



**TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON
April 7, 2025
Regular Town Council Meeting
Council Chambers**

APPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Black-Burke called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Nuchette Black-Burke, Deputy Mayor Darleen Klase, Councilor Mary Armstrong, Councilor Ronald Eleveld, Councilor Kristin Gluck Hoffman, Councilor Anthony King, Councilor Ojala Naeem, Councilor William Pelkey and Councilor Walker

Absent: Councilors Eleveld and Walker absent

2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION

Councilor Gluck Hoffman led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Gluck Hoffman led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

- a) Proclamation recognizing April 2025 as Fair Housing Awareness Month

Mayor Black-Burke read the proclamation aloud.

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Charles Jackson III, 26 Wilson Avenue, commented on the proclamation and stated there is a Fair Rent Commission in town and he is a member of that group. If you know anyone that needs those services, feel free to reach out to the town. He would appreciate if the parking ban would be enforced on Wilson Avenue sometime after 2:00 AM. There are several cars that are there that do not have plates on them that have been sitting there. He's not sure why they are there. He'd like the police to go down tonight and tomorrow night in this area. He would appreciate if the parking ban was enforced on Wilson Avenue, especially at the top of the street.



6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Eleveld - absent

Councilor Naeem thanked everyone for coming out tonight. Please come out to speak as we want to hear from you. She congratulated Chief Bianchi on his appointment as full time Fire Chief. I know he has been playing the role for quite some time, and he has been amazing. It's good know that we are in good hands and that our fire department is in good hands. Last week, the Bradley Development League had their spring gathering at Dudley Town Brewing. The Bradley Development League focuses on collaborating amongst different towns around us and with an economic development focus around the airport. Town Manager Souza is the Chair of the Bradley Development League and is doing a great job at it. John Bourdeaux, President and CEO of AdvanceCT came and spoke to them about what's in store in the coming years ahead of us, recognizing that there are challenges in terms of how funding is shifting across the State due to challenges at the Federal level. He also spoke of an optimistic outlook for all the great things that have happened here in Connecticut, and many people, including John himself, had nothing but really high praise for Windsor, for Peter, and for the staff over here. So just always a very proud moment to see that in the community, to hear that from so many people that are outsiders looking in.

Councilor Pelkey stated people should consider volunteering for their local fire department. They can find that information at windsorfire.org, they can contact the town hall or get in touch with any of them and they would be able to forward you information. There is a new public newsletter for the Fire Department. The current one is simply 8 pages. It gives you an idea of what's going on in one of the most important areas in town. Hayden Station is having their annual pancake breakfast on April 26th from 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM. It's only \$15 per person and you can eat your fill.

Councilor King thanked everyone for coming out tonight. This is the start to many more meetings to come. It's always nice to hear people and their comments.

Councilor Armstrong stated it is good to hear from the audience and to listen to them. She appreciates as well what each and every one of them do. She believes Windsor is a town that's moving forward and thanked the Town Manager who does a great job and all the staff. Self care is the best are. Take care of yourselves and watch out for your neighbors and the children.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman gave a shout out to "Molly on the Move". It's fantastic. Molly is amazing and keeps everybody updated on current events. The candidates just had their interviews here at town hall. She stated she came to pick up her daughter at the town hall at about 9:00 PM and she wanted to recognize Town Manager Souza. It was after 9:00 PM when he left for the day and of course he was picking up litter as he was walking out. We are grateful and very blessed to have him.

Councilor Walker - absent

Deputy Mayor Klase thanked the fire and police for coming so quickly to the scene right away when a power transformer went out in her area. There will be an Earth Day guided hike on April 26th at Millbrook. That information can be found on the town's Facebook page.

Mayor Black-Burke said she enjoys the commercial breaks of 'Molly on the Move', the Facebook page, etc. She congratulated Chief Bianchi on his promotion to Fire Chief. She stated that you can also find on the Facebook page that this Saturday is the third annual Veterans and Military Appreciation event that will take place at L.P. Wilson from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. She hopes individuals can come out and support it again this year. She attended the Pancake Breakfast at Northwest Park on March 22nd. It was beautiful weather. The pancakes were amazing and so wasn't the turnout. On April 26, along with the hike, there is the Wilson Community cleanup from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. All that are interested should meet at Sharshon Park at 10:00 AM.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Board of Education

Leonard Lockhart, Secretary, Board of Education stated the following:

- Windsor Public Schools had the honor of hosting Dr. Anthony J. Davis, President of Livingstone College, again this year. His visit was inspiring, leaving a lasting impression on our students, staff, and community. One of the highlights of the day was the presentation of full-ride Presidential scholarships to six deserving seniors. Ten partial scholarships were also awarded, all for academic excellence.
- March was Board of Education Members' Appreciation Month. This was an opportunity to extend our appreciation for their dedicated service to our children. Our board members are generous with their time and commitment to public school education and we appreciate their continued service. The board gifts were made especially for them by No Limits, a student-run business of the CBTA and SPARK Programs at LP Wilson overseen by Ms. Marge Renno
- Registration for the 2025-2026 school year opened on March 1. Please visit the district website for more information.
- Summer Camp Treehouse registration is now open. Windsor Public Schools is now enrolling for Camp Treehouse 2025. We also offer before and after school care programs, non-school day, snow day, half day and vacation camps. Please see the district website for more information.
- On Friday, March 7, all district schools celebrated National SEL Day. All of our classrooms were filled with enthusiasm as students embraced activities designed to foster self-discovery, empathy and resilience.

- Danielle Franklin from Poquonock School has been chosen as the District's Paraeducator of the Year! For 11 years, Miss Franklin has been a guiding light at Windsor Public Schools, dedicating the last 8 years at Poquonock Elementary. Her compassion, patience, and commitment to building strong relationships with students, families, and colleagues make a lasting impact every day. From helping students find their confidence to fostering independence, she embodies what it means to be an exceptional paraeducator. Join us in congratulating Miss Franklin on this well-deserved recognition!
- The BOE's next regular meeting will be on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at 7:00 PM in the Board Room at LP Wilson Community Center. The meeting is off schedule due to Spring Break, Monday, April 14 to Friday, April 18. Offices will be open with the exception of Good Friday, April 18.
- Dr. Hill's next Coffee Talk will be on Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at 5:30 PM in the Board Room at LPW. Please visit the district website to register for the event.
- Please remember to check our website, www.windsorct.org, for the most updated information, athletic schedules and academic calendar. Snow day information will be located on a banner on the website as soon as possible if inclement weather should affect the school day. In addition, the district will send out a communication about schools being closed, delayed or early dismissal through our notification system. Families should make sure their child's school has their most up-to-date contact information.

Deputy Mayor Klase stated that on the Board of Education's website it talks about the Smart Pre-K program being limited for this next coming year. She just wants to understand the funding concern. Was it because the grant has changed or is it because of the \$1 million reduction in the Board of Education budget from the proposed Superintendent's budget? Mr. Lockhart responded it was a 10 year Grant funded program. It expired at the end of this academic year. Considering that the funding was no longer coming from the State, it was part of the 1% cut that was approved by the Board of Education. That cut was recommended by the superintendent, but with the understanding that the Board approved the 1% cut. The superintendent took the 1% and made the cuts as discussed. This may come back as a discussion with the Board, but as of right now, those are the recommended cuts.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked if it was an option or perhaps it was looked into to have parents private pay for the Pre-K program because they have to go to private pay programs since the public schools won't have one. Mr. Lockhart stated it was not a part of their deliberations and he is not at the liberty to speak of the options of private pay.

Councilor King stated that he was told that the Secretary of the Board of Education went to the National School Board Association and was given the title as President-elect of the National School Board. He asked if that was Mr. Lockhart. Mr. Lockhart stated that the Windsor Board of Education, Data 10, said in the SBA Annual conference that he was elected

by the Delegate Assembly to be President-elect. He is presently President-elect as of the end of conference yesterday and will become President in San Antonio in April 2026.

Councilor King pointed out that we often have our members on our board and our superintendent and his administration represent us nationally and secure national roles, because that is the quality of excellence of our schools and the people that support our school system. Mr. Lockhart stated that he'd like to express to his fellow board members and have an opportunity to discuss this tomorrow with them during their meeting, but yes, thank you for recognizing him. He's truly humbled to represent Windsor. He represents Windsor locally on the State level right now. And now, taking a national stage, it's humbling, it's daunting and he's prepared for the challenge, because Windsor has prepared him for this challenge.

Mayor Black Burke asked in regards to the summer programming, is it just the treehouse or are there other options available? As of right now it is the treehouse program only with no other options.

b) Public Building Commission

Rick Hazelton, Public Building Commission, gave the following report:

Wilson Fire Station – Roof Replacement - 9585

Roof work is complete and cupola is installed. Remaining items are minor trim and painting, which are whether dependent. Project expected to be completed by the end of May 2025.

Wilson Fire Station – Interior Renovations – 9585

Project is in progress with 50% of the work completed. Project expected to be completed by the end of May 2025.

Oliver Ellsworth School Humidity Mitigation Design - 9574

Project is completed and all systems are working properly. We are waiting on final inspection by the engineer and then the project can be closed out. Project expected to be closed by the end April 2025.

Clover Street School Restroom ADA Code Compliances Phase-2 – 9552

Kickoff meeting was held last week and project is progressing. Project is on schedule with construction to begin in June of 2025 and be completed over the summer break.

LP Wilson Community Center HVAC Renovations Project – 9551

Phase - 1

Final adjustments to the RTUs rooftop units continue to be performed.
Project expected to be completed by the end of May 2025.

Phase - 2

Building controls continue to be programmed and adjusted for proper operation. Removal of existing AC window units will begin this week and opening repaired (weather permitting). Project expected to be completed by the end of June 2025.

c) Conservation Commission

Tammy Young, Conservation Commission, gave the following report:

Accomplishments and Initiatives

Throughout the past year, the WCC has actively engaged in various initiatives that align with our purpose of environmental stewardship. Some of the most notable projects include:

- **Legislation on Nips:** The Commission has been involved in discussions surrounding legislation aimed at addressing the environmental impact of nip bottles.
- **Hydroponics Seminar:** We hosted an educational seminar exploring hydroponic gardening as a sustainable method for local food production.
- **Involvement with Windsor Clean and Green:** WCC members actively participated in Windsor Clean and Green initiatives, promoting responsible waste management and environmental awareness.
- **Annual E-Cycle Event:** Our annual electronic recycling event provided residents with a responsible way to dispose of outdated electronics, reducing landfill waste and promoting sustainability.
- **Hartsprings Textile Recycling Events:** These recurring events have continued to support textile recycling efforts, diverting materials from landfills while benefiting local charitable organizations.

Upcoming Events and Programs

Looking ahead, the Commission remains committed to community engagement and environmental education. Upcoming initiatives include:

- **Bulk Order Compost Bin Program:** This initiative aims to make composting more accessible to residents, encouraging waste reduction and soil enrichment.
- **Earth Day Guided Hike (April 26th):** A community event designed to promote appreciation of Windsor's natural spaces through an educational hike at Millbrook Open Space.
- **Light Pollution Seminar (April 29th):** An informative session to raise awareness about the effects of light pollution and strategies for reducing its impact.

- **Bird Photo Contest (Beginning May 2025):** A new initiative to encourage residents to engage with and appreciate local bird species through photography, promoting awareness of Windsor's diverse wildlife.

Looking Forward

The WCC remains dedicated to its advisory role and to fostering initiatives that protect and enhance Windsor's environment. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with the Town Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and community partners to support sustainable practices and environmental conservation.

We appreciate the Town Council's ongoing support and look forward to another year of progress in our shared commitment to Windsor's natural resources.

She wanted to recognize the passing away of our longtime chair, Ann Beaudin and publicly thank her and her family for the years of dedication they provided to them. They hope to plant a memorial tree some time in the near future in her memory.

Councilor Armstrong asked how and in what way are citizens made aware of your events and programs? Ms. Young responded they have a Facebook presence, they use the town website to announce any events, and advertise through word of mouth. They also put flyers up at various locations.

Councilor Armstrong asked if this is confined only to Windsor or do we collaborate with other towns? Ms. Young stated it depends on what they do but they have partnered with other organizations in the past.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked if the Conservation Commission has ever worked with the school. Ms. Young said they try to cooperate with the schools where they can, when they can. It's a work in progress.

Mayor Black Burke added that JFK school has a wonderful composting program.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Souza gave the following report:

Construction at Bradley Airport to alter air traffic patterns

The CT Airport Authority has informed us they will be rehabilitating Runway 6/24, BDL's primary runway, starting in May. Runway 6/24 runs from Route 75 at the northeast end of BDL to Route 20 to the southwest. During construction, Runway 6/24 will be closed and operations will continue at the airport exclusively on Runway 15/33, BDL's secondary runway. This will result in more air traffic over portions of Windsor and Windsor Locks, less traffic over portions of Suffield, and East Granby's impacts being shifted from one part of



town to another. Runway 6/24 is scheduled to close on May 1st, and it is expected to reopen in November.

2025 Street Sweeping

Sweeping of all town streets and town parking lots is scheduled to begin the week of April 14, 2025. Sweeping will be performed in the neighborhoods listed below in the following order.

- River Street, Strawberry Hills neighborhoods
- Day Hill Rd Industrial area
- Rainbow area
- School parking lots
- Walden Meadow, Prospect Hill neighborhoods
- Poquonock, Farmstead, Village Lane neighborhoods
- Bloomfield Ave area, Dudley Town Rd
- Matianuck Ave area
- Willowcrest, Meadowbrook, Green Manor neighborhoods
- Wilson area
- Deerfield area
- Arrowbrook, Oakland Hills neighborhoods
- Clover, Plymouth, Ludlow neighborhoods
- Windsor Center, Nook Farms neighborhoods
- Mill Brook (Mack St, East St, Pleasant St, Pigeon Hill neighborhoods
- Kennedy Rd South, Pilgrim Village, Palisado South neighborhoods
- Kennedy Rd. North, Hayden Station, Palisado North neighborhoods

Sweeping of school parking lots will happen during school vacation the week of April 14th before initiating sweeping of the streets.

Sweeping of bricks and sidewalks near the Green, the Town library, railroad station, Milo Peck Child Development Center, Windsor Avenue, the medians in Wilson, and the Windsor Center River Trail will also be done.

The order of the neighborhoods to be swept changes each year so that one neighborhood is not always swept first or swept last.



Pavement Preservation Program on I-91 in Hartford & Windsor

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is announcing that a pavement preservation program will be performed on I-91 in Hartford and Windsor. This project is scheduled to start April 13 and last in to mid- November.

There will be various intermittent lane closures on I-91 northbound and southbound from Sundays through Thursdays from 6:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. Traffic control signing patterns, police, and flaggers will be utilized to guide motorists through the work zone.

In addition, various on and off-ramps including Exits 33, 34, 35, 36 and the HOV lanes may be closed to support milling and paving operations. Traffic will be detoured to the nearest ramp, following clearly marked detour signs with temporary traffic control.

Renters' Rebate Program for Eligible Connecticut Renters

Beginning in April, State law offers a reimbursement program for Connecticut renters who are elderly or totally disabled, with incomes that do not exceed a certain limit. This program is available to those renting an apartment, room, or living in cooperative housing or a mobile home. Renters' rebates can be up to \$900 for married couples and \$700 for single individuals. Grants are subject to income requirements as outlined in Connecticut law. Windsor Social Services is processing Renters' Rebate applications. Applicants can visit the town's website for a link to the Renters' Rebate information, including required documents and further instructions. They may also call the Social Services office for assistance. Windsor Housing Authority residents can use a drop box in each of the community rooms for document submission. Here is a link to the Social Service's monthly newsletter which highlights this program as well as others. <https://townofwindsorct.com/app/uploads/sites/20/2025/03/2025-April-Social-Services-Insert.pdf>

Wilson Branch Library Adds Area for Three Public Computer Workstations

The Wilson Branch Library is repurposing an unused display case into three public computer workstations, thanks to donated funds from the former Christ the King Lutheran Church. Built into the northeast portion of the original 1965 building, the large oak case will find renewed purpose serving the technology needs of library users. The branch currently has ten public computers, grouped together in close proximity to electrical outlets and data jacks. The new area will offer more privacy for patrons working on personal documents and more space for those receiving technology help from library staff. Last year, there were nearly 4,500 public computer users at the branch.

Workshop on Energy Efficiency for Commercial Properties

On Thursday, April 24th at 10:00 a.m. at Windsor Town Hall there will be a workshop for commercial property owners on the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy program (CPACE). CPACE is a financing structure in which building owners borrow money for energy efficiency, renewable energy, or other projects and make repayments via an assessment on their property tax bill. The financing arrangement then remains with the property even if it is



sold, facilitating long-term investments in building performance. The workshop is presented by the CT Green Bank and SustainableCT

Prior registration is requested at: www.ctgreenbank.com/windsorcpaceworkshop

More information on CPACE can be found at <https://www.ctgreenbank.com/building-solutions/c-pace/>

2025 Neighborhood Assistance Act Proposals Welcome

Community non-profit organizations are welcomed to submit applications for the **Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA)**, a State Tax Credit Program that provides funding for municipal and tax exempt organizations. Eligible programs include, but are not limited to: energy conservation, employment and training, child care services, neighborhood assistance, substance abuse, open space acquisition, and affordable housing development. For more information and the application form, please visit the Community Development Neighborhood Assistance Act page at <https://townofwindsorct.com/community-development/neighborhood-assistance-act/>. Applications are due by close of business day on May 21, 2025.

Local Tax Relief for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities

Real Estate tax relief reductions for elderly and persons with disabilities are available to qualified Windsor residents meeting the income and/or age guidelines. The application period is until May 15th. A taxpayer who is 65 years old, or 100% Social Security disabled, owns and occupies a home in Windsor and meets certain income guidelines may be eligible for elderly tax relief benefits. Annual income guidelines for the State of Connecticut program are:

- Single person household up to \$45,200
- Married up to \$55,100

In addition to the state program, the Town of Windsor provides for local elderly tax relief benefits. A taxpayer that is 65 years old, owns and occupies a home in Windsor, and does not meet the previously mentioned income guidelines may still be eligible for a local benefit listed below. Income guidelines for this year are:

- Single: \$45,201 - \$62,200
- Married: \$55,101 - \$62,200

A guide to these exemptions is available at the Town Assessor's office and on-line at <https://townofwindsorct.com/app/uploads/sites/4/2017/07/exemptionguide-6-2025-02-11.pdf>

For more information call the Assessor's Office at 860-285-1817.



Wilson and Deerfield Earth Day Community Cleanup

Come celebrate Earth Day with us on Saturday, April 26, 2025 from 10:00 AM – 12 noon at Sharshon Park on Skitchewaug Street and help with a community clean up. Gloves, bags and water will be provided for all volunteers. Rain date is May 3, 2025 from 10:00 AM – 12 Noon. For questions, please call Flavia Rey deCastro at 860-285-1985 or email at reydecastro@townofwindsorct.com.

Earth Day Hike

Celebrate Earth Day with the Conservation Commission. Come join us on Saturday, April 26, 2025 at 10:00 AM at the Mill Brook Open Space, for a guided hike with the Windsor Conservation Commission's naturalist, Brad Robinson. Discover the urban habitats in the heart of Windsor. For more information about the Conservation Commission, please visit www.townofwindsorct.com/sf/show/commission/6 or call 860-2385-1987.

Summer of 10,000 Flowers

Get ready to grow beautiful sunflowers while expanding your knowledge of Windsor's Plan of Conservation and Development. The "Summer of 10,000 Flowers" community engagement initiative will kick into high gear next week.

As the Planning Department continues to encourage residents to participate in the online survey and host community meetings over the coming months, residents are encouraged to plant sunflowers to **grow along** with the POCD process.

Seed packets will be available starting April 17th at various town facilities and local Windsor businesses including Jordan Florist, the Bean, Ace, Blue Dragonfly, Windsor Federal Savings and the Windsor Art Center. The Windsor Garden Club will have seeds available at their annual "Garden Mart" on the Eagle Green scheduled for May 10th.

Participants are encouraged to take photos of their sprouts and flowers and submit them to be included in a drawing for "Windsor swag" prizes. Learn more at plan.windsorct.com.

Questions? Call 860-285-1835

There's a lot to do in Windsor – Summer edition

The summer edition of *There's a lot to do in Windsor* will be available the week of April 21st at town facilities and will be delivered to residents together with the Hartford Courant inserts the week of April 21st.

Don't miss all the exciting programs and services available to Windsor residents this summer including swim lessons, community block parties, Shad Derby information and more.

Call 860-285-1835 for more information.



Windsor Police Cadets Spaghetti Supper

Come join the Windsor Police Cadets for their Annual Spaghetti Supper, to be held Saturday, April 26, 2025 at the Windsor Volunteer Fire Department, 340 Bloomfield Avenue, Windsor, CT from 4:30 PM to 7:00 PM. The event will be curbside pick-up only.

The cost of tickets are \$10.00 and must be purchased in advance. For advance tickets, contact Sergeant Bernard Petkis @ (860) 298-4322 or email him at petkis@townofwindsorct.com. Tickets will not be available at the door.

Earth Day Hike

Celebrate Earth Day with the Conservation Commission. Come join us on Saturday, April 26, 2025 at 10:00 AM at the Mill Brook Open Space, for a guided hike with the Windsor Conservation Commission's naturalist, Brad Robinson. Discover the urban habitats in the heart of Windsor. For more information about the Conservation Commission, please visit www.townofwindsorct.com/sf/show/commission/6 or call 860-2385-1987.

Shad Derby Trivia Contest

Share your knowledge and enter the Shad Derby Trivia Contest that will be held on Thursday, April 24th from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM at Back East Brewing Company, 1296 Blue Hills Avenue in Bloomfield. Teams of up to 6 members (age 21 and up only) can compete across five rounds of questions ranging from general knowledge, to Windsor History, to fish! Prizes will be awarded for contest winners, best team name, and more. For more information call 860-688-3813. To register go to <https://windsorhistoricalsociety.org/event/shad-derby-trivia-contest-2/>.

For more information on Shad Derby events go to www.windsorshadderby.org.

Veterans and Military Appreciation Day

The Greater Windsor Veterans Council and the Town of Windsor will be sponsoring its 3rd annual Veterans and Military Appreciation Day on Saturday, April 12, 2025 from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at L.P. Wilson, 599 Matianuck Avenue.

A primary purpose of this event is to connect veterans with valuable resources from the community. Organizations that will host a showcase table range from The Vet Center, to Veteran-specific outdoors clubs, to assistive technology, social services, and more. We will have a Touch-a-truck activity, bounce house, yard games, and face painting for the little ones, plus speakers at noon-time, free pizza, and dessert. Everyone is invited!

Deputy Mayor Klase stated that the Town Manager had put zoning and parking complaints in his Town Manager's report. There was a day in April that there would be a court hearing. Do you know which day that would be? Town Manager Souza stated he does not have that exact date but he believes it's towards the mid or tail end of this month.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked with the diversion of the summer construction that's going to happen on I-91, do you think we could do a Facebook or social media post for that to let folks know that there might be an increase in traffic. Town Manager Souza said that we will do that and the State of Connecticut is also putting out information about that as well.

Mayor Black Burke asked about the I-91 work. Would it be possible when we put it on Facebook and we link it to the State Department of Transportation, to do a reverse robocall to just let folks know that there might be some backup. Town Manager Souza said they will look into that. He doesn't believe it will be a full shut down of I-91 going northbound or southbound. As you know, we are conscientious of how we use our reverse 911 in our Everbridge program. We'll see if there is going to be a significant period of time during the summer where there's going to actually be significant lane closures.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked what is the date that it's supposedly supposed to start? Town Manager Souza said they are looking at preliminary work starting in a week or two, but they do not know if it's going to start in the Hartford exits or in Windsor.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – nothing to report.

Finance Committee – Councilor Naeem said the committee met last week to discuss open cash to help mitigate some of the impacts of revaluation and budget increases this year and took a look at projections for the next five years. Additionally, they had some more conversations around the depreciation schedules and impact of the newer state regulation that has come into play in terms of how motor vehicles are taxed.

Health and Safety Committee – Councilor Armstrong – nothing to report.

Joint Town Council/Board of Education Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase – nothing to report

Personnel Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase – nothing to report.

Mayor Black Burke stated with the addition of Councilor King to the Town Council, there have been shifts in the Town Council's standing committees. The committees seeing a change include:

- Finance Committee – Councilor King will be joining the Committee as a member with Councilor Naeem as Chair and Councilor Eleveld as a member
- Personnel Committee – Councilor King will be the Chair of the Committee with Councilors Naeem and Gluck Hoffman as members

- Town Improvements Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase will be Chair of the Committee with Councilors Armstrong and Pelkey as members

10) ORDINANCES - None

- a) Approve an ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5, TO ADOPT CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SECTION 12-81X TO PROVIDE PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT FOR LINE OF DUTY DEATH SURVIVING SPOUSE.”

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Neem that the reading into the minutes of the text of the ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5, TO ADOPT CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SECTION 12-81X TO PROVIDE PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT FOR LINE OF DUTY DEATH SURVIVING SPOUSE” is hereby waived, the full text of the ordinance having been distributed to each member of the Council and copies being made available to those persons attending this meeting; and that the full text of the ordinance be recorded with the minutes of this meeting.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Councilors Eleveld and Walker absent)

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey to approve an ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5, TO ADOPT CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SECTION 12-81X TO PROVIDE PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT FOR LINE OF DUTY DEATH SURVIVING SPOUSE.”

Town Manager Souza stated that CGS Section 12-81x enables the legislative body of a municipality to establish, by local ordinance, a program to abate all or a portion of the property taxes due with respect to real estate that is owned by the surviving spouse of a police officer, firefighter or emergency medical technician who has died during the course of the performance of such officer's, firefighter's or technician's duties, so long as it is also occupied as their principal residence.

The statute provides no further guidelines regarding the amount of the abatement. The Town Council could decide to establish an abatement program for a flat dollar tax benefit, or for a fixed percentage tax benefit. Several towns have adopted this local option including Southington, Berlin, and Groton along with a few others (see attached).

Staff researched eight municipalities who have adopted this local option and developed a proposed ordinance for review and discussion with the Finance Committee. Below are key highlights of the ordinance that is attached.

Councilor Naeem thanked Assistant Town Manager Colby for all his work on this ordinance and those at the Town Manager's office. We are one of 12 communities that will be bringing



this forward. This is reflective of how much it means for what our first responders are doing and how we can continue to honor them in the case of an unfortunate passing.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Councilors Eleveld and Walker absent)

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

12) NEW BUSINESS

a) Proposed Town Manager's Budget Presentation

Town Manager Souza gave an overview of the budget as follows:

The FY 26 overall proposed town and Board of Education expenditures are increasing 6.21% or \$8,906,630. The Board of Education (BOE) budget is proposed to increase 5.88% or \$4,961,780. The town operating portion of the budget, which consists of twelve service units, Windsor EMS, the Town Center Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) and Town Support for Education, is proposed to increase 6.08% or \$2,541,420. Fixed costs such as pension, health and liability insurance total an increase of over \$950,000.

Without increases to Windsor EMS and Town Center TIF district, the expenditure increase equals 5.2%. It is proposed to incrementally restore funding for cash funded capital projects and open space preservation in the amount of \$96,000.

Revenues

The proposed General Fund revenues total \$152,222,470. Of this amount, \$129,569,010 or 85% will come from the current levy, and non-tax revenues are anticipated to contribute \$22,653,460. State aid comprises approximately \$15.4 million of this amount.

We are expecting a modest decrease in interest income in FY 26 as compared to the FY 25 budgeted amount. Building permit revenues are proposed at \$850,000, which is predicated on a proposed increase in the building permit fee. The FY 26 Town Manager's budget proposal does not include any funding to come from the General Fund reserves, as per Town Council policy.

Tax Rate & Impact

The proposed budget, coupled with the grand list as affected by the second year of revaluation phase-in, as well as economic development growth, provides for a mill rate of 28.92 mills. This is a decrease of 4.6% from the FY 25 mill rate, but it not enough to counter the effects of the second year of phase-in and the associated increases in assessed values that many taxpayers will experience. The increase in assessed values, when combined with the overall grand list increase and the anticipated drop in the mill rate, will result in the majority of the tax increase to be related to revaluation, and to a lesser extent, due to the budget increase.

The proposed budget does not include use of General Fund reserves. If the Town Council elected to use \$2.0 million in reserve funds to mitigate the projected tax rate, the mill rate would be reduced to 28.47 mills.

FY 25 Update

The adopted FY 25 budget totals \$143,315,840. Projected revenues are expected to be approximately \$667,000 more than budgeted. General property tax collections are estimated to be \$534,000 over budget. State Aid is expected to come in over budget by \$422,000 and conveyance and vital statistics fees are expected to be \$190,000 more than budgeted. Most of our other revenue categories are relatively stable and are expected to come in slightly over or slightly under budget. Interest income is expected to come in under budget by \$370,000 due to interest rate reductions that were put forth by the Federal Reserve in the fall of 2024.

FY 25 expenditures are projected to be \$135,000 under budget. This will come mostly from vacancy savings in the Police and Public Works departments.

Town Manager Souza added the public will have opportunities to communicate to the Town Council throughout the month of April. However, there will be two formal opportunities on April 28th and April 30th at the beginning of each budget session meeting. The Council slated at this point to vote on the budget on April 30th and the recommended referendum date is the second Tuesday of May, which is May 13th this year.

Councilor Naeem asked the Town Manager when else does the public have opportunities to come out for any kind of public commentary on the budget. Town Manager Souza said the evenings of April 28th and April 30th are set dates and times. If I could add to that there's a whole host of information on the town's website where you can, if you're a commercial property owner or residential property owner, go and look how this proposed budget would potentially change your tax bill. You can look that up by address and be able to get a better understanding there. We also have what we call our 'build a budget' tool. Individuals can go there and be able to see how, if they wanted to reduce a department's budget, that would impact the specific department in terms of reductions. Everyone has to balance a budget using this tool. He and the Superintendent have also been invited by the League of Women Voters again this year to hold three different public informational meetings, and those will be in the 1st week of May on May 6th and May 7th.

Councilor Pelkey asked based on the Town Manager's budget what is the projected mill rate if we just adopted it right now? Town Manager Souza said at this point as proposed it would be 29.92 mills which is down from 30.2 mills.

b) Reapprove Fair Housing resolution and policy statement

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to approve the Fair Housing Resolution and Fair Housing Policy Statement as presented.

Patrick McMahon, Economic Development Director, gave an overview of the resolution and statement.

In accordance with federal regulations, the Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH) requires that Community Development Block Grant – Small Cities grantees promote fair housing practices. These practices include having the local governing body adopt a fair housing resolution.

The attached Fair Housing Resolution and Fair Housing Policy Statement state that the town will follow fair housing regulations and not discriminate against any protected classes in carrying out federal programs. The resolution and policy also designate the Town Manager or his/her representative to respond to fair housing complaints, provides contact information for same, and sets forth a complaint procedure.

There are opportunities both at the Commission for Human Rights and opportunities at the State level as well as the department of Housing and Urban Development HUD, where folks could first come to me, and then I potentially help them pass it on to those other entities. There is also a fair housing center in Hartford that helps on these types of issues.

The attached resolution and policy are the same as the Town council approved last year, and we do put these on the town's website for everybody to view.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Councilors Eleveld and Walker absent)

c) Presentation of Day Hill Corridor Planning Study

Patrick McMahon, Economic Development Director stated the Day Hill Corporate Area (DHCA) is comprised of approximately 3,000 acres of industrial and commercial zoned land stretching from Day Hill Road south to Bloomfield Avenue and from I-91 west to the Bloomfield town line. For decades the corridor has been an economic driver for the community, the region and the state generating investment, jobs and tax revenue. However, in recent years, dynamics such as work from home and shifting market forces have left an abundance of vacant office space. Also the amount of developable land in the DHCA has been diminished with large developments over the years. Residential development pressure is also turning to industrial land to satisfy demand. Given these dynamics, we retained Camoin Associates, an economic development consulting firm, to analyze the current land use and economic climate of the market area, as well as provide recommendations to sustain this area as an economic development generator for the community.

Camoin Associates conducted a high level analysis of the economic climate in the market area (supply/demand) for multifamily residential, assisted living, office, hotel, retail, and industrial (e.g., advanced manufacturing and warehouse and distribution) uses to determine what market sectors provided the best opportunities for new development. The study included significant community outreach including an open house format where attendees

were able to provide feedback on study topics; as well as two public information sessions focused on the market analysis and study findings and recommendations. A business roundtable and on-line survey were conducted, as well as stakeholder interviews with property owners, developers, utility providers and state economic development partner organizations. In developing study recommendations, Camoin considered many factors including land use compatibility, potential for job creation, economic/market feasibility and potential grand list generation.

We pursued a separate DHCA planning study from the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) to be responsive to private sector interest in a number of parcels for potential multifamily use, including vacant land parcels, as well as current office locations. Developers looking to construct multifamily projects have approached the Town Planning and Zoning Commission with conceptual plans for some of these properties but the parcels are not currently zoned for such use, nor comprehended for such use under the current POCD. The study confirmed that multifamily has high market potential and looked at potential locations in the area to site such projects.

The study also addressed the weak office sector market. Remote work has significantly impacted the office sector throughout the country and Windsor is not immune to that trend. Recent data shows a vacancy rate of 31% and 60% of office space in Day Hill is being marketing for lease or for sale. The underutilized office space has had a substantial fiscal impact to the town. Office valuations are based on the lease activity in each building. Increased vacancy reduces property valuations and thus tax generation. Reductions in office valuations had over a \$2M impact on tax revenues based on the recently completed revaluation. Recommendations for the redevelopment or adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized office product includes providing flexibility under land use regulations, as well as exploring financial incentives to bring projects to fruition.

There are approximately 700 acres of developable land remaining in the area after environmental constraints like wetlands and steep slopes are considered. Additional acreage could be available depending upon development scenarios for large campus sites such as The Hartford and Voya.

In order to pursue additional multifamily and mixed-used development, as well as potential adaptive reuse of office building properties, revisions to the future land use map as well as zoning regulations will be needed. The study will be presented to the Town Planning & Zoning Commission for its consideration and town staff will work in the coming months with the Commission on potential zoning regulation changes.

Mr. McMahon went over the statistics and highlights of the study.

Mr. McMahon stated for the next steps, they're going to be finalizing the report. And in the coming weeks he's hoping to have a final report for distribution to the Economic Development Commission, Town Planning & Zoning Commission and for the wider community in the near future. They'd want to present the findings to the Town Planning and Zoning Commission.

We're looking to do that likely at the May meeting, at least an introduction to this whole concept. As Town Manager Souza mentioned earlier, they're going to be the ones in the driver's seat relative to any zoning amendments or overlay districts that end up being created, and they have to be able to respond to the private sector interest that we already currently have.

Mr. McMahon added that they're going to be looking to pursue those zoning regulations and amendments to further the plan. There's a few different options to pursue financial tools to incentivize development. We do have an abatement policy that may need to be tweaked to encourage some of the things that we'd like to see. We do have a TIF policy that could potentially be brought into play. We can also take a look at those different State funding opportunities.

Mr. McMahon elaborated on what we can do about pre-development and how we can assist on some analysis of these buildings relative to design or appraisals to set these properties up for reuse, then ultimately incorporate some of these study findings in the plan of conservation and development.

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS - None

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

a) Minutes of the March 17, 2025 Public Hearing

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong, to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2025 Public Hearing as presented.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Councilors Eleveld and Walker absent)

b) Minutes of the March 17, 2025 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong, to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2025 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Councilors Eleveld and Walker absent)

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS - None

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

Mayor Black-Burke encouraged everyone to go to the town's website as it is full of information on the budget and other areas.



17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Armstrong, seconded by Councilor Gluck Hoffman, to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 p.m.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Councilors Eleveld and Walker absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Helene M. Albert
Recording Secretary