

**MINUTES
GENERAL COUNSEL COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 18, 2023**

Present: Council Member Carta, Chair, Council Member Blackwell, Council Member Nocera, Council Member Marino and Council Member Salafia.

Staff: Deputy General Counsel, Kori Wisneski

Public: Mayor Benjamin Florsheim; Director of Recreation and Community Services Cathy Lechowicz; Deputy Police Chief Rich Davis; John Stroud, Tiffany Davis, John Lozefski

1. Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. Public Comment:

None.

3. Approval of December 8, Regular Meeting Minutes

Council Member Blackwell made a MOTION to approve the minutes and Council Member Marino seconded the Motion. The Motion passed unanimously of those present and voting.

4. New Business

A. Recreation and Community Services Job Descriptions

- 1. Custodian/Program Aide**
- 2. Custodian II - Pool**
- 3. Program Aide/Coordinator**

Attorney Wisneski introduced the recreation and community services job descriptions. She explained that with the new building, there will be staffing needed. Director Lechowicz further explained that the union reviewed and approved the additional needed staff. The Recreation Center is a 40,000 square foot building with one superintendent that is responsible for the rec center and the senior center. There is an additional need for more custodial support. The Custodian/Program aide job description has been modified to be more inclusive of both the recreation center and senior center. Director Lechowicz explains that the Custodian II - Pool job description is a new position and job description. The department currently has the Building Super and the Aquatics Supervisor, however they have daytime hours. This position would be an evening position, working from 1:30pm to 10:00pm to address the needs of the pool in the evenings. The third position, which is the Program Aide/Coordinator, will have the custodial duties removed from the job because the Custodian/Program Aide and the

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Custodian II - Pool job descriptions cover the custodial needs that are needed. More discussion ensued regarding the fiscal impact these job will have.

Council Member Nocera made a motion to approve the job descriptions and Council Member Salafia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Ordinance - Fair Rent Commission Ordinance

Attorney Wisneski introduced the Fair Rent Commission Ordinance. In doing so, she acknowledged that the late State Representative Quentin "Q" Phipps put this legislation in place at the state level to ensure fair and equity housing throughout the state and we as a community have an obligation to carry out his legacy. She explained that there has been Public Act 22-30, which requires any town with a population greater than 25,000 people to adopt a fair rent commission ordinance by July 1, 2023. Attorney Wisneski explains that she proposed an ordinance that will create Fair Rent Commission for the purpose to control and eliminate excessive rental charges and to make sure there is no retaliation for any claims. The commission would consist of seven members and three alternates all of whom shall be electors of the city. Of those members, at least two tenants and two landlords and among the alternates one landlord and one tenants. The powers of the commission are based on state law. More discussion ensued regarding who will be chosen to serve this commission, the staffing needs for this commission, and the enforcement of this commission.

Council Member Marino made a motion to amend the ordinance and add the ability to craft bylaws under number 12, send the ordinance to the anti-racism task force for their review and then bring the ordinance back to the GCC commission to review again in February and Council Member Nocera seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Executive Session pursuant to Conn. Gen. Sta. 1-200(6)(A) to discuss employment of Justin Richardson as it pertains to residency ordinance proposal.

Council Member Blackwell made a motion to go into executive session, inviting Attorney Wisneski and the Mayor into the session and Council Member Nocera seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Residency

Option 1:

- 1. Ordinance 74-30, Residency Requirements for Exempt, Non-Bargaining Unit Personnel**
- 2. Ordinance 74-31, Waiver of Residency Requirement - Deputy Police Chief Rich Davis**

Option 2:

1. Repeal Ordinance 74-30

Deputy Chief Davis gave a statement to the commission. He explained how he grew up in Middletown and only built a house in East Hampton because of the work that he did as a police officer on the narcotics unit.

Attorney Wisneski introduced option 1 of the residency ordinances. She explains that option 1 would be to remove Justin from the residency requirement ordinance and to entertain a one-year waiver for Deputy Chief Davis. She explained that option 2 would be to repeal the residency requirement ordinance altogether. She explained that this option was put on the agenda based on discussions that happened on the Council floor during a prior meeting on this topic. Attorney Wisneski also explained that she had collected information from CCM and noted that residency requirements are not typical throughout other municipalities within the state. More discussion ensued as the commission members weighed in on both options. Most of the commission members agreed that the HR Director position should be removed from the ordinance.

Council Member Salafia made a motion to remove the HR Director from the ordinance and Council Member Nocera seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 1 abstention by Council Member Blackwell.

Council Member Nocera made a motion to approve a One-year wavier for Deputy Chief Davis and Council Member Salafia seconded the motion. The Motion passed with 4 ayes and 1 nay by Council Member Blackwell.

The commission agreed to have Attorney Wisneski draft proposed ordinances eliminating a residency requirement, but including a certain mile radius that positions must live surrounding Middletown to present to the commission at the next meeting.

5. **Other** - Nothing to report.

6. **Adjournment:**

Council Member Nocera made a MOTION to adjourn and Council Member Blackwell seconded the Motion. The Motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.