

The regular meeting of the Council of the City of Norwich was held March 15, 2021 at 7:30 PM in Council Chambers. Present: Ald. Bettencourt, Ald. Nash, Gould, Wilson, Myles and DeLucia. City Manager Salomone and Corporation Counsel Michael Driscoll were also in attendance. Mayor Nystrom presided.

Ald. Nash read the opening prayer and Ald. Wilson led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Please be advised that meetings of the Norwich City Council can be viewed in their entirety on the City of Norwich website “norwichct.org”.

Mayor Nystrom called for citizen comment.

There were no emails.

There were no speakers.

Mayor Nystrom declared citizen comment closed.

Ald. Gould arrived at this time.

Upon a motion of President Pro Tem Bettencourt, seconded by Ald. Gould, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to postpone the following ordinance until April 19, 2021 at 7:30 pm.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 8-74, 8-75 AND 8-77 OF ARTICLE IV OF CHAPTER 8 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES PERTAINING TO THE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF FUND PLAN OF THE CITY OF NORWICH

WHEREAS, plan changes have been proposed to the City of Norwich Volunteer Firefighters Pension Plan; and

WHEREAS, on or about October 5, 2020 the City of Norwich Finance Department received an analysis of the financial impact of the proposed changes prepared by the actuarial firm overseeing the pension fund; and

WHEREAS, the Volunteer Firefighter Relief Fund Committee at a special meeting held October 13, 2020 reviewed this financial analysis and voted to recommend the proposed plan changes to the Council of the City of Norwich

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Norwich that the following amendments to Sections 8-74, 8-75, and 8-77 of Article IV of Chapter 8 of the Code of Ordinances listed as follows:

Section 8-74(a)(v)(6);

Section 8-74(a)(v)(7,) (to be added);

Section 8-75(a) (i) and (ii), (subpart (ii) deleted in full);

Section 8-75(c)(vi), (amending 8-75(c)(vi) by deleting (i) and (2) and restating (vi));

Section 8-75(c)(vii), (to be added);

Section 8-77(d)(i)(1)(a) and (b);

Section 8-77(d)(i)(1)(c), (to be added).

BE AND HEREBY ARE ADOPTED.

Sec. 8-74. – Service

(v) Contribution rate. A plan member shall contribute the following amounts for purchase of credited service during the following periods:

- (1) \$60.00 for plan years prior to January 1, 1995.
- (2) \$84.00 for plan years on or after January 1, 1995 but prior to January 1, 2000.
- (3) \$120.00 for plan years on or after January 1, 2000 but prior to January 1, 2006.
- (4) \$180.00 for plan years on or after January 1, 2006 but prior to January 1, 2011.
- (5) \$216.00 for plan years on or after January 1, 2011 but prior to January 1, 2014.
- (6) \$264.00 for plan years on or after January 1, 2014 but prior to January 1, 2021.
- (7) \$288.00 for plan years on or after January 1, 2021.

Sec. 8-75. - Retirement benefits.

(a) Normal retirement.

~~(i) For members joining the plan prior to January 1, 2015, the~~ A plan member's normal retirement date shall be the first day of the month in which such member has attained age 55 and has completed at least 20 years of credited service.

~~(ii) For members joining the plan on or after January 1, 2015, the plan member's normal retirement date shall be the first day of the month in which such member has attained age 55 and has completed at least 25 years of credited service.~~

(b) Deferred retirement. A plan member who is satisfactorily able to perform fire duties may remain an active member and continue to earn credited service beyond his/her normal retirement date while he/she continues to collect benefits. The first day of the calendar month following such deferred retirement shall be known as his/her deferred retirement date.

(c) Calculation of retirement benefits. The monthly amount of retirement benefits payable to a plan member shall be calculated as follows:

(i) For retired members with a break in service prior to January 1, 1995, \$7.00 times 20 years of service, for a maximum of \$140.00.

- (ii) For retired members with a break in service on or after January 1, 1995 but prior to January 1, 2000, \$8.00 times number of years of credited service, with a maximum of 30 years, or \$240.00.
- iii) For retired members with a break in service on or after January 1, 2000 but prior to January 1, 2006, \$10.00 times number of years of credited service, with a maximum of 30 years, or \$300.00.
- (iv) For retired members with a break in service on or after January 1, 2006 but prior to January 1, 2011, \$15.00 times number of years of credited service, with a maximum of 35 years, or \$525.00.
- (v) For retired members with a break in service on or after January 1, 2011 but prior to January 1, 2015, \$18.00 times number of years of credited service, with a maximum of 40 years, or \$720.00.
- (vi) For retired members with a break in service on or after January 1, 2015 but prior to January 1, 2021, \$22.00 times number of years of credited service, with a maximum of forty years, or \$880,00;
- ~~(1) — Fforty years, or \$880.00, for members who joined the plan prior to January 1, 2015~~
- ~~(2) — Thirty years, or \$660.00, for members who joined the plan on or after January 1, 2015~~
- (vii) For retired members with a break in service on or after January 1, 2021, \$24 times number of years of credited service, with a maximum of 40 years, or \$960.00

Sec. 8-77. - Death benefits.

(d) Death after retirement.

(i) Qualified spousal and child benefits. A plan member who is under the age of 65 as of January 8, 2001 and is an active member is entitled to have benefits pass onto his/her qualified spouse and child(ren), subject to the restrictions and calculations described herein.

(1) Qualified spouse is entitled to death benefits until death or remarriage, calculated as follows:

- a. Plan member who died between January 8, 2001 and July 16, 2006. Fifty percent of the deceased plan member's retirement benefit;
- b. Plan member who died ~~after~~ between July 16, 2006 and January 1, 2021. Ninety percent of the deceased plan member's retirement benefit.
- c. Plan member who die after January 1, 2021. One hundred percent of the deceased plan member's retirement benefit.

Audit presentation presented by Ron Nossek of BlumShapiro.

Upon a motion of President Pro Tem Bettencourt, seconded by Ald. Myles, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to accept the following explanation of resolution regarding the transfer of certain real estate, motor vehicle, and personal property taxes into the suspense account.



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March 9, 2021

To: Mayor Peter A. Nystrom and Members of the Norwich City Council through City Manager John Salomone

Explanation of resolutions regarding the transfer of certain real estate, motor vehicle, and personal property taxes into the suspense account

There are two proposed resolutions for your consideration for the next City Council meeting agenda regarding the transfer of certain property taxes into the "suspense account." I've prepared a brief explanation of these two resolutions below.

Real Estate

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §12-165, the Tax Collector must research each real estate tax account which she deems as not being collectable prior to presenting them to the City Council. There are different reasons for her to request that the tax account be transferred to the suspense tax book, including: mobile home abandoned and owner deceased or cannot be located, mobile home was removed without consent, property is contaminated, title issues, etc.

The properties presented in the resolution for your consideration at the March 15, 2021 meeting are ones that the City of Norwich does NOT wish to acquire, either by tax sale or foreclosure and to date all attempts to collect the taxes have been unsuccessful.

Motor Vehicle and Personal Property

CGS § 12-165 states the Tax Collector at least once each fiscal year shall transfer into the suspense account any personal property and motor vehicle taxes which are deemed uncollectible. The resolution

on the March 15, 2021 agenda is to transfer the uncollected motor vehicle and personal property taxes from the October 2017 grand list into suspense.

In Summary

To consider these accounts as assets when it is believed that they will never be recouped does not help the City get an accurate picture of its finances. However, it is important to remember that while these property taxes are not **deemed** collectable, they **are** collectable and payment of the taxes would be accepted until the end of the 15 year collection period is over.

Schedule of Planned Annual Collection Efforts

Month	Real Estate	Motor Vehicle	Personal Property
July	Collect current levy		
August	* Mail delinquent notices Research and re-mail returned mail. Check bankruptcy accts & send letters as needed	Notify DMV of delinquent accounts. Research and re-mail returned mail.	* Mail delinquent notices Research and re-mail returned mail. Check bankruptcy accts & send letters as needed
September	Send demand notices to delinquent taxpayers	Send delinquent notices. Research and re-mail returned mail.	Send demand notices to delinquent taxpayers. Research and re-mail returned mail.
October	Identify properties for foreclosure (FC) or tax sale (TS) Meet with Attorney for update on FC Update new owners	Research and re-mail returned mail.	Research and re-mail returned mail.
November	Add new accts to FC list and send work-ups to Attorney	Research and re-mail returned mail.	Research and re-mail returned mail.
December	Continue to send work-ups to Attorney	Mail supplemental motor vehicle tax bills	
January	Collect second installment of RE taxes	Collect supplemental motor vehicle tax bills	Collect second installment of PP taxes, if applicable
February	Mail delinquent notices. Transfer current levy uncollectable accounts to suspense. Update new owners. Check bankruptcy accts & send letters as needed	Mail delinquent notices. Notify DMV of delinquent accounts. Suspend accts – previous tax year	Mail Demand notices. Suspend previous tax year accounts. Check bankruptcy accts & send letters as needed.
March	Mail demands. Research and re-mail returned mail.	Turn over accts from previous year to TaxServ. Research and re-mail returned mail.	Turn over all delinquent accts to TaxServ. Research and re-mail returned mail.
April	Meet with Attorney for update on FC. Add new accts to FC list and send work-ups to Attorney. Conduct Yearly or Biennial Tax Sale (Depending on need).	Research and re-mail returned mail.	Research and re-mail returned mail.
May	Continue to send workups to Attorney. File liens on all open accounts. Update new owners		Get List of businesses from Health District
June	Generate next year’s tax levy. Notify Uncas Health District of delinquent accounts.		

City Manager Report:

To: Mayor Nystrom and members of the City Council
From: John Salomone, City Manager
Subject: City Manager's Report
Date: March 15, 2021

Meetings attended via conference call or video were weekly Governor Lamont updates, State representatives and legislators, Southeastern Council of Governments (SECOG), Southeastern Area Transit (SEAT), Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Legislative Committee and Board of Directors Meeting, Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA) Investment Meeting, NPU-City Coordination Meeting, Region 4 Emergency Support Plan, Department of Health COVID-19 updates, Public Safety and NCDC Director Search Committee.

Over the past 2 weeks the Senior Center has held six COVID Clinics with Uncas Health District where 1,150 have been vaccinated. Year to date, Uncas Health has vaccinated 3,200 individuals at the Sr. Center.

Norwich Youth and Services started their mentoring program with high school football players and Project Outreach kids mentoring 3rd and 5th graders at Moriarty School. Between the two days it was held over 50 kids were involved. This program will continue weekly in conjunction with NFA and NPS. NYFS is also working on events for National Suicide week, April 26th to 30th, that include videos, suicide prevention training, and artwork competitions, to name a few. If you have any questions or need statistics, please feel free to reach out to Erin Haggan at 860-823-3484.

Basketball hoops are back at the City's outdoor courts! Many happy people honked in appreciation as they saw them being repositioned.

The City of Norwich has partnered with Bonfire Interactive to create a new procurement portal that will allow notifications of procurement opportunities and submission of bids and proposals to the City of Norwich digitally which will streamline the solicitation process. Information has been posted on the City website and Facebook pages.

The 2021 Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Proposal applications are available through the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services and the City website. The City Manager's Office will be accepting applications until June 1st, 2021 with a public hearing scheduled for June 21st to ensure the applications can be submitted to the State before the July 1st deadline.

The Norwich Downtown Bond Program will receive an award from the CT Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA). The "Downtown Strategy Award" will be presented via ZOOM on March 18th. The application was submitted during the fall of 2020 by the late Jason Vincent, former President of NCDC.

I've attached the Key Financial Indicators report for the eight months ended February 28th from Comptroller Josh Pothier.

Mayor Nystrom called for citizen comment.

There were no emails.

There were no speakers.

Mayor Nystrom declared citizen comment closed.

Upon a motion of Ald. Myles, seconded by Ald. Gould, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by President Pro Tem Bettencourt, Ald. Gould and Myles.

BE IT RESOLVED that the below named be reappointed as a **regular member** to the Board of Public Utilities Commissioners (Sewer Authority) with a term to expire on March 1, 2026 or until a successor is appointed:

William Warzecha (D)

Upon a motion of Ald. Gould, seconded by Ald. Myles, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by City Manager Salomone.

WHEREAS, the City of Norwich is obligated by State Statute to provide animal control services to its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) operates a regional animal services program for which it currently charges its members an annual fee of \$3.15 per capita; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to engage NECCOG to provide animal control services to its residents; and

WHEREAS, the City has an animal control facility that NECCOG desires to lease for \$20,000 per year to assist in providing animal services to the City and to other communities as part of its regional animal services program; and

WHEREAS, the City has a 2006 Chevrolet 2500HD pick-up truck with custom enclosed metal kennel crates and a 2006 Chevrolet Express AWD van which had been used in its animal control operations which NECCOG would like to acquire for approximately \$7,000.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH, that City Manager John Salomone be and hereby is authorized and directed to negotiate and enter into agreements satisfactory to himself for NECCOG to:

- a. provide animal control services to the City,
- b. lease the City's animal control facility, and
- c. purchase the City's animal control vehicles.

Upon a motion of Ald. Myles, seconded by Ald. Wilson, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by City Manager Salomone.

WHEREAS, there is on file in the Tax Collector's Office the names and addresses of the persons against whom motor vehicle taxes and personal property taxes on the Grand Lists up to and including 2017, were levied and the reasons why the Tax Collector believes such taxes are uncollectible; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Tax Collector’s recommendation the aggregate sum of \$377,282.70 is the total outstanding motor vehicle tax on the Grand Lists up to and including 2017, to be transferred to the suspense tax book and \$44,447.68 is the total outstanding personal property tax on the Grand Lists up to and including 2017, to be transferred to the suspense tax book; and,

WHEREAS, nothing herein contained shall be construed as an abatement of any tax transferred to the suspense tax account, but any such taxes, as it shall have been increased by interest, penalty fees and charges may be collected; and

WHEREAS, in June 2018, through RFP 18-12, the City selected TaxServ Capital Services LLC to pursue the collection of such accounts.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH that the following aggregate sums representing motor vehicle taxes of \$377,282.70 and personal property taxes of \$44,447.68 on the Grand Lists up to and including 2017, be and the same hereby are transferred to the suspense account.

Upon a motion of Ald. Gould, seconded by Ald. Myles, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by City Manager Salomone.

WHEREAS, Section 12-165 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 35 of Public Act 13-276 provides for the administrative procedure for transferring real estate taxes deemed uncollectible to the “suspense” tax book; and,

WHEREAS, taxes transferred to the suspense tax book are no longer listed as an asset of the city in its annual financial report; and,

WHEREAS, listed below are the names and addresses of the persons against whom certain real estate taxes on the Grand Lists up to and including 2019 were levied and which the Tax Collector believes such taxes are uncollectible because of lack of payment for several years; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Tax Collector’s recommendation the aggregate sum of \$94,711.10 in real estate tax on the Grand Lists up to and including 2019, to be transferred to the suspense tax book; and,

WHEREAS, nothing herein contained shall be construed as an abatement of any tax transferred to the suspense tax account, but any such taxes, as it shall have been increased by interest, penalty fees and charges may be collected; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH that the aggregate sum of \$94,711.10 representing uncollectible real estate taxes on the Grand Lists up to and including 2019, be and the same hereby are transferred to the suspense account.

Unique ID	Address	List Years Due	Taxes Due
1000020562	56 ALICE ST	2019	\$1,027.58
0112180001	HOLLAND AVE	2019	2,573.78
0112190001	20 CROWN ST	2019	1,405.64
0108790001	751 NORTH MAIN ST	2019	601.02
0360010023	53 PRENTICE ST 23	2019	873.04
0081360001	5TH CANAL END OF STREET	2019	6,494.98
1200020001	BEEBE RD	2019	216.16
0049540001	117 RIVER AVE	2019	101.80
0094660001	SEVENTH ST	2019	1,192.38
0057480001	35 LAMBERT DR REAR	2019	25.44
7125620001	LAUREL HILL RD	2019	76.29
0100340001	97 FOREST ST	2019	479.86
0023810001	OAKRIDGE ST	2019	717.38
7131530001	337-341 MAIN ST	2019	69,132.76
0085170001	252 OLD CANTERBURY TPKE 81	2019	5.52
0099370001	252 OLD CANTERBURY TPKE 28	2011-2018	8,344.10
0070940001	136 HUNTERS RD 103	2018	2.02
0070740001	76 NORTH MAIN ST	2012	1,441.35
TOTAL			\$94,711.10

Upon a motion of Ald. Wilson, seconded by Ald. Gould, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by City Manager Salomone.

WHEREAS, the Finance Department selected the proposal by the certified public accounting firm of BlumShapiro & Company, P.C. with request for proposals number 18-08 to perform the audits for the fiscal years ending June 30th 2018 through 2022; and

WHEREAS, CliftonLarsonAllen LLP acquired BlumShapiro & Company, P.C. effective January 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut General Statutes §§7-391 through 397 require each municipality to file financial statements prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and audited by an independent public accountant in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards by December 31st; unless an extension is granted by the Connecticut Office of Policy & Management; and

WHEREAS, the independent auditor must be appointed by the “appointing authority” on or before May 31st; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Norwich is the appointing authority for the City of Norwich.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH, that the accounting firm of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP be and hereby is, appointed to perform the regular general audit for the City of Norwich for fiscal year 2020-2021.

Upon a motion of Ald. Wilson, seconded by Ald. Myles, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by Mayor Nystrom, Ald. Gould and DeLucia.

WHEREAS, the R.E. Van Norstrand Neighborhood Assistance Act, Chapter 228a of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S. 12-630aa-12-638) offers certain benefits to municipalities desiring to obtain the same and is administered by the State Department of Revenue Services (Commission of Revenue Services); and

WHEREAS, the Neighborhood Assistance Act provides a tax credit for business firms which sponsor local programs; and

WHEREAS, such programs must be proposed and conducted by private non-profit agencies or municipalities and be approved by the local legislative body;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH: A public hearing will be held on June 21, 2021 to review applications and receive comments relative to the Neighborhood Assistance Act.

Upon a motion of Ald. Myles, seconded by Ald. Nash, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by Mayor Nystrom, Ald. Gould and DeLucia.

WHEREAS, the Recreation division believes that it will be able to repair and resurface more basketball courts within the amount of funds that it has been allotted in the capital budget; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH, that \$19,000 be and hereby is reallocated from the Capital Improvement Fund projects listed in #1 to the projects listed in #2 below:

1. Projects to reallocate funds from:

Org	Object	Project	Description	Amount
36024503	57100	C1902	Fernwood basketball courts	\$7,300
36024503	57100	C2053	Hamilton Ave. basketball courts	11,700
Total				\$19,000

2. Projects to reallocate funds to:

Org	Object	Project	Description	Amount
36024503	57100	C2144	Thamesville basketball courts	\$7,300
36024503	57100	C2145	Jenkins and Greeneville basketball courts	11,700
Total				\$19,000

Upon a motion by President Pro Tem Bettencourt, seconded by Ald. Myles, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to go into Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 1-200(6) for the purpose of discussing the acquisition or disposition of real estate or interests in real estate, when publicity regarding the site, and the acquisition or disposition of interest in the same would adversely impact the price of the same; and to review preliminary drafts of proposals in the development and use of the property, the Council having determined that the public interest in withholding such documents clearly outweigh the public interest in disclosure at this time, and to review commercial or financial information given in confidence not required by statute. City Manager John Salomone, Finance Director Joshua Pothier, and Corporation Counsel Michael E. Driscoll, shall be asked to participate during all or portions of this Executive Session at the request of the City Council.

I hereby further move, pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 1-200(6) that the members of the Norwich City Council continue in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategies and negotiations with respect to pending claims or litigation. City Manager John Salomone, Finance Director Joshua Pothier, and Corporation Counsel Michael E. Driscoll, shall be asked to participate during all or portions of this Executive Session at the request of the City Council.

The council was in Executive Session from 8:22 pm to 9:22 pm, at which time Mayor Nystrom, stated no votes were taken.

Upon a motion of President Pro Tem Bettencourt, seconded by Ald. Nash, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to return to regular session.

Upon motion of Ald. Gould, seconded by Ald. Nash, on a roll call vote it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:23 P.M.



City Clerk