



BOARD OF ALDERMEN
CITY OF SHELTON
SPECIAL FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2026
SHELTON CITY HALL, 54 HILL STREET, SHELTON, CT
Live Streamed at www.cityofshelton.org

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Lauretti called the Special Board of Aldermen meeting to order at 11:10 a.m. in the auditorium at Shelton City Hall. All those present stood and pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Roll Call

Alderman Bernard Simons, President – Present
Alderman Lorenzo Durante – Present via Zoom
Alderman Porter McKinnon – Absent
Alderman Anthony Simonetti – Present
Alderman Benjamin Perry – Present
Alderman Bryan Lizotte – Present
Alderman Michael Duncan – Absent
Alderman Cris Balamaci – Present

Administration

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti
Fran Teodosio, Corporation Counsel – Present
Thomas Cotter, Assistant Corporation Counsel – Present
Kellie Vazzano, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor
Frances Freer, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor
Grace Zweig, Finance Director

1. STATE MANDATED HVAC ASSESSMENTS AT ELIZABETH SHELTON AND PERRY HILL SCHOOLS

Alderman Simons MOVED to appropriate an amount of \$22,000 for state mandated HVAC assessments at Elizabeth Shelton School (\$8,500) and Perry Hill School (\$13,500) with funding to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter. Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Discussion:

Mayor Lauretti: We have done this not too long ago for a couple of the other schools, so just trying to stay compliant.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (6-0).

2. RELOCATION OF EARLY VOTING SITE

Alderman Simons MOVED, per the request of the Registrar of Voters Office, to relocate the early voting site for all future primaries, referendums and elections from the Shelton Farmer's Market at 100 Canal Street to the Shelton Community Center at 41 Church Street, effective for the August 11, 2026 primary. Further, the City of Shelton opts to not have an additional early voting location.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

No discussion.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (6-0).

3. FUNDING FOR HANDICAPPED DOOR AT COMMUNITY CENTER

Alderman Simons MOVED to add to the Capital Improvement Plan the purchase and installation of a handicapped door at the Community Center in an amount not to exceed \$5,669.00 with funding to come from LoCIP.

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

Discussion:

Mayor Lauretti: This is part of the early voting location, so it goes hand in hand with one another.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (6-0).

4. JULY STATUTORY REFUNDS

Alderman Simons MOVED that the report of the Tax Collector relative to the refund of taxes for a total amount of \$3,395.75 be approved and that the Finance Director be directed to make payments in accordance with the certified list received from the Tax Collector with funds to come from the Statutory Refunds Account 001-0000-311.13.00.

(Supporting documentation from the Tax Collector is on file with the agenda in the Town Clerk's Office)

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

No discussion.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (6-0).

5. FUNDING FOR VETERANS & FIRST RESPONDERS CENTER IN TRUMBULL

Alderman Simons MOVED to appropriate an amount of \$75,000 for the construction of the new Veterans and First Responders Center located at 1 Veterans Circle in Trumbull to service veterans and

first responders from the Shelton, Trumbull, Monroe, Easton and Redding areas, with funding to come from General Fund Surplus.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Discussion:

Mayor Lauretti: With us today we have a group of people who are involved in that project. Ray Baldwin is the point person for the last four or five years that I am aware of. Ray has had a knee operation, so if someone would like to come to the podium and just give the Board a breakdown of what is involved here, and then we can have a discussion.

Dan Sacco

Adjutant - Army - Post 10059

So just for the record, Ray went in this morning for a knee replacement. First of all, I thank you on behalf of the Veterans for inviting us here to talk about the new Veterans Center and for the consideration to supporting it as we go forward. The VFW, as you know, represents five towns now. We represent Shelton, Monroe, Trumbull, Easton, and Redding. So, we come together as one group to serve us better. If I may take a moment just to recognize some of the Shelton Board members who lead our folks these days, because we have had great success for the last four years and we have achieved the highest honor possible from VFW, which is All-American status. There are over 6,000 post across the world. I don't think 10% have done that four years in a row. We are proud of what we have accomplished. The commander for those four years is a Shelton resident, and he's right here with us, Graham Bissett. So, Graham, thank you. Behind Graham is a former Shelton commander who everybody in this building knew when I walked around with him that morning. A 95-year-old, Korean War veteran, Fred Wills. Fred, thank you, sir. Next to him is someone who still works in this building, Merle Chase, who was the quartermaster for our post. He was the quartermaster for the whole state. He is a Vietnam Navy veteran. Behind him in that blue shirt is Joe Dascanio, who's a Shelton resident who's our adjutant, who was a naval aviator veteran in Vietnam. Next to him is John DiGiacomo, who was our Shelton rep for the post. He served in the Air Force in Vietnam. So, I thank them for being here to support it. We are well represented on the Board.

Just quickly, this Center was designed not to be a veteran center the way your grandfathers knew it, but to serve. We believe there are 10,000 veterans, local veterans, in the area who we want to serve. We have already signed up with Hartford HealthCare and the Veterans Administration to provide a wide array of services to the veterans. We want to make sure we reach them. Hartford HealthCare actually came to our last meeting and gave us a contribution, gave us an AED, and is going to support it as we go forward. As I said earlier, with Ray, we have had starts and stops over the last six years. We started, COVID came and we were out for two years. By the time we started back up, prices had doubled. And we had to go back. Every time we raised more funds, the prices went up even more. We finally got to the point where we had to do something called value engineering. I wasn't involved in the construction business, but I learned that value engineering means they engineer by taking some value out of the building. That's called value engineering. So, they take things out and so it has lessened the building. We finally raised enough funds to go forward to go do it. The town of Trumbull gave us \$900,000 in

total to get us over the top. With the value of engineering, we took out \$436,000 worth of value into the building. What we have done since then, under Ray's leadership, is to go forward and try to put back that value engineering. We have put back about \$250,000 of it already, so we thank you for that. Now, we come here today to ask for a \$75,000 donation. What would we do with that? We would put two things back in. One of the value engineering things is we took the glass out of the top of this building. It is \$50,000 to put that glass back in and we would use any funds you would give us to put that glass back in. The second part is there was a deck off of the kitchen where the veterans could have a grill and do things tied into the gas line. That we took out. \$75,000 would support both of those and we would appreciate that. What does it mean to Shelton? I will tell you upon entrance to the vestibule of this building, when you walk in, there will be two walls. One wall says Corporate Business and Community Support. The City of Shelton will be noted on that wall for its donation. That is the second highest level donation box that there is. You will be on that wall when you walk in that building. Every Shelton resident will see that. Second, every place that somebody has put a donation, we are going to put a plaque up in that area of the building to say this curtain wall was donated by the City of Shelton, made possible. On the deck it will say this deck made possible by the city of Shelton by its donation. In addition to that, whether you do anything or not, we are committed to veterans. And one of the things we did in the last year was to go around to the towns that we represent and say, who are the people from your town who paid the ultimate price? There were 72 residents we identified from Shelton who went to war and paid the ultimate price. We built a wall of honor in this building. As you walk past the vestibule, you come to a wall of honor. On that wall of honor there is going to be a spot that says, "Remembering those and honoring who paid the ultimate price for freedom". It will be by town and it will be by war. The 72 residents from Shelton will be on that wall by town and by the war they served in. So that will be something you come and see. If any of you have someone who you want to honor on the wall because they served, these plaques are available for \$125 that goes on the wall and it will be on the wall forever. The last thing is we would invite you for any support you give us to come to our next meeting in September and present this to the full veterans meeting. We would be honored to have you there and present it and then do a press release to say, we thank you for the support you gave us. And that's my pitch. And I'm open to any questions.

Mayor Lauretti: I just want to make a couple of comments. I have been pretty close with Ray Baldwin for probably over 20 years and have gotten to appreciate his dedication towards the veterans issues. He kept me abreast of this project in Trumbull. I said to him one day, let's call the governor up and we did. It bore some fruit for us. The governor pitched in a few more bucks. The State was a big contributor. I say that because I don't want people to think that it's just certain entities like the Town of Trumbull, the City of Shelton that are kicking in here. The State and the Federal Government were at the table for the funding on this. I think it is important to have a shared interest in projects like this because for me there are no boundaries for veterans. They represent the United States of America. They are all over this great country and have been for so many years. They are the reason that we enjoy the freedoms that we do. It is unfortunate that some people don't appreciate it today in this country, but that is not us. This is just a way for us to show our appreciation and be part of something that is contributory to the country and the greater good. I will tell you that our former President of the Board, John Anglace, was very much in favor of this. He and I discussed it six, eight months ago. I just wanted to make sure that everybody understood that. As you know, John was in the forefront of these veterans' issues on our behalf.

Alderman Balamaci: As a veteran, Ray Baldwin was kind enough to reach out to me and I saw the future location. It is actually very beautiful. As the Mayor said, we will be getting some federal funding and I understand some of that is tied into opening up to first responders for the VFW as well which is kind of a new way to look at things. I think the \$75,000 for the 30% of Sheltonites that do belong is very manageable and I think it should go forward. Thank you for coming and presenting.

Alderman Simonetti: Thank you, gentlemen. I would like to thank you for your service to our country and to Cris also as a veteran. We could not have a country like this without people like you. Thank you for your sacrifice and for those that did make it back from different places in the world. We are very much appreciate what you did and this is a small token that we can do for you.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (6-0).

6. HIDDEN MEADOW ESTATES OPEN SPACE CONVEYANCE

Mayor Lauretti: We are not going to take up this item today because there are still a few unfinished items that I need to put together. I will be meeting with them next week. This item will be on the August Board meeting.

7. 784 RIVER ROAD PROPERTY PURCHASE & SALE

Alderman Simons MOVED, pursuant to a favorable 8-24 referral from Planning & Zoning Commission to authorize the purchase of 6.49 acres of State-owned property as seen on the attached assessor's map in the amount of \$350,000 with funding to come from General Funds Surplus.

Whereas the Board of Aldermen determines that the sale of the property to be within the City's best interest and to exclude such parcel from the sale of the City property process as proscribed by Section 2-18 of the City's Ordinances.

Further move, pursuant to a favorable 8-24 referral from the Planning & Zoning Commission to authorize the sale of the same 6.49 acres of property to the owner of Sports Center of Connecticut or the entity to be determined in the amount of \$565,000. General Fund Surplus will be reimbursed upon the sale.

Further authorize Mark A. Lauretti and Corporation Counsel to execute any and all documents to effectuate the same.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Mayor Lauretti: I make the assumption that everybody is familiar with this piece of property that we are talking about. There is a lot of history here. This discussion and debate have raced on for about seven, eight years. Crazy as the process is, we had to get a an act of the legislature to affect the sale. We could not come to terms with the entity that was running the landfill and the piece of property that is subject to this this motion today, because they thought that the value was very different than what

it really is. At the end of the day, there is a going business there, has been for over twenty five years, substantial taxpayer, and it would just be foolish to think that someone would come in and buy a five and a half acre piece of property that's a long narrow strip from River Road to the to the river and with a landfill on one side and a business on the other. So, the only practical solution is that this property goes to the to the Sports Center. As most of you know, this area has been developed, it continues to be developed, especially as you move north up the Housatonic River. It is all part of the master plan for this part of our development on the River Road portion of Shelton. There is a lot more that I can get into, but I don't think that I will at this point unless you have specific questions. So, the City is just acting as the agent for service here, for lack of a better description, to affect the sale and get this property in the hands of an owner that will be productive for the public. If they're productive for themselves, that's okay too. That that that's the American way.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (6-0).

8 EVERSOURCE AGREEMENT FOR GAS MAIN – CONSTITUTION BOULEVARD EXTENSION

Alderman Simons MOVED to approve the agreement between City of Shelton and Eversource Energy to provide a natural gas main at an extension of Constitution Boulevard westward from Bridgeport Avenue to serve future tenants and property owners.

Further appropriate an amount of \$143,828 for project costs related to the installation with funding to come from General Fund Surplus to be later reimbursed from future users.

Further authorize Mayor Mark A. Lauretti and Corporation Counsel to execute any and all documents to effectuate the same.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Discussion:

Alderman Simonetti: How long is this line or is it just a plug there?

Mayor Lauretti: This is the gas main that goes from Bridgeport Avenue straight up Constitution that is going service all those properties that we are under contract for, including, Bigelow Tea. In an effort to move this project along, and I say move it along because it has been painful for the last three years to deal with state DOT and the utilities, our goal is to upfront the money, get the gas main put in, extend the water, get the road paved this year, and get in the ground for Phase II so that we can get people to their properties that we are under contract for.

Alderman Simonetti: This is for the gas. You said water. What about electricity? Is that already laid in?

Mayor Lauretti: It is already in motion. With the utilities, everybody has a different set of rules. I don't think that we should be paying for the infrastructure cost for utilities when they have the ability to send

out monthly bills to multiple tenants that never even existed before. So, they should foot the bill for the infrastructure and they could collect their monthly fees as designed.

Alderman Perry: This is the first time I'm hearing about them charging for a main. Usually, for a project of this size they will put the main in.

Mayor Lauretti: That's true, but, again, because people can't get to their properties – the property owners are reluctant to sign agreements with the utilities until they know that they are going to get there. You really can't blame them. This whole thing has been a process and three-quarters, not a process and a half, but a process and three-quarters. It has consumed Fran, myself, Mike Kanios and Kellie. It has consumed us.

Alderman Balamaci: I have a question about the reimbursement. Will any inflation be calculated into the reimbursement?

Mayor Lauretti: I don't know. We have never done it this way before. I would be happy to get our \$143,000 back.

Alderman Lizotte: This is just for Phase I?

Mayor Lauretti: This is for Phase I, but the extension will continue into Phase II. Once asphalt is down on Phase I, everybody is going to have a different flavor for the end game. Sometimes you have to bring them to water and that is what we are doing.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (6-0).

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Simons MOVED to adjourn the Board of Aldermen Meeting.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (6-0). Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Donna Fonda

Donna Fonda
Acting Clerk, Board of Aldermen

DATE APPROVED _____ BY: _____
Mayor Mark A. Lauretti