There was a regular meeting of the Bloomfield Town Council held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, May 23, 2022 via Zoom Webinar virtual meeting platform.

Present were: Mayor Danielle Wong, Deputy Mayor Gregory C. Davis, Councilors Joseph Merritt, Kenneth McClary, Rickford Kirton, Shamar Mahon, Suzette DeBeatham-Brown, Anthony C. Harrington and C.F. Politis (in at 8:00 p.m.)

Also present were: Stanley D. Hawthorne, Town Manager, Sharron Howe, Assistant to the Town Manager, Keri Rowley, Finance Director, Jennifer Valentino-Rodriguez, Director of Planning and Economic Development, Nancy Haynes, Risk and Purchasing Manager, Town Attorney Marc Needelman and India Rodgers, Clerk of Council

Guest was: Attorney Brian McCann, Pullman & Comley

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Wong announced the appointment of Erica Coleman, 77 Wintonbury Avenue to the Library Building Committee.

Mayor Wong also announced the creation of an Ad-Hoc Trails Committee, of which Councilor Merritt will be designated as the Council liaison and Jonathan Thiesse, Town Engineer as the staff liaison along with a total of three committee members.

Mayor Wong announced the creation of the Bloomfield Housing Partnership due to Article 4 of the Bloomfield Town Charter. The partnership has been created to address the long standing crisis of Affordable Housing. There will be representatives from the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ), Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), Inland Wetlands Watercourses Commission (IWWC), Bloomfield Housing Authority and local community agencies.

This committee will not exceed three members from the Council. She is looking forward to Council input and feedback when selected members from the public to participate with this committee.

Presentation on Economic Development Authorities

Town Attorney Marc Needelman gave a brief overview of establishing an Economic Development Authority. He introduced Attorney Brian McCann of Pullman & Comley who has an extensive background with establishing an authority and legal experience.
Attorney McCann gave a presentation on Economic Development Authorities and the legal requirements to establish one. He suggested focusing on Chapter 132 – Industrial and business growth. He briefly explained the Eminent Domain option and state statutes.

The next steps is to identify the board or commission to be Development Agency and set up a subcommittee within to address specific issues. In addition, determine if the Town ordinance “Article IV” should be revised or amended and creation of committee bylaws.

Discussion

Mayor Wong asked if the Town could participate in two categories, to be in larger scope. She inquired if Chapter 130 – Urban Renewal can also be an option. In addition, she inquired about the timeframe and legal ramifications with the Eminent Domain option.

It was strongly suggested to create the Development Authority to stand as the pillar to exercising various options of land ownership. The Council must consider who will serve on the Development Authority. The consensus of the Council was to complete the study for data analysis.

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown suggested utilizing the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts as a roadmap with the Development Authority, which is required to also identify local areas.

Mr. Mike Goman of Goman & York Economic Development consultants gave a brief overview of the process of setting up a Development Authority, its uses, timelines, appraisals, plan approval, notification period, and final presentation to the Council.

Councilor Merritt expressed concerns about who will be appointed to the authority, the Town Council should have control. He is in support of utilizing the TIF districts as a guide for this process.

Attorney Needelman recommended establish the authority will an existing board or commission. The Council has full and only authority to approve any plan.

Attorney McCann explained the composition of the committee, it must be electors only as a requirement, no businesses.

Councilor Harrington mentioned the Community Investment Funds and leveraging dollars to support Town projects.

Councilor McClary commented on the cost and long term sustainability of the Development Authority. He mentioned that the Community Investment Fund dollars are very competitive. What burden would it have on the tax payers?

Attorney McCann explained the initial costs of setting up the authority and long term options to financially sustain the authority, through grant opportunities, implementation of the plan and Uniformed Relocation Assistance Act (URAA) relocation requirements.
Mr. Stanley Hawthorne, Town Manager gave a brief overview of the finances for this project. The initial funding authorized in FY 2022 the amount of $30,000. In the FY 2023 Budget, the Economic Development consultants will submit a proposal to extend services for one year, as the projected lead as an Executive Administrator of the plan. He noted that moving forward, larger funds will need to be identified if the Council is considering the Eminent Domain option. Some possible resources may be considered from the Fund Balance, Bond Issue and Community Investment Funds.

Attorney Needelman advised the Council to consider obtaining a cost estimate for the initial set-up, consultant fees, and two appraisal requirement. He also gave the other option of issuing several million dollars for a bond referendum that will be required to be authorized by the taxpayers.

Mr. Goman and Deputy Mayor Davis referenced additional funding resources for the Development Authority:
Fee income – project fees, special service district and grants initially. In addition, leveraging funding from the Community Investment Fund, with multiple allocation within the year. The Town should prioritize projects for funding and be realistic with expectations.

Attorney Needelman briefly explained the Eminent Domain process and process of ordinance creation, etc. The recommendation before Council is to authorize the initial steps to creating a Development Authority. An official report can be provided by the next Council meeting, June 13, 2022.

Councilor Kirton requested a formalized memorandum outlining Council powers and parameters of the Eminent Domain process and the establishment of the Development Authority.

Councilor Mahon suggested separating the bylaws from the structure. The next review of this topic should be discussed in the Land Use & Economic Development Subcommittee.

Attorney Needelman requested clarification from the Council on items they would like to be outlined in the memorandum.

CITIZENS’ STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS

1. Carl Delmolino, 25 Beaudry Lane requested to raise the flag Pride Month in support of the LBGTQ+ community for the month of June.

2. Glenn Cassis, 5 Edwards Way member of the Alliance for Bloomfield Children (ABC) expressed concerns about the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) process and current survey.(Please see his comments attached)

3. Gail Riley, 8 Maple Avenue expressed her support in creating a Development Authority. She stated that it should be a separate entity. However, she did express concern about moving forward in a possible Eminent Domain for Wintonbury Mall.
4. **Nancy Bowden, 7 Scotland Road** noted her disappointment with the ARPA survey and limited and sterile questioning. She recited the mission and goals of ABC and its focus to support social, emotional and mental health services to children, which impact families. Ms. Bowden recommended strategies to pursue to next phase of community engagement.

**REPORT FROM COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES**

**Administration & Education** – Mayor Wong gave a brief overview of the last special meeting held on May 10, 2022. Topics of discussion included Project Labor Agreements for Bloomfield, Roads Resurfacing Plan. The next meeting will be held on June 6, 2022.

**Public Safety** – The next subcommittee meeting will be held on Monday, June 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

**Committee on Committees** – Councilor DeBeatham-Brown noted that the Town Clerk is still in receipt of interest forms from both Town Committees. The Committee will schedule a meeting in the near future.

**Finance** – Councilor McClary gave a brief overview of the last subcommittee meeting held on May 16, 2022. Topics discussed included: Registrar of Voters stipends, 4th Quarter transfers, April financials and FY 2021 Audit Update.

**Land Use & Economic Development** – Councilor Harrington gave a brief overview of the last subcommittee meeting held on May 17, 2022. Topics included: Sale of 15 Douglas Street and initial discussions began about Affordable Housing.

**Golf Ad-Hoc Committee** – The next committee meeting will be held on June 8, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

**Community Services** – Councilor Harrington gave a brief report from the last subcommittee special meeting held on May 20, 2022. Topics included: Summer Bridge Program, a collaboration between the Town, Goodwin University and Capital Workforce Partners.

**ADDITION TO THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Councilor Harrington, seconded by Councilor McClary and voted unanimously to add the following item FY 2022-73: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Bloomfield Summer Bridge Youth Program.

**COUNCIL BUSINESS**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**FY 2022-01: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Sale of 15 Douglas Street**

There was an extensive discussion regarding the sale of 15 Douglas Street relative to the needs of affordable and workforce development housing opportunities.

Ms. Jennifer Valentino-Rodriguez, Director of Planning & Economic Development presented the proposal for the sale of 15 Douglas Street.
Discussion

Councilor Mahon asked about the percentage of affordable housing units with this proposal? There are a total 5 units, which is 11% of this proposed development.

Councilor McClary inquired about potential manufacturing development in a residential area. He expressed concerns with traffic/air pollution and the amount of units designated as “affordable”. Councilor McClary suggested to halt the process until completion of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and the Affordable Housing Plan.

Ms. Valentino-Rodriguez gave a brief overview of Section 8-30g – Affordable Housing, in which Bloomfield is required to maintain 10% of its housing stock designated as Affordable Housing. The current statistics are between 11% - 14%, figures obtained from the 2020 Census data. The Town of Bloomfield is currently compliant, however after the Affordable Housing Plan is completed, it will outline a clearer picture of actual housing needs for the community.

Councilor Merritt expressed concerns about market rate housing units for this development. He asked if there is consideration to increase the number of affordable housing units.

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown asked about the process to reconsider the sale with a developer that has already been chosen.

Councilor Harrington clarified the differences between Section 8 and affordable housing tracts.

Deputy Mayor Davis inquired about the Request for Proposal process and the financial change between proposals.

Councilor McClary referenced the Plan of Conservation & Development on page 63 regarding housing in Town. He noted that the RFP process allows municipalities to halt the sale if needed. Councilor McClary expressed serious concerns with this proposal moving forward.

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown commented on the need for more affordable homes in Bloomfield. She asked if the Town requested affordable units as a part of the RFP process. There should be more intentional ways with the RFP in the initial ask.

Councilor Mahon spoke briefly about environmental concerns, however we are encouraging development in Town and investing. Quality of life issues concerning.

Mayor Wong is in agreement with intentional vision and the need to identify more affordable housing.

Councilor Kirton noted that the Affordable Housing discussion can be skewed. The major issue is to address the high property taxes, making it difficult for working families to sustain.

It was moved by Councilor Kirton, seconded by Councilor Merritt to refer this item to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ) in accordance with Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes. VOTE: AYE: S. DeBeatham-Brown, R. Kirton, J. Merritt, C.F. Politis, G. Davis, S. Mahon, A. Harrington NAY: K. McClary, D. Wong ABSTAIN: None
The motion passes 7-2-0.

NEW BUSINESS

FY 2022-70: Consider and Take Possible Action Regarding Tax Refunds

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Davis, seconded by Councilor Merritt and voted unanimously to approve the tax refunds (per the attached list) in accordance with the memorandum dated May 19, 2022.

FY 2022-71: Consider and Take Action Regarding Transfer Appropriations within the 2022 Budget

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Davis, seconded by Councilor McClary and voted unanimously to approve the request for a fourth quarter transfer resolution in the amount of $383,354. (See attached)

FY 2022-72: Consider and Take Action Regarding a Stipend Payment of $1,500 per Election for each Registrar of Voters

Councilor McClary outlined the report of surrounding town salary and stipend amounts. He noted the Town of Rocky Hill has a comparable community to Bloomfield. He also recommended to develop a structure moving forward to avoid unnecessary errors.

It was moved by Councilor Harrington, seconded by Councilor Merritt and voted unanimously to approve a stipend payment of $1,500 per election for each Registrar of Voters to be paid in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service guidelines.

FY 2022-73: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Bloomfield Summer Bridge Youth Program

It was moved by Councilor Harrington, seconded by McClary and voted unanimously to the Bloomfield Summer Bridge Youth Program in collaboration with Goodwin University, Capital Workforce Partners (CWP), Town of Bloomfield for no less than 20 students, cap at 40 students, if additional funding is secured for services provided.

A friendly amendment was suggested and accepted by the original motioner and seconder to include funding from the Town of Bloomfield in the amount of $30,580 from the FY 2022 Budget.

Discussion

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown requested an update from the Finance Director regarding year-end expenses and transfers that are required to close out FY 2022. It was clarified that the funding would be allocated from the FY
2022 budget. Ms. Keri Rowley, Finance Director noted that there is $44,000 remaining from Council Contingency in the FY 2022 Budget.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Keri Rowley gave a brief overview of the financials for the month of April. The tax collection rate through April 30th was 98.7%, which is lower than the 101.2% for the same period in fiscal year 2021. A reduction was made to address the anticipated tax collection budget amount in the current year by $812,000 to reflect the shortfall in the prior year tax collection.

The second payment of the Educational Cost Sharing grant was received this month for a total of $2.69 million. Real Estate Conveyance Tax has surpassed the anticipated budget of $515,000 by $125,000 and collected $640,000 with two months remaining in the fiscal year.

Building/Demolitions Permit revenues continues to be strong in the month of April and collected over $111,000. The revenue in this account has surpassed the anticipated budget by $195,000 and collected $995,000 to date.

Expenditures

Overall, expenditures for the month of April are 78.6% of the total year’s budget. That includes encumbrances of $1.32 million. This is well below the 84% that should be expended by the end of the tenth month.

Ms. Rowley stated that she is anticipating not surpassing total revenue budget in fiscal year 2022, due to large amount of tax appeal cases we settled and the deficit of $1.6 million in prior year taxes.

Ms. Rowley is also requesting approval for two 4th Quarter transfer requests. The budget surplus in the majority of the transfers requests are due to savings from staffing vacancies in the Town Clerk, Assessors, Information Systems & Technology and Public Works. In addition, savings in utility costs for the Human Services Building are recognized and will be included as part of the transfer out request.

REPORT FROM MAYOR

This was no report from the Mayor.

REPORT FROM TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Stanley D. Hawthorne, Town Manager gave an overview of his bi-weekly report, referring to the bi-weekly report sent to the Council from May 21, 2022 (see attached). He noted that these reports are posted on the town website for public review under the Town Manager’s webpage.

Mr. Hawthorne gave a brief overview of some highlights and Town updates:

- Creation of “Business Workshops” with the Council and Town Administration and staff. These meetings will be held monthly, in-person staff presentation in a hybrid format.
- Pursuing grant opportunities with the Community Investment Fund
• Road Improvement Plan complaints

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Harrington and voted unanimously to approve the special minutes of May 2, 2022.

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Harrington and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of April 25, 2022.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Mahon stated that there will be an event on Wednesday, May 25, 2022 in remembrance of the late George Floyd. This marks the second anniversary of his passing due to police brutality. He also noted that everyone must be very mindful and commented on the use of the word that has been around a lot this evening “intentional” about the things that we say. Councilor Mahon stated that our words carry weight and our neighbors are listening. Being in the position, as elected officials, it's very important that we uplift and pave a path forward. Our comments can discourage individuals from participating in our democracy. He strongly encourage his colleague to have a conversation at least if an apology is not warranted.

Councilor Kirton commented on the importance of having the Town Attorney attend all Council meetings. He stated how embarrassing and basically unacceptable to not have the Town Attorney available when the Council is conducting town business.

When discussing Council agenda items and issues or disagreement arise and there's not a consensus from the full Council to do something; that he should be obligated to do in regards to providing this Council clear, concise opinions.

Councilor Kirton also addressed the dissatisfaction regarding the ARPA funds and community survey statistics since its release to the Bloomfield community. He reiterated his opinion about the survey being misleading because the $4.6 million of the $6.2 million that was already allocated in the FY 2023 budget that was just passed. There is only $1.6 million remaining to assist those in the community. Previously, he strongly suggested that it was a not a wise approach to hire a consulting firm to come in to show us how to spend 1.6 million, a big mistake by the Council.

He also commented on the appalling comments from a colleague towards a town resident. Councilor Kirton expressed his disappointment with his colleague and should be accountable for his actions.

Deputy Mayor Davis commented on several the racial comments that were made by a fellow colleague. He noted that it was very out of line and totally embarrassing. This individual is a member of our public and a taxpayer, not knowing his background what he does is inappropriate.
Deputy Mayor Davis noted that for the first time, at least during this term, that all Councilors were invited to attend as non-voting members to participate in the Community Services subcommittee meeting. He reiterated that this should be standard practice to discuss potential Council action items.

He commented on the positive vibes and activity at 330 Park Avenue on last Tuesday, giving out and delivering food, book discussions, knitting and very infectious energy in that building.

He also commended the team that work in that building, the staff was doing an incredible job.

Deputy Mayor Davis thanked Mayor Wong for appointing Erica Coleman to the Library Building Committee. She is going to be a wonderful addition to the committee and for the project is moving forward. There have been many discussions about the exterior design, with concerns with some public comment of too much brick and not enough glass.

One of the biggest issues at this time, is that the project based on supply and demand materials, will exceed its budget and the Building Committee will continue to explore alternatives for funding.

Councilor Harrington expressed his enthusiasm about the Council’s decision to support and approve funding for the Bloomfield Summer Bridge Program. He noted that recruiting will begin as soon as possible. The goal is to secure the first 20 students and then also to attempt to raise more money for this program to support the additional 20 students.

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown stated that in July 2021, the sitting Council voted unanimously to approve the sale of 15 Douglas Street. The Council need to be very intentional about the things that we do, whether it is affordable homes, more Economic Development or the best educational opportunities available to our students. The Town should request what we want from an RFP process relative to what we need.

She also informed the public of several community events occurring in the upcoming days and weeks.

Councilor McClary thanked Stanley and his staff for all the work that they do, by providing this Council with pertinent information and being responsive to community issues related to quality of life.

He reiterated the need and was very clear that the Town should wait for the five year Affordable Housing Plan and the Plan of Conservation Development to determine what the property was going to be, but if the Council decided to move forward here's some things that the Council should consider.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown, seconded by Councilor Mahon and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 p.m.
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<td>Financial Service Vehicles Trust</td>
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<td>Windsor Sanitation Inc</td>
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RESOLUTION

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Section 908 of the Town of Bloomfield Charter, that the below transfers of appropriations be approved:

The amounts below are free from encumbrances in the fiscal year 2022 General Fund budget:

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<th>FROM</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT/FUNCTION</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0130000-5111</td>
<td>Town Clerk - Full Time</td>
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<td>0130000-5128</td>
<td>Town Clerk - Retirement</td>
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<td>0141000-5111</td>
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The amounts below are to be transferred to the following departments in the fiscal year 2022 General Fund budget:

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