

CITY COUNCIL MEETING AUGUST 1, 2023

The meeting will be called to order at 7:30 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & PRAYER

ROLL CALL

Buzaid, Putnam, Eriquez, VACANT, Levy, DiGilio, Rotello, Visconti, Esposito, Coelho, Esposito III, Fox, Masi, Palma, Henry, Britton, Merchan, Perkins, Chianese, Cammisa and Tomchik

___ PRESENT ___ ABSENT

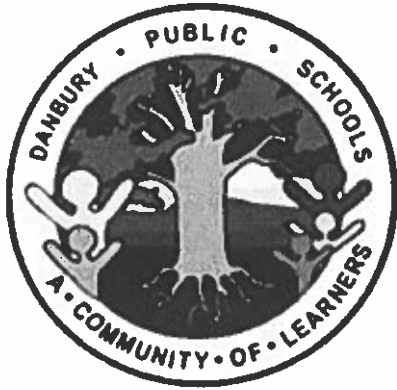
PUBLIC SPEAKING

MINUTES - Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held July 6, 2023 and SPECIAL Council Meeting held July 17, 2023

CONSENT CALENDAR

AGENDA

1. COMMUNICATION - Appointment to the City Council
2. COMMUNICATION - Police Department Promotion - Sergeant James Antonelli to Police Lieutenant
3. COMMUNICATION - Police Department Appointments - Pena, Poplaski, Ventura Mena, Garcia to Certified Police Officers
4. COMMUNICATION - Re-appointment of Mr. Richard Jannelli and Mrs. Barbara Chianese to Fair Rent Commission
5. COMMUNICATION - Tax Appeal Litigation Settlement - Danbury Mall, LLC & MS Portfolio LLC
6. COMMUNICATION - Airport Obstruction Removal EA Grant - Contract for Services with Hoyle, Tanner & Assoc. (HTA)
7. COMMUNICATION - Danbury Public Schools Request for Release of Educational Reserve
8. COMMUNICATION - DMEA Bargaining Agreement
9. COMMUNICATION - Sidewalk Easement - 32 Germantown Road
10. COMMUNICATION - Appropriation to the Ambulance Fund
11. RESOLUTION - PFAS Litigation Outside Counsel Authorization - Ventura Law & Frazer Law, PLC
12. RESOLUTION - Historical Documents Preservation Grant Program - Town Clerk
13. RESOLUTION - Community Development Block Grant Program (Year 49)



DANBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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John H. Spang, Jr
Chief Financial Officer

To: Danbury City Council and Mayor Dean Esposito
Mr. Dan Garrick, Finance Director

From: John H. Spang, Jr., Chief Financial Officer 

Re: Board of Education Reserve - Drawdown

Date: July 19, 2023

On June 26, 2023, the Board of Education unanimously approved a request to release \$3,044,808 of educational reserves in conjunction with the 2023-24 school operating budget.

In December of 2022, the 2023-24 operating budget was prepared using projections based upon our labor market outlook and residual pandemic impacts. As such, \$4.7 million was expected to be available seven months later to pre-purchase services and educational supplies in the 2022-23 operating budget. With a large number of unfilled staffing vacancies, we anticipated a higher savings in both salaries and the cost of insurance.

As each month passed, we gradually filled some of these positions, many at a premium, due to the collapse in the education labor market. We also found the savings that we anticipated in insurance were not realized due to a significantly higher than expected claims cost. In addition, inflation significantly impacted our high value accounts such as energy and the cost of supplies. The savings originally expected was ultimately needed to avoid curtailing programs and services.

Public Act 21-12, also known as the "Right to Read" legislation required implementation of a new reading curriculum by July 1, 2023. The program was an over \$3.0 million investment funded using eligible grant monies that otherwise could have been used to offset overall expenses.

A preliminary estimate of the City reserve - before and after:

Estimated total June 27, 2023	\$ 8,506,512
Requested drawdown	<u>3,044,808</u>
Estimated balance after drawdown	\$ 5,461,704

The Danbury Public School system is requesting a draw down as stated above to assist with the 2023-2024 Operating Budget.

cc: Superintendent Kevin Walston
Board of Education
Elisa Etcheto, Legislative Assistant

4. COMMUNICATION - Re-appointment of Mr. Richard Jannelli and Mrs. Barbara Chianese to Fair Rent Commission

**CONSENTED* - as received.

5. COMMUNICATION - Tax Appeal Litigation Settlement - Danbury Mall, LLC & MS Portfolio LLC

A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio, to move this item to the end of the agenda. So Ordered.

6. COMMUNICATION - Airport Obstruction Removal EA Grant - Contract for Services with Hoyle, Tanner & Assoc. (HTA)

**CONSENTED* - as received.

7. COMMUNICATION - Danbury Public Schools Request for Release of Educational Reserve

A motion was made by Councilman Levy, to refer this to an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Corporation Counsel, City Director of Finance, Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education Chief Financial Officer, and a representative from the Mayor's Office. So Ordered.

The Mayor appointed Councilman Levy in the chair, along with Councilmen Fox and Chianese.

8. COMMUNICATION - DMEA Bargaining Agreement

A motion was made by Councilman Fox, seconded by Councilman DiGilio, to receive the communication and approve the funding for the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Danbury and the Danbury Municipal Employees Association for July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2026, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Visconti spoke in favor of the agreement.

Ms. Alosco-Werner (Human Resources Director) clarified the negotiated plan year for Councilman Chianese.

9. COMMUNICATION - Sidewalk Easement - 32 Germantown Road

A motion was made by Councilman Esposito III, to receive this communication and refer this item to the City Engineer and Planning Commission for departmental reports. So Ordered.

10. COMMUNICATION - Appropriation to the Ambulance Fund

A motion was made by Councilman Coelho, seconded by Councilman Rotello, to receive the communication and approve the additional appropriation of \$584,419, for the Ambulance Fund's 2021-2022 budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Garrick clarified the appropriation of funding towards the Ambulance Fund for Councilman DiGilio

Mr. Cassavechia (Director of Emergency management spoke on Covid precautions that led to service calls with treatment but no transport for Councilman Chianese.