayor*

*Present at roll call were: Councilors Postell, Quintal, Sanders, Coute,  
Pottier, McCaul, Duarte and Dooner  
Councilor Borges was absent.*

**Record of preceding meeting was read by title and approved. So voted.**

**Opportunity for input by the general public. No one spoke during public input.**

**Hearing:**

*Continued Hearing:* Upon the petition submitted by Robert Asack, 96 Sachem Rock Ave., East Bridgewater, MA for the issuance of a Special Permit to allow: A 10 Unit group home with a parking waiver at 74 Weir Street located in the Central Business District. The City Clerk read a communication from John D. DeSousa, Northcounty Group, Inc., requesting a continuance for the date of August 15, 2023. **Motion was made to approve the requested continuance to August 15, 2023. So voted.** On discussion, Councilor McCaul said we keep saying the words “group home” but when the gentlemen was doing the presentation, he was saying “studio apartments”. He wants to make sure they get this corrected. Councilor Coute said if he filed as a group home, he would have to put into writing the change. We can't take what they say and just make changes to a written filing.

**Communications from the Mayor:**

Mayor O'Connell said they are having a community food drive starting on March 9<sup>th</sup> to benefit our seniors and local food pantries. They know our local food pantries are challenged right now to fill their shelves and our seniors are struggling a bit too. They want to help out as a community. This community always comes together when they have things like this. They look forward to a lot of participation. This has been organized by Council President Dooner, the entire City Council and the Mayor's office. Drop-off locations are at Amaro Family Auto on 503 Middleboro Avenue in East Taunton, Taunton City Hall on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor in the rear and Hannaford Supermarket on Warner Boulevard. There will be boxes at these locations where people can drop-off their donations. There is a list that they will post in various places, the Facebook page and the City website. They are asking for specific items such as: canned foods, pasta, rice, cereal, pasta sauce, peanut

butter and granola bars. They look forward to this and she thanked everyone for their help. Again, it starts March 9<sup>th</sup> and ends March 31<sup>st</sup>. This weekend, on Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., they are having a tour of the Taunton Police Station. This is an open house. The community is invited to attend. It's an opportunity to see the conditions in which our Police officers are working. Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, they will be having a community information session on the proposed Public Safety Facility. You can come in and learn about the new Public Safety Facility, see renderings of the building, meet the project manager and the architects, learn about the costs of the financing of the project and of course, the Police Chief and the Fire Chief will be present as well. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, they will be having a tour of the Central Fire Station from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. They will be announcing that again closer to the date. They encourage the community to come and attend these events and learn about Police and Fire to get some good information on this project.

**Appointments:**

NONE

**Communications from City Officers:**

Com. from the Budget Director requesting a transfer of funds due to an error with calculation regarding enrollment. The Bristol Agricultural School assessment is short \$70,388.72. **Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Finance and Salaries. So voted.** Mayor O'Connell added that this was not an error made on the City's part.

Com. from the Office Manager of the Veterans Service Department notifying of the retirement buyout for Jeff Riccitelli in the amount of \$23,426.62 with the last day of employment on March 9, 2023. **Motion was made to approve and send the appropriate scroll. So voted.**

Com. from the Director of the Department of Human Service & Council on Aging requesting to accept a donation in the amount of \$100.00 and any other future donations in memory of Elder Outreach Nurse Marie Breen for the purpose of assisting the elders of Taunton. Mayor O'Connell wanted to note that the Council can vote on this donation but any future donations have to be voted on individually. Also, as a reminder for everyone, Marie Breen was an Outreach Nurse for the Council on Aging. She did a lot of work for them during Covid. She recently passed away. She was also a nurse at Morton Hospital for 30-years. They are very grateful that a donation has been made in her name. This certainly says a lot about the person she was. **Motion was made to approve. So voted.**

Com. from Detective William Rutherford, Taunton Police Department requesting final approval relative to Greatest Hits Cannabis Co. He received a communication from Attorney Nicholas Adamopoulos presenting Canyon Harvey as the onsite manager at Greatest Hits Marijuana Dispensary located on 9 Cape Road. The City Council voted at a previous meeting to have the manager approved by the Municipal Council prior to the establishment being opened. **Motion was made to refer to the Committee of the Council as a Whole and also have a resume submitted. So voted.** On discussion, Councilor Pottier asked if a resume or something could be referred so they know who this person is.

Com. from the Chief Financial Officer and Finance Team regarding purchase orders which were recently requested from the City Council. Submitted in the communication was a listing of 288 purchase orders over a value of \$10,000 for the period of August 1, 2022 through the first week in February 2023. The City Historically processes approximately 5,000 purchase orders annually, and as mentioned in the communication sent to the Council for the February 28, 2023 agenda, there are several invoices or vouchers applied against each purchase order resulting in thousands of pages of information yearly. The Finance Department takes exception to, and strongly disagrees with, certain comments made regarding inefficiencies within the Finance Department. To be clear, cover sheets for the purchase orders are easily accessible. The excel file included with this communication lists the purchase orders and provides a great number of details and is easily accessible. Please note, however, that was not the original motion approved by the Council and requested of the Finance Department. The motion was listed from a prior meeting. If the request for a list of purchase orders was made, it would have been supplied quickly, easily and without hesitation. He continued to give a few details on some achievements the Finance Department has achieved over the past year. **Motion was made to receive and place on file. So voted.**

Com. from the Chief Financial Officer requesting to appear before the Committee on Finance and Salaries to request a revolving fund be established for the benefit of Lake Sabbatia. New parking regulations for the Lake Sabbatia boat ramp parking lot have been established by the Parking Commission and will be implementing in the coming months. The revenues received from the parking fees at the Lake will go directly into this fund and be able to be expended for Lake related purposes. **Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Finance and Salaries. So voted.**

**Communications from Citizens:**

NONE

**Petitions:**

Fortune Teller License – RENEWAL

1. Bissie's Palm Reading located at 103 Main Street, Taunton.

**Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Police and License and the Police Chief. So voted.**

**Claim**

Claim submitted by Lynda Higginbotham, 33 Mount Prospect Street, Bridgewater, seeking reimbursement for damages to her automobile from an open manhole cover on County Street near Williams Street. *(Already referred to the City Solicitor and DPW)*

**Committee Reports:**

**Motion was made for Committee reports to be read by title and approved. So Voted. Recommendations adopted to reflect the votes as recorded in committee reports. So Voted.**

**Unfinished Business:**

NONE

**Orders, Ordinances and Resolutions:****Ordinance for a first reading to be passed to a second reading**

**AN ORDINANCE**  
**Chapter 96**  
**Procurement Department**

**Be it ordained by the Municipal Council of the City of Taunton and by authority of the same as follows:**

That Chapter 96 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Taunton, as amended, be and hereby is further amended by changing the title “Chief Procurement Officer” to “Director of Procurement” as set forth below:

**96-92 Established; composition.**

There is hereby established a Procurement Department, to consist of a Director of Procurement and such assistants as the Mayor may determine.

**96-93 Appointment and qualifications of Director of Procurement.**

The head of the Procurement Department shall be the Director of Procurement, who shall be appointed by the Mayor, with the approval of the Council, and shall qualify by oath before entrance upon the duties of this office for a term of three (3) years. The Director of Procurement is a management and policy level position as defined by M.G.L Ch. 150E and is therefore not eligible for membership in a bargaining unit. The Director of Procurement shall be a person qualified by education, training and/or experience.

The Director of Procurement shall be the chief procurement officer as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30B.

**96-94 Assistants to Director of Procurement.**

The Director of Procurement shall have such assistants as the Mayor may determine. The assistants shall be appointed by the Director of Procurement subject to the Mayor's approval and shall perform such duties as the Director of Procurement shall require.

**96-95 Bond of Director of Procurement.**

Before entrance upon the duties of his/her office, the Director of Procurement shall furnish a surety bond for the faithful performance of his/her duties in the amount of \$10,000, with the surety thereon to be approved by the City Solicitor.

**96-96 Powers and duties of Director of Procurement.**

The Director of Procurement shall:

- A. Be responsible for the procurement and disposal of all supplies, materials, equipment and property for all departments and offices of the City, and including contracts for the construction, reconstruction or alteration of City buildings and property, and any services or purchases incidental thereto, and all laws covered under the Uniform Procurement Act, MGL c. 30, § 39M, MGL c. 30B, and MGL c. 149, §§ 44A through 44J.

- B. Have authority to order or make inventories of the supplies, materials, equipment and furnishings of any and all departments. No department possessing excess or surplus personal property of any kind or description shall sell, exchange, transfer or dispose thereof without first certifying such personal property as surplus to the Director of Procurement ; and, thereupon, the Director of Procurement shall circularize all departments and agencies as to their need for such surplus personal property; and if such need is determined, the Director of Procurement may order transfer of such property from one department or agency to another, and inventory adjustments between the departments shall be made accordingly. Surplus property shall be disposed of by the Director of Procurement. In the event surplus property is to be disposed of and has a value equal to or in excess of \$20,000.00, the Director of Procurement shall obtain approval by the Mayor and the Council for prior approval before disposing of said surplus property. If the property to be disposed of has a value of less than \$20,000.00 then the Director of Procurement may dispose of it without prior approval and must submit a report to the Mayor and the Council of the disposed property.

**96-97 Annual report.** The Director of Procurement shall submit before December 1 of each year a full and comprehensive report on the work of the agent's office to the Mayor for the previous fiscal year.

**96-98 Departmental estimates.** All departments of the city shall file with the purchasing department detailed estimates of their requirements for supplies, equipment, and services in such manner, at such times and for such future periods as the agent shall prescribe. This shall not prevent any department from filing with the purchasing department at any time a requisition for any supplies, equipment, or services the need of which was not foreseen when the detailed estimates were filed.

**96-99 Requisitions.**

Except as otherwise provided by Ordinance, requisitions for the purchase of supplies, equipment, or services for any department shall be received by the purchasing department prior to the issuance of a purchase order or contract for such supplies, equipment, or services and shall be signed by the head of the using department, or an authorized agent. The Director of Procurement shall examine each requisition and shall have the authority, after consultation with the department head, to revise it as to quantity, quality or estimated costs, but revision as to quality shall be in accordance with the standards and specifications provided. The agent shall promptly notify in writing the requisitioning department head of any such revision.

**96-100 Emergency purchases.**

Whenever the time required to comply with a requirement of M.G.L.A. c. 30B and this Code would endanger the health or safety of the people or their property the Director of Procurement may make an emergency procurement without following the requirement under the statute and Code and in accordance with the City Ordinance. An emergency procurement shall be limited to only supplies or services necessary to meet the emergency and shall conform to the requirements of law and ordinance to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The Director of Procurement shall make a record of each emergency as soon after the procurement as practicable, specifying each contractor's name, the amount and the type of each contract, a listing of the supply or

service provided under each contract, and the basis for determining the need for an emergency procurement.

The Director of Procurement shall submit a copy of this record at the earliest possible time to the state secretary for placement in any publication established by the state secretary for the advertisement of procurements.

**96-101 Exercise of authority to conform with all legal requirements.**

Nothing in this Code shall be construed to authorize the Director of Procurement to take any action in connection with any purchase or contract in conflict with the general laws of the commonwealth or federal statutes; nor shall anything herein contained authorize the Director of Procurement to take any action in connection with any purchase or contract in conflict with the provisions of M.G.L.A. c. 43; nor shall anything herein contained authorize or empower the Director of Procurement to have any jurisdiction or control over the acquisition, contracts for purchase or sale, transfer or disposition of real property acquired by or owned by the city.

All ordinances or parts thereof inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon passage.

**Motion was made to pass to a second reading. So voted.**

**New Business:**

**Councilor Postell made a motion to refer to the Safety Officer with the condition of safe operations from the Taunton Green area in the proximity of the post office, specifically as it pertains to crosswalk enforcement. He has reports of an elderly person nearly getting struck by a vehicle there or not being yielded too as well. So voted.**

**Councilor McCaul said he had the opportunity to go see the Covid Director and as a Veteran himself, he wanted to purchase one of the Veterans banners. He was excited to find out that they had 50-banners three-years ago, 54-banners last year and this year they are looking at 84-banners. The good thing is that we have a beautiful community and Sandy and Bruce Thomas are paying for these banners. He was ready to write a check out so he could have his banner placed on the telephone pole and come to find out, Sandy and Bruce Thomas said they are going to make a donation and pay for those banners for the Veterans. He would love to acknowledge Sandy and Bruce Thomas and invite them to the Council Chambers to thank them for their donation and give a proclamation to them. Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Military & Veterans Affairs. So voted. Mayor O'Connell said we are always grateful to the Thomas's. They have done a lot for this community in many ways and have helped to fund this program for three-years.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 P.M.

A true copy:

Attest:

  
City Clerk

JLL/KLD

City of Taunton  
Municipal Council  
March 7, 2023

**The Committee on Finance and Salaries**

The meeting was held at Taunton City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA 02780 in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers.

Present were Councilor Phillip Duarte, Chairman and Councilors Pottier and McCaul.

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 PM.

- 1. Meet to review the weekly vouchers and payroll for City departments.

**MOTION:** Approve the payroll warrant in the amount of \$3,807,577.15. **So voted.**

**MOTION:** Approve the accounts payable warrant in the amount of \$5,429,553.00. **So voted.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 PM.

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 CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
 2023 MAR -8 P 3:55  
 TAUNTON, MA  
 CIT. TOLSON

CITY OF TAUNTON  
 MAR 07 2023  
 IN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie E. Clarke  
Clerk of Council Committees

**REPORTS ACCEPTED. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED.**

CITY CLERK

City of Taunton  
Municipal Council  
March 7, 2023

**The Committee on Public Health and Environmental Affairs**

The meeting was held at Taunton City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA 02780 in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers.

Present were Councilor Phillip Duarte, Chairman, and Councilors Sanders and Pottier. CFO Patrick Dello Russo was also present.

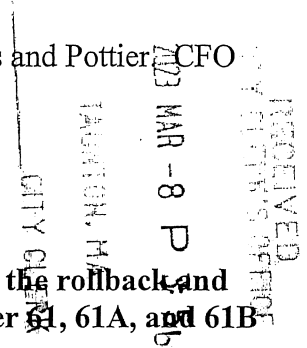
The meeting was called to order at 6:11 PM.

- 1. Meet to discuss the request to create a special revenue account for the rollback and conveyance taxes resulting from the sale and conversion of Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B land.**

Councilor Duarte provided some background on this topic explaining that rollback or conveyance taxes are collected when Chapter land is sold. People who own land in Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B, which are lands used for forestry, agriculture, open space, or recreation, pay a lesser tax and when the property is sold and not used for forestry or other Chapter purpose, a rollback or conveyance is paid. Councilor Duarte showed a chart with the last three properties that were sold and explained that the Assessor's Office estimates a collection of \$37,000 with the most recent property on Tremont Street. He explained that the goal of this proposal is to put these monies into an account for furthering sustainability initiatives for conservation and recreation. Councilor Duarte read the details and purposes of the proposed special revenue account and explained that he has worked with the City Solicitor's Office and the Mayor's Office on creating parameters of the Sustainability Committee but tonight the hope is to just create the necessary special revenue account. He pointed out the list of remaining Chapter land in the City and emphasized that more money could come in from these rollback taxes depending on when people dispose of the land.

Councilor Sanders lent his support in principal to the proposal. He questioned the proposed \$150,000 limit and wondered why the purchase of land when it becomes available wasn't included as a purpose for expending the funds. In his recollection, the City has never exercised its right to purchase these Chapter lands. Mr. Dello Russo indicated that the proposal was not to sit on funds but to use the money where it is needed. Councilor Sanders questioned the purpose that was mentioned of cleaning up blighted properties as he wasn't sure how this tied into the sustainability purpose. Councilor Duarte used Fraga Farm as an example and suggested adding language to specify that it needs to be tied to the other goals.

Councilor Pottier summarized that Chapter land refers to forestland, farms, and open space. Owners receive a tax break but, when selling privately for a different purpose, the City claws





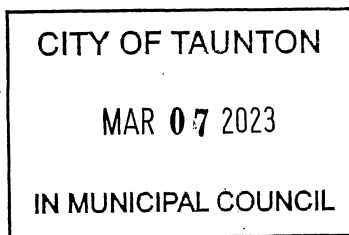
back some of that benefit. He also questioned the \$150,000 limit. Mr. Dello Russo indicated that this would be like a revolving fund and the idea is to get the cash out on the street to where it is needed. Mr. Dello Russo stressed that this is not to be a trust fund for a later purchase.

Councilor Duarte suggested that it would be good for the City to prioritize remaining Chapter land so that, in the event that some piece is to be sold, the Council could look for an appropriation to purchase that piece of property. Councilor Sanders supported this idea stressing that when the right of first refusal comes up, the City has a short window to act. He stated that he thought that SRPEDD was going to look at that and identify prime pieces of Chapter land.

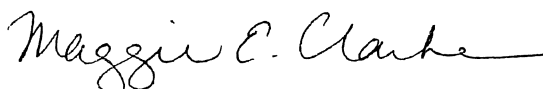
Suggested modifications to the language included increasing the limit above \$150,000 and adding language under purpose #4.

***MOTION:*** *Add this to next week's agenda under Orders with whatever amendments the Chair thinks are appropriate. So voted.*

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 PM.




Respectfully submitted,



Maggie E. Clarke  
Clerk of Council Committees

**REPORTS ACCEPTED. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED.**



Jennifer K. Regan  
CITY CLERK