Mayor DelBuono called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilor Braverman
Deputy Mayor Budrejko
Councilor Camillo
Councilor Donahue
Councilor Manke
Councilor Nagel
Councilor Page
Councilor Radda
Mayor DelBuono

Also present:
Keith Chapman, Town Manager
Stephen Clark, Police Chief
Janet Murphy, Director of Finance
Renata Bertotti, Town Planner
Steve Kosofsky Assessor
Theresa Avey, Registrar of Voters (Republican)
Marie Fox, Registrar of Voters (Democrat)
James Krupienski, Town Clerk
Susan Gibbon, Council Clerk

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor DelBuono stated that she would entertain a motion to move item VII.H up to between III and IV, after Approval of the Agenda and prior to Public Participation. At the last council meeting, a proposal came forward for a reduction of polling places to three. It was clear at that meeting, from council comment, as well as public comment, that three districts did not meet the need of everyone that spoke, including councilors. Based on that, I instructed the councilors and registrars to consult over the week, and asked any councilors to bring forward any questions, concerns or suggested changes to the proposal on the table so we could discuss those this evening. I believe the registrars are coming forward with two possible proposals that would not be reflective of the three but would be reflective of more than that. Based on that fact, I know many people in the public wanted to weigh in this evening and I would like them to have the most up-to-date information so they can weigh in on the proposal at hand. Right now I see 50 people in the attendee’s window, but it would be a long meeting for them to wait for that to come forward later. I would like to have that item moved up to make it the first thing we discuss so the registrars can put that on the table, a new recommended proposal, based on the information they received from the public, as well as from councilors on concerns based on the previous proposal. This was sparked by reapportionment recommendations from
the state. The registrars can present their new proposal and then the public can weigh in on something that is not going to be considered this evening, which is the three polling places.

Motion by Councilor Camillo to move Item VII.H, Ordinance Amendment Chapter 121, Voting Districts between Item III and Item IV. Seconded by Councilor Manke. Motion passed 9-0. Motion by Councilor Manke add Item VIII.D, Town Manager Evaluation, seconded by Councilor Camillo. Motion passed 9-0. Motion by Councilor Page to remove P&R from appointments, seconded by Councilor Radda. Motion passed 9-0. Motion by Councilor Manke to approve agenda as amended. Seconded by Councilor Radda. Motion passed 9-0.

VIII. H. Ordinance Amendment, Chapter 121, Voting Districts

- Teresa Avey stated that she and Marie would like to thank the public for their concerns about the proposal, but also with ideas, they were greatly appreciated. We also heard from many other members of the public, thanks to Mayor DelBuono, Deputy Mayor Budrejko, Councilman Manke, Councilman Nagel and Councilman Donahue who forwarded your concerns and suggestions to us, as well as voiced their own concerns. We looked at many options since our first proposal. Because the reapportionment committee moved 919 voters from district 5 and 830 voters from district 1 to the 20th assembly district, we propose the current district 8, which consists of 1,629 and the rest of current district 5, which his 1,790 voters become its own district which would vote at John Patterson. A new district 6 will vote at John Wallace and will be part of the 20th assembly district. District’s 1 and 2 will have Robbins Avenue as its dividing line. Districts 3, 4 and 7 will stay the same. Another proposal would be to combine Districts 4 and 7, a proposed new District 4 and have them vote at the high school to help alleviate parking issues at the current polling places. As required by state statute, we will notify all voters with the change in their voting location by mail.

- Marie Fox stated that Districts 4 and 7 will go to the high school to alleviate any parking issues that they’ve been having at 4 and 7 in the past years. We covered all of the questions and calls from the public. We want to keep them happy. That’s what we are here for. We are not trying to suppress any votes; we only want to make it easier.

- Mayor DelBuono thanked both Theresa and Marie; know you put a lot of work into this with all the correspondence you received. I was able to stop in and have conversations with you and I got to see you in action. I greatly appreciate the attention and hours you put into this. Just to recap -- there is one proposal that essentially keeps the districts the same, except for the changes due to the reapportionment of the 20th and 27th state assembly districts; and the other proposal is basically that same, but combining Districts 4 and 7 into a new District 4 and moving their polling place to the high school to vote to alleviate parking.

- Ms. Avey stated that the current Districts 5 and 8 will have to vote in another area because there is nothing town or BOE owned that we can use that is why we chose John Patterson.

- Councilor Manke thanked Theresa and Marie for their work on this. Because of the state reapportionment, some people will need to change where they vote no matter what.

- Ms. Avey stated that is correct.

- Councilor Manke stated that he likes the plan, it was obvious that 3 districts was too few. Can you please provide a spreadsheet of the information for us and the public to review?

- Ms. Avey stated that there would be 7 districts and 7 polling places. Currently we have 8 districts and 7 polling places.

- Councilor Page thanked the Registrars for all of their hard work and respond to feedback from the council and the public. Would appreciate something to look at. Can support this change.

- Councilor Radda thanked the Registrars for their hard work and for listening to comments from councilors and residents. For proposal one, be would be maintaining 7 polling districts and 7 polling locations, with the shift for those voters in the house districts. Can you go over the plan that includes the high school again?
• Ms. Avey stated that the second option would include everything from the first proposal tonight, but would have Districts 4 and 7 combining into a new District 4 with voting at the high school.

• Councilor Manke asked if the 20th district had West Hartford as part of it, how many people in that district?

• Ms. Avey stated that she did not have the numbers from West Hartford.

• Councilor Manke stated that districts are no longer just Newington, but include West Hartford and New Britain. At some point a public hearing will be held prior to ordinance change.

• Mayor DelBuono stated that because this is an ordinance change it is necessary to have a public hearing and that our intent is to have a public hearing once all we have a final proposal that we and the public can review.

• Councilor Radda asked for clarification, the public hearing will not take place on the 8th, but at another meeting.

• Mayor DelBuono stated that she anticipates at our next meeting we will vote to have the public hearing on February 22nd. There is a sense of urgency to get this done; voters need be notified by the end of March regarding voting changes.

• Councilor Donahue asked for clarification, if moving voting to high school, the number of voting machines would increase to accommodate the number of voters.

• Ms. Avey stated that is correct and we would add more check-in lines.

• Mayor DelBuono stated that if that if the high school was an option, has the superintendent approved the use of the high school and would there be ample parking?

• Ms. Avey stated that the school staff and polling workers would be asked to park in the student parking lot.

• Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated she is trying to understand the numbers. How many voters will have to change their polling place?

• Ms. Avey stated 830 from District 1 and 919 from District 5. Ms. Avey explained further voting district changes that will possibly occur.

• Councilor Page stated that if there was a plan to eliminate parking issues, would like survey of the voters to see if this is what they want.

• Councilor Nagel thanked the Registrars for their hard work. How much more parking is there if the districts go to the high school as opposed to where they go now?

• Ms. Avey stated Kellogg has 60 spots; E. Green has 10 spots, that are marked, and maybe another 20/25 spots. At the high school there are probably 75/80 parking spots.

• Councilor Nagel stated he too would like to see how the people that vote at E. Green and Kellogg feel about this change and if they need to move somewhere else.

• Councilor Manke stated that we are limited in southern section of town by lack of public buildings. Parking at E Green is atrocious, only 10-20 spots.

• Mayor DelBuono thanked the Registrars for all of their efforts. Grateful that the public did come forward. Concerned and dismayed that a press conference was held regarding this without discussing this with any of us first which caused people to get upset and anxious. There is a process for a reason. Would have endorsed a press conference had they come to me. Council united in the needs of the voters, there is no doubt everyone at this table wants what is best for the public.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (Via Zoom Application or Phone)
(4 MINUTE TIME LIMIT PER SPEAKER ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

A. Public Comments
• Bob Tallard asked Mayor DelBuono what the 15th amendment is.
• Mayor DelBuono repeatedly told Mr. Tallard that they follow Roberts Rules of Procedure and that the council does not engage in discussion during public comment and will address questions during Remarks by Councilors on Public Participation.

• Mr. Tallard stated the 15th amendment concerns citizen's rights to vote. You are violating my rights by going from 8 to 3 districts. There will be confusion and lines. Discriminating against the elderly. What is all of this for? Why are you doing this? This is wrong and is going to cause a lot of problems. Resent that this is even being proposed. You have no respect and this is disgraceful. Think you [Mayor DelBuono] should resign effective immediately. Plan to discuss on my next TV show, a coalition for the constitution. This is way over the top for the town of Newington; trying to control the vote.

• Kathy Flaherty, 139 Cedar Ridge Road thanked the councilors who responded to my letter and glad that there was recognition by the registrars for a revised proposal. Asking that this be my public comment and not my written correspondence. I vote at E. Green and usually walk, we may often drive later in the day for my husband to vote and have not had any problems with parking. Think a lot of people who vote at E Green will not be happy to go to high school. Appreciate fact that people are thoughtfully looking at this. It was not clear that to me that was the first draft of a proposal; that may be the reason people took the stand they did.

• Walt Ziplinski, 35 Whiteside Street, thank you for modifying original proposal. Like the previous speaker I too thought the original proposal was going to be considered, thank you for listening to concerns and making revisions. Will these modifications be presented at the next council meeting? Mayor DelBuono stated yes. After that there will be a public hearing at the February 22 meeting. Mayor DelBuono stated that she cannot engage in dialogue during public participation but will respond during Remarks by Councilors on Public Participation. How will no-internet people be getting information regarding these revised proposals? Know this will be placed on town website. Recommend that be addressed in disseminating information to the public. Thank you very much.

• Representative Gary Turco, 98 Williamstown Court. The press conference and concern regarding original proposal was not meant to be divisive. Passionately support citizens and voting rights of our citizens. Elected officials should speak up if they see injustice. Ms. Fox stated intent was not to suppress voters. Consequence would have reduced access and made it difficult for every voter in Newington to vote. Glad people wrote in and spoke up against the original proposal. Thank everyone for the revised and better proposal. Believe proposal with 7 polling districts and 7 polling stations is the way to go.

• Nancy Baxter stated that she is confused about all of this. You need say why you are doing this. How many people are being moved? Vote at Martin Kellogg, have never had an issues.

• Led Baxter stated that he thinks going from 7/8 polling to 3 will suppress voter turnout. Hope not in reaction to what is happening around the country with some state actively suppressing voter turnout. Hate to think we are doing that in Newington, that’s what it feels like.

• Gia Pascarelli, 62 Welles Drive North, thank everybody for efficiency in change. Don’t have access to early voting. Many people work. During COVID had opportunity to use absentee ballots. Would prefer not to have any change in voting districts. Currently vote at Kellogg, not happy about possible change to move to the high school; not better for me. What is the rationale for this? I’ll volunteer, let’s get more volunteers to help at polling places if that is what is needed. Want to thank Gary Turco for his press conference, otherwise would not have known this was happening. Sorry to Mayor you feel this was some sort of affront to you and the council that this was talked about, but thank goodness it was.
This might have slipped through the cracks. Urge for as little change as possible; need more convenient voting options.

- Phil Knollton, 44 Cinnamon Road. Thank you councilors for your time as well as Rep. Turco and Senator Lessor for bringing this to our attention. I've been doing some research regarding voters per stations here in Newington. As a result of changes in voting in Union City, a suburb of Atlanta, people wait five hours and have voting closed. Back in 2012 they had 2,700 voters per station, which seems to be the sweet number like we have here in Newington. By increasing numbers at polling stations, things might not go as smoothly. Are you going to save money by combining voting at the high school? How many people walk to the polls because they don't have a ride?

- Ellen Shiller stated that she is an unaffiliated voter. Should wait to redistrict until apartments are built. You are elected. Voters have long memories. Don’t vote on proposal. It's not a good idea to change things. You need to keep people in town happy.

- Alissa Charamut, 56 Francis Avenue, thanks to registrars, councilors and residents for speaking up and for changing original proposal. Agree that there should be more information regarding the need to combine districts 4 and 7. Voter registration is increasing and voter turnout in Newington for state and presidential elections is between 75-80 percent which is significantly higher than the national average. Voter turnout for municipal elections are around 30-3 percent. Should be proud of those numbers. Wasn’t first presented as a draft at January 11th meeting, the agenda stated ordinance amendment. People don’t understand the process – proposed amendment, resolution, public hearing. There doesn’t need to be divisiveness, things have been righted.

- Mark Zimmerman, 161 Miami Avenue thanked everyone for their time; got impression that this was going forward. Why was this decision being made? What data was bring used for make this proposal? Seems like you were trying to sneak something in. Appreciate that Rep. Turco and others spoke out immediately to make the public aware of this. I vote to Ruth Chaffee and walk to vote. Understand the redistricting. Need to be more transparent.

- Florence Yvonne Parker-Baer, 215 Culver Street stated she agrees with Councilor Page and the proposal should be based upon the experience of the residents who will be impacted by this. Our voting numbers are great and should be proud of that and if they are, people are voting without incident. The current voting situation can’t be that bad. Need to use real data instead of supposition, especially as something as important about our right to vote. Mr. Tallard made passionate comments, constitutional right to vote. Thank Rep. Turco and Senator Lessor for bringing this forward. We take our constitutional right to vote seriously. Generally when you are proposing to change an ordinance, law or what have you, you provide reasons for doing so and think in this instance that didn't happen. There can be lessons learned for all of us, and before proposing something as this important, before tinkering with constitutional right, need better lines of communication; may have had a different response and outcome. Have lived in Newington since 1999; people should be open to dialogue and discussion. Don't think what Rep. Turco and Sen. Lessor did was done maliciously.

- Nicole Cooney, 97 Howard Street stated that with voting rights in the national news and by reducing voting locations in half looks like voter suppression. Voting needs to be easily acceptable. Don’t want to discourage people. Voting registrations has increased. Parking is the last thing you should be worrying about. Do appreciate the attention the state legislators brought to it, there would not be as many people involved in this conversation.

- Mr. France stated he’s a Newington resident since 1990. Stated that he also sent in correspondence; would like that included as well as comment to registrars. I walk to where I vote. I want to encourage people to get registered and to vote. Get involved with your town committees. The Registrars did a tremendous job listening. Stop the mudslinging.
Harold & Jan Kretzman, 91 Tremont Street, grateful to Rep. Turco & Senator Lesser for bringing this to our attention and thank you to the Registrars for their hard work. It seems Newington is going to be experiencing a housing boom with several apartment complexes going up within a year or two increasing our population by 800 or plus new residents. Pleased to see that reducing the polling locations from 7 to 3 is not the current plan anymore; but reducing from seven to six may not work; you may need to increase polling locations. May there never be long lines, difficulty parking or confusion and let there never be less than 7 polling places. As the saying goes, vote early and vote often and vote no on merging or closing any polling places in Newington.

Jessica Weaver thanked everyone for making their voices heard, not only tonight but in the past week. Feel that this should have been noticed more than 24 hours in advance; that is something that needs to be considered. As a resident for 24 years, and now as elected office take my vote very seriously. I'm looking to recruit more poll workers as this has been an issue. Important not to put oneself on senior citizens. Never had an issue voting at E. Green. It is ain't broke, don't fix it. Thanked both Marie and Teresa for all of their hard work on this. Get involved.

Dana Havens, 113 Stoddard Avenue stated that people are confused on the process of this and thinks that came from the press conference where they stated they were fired up with anger and putting the blame on one party over the other is continuing to cause problems. Was happy to hear Mr. Turco tonight say he would like to work with the registrar of voters. It is obvious that the first proposal was too shocking and too drastic. Have not seen any lines at any polling places, have seen parking issues at a couple of polling places; can see where that is a concern. Would like for the Registrars to look into and try to make working polls easier, since that is an issue. Working 16 hours seems unreasonable.

John Trister, 81 Woodland Street, thanked the Registrars for their new proposal; sound like they heard the public's concern. Thank you Mayor for moving up the agenda item. Best thing is to leave voting locations the way they are. If change is necessary, please let it be as minimal as possible. Have never had an issue voting at Martin Kellogg and have concerns about moving the voting to the high school, see no benefit to people who vote in those districts.

Bhudan Patel stated he wanted to congratulate the council for being open to discuss alternatives. Proud that town is very democratic and working together.

Kristen Dagine [sp?], 32 Ridgeway Street stated she agrees with previous comments. Heard about this two days ago while walking my dog. Very upsetting. It's a tactic to keep voters from coming to polls. I'm a registered nurse; need accessible in order to vote. If numbers are going up, no polling location should be closed.

Cara Santoro, 93 Francis Avenue stated that the majority of voices in Newington have been heard, people don't want to change this, and it's the will of the people. To change this would be shameful.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive stated she is going to say what she just responded to someone on Facebook on haven't been people been listening and so forth and the fact of the matter is right now I believe that people right now are exercising their freedom of speech and letting the town council know what they think and how they though the process was going to go. I think a lot of people may not have watched the first presentation and have a lot of questions. Most people don't know what goes into putting on an election or where district boundaries are. I know I vote at Martin Kellogg. The first presentation was a bit clearer but did not provide maps for the council or the public and left a lot of questions. Is the change being proposed to make the registrars jobs easier, it is staffing the polls or is it a matter of saving money? People think we are saving $38,000; my understanding that is the cost of an election and cost reduction is not a reason for the changes. Communication is key. Think this
could have all been avoided, and no disrespect to registrars, if this was in layman’s terms rather than their perspective because they know it inside and out because that’s their job. We as voters know our job, our right, our honor, our privilege is to go out and vote. We get up in arms when we fear someone is taking that away without explanation. I think something should be done and hope you can come to a compromise.

- Jeremy Wetzel, 92 Old Musket Drive stated it’s amazing that we have so much here in town talking about polling places, but nobody takes into consideration keeping these buildings open for people to vote. Nobody’s taking away anybody’s right to vote. The problem is that the Democrats seem to want to allow everybody to vote, multiple times by mail, without verification and it’s not a free for all. Voting is a privilege, it’s not just an online tally, and it’s not an all-star game vote. You need to be an American, you need to be a citizen to vote. So, if we are closing centers for a cost standpoint, I’m all for it. We saw what happened in 2020 when they places were compromised and they were.

- Jacqueline Hudson, 26 Birch Lawn Terrace. Good evening to everyone. If the system is not broken, why fix it. We the people have spoken and should be listened to and hopefully the council members can find an alternative solution. I believe voting is a right, not a privilege and should be treated as such.

B. Email Correspondence

V. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Councilor Donahue thanked everyone for calling in. Have disrespect for Mr. Tallard and the way he treated our Mayor, calling us Trumpians and blaming the Republican party; we are not like that. The voting numbers are up and people are talking about voting numbers at the polls. One polling place is 4,900, but only 35% vote, so that’s 1,000 people. Parking at polling places should not be a driver. Thank you to the registrar’s office for their work. It’s a proposal. This is not about voter suppression. Let’s put the negativity behind us. This was brought forward by changes made by the state.

- Councilor Page stated that his understanding of bipartisan is when groups of people in opposition come together and they compromise and they work out an agreement; don’t think there was a group of people, two people came up with an idea which could have affected the voting access of thousands of people; don’t know anyone who feels this was bipartisan. Agree with Ms. Weaver that the presentation should have come out earlier and putting forward a new idea the night people want to talk about this is problematic and disrespectful. Thank you to the citizens of Newington for coming out and speaking on this.

- Councilor Nagel stated that he’s somewhat perturbed the people assume things are to be one thing when they may not be. There was no attempt to suppress or railroad something through and I only saw information when packet came to us. Appreciate hard work by the registrars of voters for listening and taking advice on changes that could be made. This was prompted by the state because they redistricted Newington so that is why these changes were proposed. Trying to clear up things. Poll workers are not volunteers, they do get paid and it’s a difficult job and not everyone is able to do it because of their circumstances. Know that the Republican side of the aisle, and certain that Democratic side of the aisle, have tried to get poll workers to man the polls.

- Deputy Mayor Budrejko thanked the public for coming out tonight who for the most part were respectful and considerate and gave good input; believe me, we listened. I also want to mention that I received many, many, many thoughtful and sincere letters and communications from residents regarding the initial change from 8 to 3. They were respectful and filled with valid concerns. They all gave compelling reasons of what could happen and their testimonies convinced me it was way too drastic of a cut to go to three. Their concerns were heard and the
process worked and a new proposal will be discussed, dissected and evaluated by the council. I also want to say that is receive a few communications that were very disturbing and actually contributed this proposal that came from our registrars, to a darker objective and basically calling it a nefarious and deliberate attempt, planned and calculated specifically to suppress voters and this is where I need to speak out. We have team of registrars, both Democrat and Republican, whose work is governed by state statutes and federal election laws. Their work is carefully and closely monitored at many levels. They are charged with the highest level of responsibility ensuring that the voting process is fair, efficient and accessible and preserves and protects the rights of voters in this town. The registrars have a lot to manage, from staffing logistics and delivery while also ensuring the integrity of the voting process. For anyone to think that this proposal they put forward as a result of recent changes in state reapportionment, they were obligated to look at these changes and how it would impact us in Newington. While looking at the district in Newington, and the fact they hadn’t been looked at in quite some time, they took the opportunity to do a broader review of the process and very responsible on their part. They brought changes forward and in their experience, they felt were worthy of presenting to us for our consideration. Obviously the first draft was not appropriate, to drastic a cut and impacted too many people and would have made voting difficult. For anyone to actually think these changes were a result of a backroom plan to suppress voting is an insult to these people who worked very hard for us and it undermines the trust in their position. That type of reasoning and logic doesn’t belong in our town. This was an attempt to look at recent changes by the state and make changes they felt were appropriate which many felt were too drastic. The process worked, people came out and said no, this isn’t going to work for us as voters in Newington, they listened and we listened. To think this was nefarious and deliberate is an insult to them, me and the people of this council.

- Councilor Camillo thanked the Registrars of voters for their hard work. There was a news conference last week and not a single person there went in and talked to the registrars and asked them for information. How can you bring that to the public when you don’t know what’s going on. They didn’t have the correct information. Before you do anything, listen before you start talking.

- Mayor DelBuono stated that when we received this proposal we all stated that we weren’t sure that three was the right number. For those who stated we should reach out and work with our representative in a bipartisan fashion, would expect the same. Would expect that if he has concerns he open the lines of communication and come to me to discuss perhaps prior to having a press conference so that we can work together on a proposal like this. It quickly became clear that three was not the right number when this came out and believe that we could have come to a bipartisan effort on making the proposal better. Thrilled members of the public came out. We are here to serve the public and to listen and to figure out what makes sense. This was brought to us by what we consider our experts, our Registrars of Voters who were put in place to this job. They brought a proposal to us and a lot of members of the public are asking why. The reapportionment from the state causes some of our current districts to not be in line with the new state assembly districts that were put forward by the state. So people that are asking us to leave it as is, we really can’t leave is as in and to realign our districts with those of the new state assembly. With that being said some changes will need to take place and we will try to minimize if that is what the public wants. In terms of parking, the residents took what they hear over the last two weeks and worked them into these new proposals. At our next council meeting we will have the final maps and proposals, hopefully will then set public hearing for February 22nd and after that we can take action as a council. Because this is an ordinance change, certain steps need to be followed. I urge the councilors if you have any questions or need further information from the Registrars, feel free to reach out to them directly and let them know what you need so they can bring that forward at our next meeting. I appreciate the work everyone put into this and the dialogue by all.
VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Personnel §1-200(6)(A) – Town Manager Evaluation

Motion by Councilor Manke

RESOLVED,

That the Newington Town Council, in accordance with CGS §1-200(6)(A) hereby moves to go into Executive Session, and invites the Town Council members, the Mayor and Keith Chapman, Town Manager, to discuss a Personnel issue: Town Manager.

Seconded by Councilor Camillo. Motion passed 9-0.

Council adjourned to Executive Session at 9:27 p.m.

Council returned to the Regular Meeting at 10:06 p.m.

Motion by Councilor Radda to hereby allow action upon new business items for voting in excess of 10:30 p.m. Second by Councilor Manke. Motion passed 9-0.

VII. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Health Update – COVID-19

• Town Manager Chapman stated the town is still in the red. Currently there are employees with COVID in the library, police department, parks department and other areas. Distributed 3,000 test kits and 10,000 masks. Thank you to Meghan Manke and Ryan Dean for heading up response to COVID; also thanks to the CERT volunteers for working at Alumni Road on Saturday morning. They do wonderful job, it was very successful.

• Councilor Manke stated our town COVID clinics and volunteers are always recognized for their hard work. Thanks to the public for thanking us for doing this and appreciate everyone’s efforts.

B. COVID-19 ARPA Fund Uses

Motion by Councilor Manke

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby endorses the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the following programs/uses:

1. Newington Small Business Assistance Program; and
2. Acquisition and Installation of a License Plate Reader/Camera System for the Newington Police Department.

Seconded by Councilor Nagel. Motion passed 9-0.

C. Acceptance of Grant Award-Affordable Housing Plan Grant

Motion by Councilor Donahue

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby authorizes Keith Chapman, Town Manager to execute the Notice of Grant Award-Amendment and the DOH Invoice-Request for Payment for the Affordable Housing Plan Technical Assistance Grant with the Connecticut Department of Housing, a copy of the executed documents to be attached to this Resolution.

Seconded by Councilor Nagel. Motion passed 9-0.
D. Town Council Budget Meeting Schedule 2022

Motion by Councilor Radda

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council, pursuant to Section 805 of the Newington Town Charter, will hold two Public Hearings on the proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. These Public Hearings will be held at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall (unless otherwise indicated) as follows:

Tuesday, March 8, 2022
Town Manager’s Proposed Budget

Tuesday, April 5, 2022
Town Council’s Proposed Budget

Seconded by Councilor Nagel. Motion passed 9-0.

E. Job Description – Deputy Police Chief (A-11)

• Town Manager Chapman stated that this position is to help the chief with recruitments, promotions, hiring and policy and procedure changes.
• Councilor Page stated that this is a good way to support our police department.
• Chief Clark stated this is a temporary position.
• Councilor Camillo stated that nowhere does it say temporary.
• Town Manager Chapman stated that it is temporary, you are voting on the job description and adding it to the Administrative Pay Plan so that we won’t need to do this again down the road.

Motion by Councilor Page

The Newington Town Council hereby approves the amendment to the “Classification and Pay Plan” by approving a job description for the Deputy Police Chief (A-11) position, as recommended by Keith Chapman, Town Manager, in his capacity as Personnel Director.

Seconded by Councilor Camillo. Motion passed 9-0.

• Councilor Radda stated that the memo should say Deputy Police Chief.

F. Update to the Classification Plan

• Town Manager Chapman stated that this is done on an annual basis.

Motion by Councilor Manke

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby authorizes Keith Chapman, Town Manager to update and modify the Administrative Group Pay Ranges within the Town Classification and Pay Plan, dated July 1, 2021, and adopted as of January 25, 2022, a copy of which is attached to this Resolution.

Seconded by Councilor Camillo. Motion passed 9-0.

G. Initiate Charter Revision Process

1. Create Charter Revision Commission

Motion by Councilor Nagel

RESOLVED:

WHEREAS, the Town of Newington, as a municipal corporation, has the power to amend its Town Charter in the manner set forth in Connecticut General Statutes §7-187 through §7-193;
WHEREAS, the Newington Town Council is contemplating a revision of the Newington Town Charter for the purpose of bringing said Charter up to current standards in the State of Connecticut and to eliminate any inconsistencies that may currently exist with the State of Connecticut Constitution and/or the Connecticut General Statutes; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §7-188, the proper method for the Newington Town Council to initiate the revision of the Town Charter is by way of a resolution adopted by a two-thirds vote of its entire membership;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The Newington Town Council hereby approves of the initiation of action for the amendment and revision of the Newington Town Charter pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §7-188.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Newington Town Council, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §7-190, shall within thirty days (30) of the date of approval of this current resolution appoint, by way of a separate resolution, a Commission consisting of five to fifteen members whose purpose shall be to draft amendments to the Newington Town Charter using the procedures set forth in Connecticut General Statutes §7-187 through §7-193. No, more than one-third of the membership of said Commission shall hold any other public office in the Town of Newington. No more than a bare majority of said Commission shall be members of one political party.

Seconded by Councilor Manke. Motion passed 9-0.

- Councilor Page asked what the parameters were used to determine how many members are on the commission.
- Mayor DelBuono stated that is the council decision.
- Town Clerk Krupienski stated that the council has the ability, as the resolution states, to have up to 15 members or as low as five members. A lot of time the issue comes into volunteers available for the intense period it takes to review a charter. So a smaller commission is usually more beneficial and they work in a more expeditious fashion.
- Councilor Manke stated that these people cannot serve on any other boards or commissions. So it will be difficult to get people to serve on the commission. We will officially form the Commission on February 8th.
- Town Clerk Krupienski stated that you have thirty days from today, up to the 24th of February to create the appointments and the charge of the commission.
- Councilor Page stated that he cannot promise he will be able to have nominations by February 8th; but will definitely by February 22nd.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken by Waiving the Rules)

A. Mid-Year Budget Transfers

- Janet Murphy stated she normally comes to the council twice a year with budget transfer and this that this is the mid-year transfers. Revenues to the town is up $3.5 million from what we budgeted. Pilot and state/federal aid money is also a factor. Building permits, economic development are also factors. Town Clerk fees are up as well. Expenditures – think we will break even in all departments. All transfers will be coming out of the contingency account with a base amount of $200,000.

B. Proposed Tax Fixing Agreement at 3333 Berlin Turnpike

- Town Manager Chapman stated that this is a project worth approx. $100 million. Excited to come into Newington and do development. The land is currently owned by Eversource. They will purchase the land and there are two separate developers. Nothing on the private side as large of this. Great opportunity for the town. A number of years ago the state created
a tax abatement program allowing towns to go into tax abate for 10-year period. Mr. Chapman showed a video created by the developers.

- Renata Bertotti gave a presentation of the proposed development at 3333 Berlin Turnpike. All land use approvals have been attained; just waiting on permits.
- Steve Kosofsky stated that the lot is made up of a commercial and residential. After abatement is approved, after 3 years, receive revenue as the past 20 years. Taxable assessment for project is approx. $57.4 million. This is being divided into two separate parcels and jointly developed. Since there are two separate owners you will need two separate tax abatement agreements.
- Town Manager Chapman stated that this has been a team effort and we all worked very hard on it. Developers are looking forward to working in Newington. Important we move this forward; anxious to get started with project. Last hurdle.
- Mayor DelBuono thanked everyone for their efforts on this project.
- Councilor Page congratulated Mr. Chapman and their staff for all their efforts. Do we know the price points for housing units? At some point would like the council to look at bus routes. Is the 50% tax abatement industry standard?
- Ms. Kosofsky stated that there is no industry standard. The town has approved previous tax abatement agreements.
- Councilor Page stated this is wonderful for the town.

C. Discussion – Possible Action Under §C-412 of the Newington Town Charter

- Mayor DelBuono stated that people on certain committees have asked to remove the attendance requirements.
- Town Clerk Krupienski stated that this was requested by the liaison for the Human Rights Commission, as well as the ZBA Chairperson regarding members who have not been attending meetings. As far as the Human Rights Commission, both members are under de facto status, so those can be easily replaced and not have an issue bringing the commission up to quorum standard. I’ve asked the ZBA chair to contact the person to supply us with a resignation letter; otherwise we will have to go through the removal process if it becomes necessary. The last time we had to take any removal action was back in 2018.

D. Town Manager Evaluation

- Mayor DelBuono stated we had an executive session earlier this evening to update new councilors on the town manager evaluation process. The councilor will be considering to recognize Mr. Chapman for his performance with a bonus and will bring that forward as an agenda item at our next council meeting for consideration.

IX. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS (Action May Be Taken)

A. Appointments – Various Boards

Motion by Councilor Page

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council here by makes the following appointment(s):

Balf-Town Committee
7 members, 3 alternates: 2 NTC, 1 Env. Comm., 2 residents, 2 Balf Reps
Party Max: 5 regular, 2 alternates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Replaces</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R. Clark Castelle</td>
<td>167 Connecticut Avenue</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 - 11/30/2024</td>
<td>Vacancy-Resignation of M Udice</td>
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</tbody>
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Board of Assessment Appeals
3 members – 4 year term
Party Max: 2

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<tr>
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<th>Address</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Replaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Callahan</td>
<td>99 Cedarwood Lane</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2025</td>
<td>Reappointment – Self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
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Commission on Aging and Disabled
9 Members – three-year terms
Party Max: 6

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<th>Party</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Replaces</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maureen B. Lynch Member</td>
<td>165 Foxboro Drive</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2025</td>
<td>Reappointment – Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Sobieski Member</td>
<td>26 Deepwood Drive</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2024</td>
<td>Reappointment – Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marc Frantz Member</td>
<td>288 Williamstown Court</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2023</td>
<td>De Facto term of T Lapenta-Duffek</td>
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</table>

Conservation /Inland Wetlands Commission
7 Members; 3 Alternates; Staggered 4-year terms
Member Max: 5; Alternate Max: 2

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<th>Replaces</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Casasanta Member</td>
<td>86 Indian Hill Road</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2025</td>
<td>Reappointment – Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Paskewich Member</td>
<td>100 Cambria Avenue</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2025</td>
<td>Reappointment - Self</td>
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</table>

Development Commission
9 Members, 3 Alternates; 3-year term - staggered
Party Max.: 6 members, 2 alternates

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<th>Party</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Replaces</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meredith (Meri) Beatrice Member</td>
<td>158 Hartford Avenue</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2023</td>
<td>Vacancy-Resignation of F Rosa</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Employee Insurance and Pension Benefits Committee
9 members: 5 specialists, 2 NTC, 2 BOE: 2 alternates
2-year term (specialists)
Party Max.: 6 members, 1 alternate

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<th>Party</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R Clark Castelle Alternate</td>
<td>167 Connecticut Avenue</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2022</td>
<td>Vacancy, Resignation of J Slater</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Environmental Quality Commission 2016
7 members: 5 Public, 2 Industry, 2 NTC Liaisons
2-year term
Party Max.: 5

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<th>Party</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Replaces</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karen Serio Public Member</td>
<td>74 Fox Run Court</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2025</td>
<td>Reappointment – Self</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Human Rights Commission
9 members; 3 year term
Party max: 6

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<th>Party</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Replaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liza Andrews Member</td>
<td>92 Centerwood Road</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1/25/2022 – 11/30/2024</td>
<td>Reappointment – Self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Library Board
6 appointed members (plus 9 corp. trustees); 6-year term
Party max: 4

Page 13
Newington Town Council Meeting Minutes (1-25-2022)
X. REFUNDS (Action Requested)

A. Approval of January 25, 2022 Refunds for an Overpayment of Taxes

Motion by Deputy Mayor Budrejko

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of $4,206.10 are hereby approved in the individual amounts and for those named on the “Requests for Refund of an Overpayment of Taxes,” certified by the Revenue Collector, a list of which is attached to this resolution.

Seconded by Councilor Nagel. Motion passed 9-0.

XI. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A. December 14, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes
B. January 11, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
• Motion to accept the minutes Councilor Manke. Seconded by Councilor Donahue. Motion passed 9-0.

XII. WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER
• Town Manager Chapman reminded the councilors of the Land Use Academy on Thursday.

XIII. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS
• Councilor Manke stated that the Rules Committee met and will have rules and procedures for you at our next meeting.

XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (Via Zoom Application or Phone)
(3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT PER SPEAKER ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)
• Senator Lessor apologized for missing time slot earlier. Pleased to hear additional PILOT monies issued. Want to speak regarding redistricting. Not surprised initial proposal got the reaction it did – equally upsetting to Democrat, Republican and Independent voters. Want to set the record straight; take into effect of initial proposal that is why broad faced concern. Grateful Registrars came up with another proposal. Issue getting people to volunteer to be poll workers; need to strengthen our civil fabric and need to work together on.
• Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive stated she is delighted to hear about 3333 Berlin Turnpike sat through many TZP meetings listening to various proposals. Wondering if there could be updates on other hot project items around town. Personally hated ZOOM in the beginning but love it now and will love it during budget process. Thank you for everything that you do. Stay safe.
• Ellen Shiller, 84 Settlers Knoll, please consider the amount of people moving into town before making any decision on the number of polling places. There will be more people in town and traffic on the Berlin Turnpike.

XV. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS
• Councilor Donahue stated that he wished Senator Lessor stayed around. Looking at text
• Councilor Camillo stated that he started this all over again. Should be apologizing for stirring the pot.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT
Motion to adjourn by Councilor Manke. Seconded by Councilor Donahue. Motion passes unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Gibbon
Council Clerk