

MINUTES
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL – 14 PARK PLACE – 3RD FLOOR
TUESDAY, July 21, 2026 – 7:30 PM

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
26 JUL 28 PM 3:57

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

A.) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Recited

B.) ROLL CALL:

Present: Council Members Laurie Abernathy, Laura B Bush, Patricia Buxton, Bill Dauphin, Jeremy Geller, Maryann Levesque, Thao Nguyen, Terilynn Rogers, Jim Tedford, Michael Wendus and Phyllis Winkler

Absent: Council Member Bernie Sykes

Entered During Meeting:

Also Present: Mayor Daniel Champagne, Town Administrator John Kleinhans, Town Clerk Karen Daigle and Recording Secretary Kimberly DeCarli.

C.) CITIZEN CITATIONS AND AWARDS - None

D.) CITIZENS FORUM

1. Genaro Gonzalez, 51 Hartford Tpke. Spoke on housing in Vernon and miscellaneous items

Citizens Forum closed at 7:38 PM

E.) OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS

Council Member Buxton, seconded by Council Member Abernathy moved to add addition agenda item. Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session taken out of order. See end of minutes.

F.) PUBLIC HEARING – None

G.) STATUS OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND OFFICIAL TOWN-RUN EVENTS – None

H.) PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION

Mayor Daniel A Champagne made a presentation to the Town Council on various topics.

THANK YOU to all our departments for the outstanding *July in the Sky* event held earlier this month. The fireworks were a huge success and very well attended.

REMINDERS

The *Annual Summer Days Carnival* is planned for **July 22nd – July 25th** at Rockville High School. All proceeds generously support Vernon's Sports & Recreation Scholarships, making a difference in our community.

The Vernon Farmer's Market is returning for a 3rd year in a row. Starting this Thursday July 23rd, July 30th, August 6th, August 13th, & August 20th from 4:30pm – 6:30pm at Henry Park.

MAYOR'S SUMMER CONCERT SERIES;

July 30th Army Band

August 6th Cover-2-Cover

August 13th Night Shift
August 20th Shaded Soul

Coffee & Connect with Opportunity Works Connecticut, Inc. (45 West Main St.)

Thursday, July 30, 2026 from 8:00am-9:00am

Please be sure to RSVP if you are interested in attending.

National Night Out is an annual community-building event held on the first Tuesday in August. This year's event will take place on Tuesday, August 4, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the St. Bernard's Church parking lot. The Vernon Police Department and VCN have partnered to host this family-friendly event, which is designed to bring neighbors together, foster positive relationships between law enforcement, and the community, and strengthen partnerships with Vernon residents. Attendees can enjoy an evening of fun activities, community engagement, and opportunities to connect with local organizations and public safety personnel.

I.) REPORTS FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Minutes and agendas are sent directly from the Town Clerk.

J.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Bush moved the Consent Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

1. **Request the Town Council approve the tax refunds for prior year taxes as outlined in the memorandum from Amanda Tashea, Collector of Revenue.** (See memorandum dated July 13, 2026 to John W. Kleinhans, Town Administrator from Amanda Tashea, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES EIGHTEEN (18) PRIOR YEAR TAXES TOTALING \$24,093.83 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM AMANDA TASHEA, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO JOHN W. KLEINHANS, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED JULY 13, 2026.

2. **Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's reappointment of Matt Hellman, Social Service Director as Municipal Agent for Elderly Persons for the term commencing on July 22, 2026 and expires June 30, 2030.** (No attached resume. Matt Hellman is a town employee).

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S REAPPOINTMENT OF MATT HELLMAN AS THE MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY PERSONS FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE ON JUNE 30, 2030.

3. **Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's reappointment of Diane Wheelock, Senior Center Director as an Assistant Municipal Agent for Elderly Persons for the term commencing on August 18, 2026 and expires June 30, 2030.** (No attached resume. Diane Wheelock is a town employee).

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S REAPPOINTMENT OF DIANE WHEELOCK AS THE ASSISTANT MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY PERSONS FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE ON JUNE 30, 2030.

K.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS – None

L.) PENDING BUSINESS – None

M.) NEW BUSINESS

1. **Request the Town Council approves the application for the National Culvert Removal, Replacement and Restoration (Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage) Grant Program in the amount of \$5,119,200.00.**

(See memorandum dated July 13, 2026 to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and Town Administrator John W. Kleinhans from Nichole Greco, Projects and Grants Coordinator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL NECESSARY PAPERWORK TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR AND RECEIVE NATIONAL CULVERT REMOVAL, REPLACEMENT, AND RESTORATION (CULVERT AQUATIC ORGANISM PASSAGE) GREANT PROGRAM OFFERED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,119,200.00.

Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Rogers made a motion to authorize Mayor Daniel A. Champagne to execute any and all necessary paperwork to make application for and receive national culvert removal, replacement, and restoration (Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage) Grant Program offered by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration in the amount of \$5,119,200.00. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and Sean Gately spoke and answered questions.

2. **Discussion and update relative to a request by Council Members Phyllis Winkler regarding Parks & Recreation and Youth Services teen center survey results and steps forward.**

Marty Sitler and Michelle Hill spoke and answered questions regarding the report from outside experts and the community.

NO PROPOSED MOTION

Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Winkler made a motion to extend curfew to the end of Business. Motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Wendus left the table at 9:51 PM, returns to the table at 9:54 PM.

3. **Discussion of Personnel Rules and Regulations provided by Town Administrator, John W. Kleinhans.**

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne, Town Administrator John W. Kleinhans and Asst. Town Administrator Dawn Maselek spoke.

NO PROPOSED MOTION**N.) INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES – None**

Council Member Dauphin stepped away from the table at 9:58 PM, returning at 9:58 PM.

P.) DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Town Administrator's update for the Town Council relative to the status of the Fiscal Year 2025 Municipal Audit. (This item was a previous request by Town Council Member Buxton.)

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and Town Administrator John W. Kleinhans spoke and answered questions. Motion carried unanimously.

Q.) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF **JUNE 16, 2026** AND MOVES TO APPROVE SAID MINUTES.

Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Bush made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the Regular Town Council Meeting of **June 16, 2026** and moves to approve said minutes as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.

R.) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS, PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS, ETC. NOT REQUIRING ACTION**S.) EXECUTIVE SESSION**

7:40 PM Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Bush, moved the following motion to go into Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

1. The Town Council pursuant to the authority given in Connecticut General Statutes 1-200 (2) hereby moves to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel and invites Dawn Maselek, Assistant Town Administrator and John W. Kleinhans, Town Administrator to attend.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #1

THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO CHAPTER X, SECT. 3 AND CHAPTER XI, SEC. 1, AND 3 OF THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER, APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF **SUZANNE CHOATE** AS TOWN ENGINEER FOR THE TOWN OF VERNON.

Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Bush made a motion pursuant to Chapter X, Sect. 3 and Chapter XI, Sec. 1, and 3 of the Vernon Town Charter, approving Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of **Suzanne Choate** as Town Engineer for the Town of Vernon. Motion carried unanimously.

8:01 PM Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Rogers made a motion to and invites the following motion to go into Executive Session #2. Motion carried unanimously.

2. The Town Council pursuant to the authority given in Connecticut General Statutes 1-200 (2) hereby moves to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel and invites Dawn Maselek, Assistant Town Administrator And John W. Kleinhans, Town Administrator To Attend.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #2

THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO CHAPTER X, SECT. 3 AND CHAPTER XI, SEC. 1, 3(a) AND 9 OF THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER, APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF **KAIYA HILL** AS FINANCE OFFICER AND TREASURER FOR THE TOWN OF VERNON.

Council Member Wendus removed himself from Executive Session #2 and was not in attendance.

Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Abernathy made a motion pursuant to Chapter X, Sect. 3 and Chapter XI, Sec. 1, 3(a) and 9 of the Vernon Town Charter, approving Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of **Kaiya Hill** as Finance Officer and Treasurer for the Town of Vernon. Motion carries with 10 in favor and 1 Abstention Council Member Wendus.

8:46 PM recess for introductions. Reconvened at 8:53 PM

T.) ADJOURNMENT (10:19 PM)

Council Member Levesque, seconded by Council Member Rogers made a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Received:

Approved:

Kimberly DeCarli
Recording Secretary