

MAYOR
JEFFREY A. MACMILLEN

DEPUTY MAYOR
THOMAS ZAMPANO

TOWN MANAGER
MICHAEL P. DOWNES



COUNCIL MEMBERS
BRUCE ABELSON
ROSE MARIE ANGELONI
MARIE E. DIAMOND
WALTER GOAD
VINCENT J. MASE, SR.
NICHOLAS PALLADINO
RONALD PELLICCIA, JR.

TOWN OF NORTH BRANFORD

TOWN HALL, 909 FOXON ROAD, NORTH BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT 06471
TOWN MANAGER (203) 484-6000 TOWN HALL FAX (203) 484-6025

MINUTES WPCA & TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, August 1, 2023

Town Council Chambers
7:00 p.m.

Mayor Macmillen called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Salute to the Flag

1. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Macmillen, Deputy Mayor Zampano, Councilor Angeloni, Councilor Abelson, Councilor Diamond, Councilor Goad, Councilor Mase, Councilor Palladino and Councilor Pelliccia.
Also Present: Town Manager Downes, Assistant Town Manager Burke, Town Treasurer/ Finance Director Esposito, Public Works Director Merola, Public Works Assistant Director Celentano, Town Attorney LeClerc, Town Engineer Benni, Patti Schaefer Account Clerk, Cliff Potter, Resident.

2. Community Events and Presentations:

a. Presentation of Plaque to Patti Schaefer for 31 years of service

Town Manager Downes shared, tonight we are recognizing Patti Schaefer, our Account Clerk in the Finance Department handling Accounts Payable who is retiring from town service effective August 4, 2023.

That date will mark exactly 15 years for Patti in her role with the Finance Department, but she has served the Town of North Branford much longer. She came to us in November of 1992 working for the Board of Education managing the Stanley T. Williams cafeteria, then as the NBIS cafeteria manager through February of 2000.

She then took on the position of dispatcher with the North Branford Police Department where she remained until August of 2008, when she took her current role with Finance.

Her ties to our town are strong. She lived in North Branford for 20 years, raised her children here, and is proud that they are all graduates of our school system. While she moved away after they were grown, she remained connected to our town.

Patti has given the town 31 years, and she has been an extremely valuable part of our team here. I have personally come to appreciate her important contributions to what we do here and how we do it. I also deeply appreciate her sense of humor. She will be missed very much, but I know you join me in wishing her the best in this new chapter of her life! Congratulations Patti.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

a. July 18, 2023 –Special Town Council Meeting

MOVED: Councilor Diamond

SECOND: Councilor Angeloni

Discussion: Councilor Mase requested amendment to show that the attendance did not have Councilor Goad and Councilor Palladino and they were present for the meeting on July 18, 2023.

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY AGENDA

4. Correspondence/Citizens' Statements and Petitions:

5. Unfinished Business: None

6. New Business: Discussion and Action

a. Request to Connect to Sanitary Sewers at 146 Branford Road (Map 5, Lot 56)

Town Engineer Benni there is a memorandum which explains the req. to connect procedure wasn't necessary and after reviewing the project with Kurt Weiss, and with some additional information this property has already satisfied the assessment.

MOTION: WHEREAS, the North Branford Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) has previously approved the proposal to connect the existing property known as 146 Branford Road to the existing sanitary sewers in Branford Road as its regular meeting held on May 23, 2023. NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that the North Branford Water Pollution Control Authority rescinds the previously required special connection approved on 5-23-23, including the \$12,300 special connection fee, understanding that the property in question had previously satisfied the requirements of the original assessment.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Deputy Mayor Zampano

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

b. Scheduling of Special Water Pollution Control Authority Meeting and Public Hearing for Sewer Works Operating Budget and Proposed User Fee FY

2023-2024

Town Engineer Benni shared that each year, the Water Pollution Control Authority needs to schedule a Public Hearing date to adopt the sewer user fees for the new year. We are working on analyzing

current and projected costs to see if the rates will need to change and we will have more solid figures by the beginning of September. Because there is only one meeting in August we are requesting that the Public Hearing be set for September 19th during the regularly scheduled Town Council meeting.

MOTION: That the Town of North Branford Water Pollution Control Authority schedules a Special Water Pollution Control Authority meeting on September 19, 2023, and further that the North Branford Water Pollution Control Authority, acting as the Sewer Authority for the Town pursuant to C.G.S. 7-255, will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at 7:15 p.m. at the North Branford Town Hall, 909 Foxon Rd, for the purpose of receiving public input on the Sewer Works Operating Budget and the proposed Sewer usage Fees for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Councilor Diamond

Discussion: Councilor Mase asked why we are scheduling a public hearing at 7:15 p.m. and not 7:30p.m. Councilor Angeloni clarified that since it is for WPCA it is held before the regular Town Council meeting.

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

7. Reports of Committees, Boards and Commissions:

a. Economic Development Commission

Councilor Palladino stated the next meeting will be held on Monday, August 7th.

b. Park & Recreation

Councilor Angeloni said the Parks & Recreation met last week and the Directors June at a glance says they are still going strong, over 300 meals served; summer camp program started in June and waitlist for every week in the program. They had 13 senior programs and 31 grocery transportations: 15 rec programs, and 3 bus trips. They had the Senior picnic. The adult coed softball and have 8 teams. They are also going back Farm to Family food boxes and the boxes come from the farms. They had a Local Heroes night on July 12 in cooperation with the library.

Augur Field is taking shape for the POCO fest that is being held this weekend. The grounds are the fullest they have ever been. There are lots of new things planned. Channel 8 has reached out and Town Manager and Parks & Recreation Director will be on Thursday morning 10am-11am. Also Channel 3 is coming to POCO grounds on Friday morning to do a segment for their show from 9AM-10AM.

Councilor Mase strongly recommends the town attorney and the mayor take a helicopter ride together.

Anyone wishing to Volunteer it's not too late. Please go to northbranfordpocofestival.com. There is a form under Volunteers and are willing to take volunteers for any and all shifts. Thank you to the High School sports teams have volunteered to help out and more needed.

This could not happen without our amazing Public Works Team. Mr. Merola and Mr. Celentano's team have ben amazing getting the grounds ready for the POCO Festival. Also Thank you to all of the amazing sponsors even some from out of town who have donated. The amount of food vendors this year has doubled from last year.

Mayor Macmillen shared there are many great things happening, a great band playing on Friday night, the fireworks show on Saturday and the anyone who has a vehicle 1980 or older to display at the car show on Sunday morning.

c. Police Commission

Councilor Diamond stated there was no meeting.

d. Fire Commission

Councilor Pelliccia stated there was no meeting in July for no meeting lack of quorum and no meeting for August.

e. Planning & Zoning Commission

Deputy Mayor Zampano stated there was no meeting.

f. Finance Subcommittee

Councilor Angeloni stated that there will be a meeting held next week.

g. Public Safety Communications Sub-Committee

Councilor Diamond stated there was no meeting.

h. CIWWA

Councilor Diamond stated that meeting was cancelled.

8. Town Manager's Report:

a. General Updates

Town Manager Downes shared that they had a challenging first half of the day today with a power outage that impacted Town Hall but as you can see, we are up and running. Water infiltrated a branch connection between the road and Town Hall which caused at least two of three of them to fail. The town hall offices were temporarily closed between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. while United Illuminating affected repairs. Our staff were sent to remote locations at Atwater Library or Stanley T. Williams, and out Tax and Assessor staff set up a forward operating post at the North Branford Intermediate School Choir room with a police officer as security. As this was the last day for residents to pay taxes without penalty, we needed to ensure continuity of service. Thankfully power was restored, and we reopened Town Hall at 1:00 p.m.

I want to thank our Public Works and Police Departments for their response and proactivity during this event, the Board of Education - particularly Bruce Williams, and Doug Handy for assisting with the setup of our tax department at NBIS, Dennis Pannone and Anthony Esposito who assisted on the technology end of relocating our staff, as well as all our Town Hall staff who responded with cheerful flexibility on relocating today, particularly the team in our tax and assessor's offices who kept their services up and running all day without missing a beat handling about 30-40 taxpayers in person.

The event was a great learning experience in putting a remote action plan into play and we have made note of things that were smooth and those that were less so to adjust and improve for the next similar event.

NORTHFORD OUTAGE Last Friday evening a downed tree on Middletown Avenue just south of Mill Pond Gathering took down electric wires, causing a small brush fire, blocking traffic in both directions, and causing a power outage throughout Northford Center. Wallingford Electric crews responded with power returned to Northford Center by late evening, but the electric crew work necessitated power being lost to points north of the incident up along Middletown Avenue including

several neighborhoods including my own. Power was restored just after midnight and the road was cleared soon after. Compliments go to our Fire and Police departments for their quick response, as well as our Public Works Department for theirs, and their direct work with Wallingford electric to ensure power restoration as quickly as possible.

1. POCO -This Friday, Saturday, and Sunday is the 21st Annual Potato and Corn Festival which should be returning bigger and better than ever! I don't dare to try to promote this as well as Councilor Angeloni.
2. ANIMAL CONTROL SWITCHOVER - I wanted to advise you that we have set a date for the transfer of ACO service from Branford to East Haven. The planned change of service will take place on **September 1, 2023**.

It may be noted that the print article in the New Haven Register on Saturday said we had already switched service. I called the Register for a correction to the online story which now notes the date had yet to be set (which was accurate as of Saturday morning).

Last Friday or team including me, Attorney LeClerc, Chief Halloran and Finance Director Esposito met with Michelle Benivegna from the East Haven Mayor's office, EH ACOs Emily Higgins and Owen Little to discuss the transition. We are working out details of the polices to put in place relative to communication with our Dispatch and PD, plans to promote awareness of the changeover, and expect to be ready in advance of the September 1st date.

The East Haven Animal Control team will have a booth on Saturday and Sunday at the POCO festival to help introduce them to residents and get them some visibility and promote familiarity - so please be sure to stop by and greet them when you're there!

3. Tower update:

Clintonville Tower.

Verizon has to go on the tower first before our equipment- waiting for Verizon to install per Pyramid Network Services (manage coordinating services on cell towers in state), electrical subcontractor CSB (Nick Limauro) is expecting the PO from Pyramid next week.

Ray Vergati of Homeland Towers has informed me that the utility easement issue has been resolved there- you will recall that M&T Bank which holds the mortgage on the property was denying the utility easement. The easement has been granted and recorded. We should now be closer to getting this up and running.

Tilcon - 1 Forest Road

Pyramid Network Services has a building permit issued, however late this afternoon they submitted changes for that permit, but they will be addressed in a timely fashion- when that is squared away, they will only need to pull an electrical permit and then they'll be able to proceed.

4. Flood damage reimbursement-

As you know we recently had some very significant flash flooding associated with heavy downpours received from recent storm events. The state is collecting data on flood damage from communities associated with heavy rain and flooding between July 9th and 16th for possible submission to FEMA for reimbursements. We have submitted requests to the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security for the damage on Walnut Lane/ Lanes Pond Road which I'm sure most council members are aware of. This is in the information gathering phase, and we are hoping we might

eventually see some results and reimbursement. I will keep the Council updated as this process unfolds.

5. PAVING.

State crews are paving Forest Road- (Route 22) from 6pm-6am- Tuesday to Thursday and traffic will be down to one lane. Residents driving through this area during these times should expect delays. Thanks to our Police Chief Kevin Halloran who requested on our behalf that DOT's subcontractors avoid paving this area during the POCO festival which begins Friday.

Town Paving: This week phase 2 paving has begun on the following roads and will continue throughout the week- Ciro Rd, Lower Beech St., Upper Beech St., upper Sea Hill Rd. Greystone Rd. **Rubber seal surface** to the following roads is scheduled to begin the week of August 7th and continue throughout that week:

Rose Lane, Maple Road, Tommy's Path, Judith Court, Surrey Drive, Holly Heights Drive, Old Forest Road, David Lane, St. Monica's Drive, Old Middletown Turnpike (west) and Firelight Place.

6. Anita Mancini Retirement:

I would like to announce to all of you the departure of Anita Mancini who has served for the past seven years as a staff accountant in the Finance Department. The news is bittersweet as I know we all will miss Anita and all she does for us, but she will be moving on to become Finance Director for the town of Old Lyme. I know you join me in expressing congratulations to her on this amazing opportunity for her, as she readies for the new challenges that come with this new and important role! While I hate to lose good members of our team, I am always thrilled when they move on to bigger and better things.

Anita started with us in April of 2016, working on a number of critical projects for the Town including converting to meet Connecticut's Uniform Chart of Accounts, and our current MUNIS Financial and payroll system. Her efforts, particularly on this latest MUNIS upgrade can't be overstated- she worked many late hours and extra days, fought with the numerous bugs, and without her who knows where we would be with MUNIS today! She was also central to helping us through the year we went without a Tax Collector, assisting with their monthly reconciliations.

Anita's last day with us will be August 18th, where she will be retiring from our service, and we will attempt to get her before the Council at an upcoming meeting for you to wish her well as she embarks on this new and exciting career journey!

Business Under the Big Tent - the Town of North Branford and our Economic Development Commission are partnering with the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce for a Business Under the Big Tent Reimagined event. This business-to-business community engagement event will take place this Thursday August 3rd from 5:00 to 7:00 PM Guilford Savings Bank on Middletown Ave in Northford. Featured speakers will include Rob Hotaling, Deputy Commissioner of Connecticut DECD and Charlie Rosabianca owner of Rosabianca vineyards.

The Parks, Recreation and Senior Center Department is a recipient again this year of the **Farmers to Families Food Boxes** from the United Way of Greater New Haven and when available Public Works assists with the pickup and delivery of 100 food boxes that are then distributed from Stanley T. Williams Community Center and the Food Pantry every Thursday. If a family or individual is interested, please contact the Parks, Recreation and Senior Center Department at 203-484-6017.

b. Permanent Project Building Committee

Police Department /EOC Project -groundwork continuing, and if you have passed by you can now see the frame of the building rising up.

NBHS -punch list still being worked. The basement abatement process and demolition continue, with foundation concrete expected to be poured next week.

STWCC -continuing work on punch list items

NBIS – NB Sign was removed and building power washed with good results. Reroofing is expected this month and after that, the building will be cleaned again.

Mayor Macmillen asked if the sign once cleaned and repaired would it be put back on the site. Town Manager Downes shared that given the aesthetic of the new high school and Intermediate school it doesn't seem to fit. The Council can decide after it has been repaired.

8. Citizens' Statements and Petitions and Correspondence:

Cliff Potter, Northford shared his comments regarding the Town Manager mentioned there was a significant power outage. Wallingford Electric is not keeping linemen, they need 13-14 and supposedly have 8 linemen. That effects the town greatly. Another is that the State won't cut the dead trees so that corridor is at risk for more power outages in the future. We need them to be more proactive.

Councilor Mase stated that in the 39 years living in town stated he has never lost power overnight it was only ever for several hours.

10. Resignations and Appointments:

a. Appointment of Jeff Hanrahan (U) as an alternate to the Economic Development Commission (term to expire 12-31-2024)

MOTION: To appoint Jeff Hanrahan (U) as an alternate to the Economic Development Commission term to expire 12-31-2024.

MOVED: Councilor Diamond

SECOND: Deputy Mayor Zampano

Discussion: Councilor Diamond shared he will be a great asset to committee

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

b. Appointments to the Blueprint Committee

Councilor Angeloni stated that on the documents received for the last meeting there were many residents from both the Northford and North Branford side as nominees. Her recommendation is that for the committee there is one regular member for each side of town and one alternate.

MOTION: To add one alternate elector for each Northford and North Branford for the Blueprint Committee.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Councilor Mase

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

MOTION: To appoint Matt Fleming as the regular member and Melinda Fonda as the alternate for the Northford side. To appoint Bonnie Symansky as the regular member and Christopher Heon as the alternate for the North Branford side.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND Councilor Abelson

Discussion: None

With all in favor, motion is passed.

MOTION: To appoint Deputy Mayor Zampano and Councilor Abelson as the Town Council Representatives on the Blueprint Committee.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Councilor Palladino

Councilor Diamond asked who is going to get this committee started. Mayor Macmillen responded that the goal is to get it going quickly so we can have something going by March. Town Manager Downes commented that they would need to convene an organization meeting and then the committee will determine schedule and select a chair, recording secretary, etc. It was discussed and approved by Town Manager Downes that the Blueprint committee could meet in the Town Manager's conference room.

Councilor Diamond asked that the town send letter to those who weren't appointed. Town Manager Downes said he would send letter.

Councilor Mase stated that now that it's being formed, when it starts there may be people who will drop off and how would they be replaced. Councilor Angeloni and Mayor Macmillen agreed that as they are appointed positions, so if someone leaves it will come back to the council and that member will be replaced.

11. Unfinished Business: Discussion and Action:

a. Creation of an 1831 Committee

Mayor Macmillen stated this is something we will revisit.

b. Request from Hazardous Waste and Recycling Committee

Town Manager Downes shared the encapsulation of what was discussed the last meeting. The request from the Solid Hazardous Waste and Recycling Committee is to ask the council to approve the following:

1. A Part time trash picker for the municipal properties with the aim of clearing roadsides and public areas that accumulate litter. Main roads accumulate clutter, and it is difficult for our lawn cutting crews to manage it. Awaiting State crews generally tends to be futile. DPW has estimated that one person hired in this capacity part time for 19 hours a week for 36 weeks per year from March 15th - November 15th at \$17.00 per hour would cost \$11,628 annually.
2. A-frame signs that have changeable letters for them to get information shared across the town at an expense of \$400.
3. \$600 per year to the Totoket Times for inserts for the Totoket Times to promote recycling events.
4. Reimbursement for mileage of volunteers who pick up trash.

MOTION: Be it hereby resolved that the North Branford Town Council authorizes the Hazardous Waste and Recycling Committee to draw on the Town's NIP Fund for the following expense for the amounts indicated:

1. \$11,628 annually for the hiring of a part time roadside litter collector to be overseen by Public Works.
2. An amount not to exceed \$450 for the purchase of A-Frame signs to promote recycling events.
3. \$600 annually for inserts in the Totoket Times to promote waste collection and recycling.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Deputy Mayor Zampano

Discussion: Councilor Palladino asked with the grant does it allow for publishing to be done. Town Manager Downes responded that as it is for inserts to promote recycling and not just to und the Totoket Times it does fall within the guidelines of the grant for the NIP Funds. Councilor Angeloni asked if the word annually should be removed from the part time person motion as we are unsure if we will always have the same amount of money coming in to cover the salary for this person. Many Council members were discussing the wording for the part time person with Attorney LeClerc. It was collectively decided that the wording shall be changed from annually to temporary part time position and the amount for that time period, and to strike "annually" from the motion.

MOTION: To amend the motion for #1 to say \$11,628 for the hiring of a temporary part time roadside litter collector to be overseen by Public Works.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Councilor Palladino

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

Town Manager Downes shared at a prior Town Council meeting there was a discussion regarding utilizing the "NIPS" fund to offset the expenses incurred by Committee members who drive their own personal vehicles to pick up recycled film. The conversation discussed mileage reimbursement, versus paying a fixed amount once a "regular" number of miles is driven in a month could be determined. He asked the Town Council to lean toward the mileage reimbursement philosophy. This methodology will require the members to track their milage and submit it to the Town via their liaison, Assistant Publish Works Director Dan Celentano, for reimbursement.

MOTION: BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that effectively July 1, 2023, the North Branford Town Council authorizes the use of the NIPS fund proceeds to reimburse members of the Solid/Hazardous Waste & Recycling Committee for their mileage to drive around town picking up film from the various collection sites. Mileage forms must be submitted to their liaison, Assistant Public Works Director Dan Celentano for approval and entering into Accounts Payable.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Deputy Mayor Zampano

Discussion: Deputy Mayor Zampano asked both Public Works Director Merola and Assistant Public Works Director Celentano if that was feasible to have this handled by public Works. They both responded yes that it is feasible. Councilor Goad expressed concern about the volunteers and driving their own vehicles if worst case scenario there was an accident. Attorney LeClerc stated that certificate of Insurance should be required from those volunteers and could be handled by the administrative services.

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

- c. **Award of RFP# 923002 – Ambulance – NBFD – Company 4**
(Tabled 07-18-23 and 8-1-23)

12. New Business: Discussion and Action:

a. Generator Contract with Verizon

Town Manager Downes shared that in support of this memorandum is the proposed Generator use Agreement between Town of North Branford and Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless

associated with Homeland Towers LLC at 222 Clintonville Road. It has been reviewed by the Town Attorney and approved for signature.

MOTION: That the North Branford Town Council hereby authorizes Town Manager Michael P. Downes to sign the attached Generator use Agreement on behalf of the Town of North Branford.

MOVED: Councilor Diamond

SECOND: Councilor Abelson

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

b. Re-establish new Public Hearing date for Tuesday, September 5th at 7:30 PM Regarding Designating the Town of North Branford as a Rehabilitation Area and Establishing Criteria for the Eligibility of Real Property for Assessment Deferral and Administrative Procedures

Assistant Town Manager Burke shared that at the July 18, 2023, meeting the council was asked to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday August 1, 2023, to reauthorize this Property Tax Assessment Deferral Program in accordance with the enabling statute 12-65d. At that time, he was unaware that the Town uses a weekly paper, rather than a daily, to publish its legal notices. Since statute 12-65d requires that two legal notices be published in a newspaper, the weekly publication schedule and associated deadlines rendered it impossible to get the required notices published ahead of the hearing. He apologized for the oversight.

Accordingly, the ask was to reset the public hearing for Tuesday September 5th, 2023, to allow sufficient time to publish the required legal notices. This would allow the Planning & zoning Commission to conduct their 8-24 referral at their September 7th meeting. The Town Council could then adopt a resolution authorizing the program at your September 5th meeting.

MOTION: That the Town Council set a public hearing for Tuesday, September 5th at 7:30 PM regarding designating the Town of North Branford as a rehabilitation area and establishing criteria for the eligibility of real property assessment deferral and administrative procedures.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Deputy Mayor Zampano

Discussion: Councilor Abelson asked about this program. Assistant Town Manager Burke shared that it is an incentive to help spur development in town.

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

c. Appropriation Transfer

MOTION: That the North Branford Town Council hereby approves the following appropriation transfers, as recommended by the Town Manager and the Treasurer/ Finance Director.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Deputy Mayor Zampano

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

d. Contingency Transfer FY2023-2024

MOTION: That the Town Manager is hereby authorized to appropriate from reserve for the contingency, Account #1000-00098-0000-000059510-000000-00000-00.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Councilor Diamond

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

13. Citizens' statements and petitions

14. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn.

MOVED: Councilor Angeloni

SECOND: Councilor Diamond

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

Adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: Kathleen Daly, Clerk

August 2, 2023