

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 8-12-25
AT 2:16pm AND RECEIVED BY
Kristen Panzo TOWN CLERK

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers

July 8, 2025

6:30 P.M.

AMENDED RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Thomas Laffin, Craig Fishbein, Christina Tatta, Samuel Carmody, Autumn Allinson, Jesse Reynolds, Christopher Regan (phoned in), Vicent Testa and Chairman Joseph A. Marrone. Mayor Vincent Cervoni, Town Attorney Gearld Farrell Sr., Comptroller Tim Sena 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 \$567.60 (#1-#5) – Tax Dept.

3b. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$50,921 from the Estate of Clifford M. Minyard to Wallingford Animal Control – Animal Control

3c. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$2,550 – Finance

\$2,550	From: Contingency – Accrued Expenses	Acct. #10019000-58821
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\$ 850	To: Exp.- Town Clerk - Wages	Acct. #10010650-51000
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200	To: Exp.- P&Z - Wages	Acct. #10010700-51000
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700	To: Exp.- ECD - Wages	Acct. #10011050-51000
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800	To: Exp.- Health - Wages	Acct. #10040050-51000
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3d. Acceptance of donation from Dag Hammarskjold to the K-9 Program and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$25 to Revenue Donations – Police, Acct. #2502002-47152 and to Expense Donations – Police, Acct. #25020050-58830-10127 – Police Dept.

3e. Acceptance of State Department of Aging & Disability Services Steps to Safety grant and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$5,000 to Revenue Account-Grants, Fund 250 and to Expense Account - Misc. Grants/Donations/Fire Department, Fund 250 – Fire Dept.

3f. Acceptance of donation from Live Nation for Twilight Tunes 2025 and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$10,000 to Revenue, Acct. #1009052-47040 and to PS-Entertainment, Acct. #10050050-56746 – Parks & Recreation Dept.

- 3g. Consider and approve bid waiver request for Construction Administration Services provided by TLBA Architecture – Parks & Recreation

- 3h. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$12,421- Mayor

\$12,421 From: Contingency-Misc. Expenses Acct. #10019000-58820

7,349 To: Exp. - Town Clerk - Capital Cameras Acct. #10010650-57000-TBD

5,072 To: Exp. - Town Clerk - PS Software Acct. #10010650-56718
Support

- 3i. Approve Minutes of June 24, 2025 Regular Town Council Meeting.

- 3j. Acceptance of donation from the Minyard Family Trust and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$25,460 to Revenue Account – Donations, Acct. #250-TBD and to Revenue Account Fire Department Program Expenditures, Acct. #25020150-58830-TBD – Fire Dept.

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve Consent items 3a, 3c-3j.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR

4. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

- 3b. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$50,921 from the Estate of Clifford M. Minyard to Wallingford Animal Control – Animal Control

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve a donation in the amount of \$50,921 from the Estate of Clifford M. Minyard to the Wallingford Animal Control.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: LAFFIN

Councilor Fishbein discussed another large donation that Wallingford Animal Control received during the last term. He explained at that time, he had asked what the intention was with that money and how it would be spent. It was stated that after the election, when Mayor Cervoni becomes mayor, there was going to be a discussion about how this money would be spent. He wants to know how much money is in the Wallingford Animal Control Trust Fund, what the intention for the money is and so forth.

Mayor Cervoni stated that Mr. Gibbs, the Animal Control Officer, was present to answer questions.

Councilor Fishbein stated that the Wallingford Animal Control Trust Fund has been a conversation among the Council for 25 years or so. He knew at times there was certain amounts of money that were donated with

restrictions on how and what money can be spent on. He stated that the money being donated tonight has no restrictions on it. He asked if the town is segregating the restricted funds from the non-restricted funds.

Mr. Gibbs stated that he did not know if the donations are being separated by restrictions or not.

Mr. Sena stated that once the Town of Wallingford sees the will, he will be able to segregate this donation since there are no restrictions.

Councilor Fishbein asked if this is the first time the Town of Wallingford has gotten a donation without the restrictions on the funds.

Mr. Sena stated that as far as he knows yes, this is the first time the Town of Wallingford has received a donation with no restrictions on the funds.

Councilor Fishbein stated that was his understanding historically. He wanted to know how much money is in the fund.

Mr. Sena stated that the June statement did not come in yet from Finance so as of May 31st there is \$821,000 in the fund.

Councilor Fishbein asked if all that money is restricted.

Mr. Sena stated that yes, all that money in the fund is restricted.

Councilor Fishbein stated that there was a discussion about a year and a half ago as to the vision of how this money can be used.

Mr. Gibbs stated that there are several projects in the work since he was present at the last meeting when the large donation was on the council agenda. He stated they used a little over \$30,000 to do a serious upgrade to the cat housing facility. There are other projects he would like to use this money for soon. He would like to do sound buffering for the dog kennels to elevate some of the sounds for the dogs. The kennels have high pitched ceilings, so noise tends to echo and cause the dogs stress.

Councilor Fishbein said he appreciates the update. He wants Mr. Gibbs to communicate with the council the projects he is doing with the donation money so that they can stay informed. He mentioned that the Fire Department has a donation on this agenda from the same estate and they sent a letter in the backup stating what that donation money will be used for. He also stated that he is aware that some of the restricted funds are used when an animal is injured and comes into the care of the Animal Shelter.

Mr. Gibbs stated that they have a cat with two fractures in it's leg and the cat needed a specialist to repair the fractures and that \$3,500 of that restricted money will go to that surgery.

Councilor Fishbein asked how much Mr. Gibbs thinks was spent by the trust last year.

Mr. Gibbs stated that he does not have that number. He would have to look at the numbers. He does not have a figure off the top of his head.

Councilor Fishbein asked is Mr. Sena knows if the Town of Wallingford is investing the money.

Mr. Sena stated that the money does get invested and the Treasurer oversees that. He mentioned when this fund was established, the Town Council would approve the donations, and the mayor would approve the projects. That is how the money gets spent.

Councilor Fishbein asked if it is the Treasurer is the one who determines what to invest in.

Mr. Sena stated that the town must follow State of CT statutes. He mentioned that there is another trust, and they never gave Finance the money. The Animal Control holds that money and every quarter the invested money goes into this trust balance.

Councilor Fishbein stated that at one point, the council signed off allowing the mayor to sign off on the utilization of the money. He asked about the investment of the money. He thought it would come to the council for some sort of approval.

Mr. Sena stated that the investment of the funds falls under the Comptroller's Office, which the Treasurer reports to him.

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

5. PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD-

Jack Arrigoni of Martin Trail spoke about how Martin Trail is a half mile south of a certain data center. He talked about the low frequency from that data center being a real concern to the residents who live on Martin Trail. He mentioned sending a detailed letter to the Ordinance Committee earlier this year. He gave the council highlights of the letter he had sent. He described what low frequency noise is. He stated it is a low hum or vibration that amplifies other sounds around the frequency. He discussed the Planning and Zoning Regulations for the data center. The hum or rumble will be mitigated by the design of the data center. The site must be continually monitored, and violations be reported. He stated that the Wallingford Noise Ordinance does not monitor the hum or rumbling but does state that people should be insured of environment free of excess noise and vibration. He asked if this item can be added to an Ordinance Committee meeting.

Chairman Marrone stated that he is familiar with this topic and had spoke to Mr. Arrigoni about this before. He stated that low frequency noise is much harder to measure than high frequency noise. He mentioned that anyone from the Town Council can add this item to an Ordinance Committee agenda. He stated that Mr. Arrigoni can check on the website to see if this item has been added to an Ordinance Committee agenda. He can also reach out to any member of the Town Council and ask if any of them are willing to move this item forward.

6. Discussion of old business – Chairman Marrone

(a) Update on Hidden Brook Lane

Attorney Farrell stated that the Law Department has sent out letters to the property owners on the street, where easements are needed by the town. Corporation Council Small is in discussion with some of the property owners. He stated that the developer should have obtained these easements but did not. Hopefully the property

owners will be cooperative, and they can move forward to get Hidden Brook Lane as an accepted public street. The town did call the bond. It was a cash bond, so the town does have the money at this point.

7. Consider and approve a bid waiver request for software upgrade services provided by N. Harris Computer Corporation (Advanced Utility Systems) – Public Utilities

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve a bid waiver request for software services provided by N. Harris Computer Corporation (Advanced Utility Systems) for Public Utilities.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: LAFFIN

Jack Arborio, General Manager for the Electric Division, was present to answer questions.

Mr. Arborio stated that this is not a new bid waiver. This bid waiver has been in place since 2008. In addition to the estimated cost per year on the bid waiver, which is set at \$65,000, they are looking at the additional expenditure for the software upgrade is looking to be around \$715,606. The utilities have funding currently for these upgrades. They are looking to add this added cost to the bid waiver.

Councilor Fishbein asked where this money came from.

Mr. Arborio stated that the money is coming from the Utilities budgets.

Councilor Fishbein asked if they are coming from the Utilities budgets collectively.

Mr. Arborio stated yes, collectively. He stated over two fiscal years; the Electric Division has entered \$300,000 for each fiscal year. The Water and Sewer Division has a total of \$300,000 for two fiscal years as well, totaling \$1.2 million. The cost is looking in the \$715,000 range.

Councilor Fishbein discussed the letter that was given as backup. He thought there was a projected increase of \$65,000 in the bid waiver.

Mr. Arborio stated that the bid waiver estimated expenditure was \$65,000. Because they need to upgrade the software because they are two versions behind. Through conversations with the Purchasing Department it was felt that this request for \$715,606 comes in front of the Town Council because it is a difference in the expenditure amount.

Councilor Fishbein asked for further clarification. He wanted to know how much they have.

Mr. Arborio stated that they have the budget to perform the necessary upgrades. Currently in the bid waiver document there is an estimated spend each year he stated. It is not a budget, it is an estimate of each vendor on the bid waiver and what the cost will be. That was estimated to be \$65,000. Because they are electing to move forward with the upgrades, that will cost \$715,606.

Councilor Fishbein stated that the Electric Division has gotten the Town Council to approve spending the \$65,000 already but know they are asking to spend \$715,606 because of the upgrades.

Mr. Arborio stated that is correct and it is currently budgeted for that. It is a line item in all the Utilities Budget. He stated this money is not an ask, it is a change in the language of the bid waiver.

Mr. Sena stated that they are just trying to clarify so the Town Council knows what is going on. The original bid waiver cost was the normal price, where every year you pay maintenance. Not only are they doing the maintenance, they also need to do this upgrade. They are bringing this to the council, so they know the upgrade will cost \$715,606 and it is not just annual maintenance. The original bid waiver was not clear in stating this.

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

8. Report from the America 250 Committee - Mayor

Rozz Gallagher, Gallagher Travel Shoppe, Chair of the America 250 Committee and Tara Knapp, Gaylord Specialty Healthcare were present to speak about this committee and what they have planned for next year.

Ms. Gallagher gave a brief presentation explaining what the America 250 Committee is and what they will be doing for events next year for the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. She talked about how funding has been limited for this event. She explained that their budget is estimated at around \$40,000 for this event that will be taking place on Saturday, June 20, 2026 and Sunday, June 21, 2026. The committee will be soliciting business and corporate sponsorship over the next 6 weeks. After talking with the Comptroller, Town Council approval is needed for all funds that are raised to be deposited into a separate Town Grants Line Account, America 250 and that all expenses be paid out of this same account. They are also requesting for the Town Council's consideration and or approval of a separate entry on the town drop down menu for online credit card donations. This entry would also be referenced as America 250. They do not request to use any town funding for this event next year.

Chairman Marrone asked if a motion was needed for funding.

Mayor Cervoni stated that the intension is to come back to the council once they have the cash to deposit and then they can create the line item.

Councilor Fishbein talked about whether it was feasible to have this committee be able to use the only payment system for donations if people want to donate by credit card.

Ms. Knapp stated that right now they do not have a way to accept credit card donations. There might be some businesses or donors who would like to donate using a credit card. They were hoping for the online credit card system might be a solution to this.

Mr. Sena stated that the online payment system is only working for tax payments. They are in the process of looking to use this system for permitting. Once that is up and running, then they might be able to use the online system for credit card donations. The system is not live yet so they cannot use it until it goes live. There is currently no system available for credit card donations.

Councilor Fishbein asked if the organization has attained an EIN. He was told no, they have not.

Mr. Sena stated that this committee was not going to create their own non-profit and that is why they

are seeking funding through the town.

Ms. Knapp will still have donors pay their donations with checks for now. Her hope was by 2026, they would be able to pay for their donations by credit card.

Councilor Fishbein asked if this committee receives a check does the town get that check.

Ms. Gallagher stated that the check would have to be made out to the Town of Wallingford and then put into the separate account that the town has created for this committee. The money would be held by the town and any expenses that come up would be paid through that account.

Mr. Sena stated that the town will be handling this the same way they handled Celebrate Wallingford. The town will not be fronting any money for this committee or the events they have planned for next year. Once this committee collects enough money to appropriate, then this will go on the agenda for a future Town Council meeting for them to approve appropriating the money into the account.

Vice Chair Tatta likes what this committee has presented tonight. She stated that the packet presented at the meeting came from the State of CT. She discussed the themes of this celebration that will be taking place next year in June. She mentioned that the themes created by the State of CT sounded a bit political. She asked what the State of CT's role in these events is. The themes this committee has presented seemed more celebratory.

Ms. Gallagher stated that they are going along the path of a more celebratory series of themes and events. They are going to try to integrate some activities within the school system when they are open again, in the fall. They feel it is important for the children to know the history of our country.

Ms. Knapp stated the focus was very much on being family friendly and for all ages.

Councilor Allinson likes all events and themes happening. She mentioned that she thinks the State of CT just provides guidelines for things like these events and themes. She believes that everyone should know the good and bad of our history.

Ms. Gallagher stated that all parts of our history will be entangled into the weekend events for next year. It is important to have every learn as much as they can about our history.

Chairman Marrone agrees with both Vice Chair Tatta and Councilor Allinson. He thinks both sides of our history is fascinating to talk about and to learn.

Councilor Reynolds mentioned that he did not find anything in the theme of events to be political. He stated that his 7th great grandfather is on a witness stone in Old Lyme, CT. He thinks the themes are honest for this celebration.

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Panzo
Town Clerk

Meeting digitally recorded

Joseph A. Marrone III, Chairman

Date

Kristen Panzo, Town Clerk

Date