

**TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers

May 27, 2025

6:30 P.M.

RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 27, 2025, was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Thomas Laffin, Christina Tatta, Samuel Carmody, Vincent Testa, Autumn Allinson, Christopher Regan, Jesse Reynolds, and Chairman Joseph A. Marrone. Mayor Vincent Cervoni, Town Attorney Gerald E. Farrell Sr., Comptroller Tim Sena and Town Clerk Kristen Panzo were also present. Councilor Fishbein was absent.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Consent Agenda
 - 3a. Consider and approve Tax Refunds totaling \$3,139.77 (#1005-#1014) – Tax Dept.
 - 3b. Acceptance of Overtime Reimbursement of Federal Taskforce Funds and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$1,831 to Misc. Revenue, Acct. #1009052-47040 and to Police Overtime, Acct. #10020050-51400 – Police Dept.
 - 3c. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$114,000 – Police Dept.

\$80,000	From: Overtime	Acct. #10020050-51400
\$34,000	From: Wage Differential	Acct. #10020050-51450
\$114,000	To: Capital-Radios	Acct. #10020050-57000-TBD
 - 3d. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$32,650 – Police Dept.

\$25,000	From: Maintenance of Equipment	Acct. #10020050-54325
\$ 7,650	From: Other Pay	Acct. #10020050-51900
\$32,650	To: Capital-K9's	Acct. #10020050-57000-TBD
 - 3e. Acceptance of donation and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$100 to Revenue, Acct. #2134002-47152 and to Expenditures, Acct. #21340100-58830 – Y&SS
 - 3f. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$2,500 from Professional Services-Employee Exams, Acct. #10012000-56728 and to Overtime, Acct. #10012000-51400 – Human Resources

- 3g. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$185,400 from Exp-Contingency-Accrued Exp., Acct. #10019000-58821 to the following: /Finance Dept.

<u>DEPT.</u>	<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
IT	10010300-51000	\$8,400
Mayor	10010150-51000	1,000
Law	10010300-51000	3,500
Comptroller	10010400-51000	61,400
Town Clerk	10010650-51000	2,000
P&Z	10010700-51000	5,000
Inland/Wetlands	10011000-51000	11,000
Economic Dev.	10011050-51000	5,200
PUC	10011150-51000	9,400
HR	10012000-51000	32,000
Animal Control	10020100-51000	1,500
Fire	10020150-51400	25,000
Engineering	10030050-51400	14,000
Health	10040050-51000	6,000
Total		\$185,400

- 3h. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$5,000 from General Plant-Stores Equipment, Acct. #392 to General Plant-Communications Equipment, Acct. #397 – Electric Div.
- 3i. Consider and approve FY 2024-2025 Budget Amendment and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$30,000 to Interest & Dividend Income, Acct. #4190 to Other Interest Expense, Acct. #431 – Electric Div.
- 3j. Consider and approve FY 2024-2025 Budget Amendment and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$120,000 from Cash, Acct. # N/A to Liability Insurance, Acct. #43100925 – Water Div.
- 3k. Consider and approve Merit Review Board (2) – Human Resources
- 3l. Consider and approve a Resolution authorizing Mayor Vincent Cervoni to deliver to the State of Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection any and all documents deemed to be necessary or appropriate – Fire Dept.

- 3m. Consider and approve the appointment of CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen LLP) as the Town's Independent Auditor for the 2024-2025 Audit, 2025-2026 Audit and 2026-2027 Audit per the results of Public Bid 24-125 – Chairman Marrone
- 3n. Approve Minutes of April 28, 2025 Special Town Council Meeting, May 6, 2025 Special Town Council Meeting and May 13, 2025 Regular Town Council Meeting.

MOTION WAS MADE to approve Consent items 3a-3m.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: REGAN

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR

4. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

Item 3n was withdrawn from the agenda by Vice Chair Tatta.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD-

Anne Marie of Mansion Road spoke about Girl Scout Troop 60262 who were present to speak about the Community Pool Project. They are high school freshmen who are in support of bringing back the Community Pool Project.

Patricia Corbett of North Main Street also spoke about her support for the Community Pool Project. She stated that she is here to speak on behalf of a lot of the seniors in town who loved the pool when it was in use.

Mayor Cervoni referred to an article that was published, stating that Wallingford was the #1 town in New England to retire to.

6. Discussion of old business – Chairman Marrone

(a) Update on Hidden Brook Lane

Attorney Farrell stated that Corporation Council Small noted that the appeal period has not yet run and she is working on it.

7. Discussion and possible action regarding Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement between Town of Wallingford and IAFF, Local 1326 from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028 – Human Resources

Jim Hutt Human Resources Director and James Buck Fire Chief were present to speak on this Matter.

Mr. Hutt explained the changes to the contract.

Vice Chair Tatta asked if the union had voted on this contract and wanted to know the vote total.

Mr. Hutt stated that the voting was unanimous.

Councilor Laffin stated because of the exceptional job of the fire department and to follow suit he will make a motion.

**MOTION WAS MADE to accept the Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement
Between the Town of Wallingford and IAFF, Local 1326.**

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: CARMODY

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: ABSENT

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: AYE

MARRONE: AYE

8- AYE

0-NAY

1-ASBENT

MOTION: PASSED

8. Consider and approve an Appropriation of ARPA funds in the amount of \$987,820 - Mayor

(a)	\$350,000	To: Rev-ARPA	Acct. #1001002-45134
	\$350,000	To: Exp-Fire-Squad 8	Acct. #10020150-57000-TBD
(b)	\$182,820	To: Rev.-ARPA	Acct. #1001002-45134
	\$182,820	To: Exp.-Pol-Cameras	Acct. #10020050-57000-TBD
(c)	\$455,000	To: Rev-ARPA	Acct. #1001002-45134
	\$35,000	To: Exp-PW-Snowplow	Acct. #10030000-57000-TBD
	\$15,000	To: Exp-PW-Brush Cutter	Acct. #10030000-57000-TBD
	\$35,000	To: Exp-PW-Auto Lift	Acct. #10030000-57000-TBD
	\$70,000	To: Exp-PW-Crewcab Flatbed Truck	Acct. #10030000-57000-TBD
	\$300,000	To: Exp-PW-Class Plow/Dump Truck	Acct. #10030000-57000-TBD

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve an Appropriation of ARPA funds in the amount Of \$987,820, \$350,000 to Revenue ARPA, \$350,000 to Expense Fire Squad 8, \$182,820 to Revenue ARPA, \$182,820 to Expense Police Cameras, \$455,000 to Revenue APRA, \$35,000 to Expense Public Works Snowplow, \$15,000 to Expense Public Works Brush Cutter, \$35,000 to Expense Public Works Auto Lift, \$70,000 To Public Works Crewcab Flatbed Truck and \$300,000 to Expense Public Works Class Plow/Dump Truck.
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: LAFFIN**

Chairman Marrone wanted Mayor Cervoni to clarify that these were the items removed from the budget with the intent of spending ARPA money on them.

Mayor Cervoni stated that the council had proposed moving some of those to the Cap N Non-Fund and move some of those to propose bonding of some items. He said instead they have the ARPA money that can be used to pay for these items.

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

9. Discussion and possible action to consider the Community Pool Project – Parks & Recreation

Kenny Michaels Director of Parks and Recreation spoke about the bid waiver the Town of Wallingford received for \$9.3 million dollars. He went into detail what the town would get for that money.

**MOTION WAS MADE to accept the lowest bid presented in their backup.
MADE BY: MARRONE
SECONDED BY: CARMODY**

Mr. Michaels explained that they reopened the bidding for the Community Pool Project. There was a bid for the Community Pool Project back in 2020 that did not go forward due to COVID at that time. He stated that there was a construction analysis done during the summer. Benton Construction was the lowest bid, coming in at \$9.3 million. They were also the lowest bid in 2020. It is an eye sore from a town and an amenity standpoint he stated. If the bid gets approved it will make that Community Pool a four-season destination, where people can use the park throughout the year if the weather is permitted. There will be a pavilion, a playground, the pool, a splash pad in that area that again weather permitting people will be able to use most of these amenities most of the year. Swimming lessons can happen again along with a camp destination, if this project goes through. The pool will shrink but will still accommodate the 4 lap lanes. He suggested removing the sand volleyball court.

Councilor Testa asked if the Park & Rec Commission is on board with this proposal. Mr. Micheals said he believes they will follow suit and agree. They are in support of the project. Councilor Testa is also in agreement with removing the sand volleyball court. He asked what the council can do this evening.

Chairman Marrone stated that the council is being asked to potentially vote on moving forward with the project. The bond council would then draft up the bond. They want to give some ideas to the developer, whether the project is moving forward or not.

Councilor Regan asked what the annual cost is to maintain this facility. Mr. Michaels stated that they have not gotten the updated numbers yet. He said there would be a reduction in the chemical cost to maintain the pool because the pool is smaller. He does not have today's numbers. He also stated that they would have to figure out staffing hours, especially if there will be extended hours during peak season. He did mention that the lifeguards would be down to eight. The splash pad does not need supervision. In the past there were 12 lifeguards total. The maximum number of people that can be in the park was asked. Mr. Michaels would have to find out that information. Security was asked about if there is a large party. Mr. Michaels stated that it would not be necessary for that. The cost of passes for the Community Pool was discussed. Mr. Michaels stated that the information was not in the bid specs. With the updated technology there is the ability to do day passes and so forth. The removal and clearing of the site were asked if it was included in the bid. Mr. Michaels stated he believed it was included.

Chairman Marrone asked if there was a prior discussion as to what the demolition cost was going to be.

Mayor Cervoni stated that he thought it was in the seven-figure range.

Councilor Allinson is concerned about approving this item and then not funding it because of the budget they have just passed. She is concerned about the cost of this project. She asked what the staffing would look like if given a long outdoor season because of the splash pad and other amenities being added. Mr. Michaels stated that the splash pad can be unsupervised. The only cost for that would be the opening prep and closing of the splash pad daily. She asked if the lifeguards would be college and high school kids like they used to be in the past. Mr. Michaels stated that they would be open to anything. The lifeguard market is tough. The pool would be staffed like it was in the past. Weekends from Memorial Day to weekends to Labor Day. They would have to get creative and see what would work if they were going to possibly do extended hours.

Councilor Laffin just wanted to thank the Girl Scout Troop 60262 for their letter.

Vice Chair Tatta asked if the council wanted to remove items before awarding the bid, does that need to be done at tonight's meeting. Mr. Michaels stated that they are add on options. Mayor Cervoni stated that if it gets to the meeting where they must fund the bond and it is not fully funded, then the project cannot get done without fully funding the bond. He does not see why they cannot reduce the size of the project at the bond meeting.

MOTION WAS MADE to remove the sand volleyball court.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: MARRONE

Vice Chair Tatta stated that she wanted the cost of the demolition before voting to accept this bid. She discussed the cost of renovation of the existing pool compared to removing it and rebuilding it. She wanted to have the two amounts so she could compare and make the best decision. Who will maintaining this project was discussed. Mr. Michaels stated that the maintenance will be provided by the Park & Rec. The chemical contract might be outsourced he said. They have done that in the past. The possibility of extended hours was discussed. She asked Mayor Cervoni if the bid was accepted, is it his intend to move forward with the project. In the past the previous mayor did not move forward with the pool project. Mayor Cervoni stated that something must be done with the park. If the council does not move forward with the bid, then another idea needs to be presented. The park cannot stay like it is anymore. She does not think the timing of this is great with the budget that was just passed and taxes going gup as much as they are.

Councilor Reynolds stated he is in favor of the project and thinks something needs to be done in that area of town. He stated that the cost has gone up since last time a bid came before the council in 2020. The cost will keep going up and a decision needs to be made about what to do. He thinks the bonding of this project, the town will be able to absorb some of it over time. This project is a good way for families who don't have pools and can't afford vacations to spend time with their children during the summer.

Councilor Testa mentioned that this year it is difficult to implement a project like this due to the high tax increase in town. He talked about why the taxes are so high in town. He stated it was partly due to not having any new business coming into town. This project will make the community attractive to people and companies trying to move into town.

Councilor Carmody asked if this will be a 20-year bond. Mr. Sena stated that it will be. Councilor asked about the interest rate and what it will be. Mr. Sena stated that it should be 3.5%. Councilor stated that in 2015, the Parks & Rec Department and the Parks & Rec Commission came to the council stating that the pool needed to be repaired and updated to continue future use. They came back to the council in 2017 and 2018 with recommendations of what needed to be done. The last season the pool was used was in the summer of 2019. In 2020, the council voted on a \$7.4 million plan to renovate the pool area. That project never moved ahead. Five years later it will cost \$9.3 million to renovate the pool area. The price and time of this project is not ideal.

Chairman Marrone mentioned that originally this was not a council or administration idea. The idea came from a commission that was appointed to figure out what to do with the pool and then present it to the council for approval. Parks & Rec has a core function for the town. They maintain the parks around town, so this park where the pool is must need something done to it going forward. It needs to stop being neglected. If the new pool project doesn't go through, the council is back at square one with having to find something to do with that park moving forward.

Councilor Regan likes the idea of the pool. He is not in favor of not having all the information about what things cost before having to vote on this project.

Councilor Laffin mentioned that pool Wallingford has now has one million gallons of water. It is the largest zero depth entry pool, cement pond in the entire country. Mr. Michaels stated that

it is not an actual pool. It is considered an impoundment. Councilor stated that there are unknowns. The unknowns are what keep the council from making decisions and moving forward on projects.

Vice Chair Tatta stated that she does not like making decisions without having all the information. She would have an easier time voting yes if she had all the information presented in the bid.

MOTION WAS MADE to table this till the next regular council meeting in anticipation of the requested information.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: REGAN

Councilor Testa questioned whether the objection is to have a pool at all and not the maintenance. He stated the questions of chemicals, staffing etc. are operational costs that come with running a pool. He has questions about this pool design also. The changing of the design of the pool was discussed. He is ok with moving forward if that is what is voted on.

Councilor Allinson does not think this is a good investment. She stated an example where the council voted to approve something without having all of the information available. She said Mr. Michaels pointed out that the pool will be smaller than the pool they have now, so the council should assume the maintenance costs and staffing are the same until the numbers are given. She said they have tabled this item for seven years and a decision needs to be made.

Councilor Laffin thinks that the council can vote and then negotiate at the bond meeting.

Mr. Michaels stated that in the previous presentation in 2020, there were no maintenance costs presented and there was a vote taken twice.

ROLL CALL TO TABLE ITEM #9

ALLINSON: NAY

CARMODY: NAY

FISHBEIN: ABSENT

LAFFIN: NAY

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: NAY

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: NAY

MARRONE: NAY

2- AYE

6-NAY

1-ASBENT

MOTION: FAILED

Ray Ross of Center Street spoke about how the pool was originally built. He said a hole was dug and the water came into the pool and out the other end. The pool will go from 40,000 square feet to 13,000 square feet. He wanted to know if there would be a wading pool for the kids who do not want to go into the pool. Mr. Michaels stated that there will be about 180-degree zero entry part

of the pool for people who do not want to go into the pool. It will be like what the pool has now.

Leslie Williams of Woodhouse Avenue agrees the timing is bad for this project but at the same time they will be getting something for those taxes. She said many of the surrounding towns have community pools that are in use for the public to use. She stated the town needs this.

ROLL CALL ON THE AMENDMENT

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: ABSENT

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: NAY

REYNOLDS: AYE

TATTA: NAY

TESTA: AYE

MARRONE: AYE

6- AYE

2-NAY

1-ASBENT

MOTION: PASSED

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Panzo
Town Clerk

Meeting digitally recorded

Joseph A. Marrone III, Chairman

Date

Kristen Panzo, Town Clerk

Date