

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers
May 6, 2025
6:30 P.M.
RECORD OF VOTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Thomas Laffin, Christina Tatta, Vincent Testa, Christopher Regan, Craig Fishbein, Autumn Allinson, Samuel Carmody, Jesse Reynolds and Chairman Joseph A. Marrone. Mayor Vincent Cervoni, Comptroller Tim Sena and Town Clerk Kristen Panzo were also present.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Discussion and possible action on amendments to the Town of Wallingford Budget for FY 2025-2026

Councilor Laffin and Councilor Regan presented a presentation to reduce the burden on the taxpayers and reduce costs.

There was a discussion on how money would be allocated for certain big-ticket items in the budget. An example of that would be the Public Works Vacuum Truck for \$600,000. There was a discussion on trying to figure out what would be the best way to pay for certain items going forward. The possibility of reauthorizing expenditures from the Mayor's Budget was discussed.

MOTION WAS MADE TO bond the full \$165,000 for IT Cap Ex Projects.

MADE BY: REYNOLDS

SECONDED BY: CARMODY

This motion was withdrawn.

There was a discussion on how money should be appropriate in the budget. There was a discussion on what items from the budget can and should be bonded. There was a discussion on recruiting new talent for jobs because of the presentation that was presented to the council. There was a discussion about cuts made to jobs to save money in the new fiscal year. A hiring freeze was discussed as a possible way to save money going forward. The Police Department salary was discussed. The collecting of taxes assuming that the Town of Wallingford is 100% staffed was discussed. The Fire Department positions were discussed. The salary line for departments was discussed.

There was a discussion on the contingency fund and how much it was for each year and how much was spent each year. There was a discussion as to eliminating the contingency fund all together. The amount of the contingency fund was discussed because this amount of money is taxed, and the residents' taxes reflexed the amount each year. The money in the Reserves Account was discussed. There was a discussion about the grand list and how to grow the town so the taxes can be lowered.

MOTION WAS MADE TO eliminate the contingency fund all together.
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: CARMODY

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: NAY
CARMODY: AYE
FISHBEIN: NAY
LAFFIN: NAY
REGAN: NAY
REYNOLDS: NAY
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: NAY
MARRONE: NAY
2- AYE
7-NAY
MOTION FAILED

The nonprofit and social services funding was discussed. There was a discussion on cutting back on services for some non-profit organizations. There was a discussion on certain organizations and how they need the money they asked for. An example would be the food pantries. The Boys and Girls Club was discussed. There was a discussion on a better way to get information from the nonprofit organizations and what type of information should be needed to receive larger amounts of money. The Town Council Budget Workshops were discussed and how they really were not utilized very well. The money that Columbus House asked for was discussed. They had asked for \$90,000. The shelter that they run in town was discussed.

There was a discussion on the upgrades to the town hall including the new technology and how possibly some of that can wait till the next fiscal year. Products that are shipped from other countries were discussed because of the increased tariffs for shipping products. There was a discussion about new technology to keep up with the times. The Town of Wallingford has not had any upgrades to technology in about 40 years. There was a discussion about possibly bonding the hardware for the technology upgrades. There was a discussion on what exactly can be bonded versus what should be paid in full.

There was a discussion about the Board of Education and what can possibly be cut to their budget. They make up 60% of the town's budget. There was a discussion in the decline of students each year. There was a discussion on cutting the mayor's proposed budget for the BOE. There was a discussion on how hard BOE worked this year to create a bare bones budget. There was a discussion on how the town should find ways to fund the BOE. There was a discussion on how much the BOE pays for each student and if the student population drops you should be paying less for each student. The discussion of students per classroom was discussed. The number of teachers was discussed. There was a discussion on how everyone in town needs to take a hit this year in their budget. There was a discussion on how certain grants are no longer available for the BOE to use. There was a discussion on changes in how the BOE is funded. There was a discussion on the Minimum Budget Requirement adjustment and how the BOE was not taking it each year.

**MOTION WAS MADE TO approve budget adjustments, with the adjustments on page 3 of the packet to eliminate the claw back provisions except for the pool which was amended to the \$900,000 and the police officers were put back in on page 4. Change the Clerk Typist II to the Account Clerk.
MADE BY: REGAN
SECONDED BY: LAFFIN**

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: NAY

CARMODY: NAY

FISHBEIN: NAY

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: NAY

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: NAY

MARRONE: AYE

4- AYE

5-NAY

MOTION FAILED

The bonding of project was discussed. The Cap N Non fund was discussed. The town wide paving project was discussed. The amount of money percentage wise that each department spends per fiscal year was discussed.

Councilor Reynolds presented his presentation to reduce costs for the town and for taxpayers.

There was a discussion on reducing contingency. There was a discussion on how this presentation would not cut anything from the budget. It would just reduce amounts.

**MOTION WAS MADE TO reduce the contingency by \$1.3 million
dollars down to \$500,000
MADE BY: REYNOLDS
SECONDED BY: TESTA**

There was a discussion on moving certain bonding items into the Cap N Non and move certain items to be able to bond them. There was a discussion about the increase in taxes and what causes that. There was a discussion on tabling this motion. There was a discussion on just eliminating the contingency line all together.

ROLL CALL

**ALLINSON: NAY
CARMODY: AYE
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: NAY
REGAN: NAY
REYNOLDS: AYE
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: AYE
MARRONE: AYE
6- AYE
3-NAY
MOTION PASSED**

There was a discussion on removing capital items from departments and bonding them instead or putting them into the Cap N Non account. The bonding of the computers was discussed. The software cost and how to fund it was discussed.

**MOTION WAS MADE TO BOND \$550,000 WHICH INCLUDES THE
DPW SNOW PLOW FOR \$300,000 AND THE SQUAD 8 FIRE TRUCK
FOR \$250,000
MADE BY: MARRONE
SECONDED BY: REYNOLDS**

Amend previous motion by Councilor Laffin to add everything on the list provided by Councilor Regan and Councilor Laffin to include DPW snowplow loader for \$35,000, DPW rotary brush cutter for \$15,000 DPW, automotive lift for \$35,000, DPW crew cab flatbed \$70,000, excluding the Asset Management System for \$40,000. \$705,000 of items to be recommended for bonding that were removed from departmental capital line items.

There was a discussion on what should be bonded. There was a discussion about the letter the council received from the mayor today. There was a discussion on certain amounts to cut from the budget and bond those amounts instead. There was a discussion on the police cameras and the cost of them.

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: NAY
CARMODY: AYE
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: AYE
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: AYE
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: AYE
MARRONE: AYE
8- AYE
1-NAY
MOTION PASSED

MOTION WAS MADE TO remove all the items list on page 2 of the packet provided by Councilor Regan and Councilor Laffin from the Cap an Non account with recommendation that they be bonded.

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: REGAN

Councilor Laffin withdrew this motion.

There was a discussion on how to bond these items or should they be capital items.
There was a discussion on what would happen if all the capital projects were bonded.
There was a discussion on using the remaining ARPA funds to pay for some of the capital projects now in the current budget.

MOTION WAS MADE TO add the Computer Replacement for \$165,000, the Police Cameras for \$182, 820 and the Police Cruisers for \$138,368. Being eliminated from the list on page 2 of the packet provided by Councilor Regan and Councilor Laffin is the Downtown Parking lot for \$80,000, 325 N Main Street for \$140,000, Library parking Lot for \$75,000 and the Lighting Upgrade at Doolittle Park for \$215,000.

MADE BY: REYNOLDS

SECONDED BY: TESTA

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: NAY
CARMODY: AYE
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: AYE
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: AYE
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: AYE
MARRONE: AYE
8- AYE

1-NAY
MOTION PASSED

There was a discussion on moving the \$923,131 from the pool to the general fund.
There was a discussion of this money being the \$1 million that went into the Cap N Non account.

MOTION WAS MADE TO return the \$923,131 from the community pool fund back to the general fund.

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: REGAN

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: NAY

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: AYE

MARRONE: AYE

8- AYE

1-NAY

MOTION PASSED

There was a discussion on what non profits to cut a bit.

MOTION WAS MADE TO cut the following non-profit and social services funding: America 250 for \$78,000, Center Street Cemetery for \$25,000, WCI capital streetscape improvement for \$50,000, WCI front façade improvement for \$25,000. WCI rear façade for \$25,000 and WCI restore to previous FY 25 levels for \$15,000.

MADE BY: MARRONE

SECONDED BY: TATTA

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: NAY

CARMODY: NAY

FISHBEIN: NAY

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: NAY

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: NAY

MARRONE: AYE

4- AYE

5-NAY

MOTION FAILED

MOTION WAS MADE TO remove the Government TV Manager position for \$83,347

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: REGAN

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: AYE

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: NAY

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: AYE

MARRONE: AYE

8- AYE

1-NAY

MOTION PASSED

There was a discusion on why this motin is needed for the Fire Department.

MOTION WAS MADE TO increase the revenue line 46010 Ambulance for \$200,000 and add \$200,000 to 51000 Fire Department Regular Salaries and Wages.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: REGAN

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: AYE

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: NAY

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: AYE

MARRONE: AYE

8- AYE

1-NAY

MOTION PASSED

There was a discussion about the left-over money that is always in this account. There was a discussion on raising taxes. The way the reserves money is spent was discussed. The increase in the reserves account was discussed.

MOTION WAS MADE TO use \$2,000,000 more from reserves to bring that line to \$11,000,000 from the mayor's proposed \$9,000,000.

**MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: REGAN**

ROLL CALL

**ALLINSON: NAY
CARMODY: NAY
FISHBEIN: NAY
LAFFIN: NAY
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: NAY
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: AYE
MARRONE: AYE
4- AYE
5-NAY
MOTION FAILED**

**MOTION WAS MADE TO
MADE BY: TESTA
SECONDED BY: MARRONE**

There was a voice vote, and everyone was in favor except for two councilors.

MOTION WAS MADE TO remove the \$5,000 from the Literacy Volunteers and the rest of the funds of \$6,000 and the police cars.

**MADE BY: LAFFIN
SECONDED BY: TATTA**

There was a voice vote, and everyone was in favor.

MOTION WAS MADE TO reduce the BOE budget by \$467,172 which coincides with their contingency.

**MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: MARRONE**

There was a discussion as to having every department in town take a hit this year in their budget.

ROLL CALL

**ALLINSON: NAY
CARMODY: NAY
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: AYE
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: NAY
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: NAY
MARRONE: AYE
5- AYE
4-NAY
MOTION PASSED**

MOTION WAS MADE TO take \$20,000 out of the contingency fund and assign it to a fund hereby willing to track all the FOI claims so we can reimburse the departments for their requests.

MADE BY: MARRONE

This motion was withdrawn.

MOTION WAS MADE TO remove the line item for the Youth and Social Services database software in the amount of \$29,450.

**MADE BY: REGAN
SECONDED BY: LAFFIN**

There was a discussion about the onboarding for this department and how important this item is to their budget.

ROLL CALL

**ALLINSON: NAY
CARMODY: NAY
FISHBEIN: NAY
LAFFIN: AYE
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: NAY
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: NAY
MARRONE: AYE
4- AYE
5-NAY
MOTION FAILED**

There was a discussion about giving the Columbus House the \$90,000 especially because of what happened last year with the shelter not being opened. How they spend their money was discussed.

MOTION WAS MADE TO allocate \$30,000 for Columbus House instead of the \$90,000.

**MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: MARRONE**

ROLL CALL

**ALLINSON: AYE
CARMODY: NAY
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: AYE
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: NAY
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: NAY
MARRONE: AYE**

6- AYE

3-NAY

MOTION PASSED

MOTION WAS MADE TO reduce the library's amount by \$150,000.

**MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN**

ROLL CALL

**ALLINSON: NAY
CARMODY: NAY
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: NAY
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: NAY
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: NAY
MARRONE: AYE**

4- AYE

5-NAY

MOTION FAILED

The meeting adjourned at 12:19 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Panzo
Town Clerk

Meeting digitally recorded

Joseph A. Marrone III, Chairman

Date

Kristen Panzo, Town Clerk

Date