

**MINUTES  
COVENTRY TOWN COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
JUNE 27, 2022, 6:30 P.M.  
TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM B & VIRTUAL**

See a video of this meeting at this link:

<https://coventryct.viebit.com/player.php?hash=8mxVlrRpQmFE>

**1. Call To Order, Roll Call:**

The meeting was called to order by Thomas at 6:30 p.m.

Members present:

John French

Robyn Gallagher

Jonathan Hand - Secretary

Matthew Kyer

Marty Milkovic – Vice-Chairperson

Lisa Thomas - Chairperson

Members absent:

Julie Blanchard

Also present:

John Elsesser – Town Manager

Eric Peterson – Candidate for Police Chief

**2. Pledge Of Allegiance:**

All Council members and Staff stood to recite the Pledge.

**3. Unfinished Business:**

**3.A. 21/22-92: Consideration/Possible Action: Ratification Of Appointment,  
Coventry Chief Of Police**

Thomas: This will be held over until we have an Executive Session.

**Motion:** I move that the Council continue this item until after Executive Session.

By: Hand

Seconded: Milkovic

Voting:

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher, French

Against: None

Abstain: None

**Motion:** I move that the Council ratify the appointment of Eric Peterson as Coventry Chief of Police.

By: Milkovic

Seconded: French

Discussion: Thomas: We are all very impressed by what you bring to Coventry. By your demeanor, your focus on the community. Several of us were commenting on the broad base letters of reference. Hand: In addition to all the credentials. Milkovic: When will he start? Elsesser: Several weeks from now; about the middle of July.

Voting:

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher, French

Against: None

Abstain: None

**3.B. 21/22-18: Consideration/Possible Action: Assignment Of American Rescue Plan Funding**

Thomas: Pertains to the Transfer Station move to use \$249,973.95 of ARPA funding.

**Motion:** I move that the Council assign \$249,973.95 of ARPA funding for the Transfer Station relocation.

By: Milkovic

Seconded: Gallagher

Discussion: Elsesser: The bids were disheartening. Especially after staff came up with ways of reducing the costs. Now the cost is at \$750k. Regulatory changes, water detention issues, and licensing are some of the reasons for the increases. We've asked the lowest bidder to scale back on some items such as a laying down a binder course only. We will be bringing in gravel that we have a credit on. French: With this growing from .25 million to .75 million what is the advantages of moving this now? Elsesser: There will be more efficiencies. French: What is the real advantage? Elsesser: Right now, we have a transfer station in the middle of a park. Moving it will make the park whole. At DPW we can increase the hours the station is open. The DPW location is in the dead middle of town. Thomas: This has been a goal for many years. It was supposed to have been done but then the COVRRRA fund was depleted. There are other things that rest on the move. There is a contract with the town to build that softball field and provide playing equity. People are asking for recreational facilities. We are fortunate to have these funds to be used for this purpose. Milkovic: We will gain the synergies of being near the other fields. There are advantages to having it with the same fields. It will be nice to have a recreation

facility. Gallagher: Taking \$250k is a lot out of ARPA. We have used \$90k to mitigate the deficit for the EMS fund. How thick in the binder course?

Elsesser: Less than 2"; subdivisions can go 10 years with only a binder course. The binder course is the more important layer. The big trucks coming into the Transfer Station will be on the concrete. Kyer: Is item N, electrical improvements, a significant portion of the increase? Elsesser: That is a decrease. We will run the minimal wiring needed for the lights and the shed. We plan to use solar in the future.

Voting:

For: Hand, Thomas, Milkovic, Kyer, Gallagher, French

Against: None

Abstain: None

Elsesser: He is pleased to present Eric Peterson to the Council. It is rare to hire a police chief; this is the third one he has presented to the town. We went through a lengthy and rich process for proper vetting. We went to a full statewide recruitment going through CCM. A leadership attributes screening was done. Twenty-seven initial applicants were screened down to eight. A four person panel made up of two police officers from a smaller town, the Town Manager of Enfield (now in Simsbury), and one police chief that was formerly a town manager. Seven of the eight candidates came in for their interview. The panel passed five. Elsesser decided on two and ultimately selected Peterson. A initial offer was made and then intense screening was done. Reference letters from peers and elected officials were submitted. All mentioned they felt Peterson was open and honest with communications. Elsesser was impressed with the personal relationships. Peterson has been with the Plainville Police Department for twenty-five years, he has a Master's Degree, and feels comfortable his career has led up this time. He is looking to moving into town or within 20 miles of Coventry.

Peterson: He has been working through the past twelve years knowing he wanted to move into a police chief position. He was the second in command working hands on with his police chief. He's seen the first-hand results of communicating with the community. He is 98-99% sure his family will be moving to Coventry. Coventry is where he wants to finish out his law enforcement career. He will get deeply involved with the community and will provide the best police service that we can. He will be an asset to the town. He is eager to get started. French: How many officers are in the Plainville department. Peterson: 40. Milkovic: Was the community survey shared with Peterson? Elsesser: He had not but provided a copy at the table. Kyer: What is his view on speeding enforcement? Peterson: It is about the safety of and educating the community. Speed kills. It is something that has to be enforced.



***PLEASE NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Council at the next Council meeting. Please see the next Council meeting minutes for approval or changes to these minutes.***