

TOWN COUNCIL
Town of Trumbull
CONNECTICUT
www.trumbull-ct.gov

TOWN HALL
Trumbull

TELEPHONE
(203) 452-5000



MINUTES
JUNE 6, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. All present joined in a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. During the moment of silence the Chair asked all those present to remember all the children lost and the hole in hearts they left

ROLL CALL: The clerk called the roll and recorded it as follows:

PRESENT:

Mike Buswell	Mary Isaac	Jason Marsh
Ashley Gaudiano	Steve Lemoine	Kelly Mallozzi
Donna Seidell	Tony Scinto	Alissa Hall
Dawn Cantafio	Christopher DeCruze	Tony Scinto
Kevin Shively	Dede Robinson	Bill Mecca
Lissette Colón	Olga Leiva	Thomas Whitmoyer
Joy Colon	Nicole Satin (By conference call)	

ABSENT: Steve Choi

ALSO

PRESENT: First Selectman Vicki A. Tesoro, Chief Administrative Officer Kathleen McGannon Town Attorney Daniel Schopick, HR Director Thomas McCarthy, Economic & Community Development Director Rina Bakalar, Pension Board Chairman Patrick Clark, Joanne Glasser Orenstein, Chairman of the Middlebrook and Booth Hill Elementary School Roof Building Committee Pat Borghesan, Attorney Bonnapaine

APPROVAL

OF MINUTES: Moved by Cantafio, seconded by Colon to approve the May meeting minutes as submitted. VOTE: Motion CARRIED by unanimous consent.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *Odyssey of the Mind Team Recognition - Middlebrook and Jane Ryan:* First Selectman Vicki A. Tesoro and Town Council Chairman Ashley Gaudiano presented a Certificate of Recognition and Trumbull pins to the Odyssey of the Mind team and their coach Henry Lang for placing second in their division. This team began their journey last September attending an escape room in Trumbull, (Escapology), as a team building experience without knowing Odyssey of the Mind was going to have an escape room problem to choose from later that month. By the end of September, the team did just that and chose to create their own escape room with several moving vehicles to help track people's escape. The team attended workshops from Connecticut Odyssey of the Mind, where they learned how to write scripts, develop scenes, as well as how to create timelines to help in the overall production of their problem. The team met weekly under the supervision of Henry Lang, to practice verbal spontaneous, hands on spontaneous and verbal hands on spontaneous problems alongside solving their long term problem. At the Connecticut State competition on March 19th, the team had a perfect score on their verbal spontaneous problem, which resulted in them winning an award for Excellence in Spontaneous. The award was created to honor a longtime board member, former coach and assistant captain who passed away after a long battle with cancer. The team overall won second place in their division representing CT at the World Finals for the escape room long term problem. First Selectman Tesoro recognized the students for their dedication to creativity, learning and problem solving, and hopes their love of learning will never end. All present congratulated the team.
- *We the People Recognition:* First Selectman Vicki A. Tesoro presented the We the People Team a proclamation. On February 5, 2022 twenty two students in Ms. Katie Boland's AP ECE Government Constitutional Studies class represented Trumbull High School at the State Championship held via zoom. The Trumbull High School We the People team won the state championship for the 10th time, under the direction of Ms. Boland, and the 26th time in school history. Trumbull scored 1462 total points higher than Staples and Greenwich. The Trumbull High School We the People team represented Connecticut at the national finals held on April 22 through April 26 via zoom in Washington DC. On April 25, 2022, they made it to the final top 12 round of the competition for the 9th time in history and finished 10th in the country. All present congratulated them.

Ms. Boland extended her gratitude to the town for all of their support. Ms. Boland noted there was something special about this team, they brought their A-game to the competition, they were doing good but needed to better which they did and blew it out of the park. On Monday of the competition their scores rose to 5th in the nation from being 12th in the country on days one and two. Our town is lucky to have these students and moving forward our country is lucky to have them. Each student introduced themselves.

- *American Lawyers Alliance Teacher of the Year Katie Boland Recognition:* First Selectman Vicki A. Tesoro explained the Oklahoma based American Lawyers Alliance announced Katie Boland as one of its 2022 Teachers of the Year. The purpose of the program is to highlight the work of civics and government teachers across the country.

The ALA is a national organization affiliated with the American Bar Association, whose aim is to promote civic and law related education. The American Lawyers Alliance is concerned that our high school students are not getting the civic education that they need to become informed citizens. Many schools have cut those programs from their curriculum. Their goal is to reward teachers who are going the extra mile to expose students to why the law is important and what their roles as citizens are. First Selectman Tesoro and all present congratulated Ms. Boland.

- *EDIT Task Force Update:* EDIT Task Force Chairman Andrea Fonseca was present and reported since the last time she reported to the Council, the Task Force had six meetings in total, two special meetings and four regular meetings. They conducted a series of meetings, including a public forum on January 13th. The topic of the forum was how “Have you felt included in Trumbull?”, and conversely, “How have you felt excluded in Trumbull?” The resounding responses from the public forum indicated while our residents feel welcomed through our excellent library system, flying pride flags and the program offerings by Parks and Rec, there are many incidences in which residents have not. Some residents spoke of times where they were erroneously accused of wrongdoing, incidences where children were excluded from everyday playground activities, and not having the Kinara on display during Kwanzaa. While meeting with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Semmel, they disclosed several aspects of their plan for equity. Their plan included a district-wide training on March 21st. They have also created district-wide and school level equity leadership teams. They discussed their difficulty in diversifying their candidate pool and plan to work with various agencies and organizations to draw candidates for various colleges and universities. Unlike several other districts in the area, TPS did not have a plan for creating a position for a Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. At the meeting with the Trumbull Police Department, its representatives including Chief Lombardo explained to the community the protocols in place for responding to a calls from citizens. Chief Lombardo highlighted the community outreach “Coffee with Cops” and explained different strategies employed by the departments to diversify their department. They discuss methods of recruitment including reaching out to the surrounding NAACP chapters to advertise entrance exam dates and while gender diversity has significantly improved, the department’s ethnic and racial diversity has been difficult. In their meeting with town government representatives, First Selectman Vicki A. Tesoro, Director of Human Resources Tom McCarthy and Library Director Stefan Lynne-Nielsen, along with our Chief administrative Officers, Cindy Katske, and Kathleen McGannon. First Selectman Tesoro shared the process in which events are added to the town calendar, and the different communication platforms the town has to offer. She also shared how private citizens can seek approval for the use of public property throughout the town and highlight the great work that's happening in the upcoming arts fair. Mr. McCarthy shared the challenges the HR department faces in diversifying the staff using the civil Service Board protocols. Mr. Nielsen has shared how important it was to have a supportive board and experienced librarians running the successful programs. He explained the criteria for selecting resources and offering programs that are diverse and inclusive. All in all, the Task Force is ready to digest all of the information they have received from the anecdotal and our quantitative data. Their

first recommendation would be for training. Leading and learning through Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is a journey. Everyone is on a different path, and everyone is in a different lane. In order to truly embrace and understand how to move forward as a town, we should consider training programs that will be available to all elected and appointed officials on the various boards and commission throughout the town. To truly examine and implement policies and procedures that have equity, diversity and inclusivity. To have that lens, we need to have a common understanding. When we're thinking about how we are going to be thinking about ability, neuro-diversity, gender, religion, race, this increased sense of inclusivity throughout our town will bring about a new welcome for our new residents, new businesses and a new sense of pride in all that Trumbull has already accomplished.

- *Annual Pension Board Letter:* Mr. Patrick Clark Chairman of the Pension Board was present and indicated he succeeded James Lavin and at the beginning of the year. By way of background he has 29 - 30 years in the investment industry. He was appointed to the Board in 2016. In 2021 they completed the biannual actuarial valuation. Our funded ratio was 44.75%, in 2014 it was at 35%. We are making slow, steady progress and moving in the right direction which is critical for the long term health of the pension plan. During this process, the actuary presents the board with recommendations, different elements to consider. One of their considerations was to reduce the assumed rate of return for the pension plan from 7.5%, to 7.25%, which they adopted. This makes the plan more conservative, and also brings it more in line with other municipalities not only in the state of Connecticut, but across the country. He believes the state of Connecticut is using a 6.9% assumed rate of return. What we've been doing over the past few years is assuming more conservative assumptions for the plan. This is critical, because we don't want to become overly optimistic and want to present the town of Trumbull with realistic numbers. We're moving in the right direction, which is which is encouraging. The performance last year was up 12.7%. Again, assuming a 7.25% return, we met our number and then some, unfortunately, if you follow the financial markets this year, it has not been good. It's been an extraordinarily challenging time to be an investor, there has been no place to hide whether you're in stocks or bonds, or any asset class. Everything has been going down. So this is going to be a challenging year. But thinks the good news is that the plan last year performed very well above our targets. Hopefully we'll get some improvement in the markets going forward. And thinks maybe we'll have a more optimistic number when they come back a year from now. One of the things the board concentrated on this year was developing what is called an "Inflation protected alternative asset class". This is something that the pension did not have five years ago. The idea was to put in different assets other than stocks and bonds that can hopefully give returns that are equal to what we would get from the stock and bond market and specifically moving from the bond market which really has been giving anemic returns over the years. Last year we increased our target weighting from 10% to 20% and have been really diversifying the pension plan in these. It's an investment. He thinks that has helped to improve the performance and helped to insulate the pension this year as we face these challenging times. Mr. Clark noted the Police pension is not part of this discussion and is separate from the town. Inflation was supposed to be transitory although it looks like it's here to stay. We may have seen the peak of inflation. But doesn't think we'll be

going back to what we had experienced over the last few years. From a market point of view, seeing a plateau in inflation helps to alleviate some of the downward pressure that's been on the markets. He has been doing this for 30 years and can't remember a time when you could not hide, the only place to hide has been cash. The most important thing to do during these times is to not lose focus of the strategy in place. That's when you make mistakes. Staying the course is critical for the long term success. An example of an inflation protected asset is a GSA fund, they purchase properties associated with the federal government. These properties will be used by the federal government. This fund will collect the lease and rental payments as part of the ownership of these properties. This income is then paid to the owners. Having the federal government as their tenant is often a good sign that they're not going to be leaving anytime soon. We've been moving more towards that, part has been in some of these government owned properties. And is probably their largest holding on the inflation protected side. We've also invested in a fund that is involved with lawsuits. Advisors look at various lawsuits, if they feel that a particular suit looks like it's going to be successful, they may end up buying out those plaintiffs and then hopefully waiting for that that lawsuit to come to fruition. When it pays out, the owners of the fund then receive part of that as the return. These are very different from the traditional stock and bond market. Most of the funds they have invested in are inflation protected securities, and alternative assets have come from. Bond market assets over the last two to five years have returned in three or 4%. That's well below our target. They had to find another source to get a consistent return. It has been helpful. The investments don't have a rating but the investment advisors they work with have worked with many other pension funds and plans throughout the country. They are doing their due diligence and we have a great board members on the Pension Board who bring a lot of other experience. They have confidence that these will be good investments for the fund this year and going forward. Mr. Clark further explained the most recent numbers they have are through April, the pension is down 10%. If you know the market, the NASDAQ at its worst this year was down 30%-33%, which is the definition of a bear market. He thinks it was very striking that if you bought a 10-year treasury, which is kind of the prototypical investment that everyone in the bond world looks to as a measure of performance, if you bought that at the beginning of the year, you'd be down 10%. That is striking, because that is supposed to be a safe and secure investment. It has really been a challenging year, hopefully, we've probably seen the worst of this and what we're going to see is kind of dry writing for the next several months, up until the election. Bear markets tend to last about nine months, which would bring us to the elections, the good news, bull markets last three and a half years, which makes his job a lot easier during that cycle. He thinks having faith in the in the investment cycles they will they will come back. Employees can choose to add to the plan if they want to or not if they do not want to.

- PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no one present to speak.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. RESOLUTION TC29-61: Moved by Hall, seconded by Cantafio.

BE IT RESOLVED, That Joanne Glasser Orenstein, be and the same is hereby appointed as a member of the Middlebrook and Booth Hill Elementary School Roof Building Committee.

Committee Report: The L&A Committee met on June 2, 2022 and voted by unanimous consent.

VOTE: ADOPTED by unanimous consent.

2. RESOLUTION TC29-62: Moved by Massaro, seconded by Cantafio
BE IT RESOLVED, That the application to the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services (DRS) for the Neighborhood Assistance Act program is hereby authorized to include the Kennedy Center (\$150,000), Make A Wish Foundation of CT (\$35,000), CT Radio Information System – CRIS (\$5,000), and Cooperative Educational Services (\$100,000) and that First Selectman Vicki A. Tesoro, or her designee, is hereby authorized to submit such application and sign all related forms, contracts and reports in order to implement the Neighborhood Assistance Act program. (Full Resolution Attached) (*Public Hearing June 6, 2022 Town Council*)

Councilman Scinto recused himself at 8:28 p.m. as CRIS may be in related to his employment.

Committee Report: The L&A Committee met on June 2, 2022 and voted by unanimous consent.

The Chair OPENED the Public Hearing at 8:29 p.m.

There was no one present to speak.

The Chair CLOSED the Public Hearing at 8:29 p.m.

The clerk called the roll call vote and recorded it as follows:

	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mike Buswell	✓		
Mary Isaac	✓		
Dede Robinson	✓		
Bill Mecca	✓		
Nicole Satin (conference call vote)	✓		
Donna Seidell	✓		
Alissa Hall	✓		
Jason Marsh	✓		
Lissette Colón	✓		
Ashley Gaudiano	✓		
Olga Leiva	✓		
Joy Colon			✓
Steve Lemoine	✓		
Kelly Mallozzi	✓		
Dawn Cantafio	✓		

Christopher DeCruze	✓		
Carl Massaro	✓		
Tony Scinto	Recused	Not	Voting
Kevin Shively	✓		
Thomas Whitmoyer	✓		

VOTE: ADOPTED 19-0-1 (ABSTENTION: Colon)

Moved by Cantafio, seconded by Whitmoyer to pass as Emergency Legislation.

VOTE: Motion CARRIED by unanimous consent.

3. RESOLUTION TC29-63: Moved by Shively, seconded by Cantafio
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Attorney is hereby authorized to settle a workers compensation claim known as Nicola Costantini v. the Town of Trumbull.

Committee Report: The L&A Committee met on June 2, 2022 and voted by unanimous consent to enter into Executive Session, to end Executive Session and by unanimous consent.

VOTE: ADOPTED by unanimous consent.

4. RESOLUTION TC29-64: Moved by Lemoine, seconded by Cantafio
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Attorney is hereby authorized to settle a workers compensation claim known as James McGuire v. the Town of Trumbull.

Committee Report: The L&A Committee met on June 2, 2022 and voted by unanimous consent to Enter into Executive Session, to end Executive Session and by unanimous consent.

VOTE: ADOPTED by unanimous consent.

5. RESOLUTION TC29-65: Moved by DeCruze, seconded by Cantafio
BE IT RESOLVED, That \$62,070 is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to 01080600-578803 Maintenance/Repairs-Program Related.

Moved by Shively, seconded by Mallozzi to waive the reading of the committee minutes.

VOTE: Motion CARRIED by unanimous consent.

Committee Report: The Finance Committee met on June 2, 2022 and voted 4-1 (AGAINST: Scinto)

It was explained the Committee minutes contain the process of how these funds were authorized and referred to page 2, “After discussions with the administration DPW and the BOE it was determined the most prudent course of action was bringing in experts to evaluate the pool proposals received to be architecture was ordered the analysis.” And also referred to the 4th bullet on the same page that reads as, “Councilman Isaac added the

BOF was aware of this Ms. Pires had been bringing it up with the board of finance, letting them know this was going on going to be coming from this account. And once they knew what the extent was, they would be coming for a supplemental appropriation”. Another section of the committee minutes was noted, “Councilman Isaac noted she was aware of this was coming because she had watched the BOF meetings, which is a part of what they've tried to do to, be aware of what's going on with other boards in town. They typically wait until the end of the year to balance the accounts, and in this case, they waited for the analysis, the BOF saw the pool was not going to work and the analysis of what went to the Aquatics committee was fully discussed. The BOF approved the appropriation, and then it came to the council.”

The Chair noted the BOF heard this exact request prior to it coming to the Council and the BOF heard Mr. Paris's commentary at their meeting, and he also came before the TC Finance committee on Thursday of last week and responded to questions at that point.

Councilman Massaro noted the point made is that this report was done without funding authorization some time ago and is coming now for supplemental appropriation. That's not the way to do government business. This is used by the BOE, and none of their funds are being applied to this. \$62,000 was spent on a pool that has been draining town funds for decades. We need to get a pool that works, some people think the pool should have been replaced in the 2000's. We need to do something for the swimmers in town.

Councilman Isaac explained this was brought to the BOF in July when the pool failed. It was discussed at every Parks & Rec meeting, that the need was immediate and what they would do to access the funds. What they thought was the best way because they didn't know what the amount was going to be at that point, was to use this account and they advised the BOF that they would be coming back for supplemental once the amount was known. It was approximately \$37,000 in the beginning but as they went into it, as Mr. Paris said, they kept finding more and more for the stud to establish whether it was a small fix, major fix, or catastrophic, which is what it ended up being. The BOF was aware that they would be coming back at the end of the year to replace those funds for the startup of the summer pools. The presentation was at the Aquatics Committee. Mr. DeCruze was there for that as well. It has been discussed by all the various boards and commissions as to how and why. Councilman Isaac agreed they do need a pool.

The clerk called the roll call vote and recorded it as follows:

	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mike Buswell		✓	
Mary Isaac	✓		
Dede Robinson		✓	
Bill Mecca	✓		
Nicole Satin (conference call vote)	✓		
Donna Seidell		✓	
Alissa Hall	✓		
Jason Marsh	✓		
Lissette Colón		✓	

Ashley Gaudiano	✓		
Olga Leiva		✓	
Joy Colon	✓		
Steve Lemoine		✓	
Kelly Mallozzi	✓		
Dawn Cantafio	✓		
Christopher DeCruze		✓	
Carl Massaro		✓	
Tony Scinto		✓	
Kevin Shively	✓		
Thomas Whitmoyer	✓		

VOTE: ADOPTED 11-9 (AGAINST: Buswell, Robinson, Seidell, Colón, Leiva, DeCruze, Massaro, Scinto, Lemoine)

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to discuss and upon motion made by Cantafio, seconded by Leiva the Trumbull Town Council adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret D. Mastroni
Margaret D. Mastroni
Town Council Clerk

FULL RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION TC29-62:

Whereas, the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services (DRS) offers funding to tax exempt organizations in the form of tax credits; and

Whereas, tax credits are given to eligible corporations who contribute funding to support specific programs and services of the tax exempt organizations; and

Whereas, programs supporting job training, low income residents, senior residents, residents with disabilities, child care services, or open space acquisition offer a 60 percent credit and energy conservation programs offer 100 percent credit; and

Whereas, the 2022 application will include the Kennedy Center (\$150,000), Make A Wish Foundation of CT (\$35,000), CT Radio Information System – CRIS (\$5,000), and Cooperative Educational Services (\$100,000); and

Whereas, the town of Trumbull serves as the applicant and liaison to the Department of Revenue Services on behalf of the tax exempt organizations.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved:

1. That the Trumbull Town Council is cognizant of the application to the State Department of Revenue Services for the Neighborhood Assistance Act program; and,
2. That Vicki A. Tesoro, or her designee, is authorized to submit such application and sign all related forms, contracts, and reports in order to implement the Neighborhood Assistance Act program.