

**MINUTES  
COMMISSIONERS' MEETING  
SIXTH TAXING DISTRICT, City of Norwalk, CT  
December 18, 2019**

**7:00 p.m.  
Rowayton Community Center**

PRESENT: Commissioners Tammy Langalis, Mike Barbis and John Igneri, District Treasurer Gil Kernan, District Fire Marshal and District Property Manager Ed Carlson, District Assistant Property Manager Jason O'Donnell, District Clerk Andrea Woodworth.

Commission Chair Tammy Langalis called the December 2019 meeting of the Sixth Taxing District Commissioners to order at 7:05 p.m. She thanked those in attendance for coming and introduced the Commission to the attendees.

Under **NEW BUSINESS**, Mrs. Langalis recognized Andrew Strauss, Vice-President of the Norwalk Tree Alliance and Susan Simmons, its Treasurer. They made the following proposal to enhance the Rowayton tree canopy:

Subject: Proposal for Rowayton tree planting grant.

On behalf of the Norwalk Tree Alliance, we would like to present our proposal for a grant for tree planting at this meeting of the Commissioners on December 18. The goal would be to plant trees in 2020 in the front yards of Rowayton residents.

Norwalk Tree Alliance (NTA), a 501(c)3 organization, has been the City of Norwalk's non-profit partner for 15 years in promoting and protecting Norwalk's urban forest. Together, we have achieved the coveted Tree City USA award from the National Arbor Day Foundation every year during this period.

The proposed program for Sixth Taxing District is a continuation of our successful tree planting partnership with the Third Taxing District. With grants from TTD since 2015, we have been able to plant over 60 trees in areas of East Norwalk lacking sufficient tree canopy. The program has been so popular with homeowners, that we have instituted a tree lottery system that will continue into 2020.

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Our proposed program for the Sixth Taxing District would begin by assessing Rowayton streets to identify those lacking sufficient tree canopy due to storm damage, decay and disease. Indeed, WestCOG's recent Tree Canopy Analysis for the City of Norwalk has identified Rowayton and other Norwalk communities as key improvement opportunity zones for tree canopy enhancement. Following site-specific assessment, we would reach out to homeowners in targeted Rowayton locations to solicit their commitment for planting trees in their front yards at no cost to them, for the trees and installation. In a real sense, the program would be additive to the existing City of Norwalk's tree planting program, which had been curtailed last year due to budget cutbacks. Next, upon acceptance by homeowners, we would select planting sites with them, followed by procuring and installing trees via a Norwalk wholesale tree supplier.

For the 2020 base program, we propose a grant of \$5,000 for the purchase and installation of up to 14 canopy trees of appropriate size for Rowayton. The program would be undertaken by our volunteer team, including professional arborists and members of the Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee who are also NTA Directors.

Thank you for the prospect of meeting with you at this meeting to present our grant proposal in detail. As a Rowayton resident, I am particularly excited about the opportunity this program represents for our community. (from the proposal letter of Susan Simmons, Treasurer, Norwalk Tree Alliance).

Mr. Strauss and Mrs. Simmons went on to say that a survey would be done before the planting of trees to determine where trees are needed and then to determine what residents are supportive of having a tree planted on their property. They also said that they had been working with the Third Taxing District in a similar fashion to what they envision for Rowayton. They also said that they would be canopy type of trees. A few examples are a red or white oak, a maple and a little leaf Linden. If they considered putting trees near the water in Rowayton, they would plan trees that are not threatened by salt water. The homeowner would have no financial input at all if their property were selected for a tree planting. They would have an agreement with the homeowner wherever trees were to be planted that would ask them to water the tree weekly and to not trim it or take it down. The trees that would probably be planted in Rowayton would be 2 – 2 ½ inch caliper and would cost the Tree Alliance about \$350.00. District Treasurer Gil Kernan asked what the budget for the Tree Alliance is. The answer is that the Tree Alliance budget is around \$25,000. There have been quite a few trees planted in Rowayton through the City of Norwalk. These would be separate trees from the ones planted by the city. The policy is not to put in flowering trees now. Commissioner John Ignneri asked how they would measure the canopy. That is via an independent survey, but the grant that they are requesting would go directly to the purchase of trees and the tree plantings. The cost of the survey and other work would be borne by the Norwalk Tree Alliance. It was asked whether it was a goal to replace trees that have come down over the years. Mrs. Simmons says that the overall goal is to have more trees in neighborhoods to improve the quality of the air, to enhance the beauty of the area and to provide an eco-environment for birds. It was noted that trees are often taken down while houses are being renovated or rebuilt. This might be due to a convenience factor and the Tree Alliance

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would discourage that. However, if that was done, they would ask the contractor to replace the trees removed. Commissioner Mike Barbis suggested, if the grant proposal is approved, a posting of a story in Currents to let people know who to contact if they would want a tree on their property.

Under **OLD BUSINESS**, **Commissioner Mike Barbis** gave an update on the planned sidewalk project at Bayley Beach. He said that the Commissioners are having ongoing meetings with the Roton Point Board and with our counsel. We're looking to improve the safety at the beach. We have to get multiple bids for the projects that we do. We're now working on that. We have a good dialogue going with Roton Point. They are going to take our plans to their membership when we get a little more detail. WeeBurn Beach Club has been working really well with us. We're going to move the pillars at the beginning of where the sidewalk is going to go. The fence work has started. We have one little issue with a manhole cover that needs to be resolved. It's very unlikely now that we'll get much of anything done before early spring.

Another concern with No Thru Trucks in Rowayton falls under **OLD BUSINESS**. This is an ongoing problem with trucks cutting through on Wilson Avenue and going onto Tokeneke Road in order to access the interstate. It is when they enter Darien that the law is being broken. We have an ongoing communication going with the police department and the First Selectman in Darien. We're hoping to set up a meeting soon. Identifying the trucks committing the offense works mostly for that occasion that they are stopped and then they are back the next day doing the same thing. **Commission Chair Tammy Langalis** said that we can't stop these trucks from using our roads. If the truck originates in Norwalk and stays in Norwalk, there is nothing that can be done. It is only when they cross into a different town that anything can be done and it would be up to Darien, for example, to cite the truck driver for the illegal route that it has taken. A discussion of possible signage improvement and noting the sources of these trucks was discussed. The use of overhead cameras to prove the illegal route of the driver comes with its own set of problems. **Commissioner John Igeri** said that it is very hard to enforce the laws with photos taken. It was also noted that the UPS trucks that were repeat offenders when this issue surfaced a number of years ago have not been seen as abusing the No Thru Trucks policy. Resident Bard Jones, 176 Rowayton Avenue, said that there are 12 – 15 companies that are the biggest problems. He would encourage a letter writing campaign to these companies and possible law suits against these companies.

### **REPORTS**

**Commissioner John Igeri** wishes everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year.

**Commissioner Mike Barbis** reported that we are going to look at the Ambler Parking Lot for possible projects before we finalize the budget for the next Fiscal Year. We also intend to wrap up work on the community center signage.

**Commission Chair Tammy Langalis** said that she recently had a conversation with Rob Frazier. She said that it is nice that residents are constantly coming to us with ideas about what

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to do with our properties.

**District Treasurer Gil Kernan** submitted the following report:

**Sixth Taxing District  
Treasurer's Narrative Report  
Commissioners' Meeting  
December 18, 2019**

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**Handouts to Commissioners\*:**

- Budget v Actual report as of November 30, 2019 for FY 19-20
- Treasurer's Report of Bank Balances as of November 30, 2019
- Capital Funds Project Balances report
- Community Center Spending Summary Capital Projects report
- Report of Bills Paid in November 2019
- Grants List: FY 19-20 & FY 20-21

**Comments on Reports:**

- **Budget v Actual Report for FY 19-20**
  - Our income is at 50% of the budgeted income for FY 19-20
  - Our expenses are currently at 41% of the budgeted expenses.
- **Capital Budget**
  - Including reserves, the capital account has a balance of \$335,766.

**Events:**

- The FY 20-21 Budget preparation is underway. All proposed budget requests, expenses, project information and Grant requests need to be submitted to the Treasurer's Office as soon as possible for inclusion on the budget.

\*Please note, these are preliminary drafts and not final audited reports.  
(Statistical reports will be included at the end of the Minutes).

**District Treasurer Gil Kernan** noted that there is approximately \$204,500 budgeted for the Bayley Beach Sidewalk Project and that the capital budget available is in excess of \$335,000.

He also said that we have reached out to the Auditors and are discussing some more streamlined payment procedures.

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**District Fire Marshal Report**

**November 2019**

**Ed Carlson**

<u>Type of Activity</u>	<u>#</u>	<u># Man Hours</u>
Blasting Permits	***	***
Blasting Site Inspections	***	***
Building Inspections	2	4
Clerical (office) work		14
Fire Marshal Conferences	***	***
Career Development Training	1	3
Investigation(s)	2	2
Meetings: District Monthly	1	2
FNHFMA	1	2
Temporary structure inspection	1	1
		Total Man Hours: 28

Remarks: I have had several inquiries for detectors following the post on District wide email. Holiday Fire Safety Tips were also sent out over email to subscribers.

**District Property Manager**

**December 2019**

**Ed Carlson**

**Community Center:**

1. Holes in parking lot repaired with Quik Patch.
2. The tower clock works were relocated from the Library to the second floor landing.
3. GFCI outlets (4) are being added to the outdoor panel. The RCA may cover half the cost.

**Bayley Beach:**

1. There is one kayak and two paddle boards still on the rack. Do we remove them? (Yes, please store them for the winter).
2. Trees have been removed to clear way for sidewalk.

**Pinkney Park:**

1. The AED has been repaired and is stored for the winter.
2. Security lights are being installed on the barn and the main house. The RCA Board (RHS?) is to consider helping with the cost.

**R. R. Parking Lot:**

1. I am waiting to hear from Fedor on their insurance before activating the Barnacle.
2. Holes in the lots have been filled but there are still more to do.
3. The porch light has been installed on the hut on the eastbound side and Wendy Nardis is very grateful.

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Mr. Carlson said that the bathroom door at the Pinkney House needs to be replaced. Mrs. Langalis asked Mr. Carlson to get someone to do it even if our usual handyman is not immediately available.

Mrs. Langalis also asked District Asst. Property Manager Jason O'Donnell to give her a list of the maintenance projects that should be included in the budget for the next Fiscal Year.

**Report of the District Clerk**

**December 18, 2019**

**Andrea Woodworth**

1. A gift box of edibles was sent to Bob Essenyi to wish him a speedy recovery from back surgery.
2. There was a party in the Moose Room on Sunday that triggered a complaint from the library because of the loud music and DJ. I don't remember anyone asking about a DJ. Nevertheless, the music was loud and there was no cooperation between the party and the library. I hope the sound absorption panels will help with that. I'll need to find out more about the renters' plans in future and advise them to be careful about noise when the library is open.
3. A group of volunteers with the Surfrider organization were scheduled to do a clean up at Bayley Beach on Saturday, December 14. This was the last scheduled clean up for this season for this group. The weather was awful on that Saturday, so don't know if they were able to do the project or not. (It was widely thought that the beach clean up did go on).
4. We're finishing out the year with twice the number of Moose Room rentals as there were in the last full year before the reconstruction. Additionally, there were quite a few events in the Grace Room and a few in the Underground.

A motion by Commissioner Mike Barbis to approve the Minutes of the November 20, 2019 meeting as submitted was made and seconded by Commissioner John Igneri. The Minutes of the November 20, 2019 meeting were approved as submitted.

Two budget meetings were set for Friday, January 10 at 1 p.m. and Wednesday, January 15, at 6 p.m. just before the January Commissioners' Meeting.

Mrs. Langalis adjourned the December 18, 2019 meeting of the Sixth Taxing District Commission at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrea J. Woodworth  
Clerk, 6<sup>th</sup> Taxing District