RESOLUTION

TOWN OF COVENTRY
TOWN COUNCIL

RESOLUTION PERTAINING TO A MODIFIED CALENDAR FOR THE FY 2020-2021 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGETS AND NECESSARY ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ACTIONS AUTHORIZED BY EXECUTIVE ORDERS 2020-7B, 7C AND 7I

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, the Governor of the State of Connecticut ("Governor") declared a public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency for the State of Connecticut, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Sections 19a-131 and 28-9, in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 disease associated with a novel coronavirus that is currently affecting multiple countries and states; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States ("President") declared a national emergency to combat the coronavirus that is currently infecting the population of the United States; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Town Manager of the Town of Coventry ("Town Manager") declared a local state of public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency to ensure that local officials and the Town Manager have all the authorities necessary to limit the spread of COVID-19 disease and to protect the public safety of the Town of Coventry; and

WHEREAS, the effects of the transmission of COVID-19 has resulted in the spread of infections in the Town of Coventry, in Connecticut and throughout the country, as well as resulting in shortages of personal protective equipment and other supplies that could jeopardize public safety and civil preparedness; and

WHEREAS, in response to the issuance of declarations of a public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency by the Governor, he has issued a series of Executive Orders setting forth the law governing the conduct of the business of state and municipal government during the period of the emergency; and
WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 7B ("EO 7B"), paragraph 1 of which suspends all statutes, charter provisions, ordinances and regulations mandating open meetings in order “...to permit any public agency to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting or requiring in-person, public access to such meetings, and to hold such meetings or proceedings remotely by conference call, videoconference or other technology” ("Electronic Meetings"); and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020 the Governor issued Executive Order No. 7C ("EO 7C"), paragraph 5 of which extended “all budget deadlines for the preparation of the municipal budget” for the FY 2020-2021 “that falls on any date prior to and including May 15, 2020 are extended by thirty (30) days”; and

WHEREAS, the Coventry Charter confers the legislative power of the Town of Coventry in the Town Council, for all matters except those powers specifically reserved for the Town Meeting; and

WHEREAS, EO 7C permits the legislative body to “alter or modify the schedules and deadlines pertaining to the preparation and submission of a proposed budget and the deliberation or actions on said budget” including any required public hearing(s), publication, referendum or final budget adoption: and,

WHEREAS, EO 7C postpones all submission dates as set forth in the Coventry Charter until such time as the legislative body approves said modified schedule and deadline consistent with the thirty (30) day extension; and,

WHEREAS, on March 21, 2020, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 7I ("EO 7I"), paragraph 13 of which dispenses with any in-person voting requirements, including referenda and town meetings requiring in-person votes, for purposes of adopting 2020-2021 fiscal year municipal budgets and setting the mill rate; in effect conferring final responsibility on the Town Council to adopt a budget which would otherwise be allocated by the Charter to the Automatic Referendum; and then set a mil rate.

WHEREAS, EOs 7C and 7I do not alter or modify the control of line-items that fall squarely within the authority of the Board of Education budget and, thus, the Board of Education should comply with all submission requirements pertaining to budget deadlines adopted by the municipality, except as modified by this Resolution; and,
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by the Town of Coventry Town Council pursuant to paragraph 5 of Executive Order 7C, the legislative body of the Town of Coventry hereby sets forth the following modified schedule, process, and deadlines for the submission, deliberation and final action on the Town Budget for FY 2020-2021, which meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements noticed in accordance with EO 7B ¶1.

1. The Town Manager has forwarded a proposed FY 2021 Town of Coventry Budget and Board of Education Budget, Capital Budget and Debt Service Budget (the Annual Budget) consistent with the Coventry Charter (Charter) to the Town Council and has made said proposed budgets available for public inspection on the Town's website and held a public hearing on said proposal on March 12, 2020.

2. The Town Council shall adopt a proposed Annual Budget on or about May 18th and then shall require the Town Manager to hold a Public Presentation by means of an Electronic Meeting no later than May 21st. The Town Council shall accept written public comment via email and hard copy documentation through and including May 29, 2020 from persons eligible to vote on the town budget and who must include their name and address.

3. The Town Council shall consider the input received and shall adopt the FY 2021 Annual Budget as may be amended based upon input received. The Town Council shall consider and approve as separate resolutions for the Town Government Budget, the Board of Education Budget, the Capital Budget, Debt Service budget and COVRRRA service rates. They shall submit the budget to the Town Clerk in accordance with the Charter on or about June 1, 2020 and shall cause said final Annual Budget to be available for public inspection on the Town's website no later than June 5, 2020. The adoption of said resolutions shall be deemed final approval of the Annual Budget.

4. The Town Council shall also consider and adopt other resolutions typically considered at the annual meeting including, entering into agreement for Town aid for Roads funds, adoption of the Capital Improvement Plan, authorization to submit LOCIP grants, borrowing funds in anticipation of taxes, and correcting mathematical errors.

5. The Town Council shall set the mil rate related to the FY 2021 budget on or about June 1, 2020.
6. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, all public hearings and meetings shall adhere to rules, protocols set for Electronic Meetings, including the use of online or telephonic conferencing, and that no in-person meetings shall be held in consideration of this process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in the event the previously declared emergency is resolved or declarations prohibiting assembly of groups of persons are lifted on or prior to May 4, 2020, the Town Council shall act to reinstate the usual process of a referendum regarding the proposed FY 2021 budget starting at the Special budget meeting stage, as outlined in the Town Charter, as if an adjourned Town meeting vote had been defeated.

Approved this 6th day of April 2020.

Town Council

Julie A. Blanchard

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Julie Blanchard, Council Chair

ATTEST

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Lori Tollman, Coventry Town Clerk