



City of Winooski

Vermont's Opportunity City

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

Winooski City Council Meeting

Monday, December 12, 2022, at 6 PM

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

Attend by phone: 1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 843 6484 9328

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

I. Call to Order

II. Agenda Review

III. Public Comment

IV. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval: City Council and Liquor Control Board Minutes of 12.5.22
- b. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant 12.8.22

V. Council Reports

VI. City Updates

VII. Regular Items

- a. Discussion: FY24 Budget Presentation - Community Services Department - Ray Coffey, Community Services Director
- b. Discussion/Approval: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Program Grant - Ray Coffey, Community Services Director
- c. Discussion/Approval - Vermont Department of Education 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant (Sub-Grantee of Winooski School District) - Ray Coffey, Community Services Director
- d. Discussion/Approval: COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program - Second Round - Elaine Wang, City Manager
- e. Discussion/Approval: Political Sign Procedure - Elaine Wang, City Manager
- f. Discussion/Approval - Housing Initiative Director Position - Elaine Wang, City Manager
- g. Discussion: Strategic Vision Area Goal Update - Housing - Elaine Wang, City Manager
- h. Discussion/Approval: Housing Trust Fund Application - Down Payment Assistance Application 002- Elaine Wang, City Manager
- i. Discussion: 2023 Legislative Priorities for Winooski - Mayor Kristine Lott
- j. Discussion/Approval - Appoint Airport Commissioner - Elaine Wang, City Manager

VIII. Adjourn

Minutes

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:23 pm.

Members Present:

Mayor Kristin Lott

Deputy Mayor James Duncan

Councilors: Bryn Oakleaf and Aurora Hurd

Councilor Thomas Renner was absent

Officer's Present:

Elaine Wang, City Manager; Paul Sarne, Communications Director; Angela Aldieri, Finance Director; John Audy, Fire Chief; Jon Rauscher, Public Works Director; Eric Vorwald, Planning/Zoning Manager; Jenny Willingham, City Clerk; Ray Coffey, Community Services Director; Barbara Pitfido, Senior Center Director; Robin Merritt, Recreation and Parks Manager; Angel Lane, Assistant City Clerk

Other's Present:

Ryan Johnston, Meaghan Willis, Lorrie Hoffman, Lance McKee, Bhatka Pradhan, Aaron Fournier, Judy Lance, Marielle Matthews, Town Meeting TV, Jamie LaCourse, Winooski Library, Kirsten Wilson, Jean Coffey, Andy Blanchet, Mary Hussmann, Meghan, Francine Bahati, Indra Acharya

II. Agenda Review

Councilor Hurd requested that item F and G be switch placing Item G just before item F.

MOTION: by Councilor Hurd second by Councilor Duncan to place item G before item F on tonight's agenda. Voted and passed 3-0.

III. Public Comment - none

IV. Consent Agenda

a. Approval: City Council and Liquor Control Board Minutes of 12.5.22

b. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant 12.8.22

MOTION: by Councilor Hurd second by Councilor Duncan to approve entire Consent Agenda as presented. Voted and passed 3-0.

V. Councilor Reports

Councilor Oakleaf – Councilor Oakleaf attended the Planning Commission this past Thursday. They had a very full agenda. They discussed historic preservation incentives and some administrative details with this plan. There were no concerns from the commissioners. Shared parking incentives were also discussed. The next Planning Commission meeting will be in January. As a reminder per the State Legislature remote only meetings will be ending and going forward all meetings will have to be hybrid or in-person meetings. The Municipal Infrastructure Commission will meet this Thursday at the pool @ 6:30 pm. They plan to go over the workplan and if time allows discuss multi-family/renter-based homes energy efficiency incentives that the City might be involved with regarding housing quality.

Deputy Mayor Duncan – The Deputy Mayor shared that he would not be seeking re-election. He will have more to say about his decision later. Deputy Mayor Duncan attended the Housing Commission last Thursday where a down payment assistance application was reviewed. Other activities were reviewed such as the legal language and the timeline for Just Case Eviction being added to the ballot for a possible Charter change. The discussion on these items continues. They discussed changes to the housing quality ordinance which includes the Rental Registry inspection schedule and other items relative to housing quality. The next meeting will be in January the exact day and time to be determined.

Councilor Hurd – The Inclusion & Belonging Commission met this week and had very productive meeting. The Ambassadors shared updates from their various commission meetings. The group set ground rules for the Commission and decided to have a Chair and Secretary for a 3-month term. Councilor Hurd stated that they are trying to create an equitable and inclusive structure within the Inclusion & Belonging Commission itself. Also discussed was the Equity Audit and action steps that can be taken and how to communicate these actions to the City at large. The next Inclusion & Belonging Commission meeting will be a special meeting to be held on January 12th @ 6:30 pm. The Safe Healthy Connected People Commission will meet on this Wednesday via Zoom at 6:30 pm.

Mayor Lott – This Friday morning Mayor Lott will be meeting with Burlington Mayor Weinberger and State Legislators to share our Legislative Priorities that will discuss and hopefully approved tonight.

VI. City Updates

As you know, we're continuing the Fiscal Year 2024 budget meetings tonight! Community members are encouraged to get engaged in the process. To see the full budget and meeting schedule, please visit winooskivt.gov/fy24. Questions? Contact us at 802 655 6410 / budget@winooskivt.gov or get in touch with me or your Councilors directly.

Today, we promoted our annual winter parking ban reminder – if you haven't yet, please sign up for our winter parking ban alerts by texting 'Winooski' to 888-777 or by visiting winooskivt.gov/parking.

As we head into the holiday months, the City of Winooski encourages our residents and visitors to do everything they can to prevent the spread of COVID-19. More COVID-19 illness is to be expected as people are spending more time gathering indoors. To learn more about vaccines, testing, masks, and other resources, please visit winooskivt.gov/covid-19. Test kits are available for free at City Hall, the library, and the Senior Center during regular hours.

Speaking of which, The Vermont Health Equity Initiative is hosting free BIPOC vaccination clinics are culturally affirming spaces that offer education and language interpretation resources for community member and their households. No proof of insurance or identification is required to receive care. Community members can get the Bivalent Vaccine (ages 5+) and the Flu Vaccine for (any age under 65). **Dec 17, Jan 7: 9 – 11 AM @ The Cathedral Church of St. Paul (2 Cherry Street Burlington)**

From the Winooski School District:

Bus transportation to and from school for students living .75 of a mile from the campus kicked off this week! Drivers and riders are still adjusting to their routes and the district is hopeful for consistent pick-up/drop-off times. The District also wants community members to know that they continuing the driver hiring and training process to expand bus routes and are currently focused on the students who live the farthest distances – hoping to have more drivers by the end of this month!

The Vermont Agency of Education has released an application to help build the newly formed Family Engagement Council. This council is intended to advise the secretary on education policy and topics of interest to parents in Vermont. Winooski parents of younger children, parents in non-traditional families, and grandparents or other relatives acting as primary caregivers are especially encouraged to apply – to do so, please see the latest edition of the School District’s email updates or contact the WSD offices for assistance.

Finally, A heads up for Council. The building at 72 W Spring St that had the first last weekend has been deemed unstable and there is a high risk of further collapse, especially in the event of a heavy snow, such as is forecast for this Friday.

It appears of late today that the owner does NOT have insurance, nor does he have resources to mitigate the risk. Therefor the city will likely move forward with demolition to protect public health and safety which will require use of fund balance. We do not have quotes yet and so are not prepared to make a fund balance request tonight.

The costs will include for a demolition Contractor, disposal of waste (likely will be considered all asbestos waste), and Environmental assessment and/or supervision of removal, and State and local demo permits.

VII. Regular Items

a. Discussion: FY24 Budget Presentation - Community Services Department - Ray Coffey, Community Services Director

Ray Coffey the Community Services Director shared his FY24 Budget Presentation. He highlighted his staff and each one’s area of responsibility. Mr. Coffey shared many of the recent investments in Community Services. This brought forward the discussion of ESSER funding that will soon expire. Mayor Lott offered a reminder that the continuation of ESSER funded programs is not level service funding. Mr. Coffey began a discussion on what is proposed to be cut. Some of the proposed cuts will be the Youth Interventionist Position, an AmeriCorps position, and a cut to Library books/periodicals. There was discussion and many questions. There was a brief discussion regarding the Stretch Budget. A review of emerging issues was brought forth for awareness of possible future changes. Discussion ensued. Council thanked Mr. Coffey for his time and detailed presentation.

Mayor Lott proposed a 5-minute recess at 8:26 pm. The City Council Meeting reconvened at 8:33 pm.

b. Discussion/Approval: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Program Grant - Ray Coffey, Community Services Director

Ray Coffey explained the requirements of the grant with Council. The Community Services Department is seeking these funds to support improved signage and wayfinding for the recreational trails located within several of our City's parks. Deputy Mayor Duncan stated that even though he is employed by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources there would not be a conflict of interest with him voting on this grant approval since he does not have anything to do with grant acceptance in his role. He stated his intent on voting on this item.

MOTION: by Councilor Hurd second by Councilor Oakleaf to approve the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Program Grant as presented. Voted and passed 3-0.

c. Discussion/Approval - Vermont Department of Education 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant (Sub-Grantee of Winooski School District) - Ray Coffey, Community Services Director

The Community Services Department is excited to partner with the Winooski School District again to apply for funding through the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant program, serving as a sub-grantee in support of the grant program's mission of providing high quality after school and summer learning opportunities for school aged youth. On November 7th Council had authorized the City Manager to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the school to implement the work; that MOU will be included with this grant application. There was some discussion.

MOTION: by Councilor Duncan and second by Councilor Hurd to approve the Vermont Department of Education 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant (Sub-Grantee of Winooski School District) as presented. Voted and passed 3-0.

d. Discussion/Approval: COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program – Second Round - Elaine Wang, City Manager

City Manager Wang brought this item before Council to consider whether to open a second round of the Covid-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program and if so, how much to allocate and what direction to provide the Safe Healthy Connected People Commission on revising the grant program guidelines. It was discussed at the November 7th meeting to have this item back on the agenda once Council had a clearer picture of the FY24 proposed budget. Discussion ensued. Councilor Duncan and Councilor Oakleaf did not wish to take action at this time in going forward with second round of Covid-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grants.

MOTION: by Councilor Duncan to approve the Covid-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grant Program reallocating to \$30,000.00 as presented. There was not a second motion, so the motion failed.

e. Discussion/Approval: Political Sign Procedure - Elaine Wang, City Manager

City Manager Wang brought this item before Council to seek approval on the proposed Political Sign Procedure. There was some discussion.

MOTION: by Councilor Hurd second by Councilor Duncan to approve the Political Sign Procedure as amended. Voted and passed 3-0. Amended items include the following added verbiage:

- Campaign signs related to candidates or matters on the ballot are allowed for no more than two weeks prior to an election, and no more than one day after an election.
- No signs allowed in City parks without the approval of the City Manager.
- Signs may be removed if the signs conflict with community events per the City Manager.
- The City will operate reacting to complaints versus monitoring for compliance.

f. Discussion: Strategic Vision Area Goal Update - Housing - Elaine Wang, City Manager

City Manager Wang brought forth progress to Council as related to Housing. Some items are moving slower than planned due to dedicated staff. There were many areas highlighted that are moving ahead i.e., updating the Public Building Registry Ordinance, launch and monitor the Housing Trust Program. There was also an update on the citywide reappraisal which is moving along as expected. There was some discussion regarding the removal of the Housing Summit due to a lack of vision and dedicated staff but there was not a decision made at this point. Discussion ensued. Council thanked the City Manager for the update.

g. Discussion/Approval - Housing Initiative Director Position - Elaine Wang, City Manager

This position was approved at 40 hours back in November and was posted with a few applications coming in. The post has been taken down and it is now being proposed as a 30-hour position. This was done considering the FY24 proposed budget and the need to find cuts. City Manager Wang presented this to the Council advising them that they could also delay this decision until the final budget comes out. There was much discussion.

MOTION: by Councilor Duncan and second by Councilor Oakleaf to approve the Housing Initiative Director Position at 30 hours as presented. Voted and passed 3-0.

h. Discussion/Approval: Housing Trust Fund Application – Down Payment Assistance Application 002- Elaine Wang, City Manager

City Manager Wang brought this item before the Council to vote to approve DPA application 002. The purpose of the Housing Trust Fund is to promote, create and retain affordable housing options for low- and moderate-income households. Some discussion ensued.

MOTION: by Councilor Duncan second by Councilor Hurd to approve the Housing Trust Fund Application – Down Payment Assistance Application as presented. Voted and passed 3-0.

i. Discussion: 2023 Legislative Priorities for Winooski - Mayor Kristine Lott

Mayor Lott presented the Legislative Priorities to the Council. Since this item was not on the agenda for approval the Mayor sought consensus from the Council to move forward and will bring this item back to Council to be approved at the next meeting. Each Councilor gave a verbal consensus of agreement with the document. Councilor Hurd offered a minor change of wording from "safe injection sites" to "overdose prevention sites". There was mutual agreement on this change.

j. Discussion/Approval - Appoint Airport Commissioner - Elaine Wang, City Manager

City Manager Wang brought this item before Council to vote to appoint Deputy Mayor James Duncan as Airport Commissioner. He will only serve until Town Meeting Day. A different solution will be needed a that time.

MOTION: by Councilor Oakleaf second by Councilor Hurd to approve the appointment of Deputy Mayor Duncan to Airport Commissioner as presented. Voted and passed 3-0.

VIII. Adjourn

MOTION: by Deputy Mayor Duncan second by Councilor Oakleaf to adjourn the Winooski City Council Meeting at 9:46 pm. Voted and passed 3-0.

ATTEST: _____
Angel Lane, Assistant City Clerk