

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers
April 28, 2026
6:30 P.M.
RECORD OF VOTES AND MINUTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Autumn Allinson, Samuel Carmody, Thomas Laffin, Jesse Reynolds (on video conference), Bryan Rivard, Melanie Rossacci, Craig Fishbein, Christina Tatta and Chairman Vincent F. Testa Jr. Town Attorney Geoffrey Einhorn, Corporation Counsel Janis Small 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 \$3,859.45 (#1054-1066) – Tax Dept.
 - 3b. Acceptance of donation from Barbara Lagerstrom to be used for the K-9 program and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$100 to Revenue Donations - Police, Acct. #2502002-47152 and to Expense Donations – Police, Acct. #25020050-58830-10127 – Police Dept.
 - 3c. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$1,311 to Capital Account-Chainsaws, Acct. #10020150-57000-01419 and to Capital Account-Technical Rescue Equipment, Acct. #10020150-57000-01410 – Fire Dept.
 - 3d. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$6,000 from Maint. of Equipment, Acct. #10030000-54325 to Maint. of Vehicles, Acct. #10030000-54320 – Public Works
 - 3e. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$890 from Dues & Fees, Acct. #10010700-58810 to Offices Expenses Misc., Acct. #10010700-56100 – Planning & Zoning
 - 3f. Acceptance of donation from Pavilion of Hope and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$250 from Revenue, Acct. #2505002-47152 to Donations – Parks & Recreation, Acct. #25050050-58830-10174 – Parks & Recreation
 - 3g. Consider and approve budget amendment FY 2025-2026 and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$6,500 to Miscellaneous General Expenses, Acct. #46100930 from Retained Earnings, Acct. # N/A – Sewer Div.
 - 3h. Consider and approve Fair Housing Resolution – Mayor

- 3i. Consider and approve the appointment of Richard Benham as an Alternate to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a term of three (3) years expiring on March 1, 2029 – Chairman Testa
- 3j. Consider and approve the appointment of Aili McKeen to the Inland Wetlands & Watercourse Commission for a term of five (5) years expiring March 1, 2031 – Chairman Testa
- 3k. Consider and approve the appointment of Shayne O’Brien as an Alternate to the Inland Wetlands & Watercourse Commission for a term of three (3) years expiring on March 1, 2029 – Chairman Testa
- 3l. Consider and approve the appointment of James Vitali to the Inland Wetland & Watercourse Commission for a term of five (5) years expiring on March 1, 2031 – Chairman Testa
- 3m. Consider and approve the appointment of Nancy Leahman as an Alternate to the Historic Properties Commission for a term of five (5) years expiring on March 27, 2031 – Chairman Testa
- 3n. Consider and approve the appointment of Leslie Williams as an Alternate to the Historic Properties Commission for a term of five (5) years expiring on March 27, 2031 – Chairman Testa
- 3o. Approve Minutes of April 14, 2026 Regular Town Council Meeting, April 6, 2026 Special Town Council Meeting and April 8, 2026 Special Town Council Meeting.

**MOTION WAS MADE TO approve Consent Agenda items 3a-3n, 3o as amended.
MADE BY: CARMODY
SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI
Everyone present was in favor.**

Chair Testa spoke about a letter he received from Keith Massamino.

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

There were no items removed from the Consent Agenda.

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD**

Bob Gross explained that he was at the meeting as a representative for the Center Street Cemetery. He is an unpaid volunteer. He explained that he wanted to clear up a few things that were said about the Center Street Cemetery at the April 27, 2026, Town Council Public Hearing. He mentioned that there is no cease and desist order as far as he knows from the town. They have had correspondence with the Town Planner, Planning & Zoning, Public Works and the Mayor’s Office stating that they do not want them to use artificial grass the cemetery. They are working with a landscaper to decide what will work best for the small area as the cemetery

has had numerous issues with growing and maintaining grass in that area. They have received suggestions from the town. The cemetery has a contract with the Town of Wallingford and abides by it. As costs go up the cemetery requests small increases to minimize the escalating expenses. The funds that the town provides does not cover all of the yearly expenses. The cemetery relies on more than just town funds to operate. The cemetery raises money for the short fall that they experience in some years. He explained that the cemetery is open all year round and not closed for December through March like mentioned at the previous meeting. Burials might be delayed during the winter months, but the cemetery is always open. Winter months is when the building gets more attention, as does the machinery. He discussed the comment that the salary is that of a town employee. He discussed what Mr. Beaumont spoke about at the Public Hearing last night. He said if any council member wants to tour the cemetery, all they have to do is contact them. Cremations and burials continuing were discussed. There was a discussion about unknown graves at the cemetery.

Chair Testa want to thank Mr. Gross for the information he provided. He asked Mr. Gross can give them the cemetery contract that they have with the town. Mr. Gross explained that the council can receive the contract through the Law Department as they were the ones who drew up the contract.

Angelo Mitchell spoke about where she lives on Jones Road and how it is very dangerous to pull out of her driveway because of the traffic and people not stopping. She also presented a handout to the Town Council showing what happens when the traffic does not stop coming from Cook Hill Road when turning onto Jones Road. She suggested putting flashing signs, cameras ,signs, etc. to help with the people not stopping.

6. Discussion and possible action on Save the Sound Proposal to remove Wallace Dam – Mayor

Mayor Cervoni was not present for this meeting so Janis Small, Corporation Counsel explained that the mayor and staff met with Save the Sound. They are here to make a presentation with respect to Wallace Dam.

Laura Wildman, Vice President of Ecological Action at Save the Sound. She is also an engineer who is licensed in the State of CT, Alex Croft. Project Manager on the Ecological restoration team at Save the Sound and Tim Wildman, Senior Fisheries Biologist with the State of CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Fisheries Division were there to speak about Save the Sound Proposal.

Mrs. Wilman explained why they were there and also discussed the proposal to remove Wallace Dam. She explained that about a year ago DEEP contacted them to ask if they would consider removing the dam because of the problems they were having with the fishway. The Save the Sound reached out to the mayor at that time and the Town Engineer. They had an initial meeting to discuss the potential idea because Wallace Dam is a privately owned dam and they need the permission of the owner to be able to do anything with it. They have them the ok to move forward so they can start looking for some funding for the removal. There was a discussion as to what type of funding they received and how much. There was a discussion about the project itself. There was a feasibility study done and it showed no potential dangers with the dam or its surroundings. There was a discussion as to the benefits of removing the dam. There was a discussion how this dam is a low head dam and it is actually a drowning hazard. They have done everything they can on their end to prepare for this project to move forward and they just need the approval of the Town Council as the final step to move this project forward.

Councilor Fishbein asked about the flow of the water because the back states that the same amount of water will flow before and after the removal of the dam. Mr. Wildman explained that right now this dam is just backing up water and all of the water coming in into the impoundment is the same amount of water that leaves the dam. The flows that are coming into the dam is the same amount as the flows going out. The low water levels during different times of year was discussed. There was a discussion of the fish ladder and its opening. There was a discussion about the infrastructure. There was a discussion about the fishways and how fish can find them or not find them. There was a discussion about water quality and if removing the dam would help with the water quality or not.

Councilor Rivard talked about how this project would restore the natural flow of the water. There was a discussion about the future use of the dam. There was a discussion about the water flow of the dam and the possible effect if any on Community Lake. There will be tests done to show the water flow and any impact if any on Community Lake before this project even takes place.

Councilor Tatta wanted to discuss why and when the original dam was built so members of the public can know that information. The dam was originally built in the 1800's. It was built for diversion of water for mechanical power to industry. There was a discussion about Garden Road. That is the road to the east that used to flood. There was a discussion about Community Lake and the analysis that is going to be done.

Ms. Small mentioned that the agreement in place provides the right to terminate through the design stage. They will be discussion the design phase to see if there is a problem that can't be solved that can be dealt with at that time.

Councilor Laffin said he liked the explanation of turning the dam back into what it was before the dam was even built. There was a discussion about Wallace Dam being the first dam built for water flow. There was a discussion about the fishway.

Chair Testa discussed with them the difference between upstream and downstream. There was a discussion about material removal. There was a discussion about Community Lake.

Councilor Fishbein is concerned about the Community Lake aspect of this project. There was a discussion about the fish ladder. There was a discussion about how the council can terminate this project through the design stage if they are unhappy with the project or the outcome thus far. There was a discussion about the scope of work that this project would entail.

Larry Morganstein said he is very excited about this idea for the project. The project was discussed.

Shiela Tierney talked about Garden Road. She asked if the snow was still being dumped there.

MOTION WAS MADE TO authorize the execution of the agreement with Save the Sound Inc. for the removal of the Wallace Dam in accordance with the terms outlined in the proposed agreement contingent upon the Town Council receiving a report at the completion of the analysis of the impact on Community Lake followed by the Town Council's approval.

**MADE BY: CARMODY
SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI**

ROLL CALL:

**ALLINSON: AYE
CARMODY: AYE
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: AYE
REYNOLDS: AYE
RIVARD: AYE
ROSSACCI: AYE
TATTA: NAY
TESTA: AYE
8- AYE
1-NAY
0-ASBENT
MOTION: PASSED**

7. Consider and approve bid waiver to purchase additional ClearGov software modules – BOE

MOTION WAS MADE TO a bid waiver to purchase additional ClearGov software modules as requested by the BOE.

**MADE BY: CARMODY
SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI**

Dominic Barone, Business Manager for the BOE and Karen Baeu, IT Director for the schools.

Mr. Barone explained the bid waiver and why it is needed and why the schools need additional software modules.

There was a brief discussion as to why the BOW was going through the bid waiver process. There was a discussion as to how they original software modules were purchased and for how long. There was a discussion as to if everyone on the BOE, including the administration, BOE Committee members etc. were all in agreement with this additional purchase. There was a discussion as to why they did not go out to bid or do any RFP. There was a discussion as to why this item was not added to the original purchase of the software modules in the budget.

ROLL CALL:

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: NAY

LAFFIN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

RIVARD: AYE

ROSSACCI: AYE

TATTA: NAY

TESTA: AYE

8- AYE

1-NAY

0-ASBENT

MOTION: PASSED

8. Consider and approve bid waiver for purchase of John Deere 320P backhoe from W.I. Clark Company of Wallingford, CT via NASPO – Water Div.

MOTION WAS MADE TO a bid waiver for the purchase of a John Deere 320P backhoe From W.I. Clark Company of Wallingford, CT via NASPO.

MADE BY: CARMODY

SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI

Neil Amwake , General Manager for the Water/Sewer Division spoke about the bid waiver and why it is needed.

Councilor Fishbein discussed the letter the council received as backup. There as a discussion as to the Water Division bid waiver process.

Councilor Laffin discussed the BOE policy found on their website.

Councilor Rossacci thought that the backup material was really strong. There was a discussion about how The Water Division uses NASPO.

ROLL CALL:

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: AYE

LAFFIN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

RIVARD: AYE

ROSSACCI: AYE

TATTA: NAY

TESTA: AYE

9- AYE

0-NAY

0-ASBENT

MOTION: PASSED

9. Consider and approve delegating authority to the Law Department to settle collection cases on claims valued up to \$2,500 for the term of the Town Council ending January, 2028 - Law Dept.

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve delegating authority to the Law Department to Settle collection cases on claims valued up to \$2,500 for the term of the Town Council ending January 2028.

MADE BY: CARMODY

SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI

Geoffrey Einhorn, Tow Attorney explained why this is necessary. He mentioned this has been approved already. It allows them to have some flexibility and is across all departments. There was a discussion about the collection process.

Councilor Fishbein asked about the Town Council term ending and how that would work. There was a discussion about the time period as to when this can end. There was a discussion to amend the motion.

MOTION WAS MADE TO amend the motion approve delegating authority to the Law Department to Settle collection cases on claims valued up to \$2,500 for the term of the Town Council ending January 2028 to say the term of the Town Council ending December 31, 2027.

MADE BY: CARMODY

SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI

There was a voice vote on the amendment and everyone present was in favor.

10. Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §1-200 (6)(E), §1-210(b)(5)(A)(B) and §7-232(a) to discuss Purchased Power – Electric Div.

MOTION WAS MADE TO go into Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut general Statues 1-200 (6)(E), 1-210 (b)(5)(A)(B) and 7-232(a) to discuss Purchased Power at 8:49pm.

MADE BY: CARMODY

SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI

In attendance was the full Town Council, Town Attorney Geoffrey Einhorn, Ric Hendershot, Public Utilities Director.

11. Discussion and possible action to approve a bid waiver for Smartest Energy US, LLC as discussed in Executive Session – Electric Div.

MOTION WAS MADE TO come out of Executive Session at 9:18pm.

**MADE BY: CARMODY
SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI**

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve a bid waiver for Smartest Energy US, LLC as Discussed in Executive Session.

**MADE BY: CARMODY
SECONDED BY: ROSSACCI**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Panzo
Town Clerk

Meeting digitally recorded

Vincent F. Testa, Jr. Chairman

Date

Kristen Panzo, Town Clerk

Date