

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers
March 10, 2026
6:30 P.M.
RECORD OF VOTES AND MINUTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Autumn Allinson on video call, Samuel Carmody, Thomas Laffin, Jesse Reynolds, Bryan Rivard on video call, Melanie Rossacci, Craig Fishbein, Christina Tatta and Chairman Vincent F. Testa Jr. Mayor Vincent Cervoni, Comptroller Tim Sena, Town Attorney Geoffrey Einhorn and Town Clerk Kristen Panzo were also present.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Consent Agenda
 - 3a. Consider and approve Tax Refunds totaling \$45,800.53 (#835-#870) – Tax Dept.
 - 3b. Acceptance of donation from Roehm America LLC for the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to purchase operational equipment and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$6,222 to Revenue Account – Donations, Acct. #2502002-47152 and to Expense Account-Fire Dept. Program Expenditures, Acct. #25020150-58830 - TBD - Fire Dept.
 - 3c. Acceptance of donation from Roehm America LLC for the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to purchase operational equipment and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$1,500 to Revenue Account-Donations, Acct. #2502002-47152 and to Expense Account-Fire Dept. Program Expenditures, Acct. #25020150-58830-TBD – Fire Dept.
 - 3d. Acceptance of donation from Roehm America LLC to purchase Haz-Mat equipment and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$2,000 to Revenue Account-Donations, Acct. #2502002-47152 and to Expense Account-Fire Dept. Program Expenditures, Acct. #25020150-58830-TBD – Fire Dept.
 - 3e. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$150,000 – Fire Dept.

\$150,000	From: Regular Wages & Salaries	Acct. #10020150-51000
\$ 50,000	To: Overtime	Acct. #10020150-51400
\$ 100,000	To: Replacement Pay	Acct. #10020150-51500
 - 3f. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$2,500 from Software Support, Acct. #10020050-56718 to Mapping, Acct. #10020050-56796 – Police Dept.
 - 3g. Consider and approve reappointment of William Camelio to the Pension Commission for a term of six (6) years set to expire December 31, 2031 – Mayor

- 3h. Consider and approve correction of Chris Larocque's Zoning Board of Appeals Alternate appointment term expiration of January 27, 2031 to January 27, 2029 – Chairman Testa
- 3i. Consider and approve the use of the Parade Grounds on April 25, 2026 by the Wallingford 250 Committee for the Second Company Foot Guard annual Powder House Day re-enactment – Mayor
- 3j. Consider and approve a bid waiver for Creative Recreation of West Hartford for Playscape Equipment at Cook Hill, E.C. Stevens and Parker Farms Elementary Schools – Board of Education
- 3k. Acceptance of donation and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$125,000 to Rev-State Grant, Acct. #3223003-45114 and to Exp-Boathouse Study, Acct. #32280350-57000-TBD from Community Investment Act Technical Assistance Planning Grant from Connecticut Department of Housing to be used for a feasibility analysis of 320 Washington Street – Economic Development
- 3l. Consider and approve an agreement authorizing Mayor Vincent Cervoi to execute all necessary documents related to the grant award – Economic Development
- 3m. Consider and approve bid waiver for David Baker Associates as the highest ranked consultant in the Request for Proposal (RFP) Process – Economic Development
- 3n. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$90,000 from Contingency-Misc., Acct. #10019000-58820 to Overtime, Acct. #10030000-51400 – Public Works
- 3o. Acceptance of donation to the America250 Committee and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$12,500 to Rev-Donations-America250, Acct. #2505002-47152 and to Exp-America250, Acct. #25040150-58830-10245 – Mayor
- 3p. Approve Minutes of February 24, 2026 Regular Town Council Meeting.

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve Consent Agenda items 3a-3p as amended.

MADE BY: CARMODY

SECONDED BY: REYNOLDS

Everyone present was in favor.

4. **Items Removed from the Consent Agenda**

There were no items removed from the Consent Agenda.

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD-**

Bill Comerford discussed how at the last meeting he brought up the post tension concrete and the diagram, and he wanted to know if the diagram was followed. He wanted to know seeing how the Town Engineer was at the meeting if he could ask her to answer his question. He wanted to know if the diagram was followed or not. Chairman Testa stated that any questions should go through the department or through the Mayor's Office. There was a discussion as to whether the drawings or plans were followed when the basketball courts were installed.

Larry Kellogg thanked whomever in town who arranged the bridge in Yalesville to be cleared of snow.

Bill Comerford mentioned that State Rep Cicarella is applying for a State bond of \$3.5 million dollars for the Historic Railroad Station. He asked Mayor Cervoni about this and if he had taken him down there to see the building. Mayor Cervoni stated that he did not take him down there because he was not asked to. Mr. Comerford asked what the plan is for that building. Mayor Cervoni said he was not sure if the request is for \$3.5 million dollars from what he can remember. He mentioned that they are maintaining the exterior of the building. They would then look to make the interior space a white box or white space so that any potential tenant would have an opportunity to come up with their own use for the building. The Brother's parking lot was discussed and how bad it is.

6. Acceptance of Local Transportation Capital Improvements Program (LOTICIP) funds for the rehabilitation of the Tolles Road Bridge and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$3,466,503 to Revenue-State Grant (LOTICIP), Acct. #3213003-45114 and to Exp-Capital-LOTICIP, Acct. #32180350-570000-TBD – Engineering

MOTION WAS MADE TO accept the Local Transportation Capital Improvements Program funds for the rehabilitation of the Tolles Road Bridge and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$3,466,503 to Revenue-State Grant and to Exp- Capital- LOTICIP Acct. as requested by Engineering.

**MADE BY: CARMODY
SECONDED BY: REYNOLDS**

Alison Kapushinski, Town Engineer spoke about this project. She gave an overview of the project and where the bridge is located. The bridge is located over the Quinnipiac River. It is located directly next to the Route 15 overpass on Tilly's Road towards the Hartford Turnpike and South Turnpike side. The bridge was rated as poor during a recent inspection the CT Department of Transportation. The project has been designed and permitted already to replace the existing structure. The existing abutments will stay in place. The construction bid was awarded to Mckeme Construction for approximately \$2.8 million dollars. The work is anticipated to begin in April with Eversource relocating their gas main. The bridge will be fully closed during construction. If everything goes smoothly the plan is to have the bridge and road reopened by the wintertime. The project is fully funded by the State of Ct through LOTICIP (Local Transportation Capital Improvements Program). The State of CT sends the money first, so the town is receiving \$3,466,503. She said she is here today to ask for the appropriation of this money.

Councilor Reynolds asked if it is only the bridge that is getting paid for. He discussed the turn on Route 15 and how that whole section is a nightmare and should be addressed. He said that area is crowded on the weekends with the Flea Market and is dangerous. He did not know if this could be addressed in addition to reconstructing the bridge. Mrs. Kapushinski said that there will be a little bit of paving on each side of the bridge and the area that Councilor Reynolds was talking about is actually in North Haven.

Councilor Fishbein wanted to discuss the plan for this project and if the road would be opened and possibly a light be put up for traffic purposes. Mrs. Kapushinski said that the bridge will be fully closed during construction. Councilor Fishbein said that he was in favor of the project, he was just trying to figure out a way as to how the traffic would be rerouted due to the bridge being closed while the construction is taking place. There was a discussion as to the rerouting of the traffic. There will be a signed detour that people can follow. Councilor Fishbein asked if Oakdale would be notified of the bridge closure. They have some big events there and it would be problematic if they did not know about the bridge closure. Mrs. Kapushinski said they typically do a press release through the Police Department but can certainly notify Oakdale specifically.

Chairman Testa said he was actually thinking of the same thing with Oakdale. He said hopefully there will be a plan in place for the Police Department to look at this and make sure people are informed of the closure of the bridge.

ROLL CALL:

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: AYE

LAFFIN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

RIVARD: AYE

ROSSACCI: AYE

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: AYE

9- AYE

0-NAY

0-ASBENT

MOTION: PASSED

7. Consideration and possible action on the tax assessment agreement for 55 Kondracki Lane – Law Dept.

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve the Tax Assessment Agreement for 55 Kondracki Lane as presented by the Law Department.

MADE BY: CARMODY

SECONDED BY: REYNOLDS

Janis Small, Corporation Counsel said that she provided the Town Council with the proposed agreement. The agreement is for 66 affordable units up to 60% of the area median income. 100% of the units will be affordable. There will be a 40-year deed restriction. The tax assessment agreement is for 18 years. During construction it will be taxed as it normally would. The assessor will tax it during construction as a percentage. The assessed

value will be at \$3.3 million dollars held for the 18 years yet subject to whatever the yearly mill rate is. After the 18 years the normal taxation will start. They included a commitment of the owners to spend at least \$10 million dollars on the renovations. The timeline is for the work to start by January 31, 2027, and to be completed with a final CO in January of 2029. She discussed the memo that she gave to the Town Council. She discussed the local employment preferences. There cannot be a preference of local employment. She discussed the preferences when it comes to housing and what is allowed. The Connecticut Responsible Contracting Policy was discussed. She said that it does not apply under this program.

Councilor Reynolds had questions about the 60% and how it was going to work. He wanted to know given size of the units and the median percentage, does the numbers that were given still apply given the language of the contract that was discussed. Steve Caprio of Honeycomb Real Estate Partners discussed the breakdown of the median ad unit size.

Councilor Rossacci asked what the contractors would be responsible for when it came to the construction, seeing how the Connecticut Responsible Contracting Policy does not apply here. Mr. Caprio discussed what the contractors will do to follow the guidelines and make sure that the construction goes smoothly. He mentioned that the CHRO policy will be followed. An affirmative action plan will have to be filed with the state DOH and CHFA. They are responsible for all local and state guidelines as far as contracting and full bond on the property.

Councilor Tatta explained that she is not in favor of any tax abatements and why. She stated that she will not be supporting this item on the agenda tonight.

Councilor Fishbein wanted to discuss the unit breakdowns and how many units of each size there will be. Mr. Caprio stated that there will be 2 studio apartments at 50% AMI, 8 studio apartments at 60% AMI, 10 one-bedroom apartments at 50% AMI, 38 one-bedroom apartments at 60% AMI, 2 two-bedroom apartments at 50% AMI and 6 two-bedroom apartments at 60% AMI. Councilor Fishbein wanted to know why this isn't in the contract. Mr. Caprio said they would not have an issue with this information being in the contract. Corporation Counsel Small said it can be added to the contract as an attachment. Councilor Fishbein said that would be helpful. Lewis Brown of Honeycomb Real Estate said they do not mind putting this into the agreement. There will be the regulatory agreement on the land records. The regulatory agreement document was discussed. Councilor Fishbein asked what the status of the project was in regard to Planning & Zoning. Mr. Caprio said that the project was fully entitled prior and everything has been received by Planning & Zoning except for the building permit. There was a discussion as to whether there is a sidewalk in the area where the building is located and it was determined that yes, there is a sidewalk there. There was a discussion as to whether a traffic study was done.

The motion was amended to say:

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve the Tax Assessment Agreement for 55 Kondracki Lane and to include the housing schedule attachment to the contract.

MADE BY: CARMODY

SECONDED BY: REYNOLDS

Councilor Rossacci thinks that this affordable housing project is important for the town. The town is still growing its tax base. Without this tax abatement, the contractors would not be able to build and take on this project. There was a discussion as to what affordable housing is.

Councilor Rivard discussed and asked the possibility to have to contractors come up with some plan for the preference of local employment to be added. Mr. Caprio said that because fair housing does not allow local employment preference they have not done that before. There was a discussion on how people can become familiar with the affordable housing in town and how they can sign up for units. They will have a website built prior to the opening of the units. Four to five months prior to the opening they will put on their website the expected leasing dates and three months before the opening they will add the capability for people to start applying for the leasing of the units. It first comes first serve on the website.

Chairman Testa said that when they are ready for the website to open up for people to sign up for units that they let the Town Council know so that way they can start announcing this to the public that the website is up and running and ready for applicants.

Richard Partisano stated that he is an affordable housing advocate. He is also a taxpayer in town. There was a discussion about the tax abatement. Chairman Testa said it is a tax fixed abatement. The value of the property is going to be fixed. They are going to be taxed at the full mill rate at that value. For the 18 years it will not increase with property value increases. The cost benefit analysis was brought up. There was a discussion as to how the affordable housing would work. There was a discussion as to if this would increase the housing stock and increase revenue for the town. Councilor Rossacci went over the number. It would be \$1.43 million with the tax abatement and \$1.96 million without abatement. Over the 18 years with the deferred revenue, it would be about \$525,000 over the 18 years. Councilor Tatta stated that those numbers do not reflect if the mill rate goes down like it did this year. Those numbers are only reflective of the current mill rate.

Councilor Rivard stated that this will provide development for that property. After the 18 years is up, the property is back on the regular tax roll. This is providing an opportunity for people to live or stay in town that might otherwise not have if an affordable housing unit was not being built.

Bill Lennon His property abuts this facility. There was a discussion of how originally this project was supposed to be 71 units but got changed to 66 units. He mentions that he had no notice of this project until 20 minutes before this meeting started. His neighbor mentioned it to him. There was a discussion of what is going to happen to the neighbors of this facility, and they are worried about the traffic, bus stops, emergency vehicle access, etc. There was a discussion about the lack of communication and information about this project.

Chairman Testa said that they do not approve the project as a zoning board. They do not send out notices as to what is going to be voted on in their meetings besides sending out the agenda to the public. He mentioned that this project has been discussed at a couple of meetings and a proposal was voted on, so the information is out there. The council approves the money portion of a project.

Jeff Kohan, Vice Chair of Planning & Zoning spoke about the traffic study that was done and how there will be no impacts with traffic. His concern is that they approved this project for a different applicant originally. There was a discussion as to if this project should come back to Planning & Zoning for approval because of the new applicant. Mr. Caprio said that the change of the developers does not matter and that the project does not need to be reapproved. Corporation Counsel Small said that the commission would not know about the change in title

because it is after the approval. Per the State of CT, converting nursing homes into residential buildings cannot be denied.

Larry Kellogg asked what the estimated return over the 18 years is based on the abatement. Mr. brown stated that as developers they do not operate under that sort of return. They have an institutional investor who is a bank that is local and who takes the line share of the economics. The developers do not use an internal rate of return. There was a discussion as to the bank's rate of return and the fact that the developers are getting the money from the bank for this project. There was a discussion about how this project is funded and under what State Statutes and laws the developers have to follow. There was a discussion about how if rents go down the expenses still remain the same and they have to get paid even if the developers aren't making money in rents.

Councilor Fishbein asked about the fixed assessment period and when the 18 years start. Corporation Counsel Small stated that it starts with the first grand list following the issuance of the final CO. It will not be done mid tax year. There was a discussion about the grand list. There was a discussion about fair market value and assessed value properties.

ROLL CALL:

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: NAY

LAFFIN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

RIVARD: AYE

ROSSACCI: AYE

TATTA: NAY

TESTA: AYE

7- AYE

2-NAY

0-ASBENT

MOTION: PASSED

8. Consider and approve a bid waiver to authorize an agreement with Revise Software Systems for the comprehensive redesign and modernization of the Town of Wallingford's website – Mayor

MOTION WAS MADE TO a bid waiver to authorize an agreement with Revise Software Systems for the comprehensive redesign and modernization of the Town of Wallingford's website

MADE BY: CARMODY

SECONDED BY: REYNOLDS

Don Crouch, Economic Development Specialist spoke about the bid waiver for Revise Software Systems. He explained how we need a better website that will adhere to ADA compliance. He gave an oversite of the research that was done and how they picked this company.

Mayor Cervoni stated that they had ADA requirements to follow and comply with Federal Law. He thanked Mr.

Crouch and asked the council to look favorable on the request.

There was a brief discussion amongst the councilors about the process of this bid waiver and why it did not go out to bid instead. Timing was an issue as to why it did not go out to bid Mr. Crouch stated. He explained why he wants to go with Revise Software Systems and not the other companies. There was a discussion about the ADA compliance factor and why that was important. There was a discussion as to whether the current company was reached out to and asked if they were explained to how the town website had to be updated and if they can in fact, meet the new criteria. There was a discussion as to why the same vendor cannot be used and why the town wants to switch to a different vendor, if they have been working with the same vendor for over 20 years.

ROLL CALL:

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: NAY

LAFFIN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

RIVARD: AYE

ROSSACCI: AYE

TATTA: NAY

TESTA: AYE

7- AYE

2-NAY

0-ASBENT

MOTION: PASSED

9. Presentation and Discussion of the "Fire and Emergency Services Department Strategic Risk Analysis"
– Chairman Testa

Eric Keith, Representative Consultant for Municipal Resources. He is part of the Fire Services Division of that consulting group. He mentioned that on video call is Brian Dougen, Fire Services Director and Don Bliss.

Mr. Keith went over a power point presentation of the Fire and Emergency Services Department Strategic Risk Analysis Study that was done on behalf of the Town Council asking for this to be done. There had been some issues in administration and cultural issues that needed to be addressed and where not until after this study was done.

There was a brief discussion amongst the councilors as to what the cultural issues were and some councilors where not aware of these issues beforehand. There was a discussion as to how the services that the Fire Department and Emergency Services Department provide are outstanding. It is just a lack in leadership that was the issue before Chief James Buck was hired as the new Chief. There was a discussion about how leadership and the administration and cultural issues have gone away since Chief Buck was hired. The general consensus was that everyone was pleased with the study for the most part. Fire Marshall Shock would have liked to see more about the cultural aspect in the report that was done. Chief Buck stated just how bad the situation was when he first arrived and was hired as Chief.

10. Discussion of “Facilities Condition Assessments Report” – Councilor Rivard

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

11. Review and possible action on changing the Town Council Rules of Procedure – Councilor Allinson and Councilor Rossacci

Chairman Testa stated that some councilors wanted to take back what as voted on at the last meeting. He said that these are the council rules. There was a discussion as to having the language changed back to public comment being at the discretion of the chair instead of getting rid of it at workshops. Councilor Tatta had the idea of changing the language to say that at any workshop the public is allowed 20 minutes at the end for public comment.

MOTION WAS MADE TO say at any workshop 20 minutes of public comment will be had at the end of the meeting. The 20 minutes may be extended at the discretion of the Chair.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN

There was discussion about how for years the council did not use the workshops to their advantage. There was a discussion about getting rid of the workshops all together and just having meetings so that public comment will not be an issue then.

ROLL CALL:

ALLINSON: NAY

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: NAY

LAFFIN: NAY

REYNOLDS: AYE

RIVARD: AYE

ROSSACCI: AYE

TATTA: NAY

TESTA: AYE

7- AYE

2-NAY

0-ASBENT

MOTION: PASSED

The meeting was adjourned at 11:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Panzo
Town Clerk

Meeting digitally recorded

Vincent F. Testa, Jr. Chairman

Date

Kristen Panzo, Town Clerk

Date