

# **REGULAR MEETING OF THE AGAWAM CITY COUNCIL**

## **Minutes dated July 11, 2022**

Meeting was called to order by Council President Johnson at 7:00pm at the Agawam Senior Center Veterans Hall.

### **Item A. Roll Call**

#### **ROLL CALL – 11 PRESENT, 0 ABSENT**

Roll Call was taken with the following Councilors present: George Bitzas, Cecilia Calabrese, Paul Cavallo, Thomas Hendrickson, Christopher Johnson, Dino Mercadante, Anthony Russo, Robert Rossi, Rosemary Sandlin, Gerald Smith, and Anthony Suffriti. With eleven present, there was a quorum.

### **Item B. Moment of Silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.**

There was a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Item C. Citizen's Speak Time**

None.

### **Item D. Minutes**

#### **1. Regular Council Meeting – June 21, 2022**

Motion to approve made by Councilor Mercadante and seconded by Councilor Suffriti. Voice vote approved.

### **Item E. Declaration of Council President**

#### **1. Introduction of new Personnel Director – John Fitzgerald**

Council President Johnson welcomed Mayor Sapelli who was going to introduce John Fitzgerald, the new Personnel Director. Mayor Sapelli said he was pleased to announce the hiring of our new Personnel Director/ head of Human Resources, John Fitzgerald noting he may go as Jack, John or Fitzzy. He gave a brief introduction and then gave the microphone to John Fitzgerald. John Fitzgerald said he was thrilled to be here working for the Mayor, the City Council and residents of Agawam. His background includes going to Springfield College and WNEU School of Law and worked for many years in the District Attorney's Office in Springfield. He also worked with the Mayor of Chicopee, Springfield and Westfield along with practicing in a private law firm.. He is excited to begin working in this capacity. He has a wife and two children residing in East Longmeadow and even has a dog named Brownie. He noted that the town was in great hands for the last ten months with Jan Sapelli and Kathy Chase and that there are no words to express gratitude for the amazing service these two have done for Agawam these past months. On behalf of the City Council, Council President Johnson welcomed him.

### **Item F. Presentation of Resolutions**

- 1. TR-2022-24 - A Resolution to appropriate and authorize borrowing in the amount of Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,500,000.00) to pay costs for the Westfield River Intercept Sewer Relocation Project and the Reed Street Embankment Project (Sponsored by Mayor Sapelli) (Referred to Finance Committee) (Remain on table since 4/4/22)**

Council President Johnson noted this item will remain on the table noting the town is still working on alternate plans for this item because of the hazardous materials found in the original corridor.

**2. TR-2022-49 - A Resolution appropriating (\$18,400.00) from the Community Preservation Fund and authorizing the expenditure of Community Preservation Funds for the historic graves and monument restoration (CPA) (Referred to Community Relations Committee)**

Motion to approve made by Councilor Rossi and seconded by Councilor Cavallo. As Chair of the Community Relations Committee, Councilor Bitzas provided the report stating that Committee members spoke in favor of this item as did the Mayor. Mayor Sapelli said the Eagle Scouts are working on this as well. Councilor Bitzas decided to go into Committee as a Whole to have questions asked by non-members. Councilor Mercadante asked a question how the funds would be spent. They would be breaking it down for cleaning and also training for education on how to clean these ourselves. The Committee made a Motion to send a positive recommendation to the Full Council by Councilors Rossi and Russo and seconded by Council Vice President Calabrese. The vote was 5 Yes, 0 No.

Councilor Bitzas continued speaking saying it is a necessity to clean these headstones. There are 332 in town and more than half need to be restored. There was a question as to whether or not this could be legally paid for by CPA funds and the Solicitor provided a written opinion that they can indeed be because they are historic. David Cecchi of the Historical Commission also supports this item. Councilor Mercadante noted that this is one of the best uses of CPA and respects our heritage. His only question was that we need to be diligent with these funds and understood \$4000 of the appropriation will be to train our own people how to do this cleaning on future graves and monuments in town. He fully supports this item. Councilor Rossi said history personally triggers a unique outlook for him noting these gravestones are a tangible record of our past and it is important to keep these people in our thoughts. This provides a clear sense of community and history of Agawam in years past. It is a small price to pay to maintain these important parts of our town's history. Councilor Russo agreed with Councilor Rossi regarding the history of our town but also because many of these belong to veterans and it is so important to preserve them and honor our veterans. He said it was a great way to spend CPA money and is very glad that people would be trained in this procedure. Councilor Sandlin gave a big shout out to the Eagle Scouts because they have been doing this already without being paid. She agreed it was a great way to use CPA money and fully supported it.

The vote was **11 YES, 0 NO** approving the item.

**Item G. Elections**

None.

**Item H. Public Hearings**

**1. ZC-2022-1 (PH-2022-7) - Petition for Zone Change by prospective owner Route 75/Main Street Aga, LLC for property located at 36 Main Street from Residents A-2 to Business A (Referred to Legislative Committee) - Public Hearing Date set for August 1, 2022**

The Public Hearing for this item will be at our next meeting on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Item I. Old Business**

**1. TO-2022-15 - Budgetary Transfer (\$2,600.00) from Clerk Regular Temporary (#11611-51020) to Printing (#16602-52280) (Sponsored by Mayor Sapelli)**

Motion to approve made by Councilor Sandlin and seconded by Councilors Smith and Mercadante.

The vote was **11 YES, 0 NO** approving the transfer.

**Item J. New Business**

1. **TR-2022-50 - A Resolution to appropriate and transfer Two Hundred Forty Eight Thousand and Four Hundred Seventy Six Dollars and Eighty Cents (\$248,476.80) for the Agreements of the Agawam Nurses Association, the Agawam Police Supervisor’s Association, the Agawam Patrolmen’s Association, and the Agawam Building Maintenance Association with the Town of Agawam (Sponsored by Mayor Sapelli)**

Referred to Finance Committee, next Agenda.

2. **TO-2022-16 - Budgetary Transfer (\$248,476.80) from Line Item – Salary Reserve (#16605-57350) to the following accounts:**

<b>Health Reg/Permanent</b>	<b>#15101-51010</b>	<b>\$ 46,804.25</b>
<b>Building Maintenance Reg/Permanent</b>	<b>#11921-51010</b>	<b>\$ 56,057.13</b>
<b>Police Reg/Permanent</b>	<b>#12101-51010</b>	<b>\$122,466.04</b>
<b>Police Science College</b>	<b>#12101-51120</b>	<b>\$ 23,149.38</b>

Referred to Finance Committee, next Agenda.

**Item L. Any other matter that may legally come before the City Council**

Councilor Sandlin was glad to read the article about the Fire Department using a \$3,500 grant to help residents with smoke detectors however they already ran out of money. She is challenging everyone to donate to the Fireman Fund and personally donated \$50 which would allow the Fire Chief to purchase more smoke detectors for residents of Agawam. Councilor Hendrickson mentioned the recent unfortunate sewer main break spilling 540,000 gallons of untreated sewage into the Westfield River noting the City Council recently passed the increase in sewer fees. He said he is glad this was approved as incidents such as these show the importance of raising fees to help improve our infrastructure. Council Vice President Calabrese welcomed Joh Fitzgerald to the Human Resources Department and gave a huge shout out to Jan Sapelli and Kathy Chase who picked up the ball and did a great job. Councilor Cavallo said he took advantage of having the Fire Department come to his home. They cannot replace wired detectors but gave them great advice on what they can do to improve their safety. Councilor Mercadante said it was so nice to see all eleven councilors together. He was glad Councilor Sandlin was healthy and happy to have her back. He said “we are eleven strong!” Council President Johnson was thinking the same thing and hoped everyone stays healthy so we can remain together.

**Item M. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was moved and seconded all around the house. Meeting was adjourned at 7:23pm.

\*Please note that this meeting was live-streamed on Channel 15 as well as being able to view on the town’s website\* [www.agawam.ma.us](http://www.agawam.ma.us)

Approved

TR-2022-49

**A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING FROM THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND AND AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDS FOR THE HISTORIC GRAVES AND MONUMENT RESTORATION**

Sponsored by the Community Preservation Act Committee

**Whereas**, voters of Agawam chose to form a Community Preservation Committee (CPA); and

**Whereas**, pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44B, Section 5(2) allows the CPA Committee to make recommendations to the legislative body; and

**Whereas**, pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44B, Section 5(3)(d) states that the legislative body shall then take such action and approve such appropriations for the CPA Committee; and

**Whereas**, one of the Committee's functions is to fund Historic Preservation and the Rehabilitation/Restoration of historic sites; and

**Whereas**, the restoration of historic graves and monuments within local cemeteries is vital; and

**Whereas**, the South Westfield Street / Old Feeding Hills Cemetery in Feeding Hills is considered one of Agawam's six historic cemeteries; and

**Whereas**, the South Westfield Street / Old Feeding Hills Cemetery is included in the Town of Agawam's inventory of historic resources and is listed in the Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) MACRIS (Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System) database; and

**Whereas**, the Agawam Historical commission has voted unanimously to support this project; and

**Whereas**, the Community Preservation Committee has recommended that the Agawam City Council appropriate and expend the amount of eighteen thousand four hundred dollars and zero cents (\$18,400.00) from the Historical Fund Balance; and

**Whereas**, it is in the best interests of the City of Agawam to appropriate from the community preservation fund and authorize the expenditure for the Restoration of Historic Graves and Monuments;

**Now Therefore**, the Agawam City Council hereby resolves, appropriates, and authorizes the expenditure of Community Preservation Funds in the amount of eighteen thousand four

Orig. Clerk's Office  
 cc: Council  
 cc: Auditor  
 cc: Procurement  
 cc: Law  
 cc: Mayor

hundred dollars and zero cents (\$18,400.00) from the Historical Fund Balance for documentation of the Restoration of Historic Graves and Monuments; and The Agawam City Council hereby further resolves that the Mayor is authorized to expend said funds, as permitted by law, and to do all things necessary for the purposes so stated.

Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2022.

PER ORDER OF THE AGAWAM CITY COUNCIL

  
 Christopher C. Johnson, President

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY

  
 Stephen Buoniconti, City Solicitor

APPROVED AS TO APPROPRIATION

  
 Cheryl St. John, Auditor

**BUDGETARY TRANSFER FORM**

Approved TO: 2022-15

Department: Clerk

Amount: \$ 2,600.00 Date: June 7, 2022

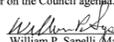
From: Clerk Regular Temp. 11611-51020  
 Title of Account Account Number

To: Printing 16602-52280 \$2,600.00  
 Title of Account Account Number

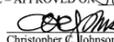
Reason for Transfer:  
 Cover printing costs of Street Listing Books and Re-precincting notices to affected voters

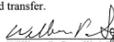
  
 Department Head

I hereby certify that funds are available to make the above-stated transfer.  
 Date: 6/7/22   
 Cheryl St. John, Auditor

I hereby approve placement of the above-stated transfer on the Council agenda.  
 Date: 6/7/22   
 William P. Sapelli, Mayor

Approved as to form and legality.  
 Date: 6/7/22   
 Stephen Buoniconti, Solicitor

PER ORDER OF THE AGAWAM TOWN COUNCIL - APPROVED ON July 11, 2022  
 Date: 7/11/22   
 Christopher C. Johnson, President

APPROVAL OF LEGISLATION: Pursuant to Section 3-6 of the Agawam Home Rule Charter, I hereby approve the Council passage of the above-stated transfer.  
 Date: 7/12/22   
 William P. Sapelli, Mayor

DISAPPROVAL OF LEGISLATION: Pursuant to Section 3-6 of the Agawam Home Rule Charter, I hereby disapprove the Council passage of the above-stated transfer.  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 William P. Sapelli, Mayor

Orig. Clerk's Office  
 cc: Council  
 cc: Auditor  
 cc: Treasurer  
 cc: Mayor