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East Haven Town Councilman Special Meeting Minutes

The East Haven Town Council held a Special Meeting Wednesday, July 22, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. Via Zoom in order to transact the following:

Chairman Deko called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. he read into the record the Zoom process and the Governor's executive order.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Deko requested a roll call.

Roll Call-10 Present Absent 5 (Maltese, Pompano, Ruggiero, Hennessey, and Santino)

Vice Chairman Pacelli read the ordinance as follows: The Enactment and Continuation of the EMERGENCY ORDINANCE REGARDING USE OF EAST HAVEN TOWN BEACH AND FACILITIES pursuant to Section 7 of Chapter III of the Charter of the Town of East Haven.

Vice Chairman Pacelli moved to approve.

Councilwoman Cesare second the motion.

Chairman Deko recognized Town Attorney Michael Luzzi who stated that the changes to the Governor's Executive order are slightly updated in subsection 7 page 3. Due to a public emergency the council has the right to have a public hearing with regard to that public emergency without holding a public hearing and the order is to continue to restrict the beaches to residents only it will be for an additional 61 days or when the Governor terminates the order whichever comes first. This order is strictly a temporary order as it relates to the pandemic, to limit and restrict the space on the beach by limiting the amount of people. Again, he repeated that it is strictly a temporary order to restrict the beach to residents only due to the pandemic. The Governor's State of Emergency Order document speaks for itself, its need and appropriateness. This ordinance mirrors the language in that order and the ordinance outlines in detail why we are doing this and the need for the restriction. The beach monitors not only have been trained during this social distancing but are doing an amazing job.

Chairman Deko commented that public works has done a great job with all the fencing and signage. He then read a letter from the Recreation Director, Louis Pane who stated in his letter for the safety of the

residents and the beach monitors limiting the use of the Town Beach is imperative for health and safety during this pandemic.

Councilwoman Glassman commented that she will support the ordinance but she has serious concerns with regard to the Town's history of being discriminatory. These exclusionary and segregationist practices were challenged and stuck down by the Supreme Court. Towns like Greenwich and Westport have tried for years to keep blue collar working families like our town off of their public beaches. There is renewed scrutiny over these practices, this week alone numerous news articles were published and the prior day a piece was done on the restriction of Connecticut beaches. Thank you to Attorney Luzzi to outline the strict parameters of this order that the impedance of this order is to promote social distancing and public safety at our beach during this pandemic. She appreciates that the order is temporary extinguished after 60 days or when Governor Lamont lifts the Executive Order. She wanted to share her frustration with Governor Lamont with this restriction; it should not have fallen exclusively on Mayor Carfora to craft policy because this is a statewide issue; so after the 60 days it is her hope that the town has received guidelines from the Governor as to how to proceed. She will vote in favor tonight for the temporary order and will oppose any permanent order to restrict the beach.

Councilman Balter made the following comment he will be voting for this ordinance because of public health. He appreciates the carefulness of the town attorney in drafting this ordinance where it strictly deals with the health of the town. He felt the need to address a phone call he received that day and wants to address publicly. It was a very racist phone call in relation to this ordinance wanting it to be permanent. Councilman Balter stated firmly that if you are a racist; that is not East Haven any longer we are a town who represents everybody. The residents and the police department came together recently with the Black Lives Matter movement successfully. He will fight for every resident in the town and if you are racist scurry back to your hole because your days are over.

Councilwoman Cesare stated that it never occurred to her that this restriction was based on racism but strictly due to the health and welfare of everyone. This ordinance is for the safety of all.

Attorney Luzzi indicated that the data will be updated with tomorrow's figures.

Roll Vote-All in favor. None opposed. No abstentions.

Motion carried.

Approved.

Vice Chairman Pacelli moved to adjourn.

Councilwoman Lesco second the motion.

Voice Vote-All in favor. None opposed. No abstentions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta A. DeLuca
Council Clerk

