

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES- WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023

The council met on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, and called to order at 6:00p.m. in the Town Hall, Council Chambers, Council Chairman Calouro presiding:

PRESENT: Council Chairman, Nathan Calouro
Vice-Chairwoman, Mary Parella
Councilman, Antonio "Tony" Teixeira
Councilman, Timothy Sweeney
Councilman, Aaron Ley

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator, Steven Contente
Assistant Town Solicitor, Anty Teitz, Esq
Town Sergeant, Archie Martins

Public Service Interviews and Appointments

Bristol Planning Board - 2nd Auxiliary (1 vacant term set to expire ~~April~~ July 2024)

a. George Duarte, 47 Lafayette Drive, interest/appointment

The Council heard from Mr. Duarte who expressed his interest in becoming a member of the Bristol Planning Board. Discussions ensued between members of the Council and Mr. Duarte pertaining to Mr. Duarte's qualifications and experiences. Mr. Duarte also stated why he would consider himself to be a good fit for the position.

b. Jessalyn L. Jarest, 183 High Street, interest/appointment

The Council heard from Mrs. Jarest who expressed her interest in becoming a member of the Bristol Planning Board. Discussions ensued between members of the Council and Mrs. Jarest pertaining to Mrs. Jarest's qualifications and experiences. Mrs. Jarest also stated why she would consider herself to be a good fit for the position.

c. Myra M. Page, 423 Hope Street Unit K, interest/appointment

The Council heard from Mrs. Page who expressed her interest in becoming a member of the Bristol Planning Board. Discussions ensued between members of the Council and Mrs. Page pertaining to Mrs. Page's qualifications and experiences. Mrs. Page also stated why she would consider herself to be a good fit for the position.

d. Kenneth A. Marshall, 6 Harborview Ave., interest/appointment

Clerk Cordeiro informed the council that Mr. Marshall had submitted a letter that was "received at meeting" explaining a conflict in his schedule that hindered him from participating in this evening interviews.

e. Alan Spen, 133 Ferry Road, interest/appointment

The Council heard from Mr. Spen who expressed his interest in becoming a member of the Bristol Planning Board Discussions ensued between members of the Council and Mr. Spen pertaining to Mr. Spen's qualifications and experiences. Mr. Spen also stated why he would consider himself to be a good fit for the position.

Ley/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to appoint Jessalyn L. Jarest to the Bristol Planning Board with a term set to expire in July 2024

Special Recognitions

Major Burke (*retirement after 27 years of service*)

Prior to the commencement of the regular scheduled meeting the following Proclamation was presented to Major Brian Burke in recognition of his retirement after 27 years of service with the Bristol Police Department:

Whereas, Major Brian Burke, with an illustrious career spanning 27 years of dedicated service, is retiring from the esteemed Bristol Police Department; and

Whereas, Major Burke's journey within the department commenced as a Patrolman fresh out of the academy in 1997, showcasing his unwavering commitment to upholding the values of law enforcement; and

Whereas, Major Burke's exemplary trajectory led to his successive promotions, ascending to the roles of Sergeant in 2003, Lieutenant in 2010, Captain in 2016, and ultimately retiring as a Major, showcasing his exceptional leadership and unwavering dedication to the progression of the department; and

Whereas, Major Burke's distinguished service has garnered numerous letters of commendation, both from the town and the esteemed citizens of Bristol, a testament to his unwavering integrity and unwavering commitment to public service; and

Whereas, his appointment as the Interim Police Chief of the BPD in 2019 epitomized the epitome of professionalism within the department, showcasing his exemplary leadership and embodiment of the core principles the Bristol Police Department stands for; his tenure as the Interim Police Chief was marked by his adept handling of day-to-day operations, ensuring seamless continuity and efficacious functioning within the department, further solidifying his reputation as an invaluable asset to the force; and

Whereas, Major Burke's instrumental role in securing the department's accreditation status and implementing cutting-edge technological advancements, including computer and camera upgrades, as well as his pivotal support for the integration of Body Worn Cameras, highlights his visionary leadership in propelling the Bristol Police Department into the forefront of 21st-century policing; and

Whereas, Major Burke's unwavering commitment, profound camaraderie with fellow officers, and profound impact on the citizens of Bristol have solidified his legacy as an indispensable and cherished member of the department, whose absence will be deeply felt within the fabric of the community.

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that Bristol pays the highest tribute to Major Brian Burke for his exceptional service, unwavering dedication, and profound impact on the Bristol Police Department and the community at large. His legacy shall forever serve as a beacon of inspiration for future generations within the force and the community.

Town Administrator Contente acknowledged Major Burke's outstanding service to the Bristol Police Department and his dedication to the Bristol community.

Members of the Council congratulated Major Burke and offered their sincerest appreciation for the level of service he provided for the Bristol Community and offered their heartfelt congratulation.

Major Burke addressed the members of the Council and those present, expressing gratitude to the town for the privilege of serving in the Bristol Police Department. He emphasized the support and guidance he received from both the department and its leadership.

Additionally, he underscored the department's growth over the past 27 years and conveyed his pleasure in serving the community and its residents.

(ADD ITEM)

At this point in the meeting, Council Chairman Calouro requested that the Council add an agenda item to consider the matter of BETA Engineering - Engineering Excellence Award 2023.

Ley/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to add a non-action agenda item to allow for discussion of the BETA Engineering- Engineering Excellence Award 2023.

Town Administrator Contente presented the council with a summary of the Tanyard Brook Project's completion, emphasizing the project's scope, challenges faced, and the overall positive impact of enhancements to the stormwater management systems. He also conveyed appreciation for the dedicated efforts and assistance provided by Community Development Planner Williamson, acknowledging her significant role in overseeing the project's success.

Town Administrator Contente highlighted the crucial contribution of BETA Engineering in successfully concluding the project, noting that BETA received the 2023 Engineering Excellence Award for the Tanyard Brook Culvert Replacement project. He clarified that although numerous contenders were evaluated for the award, BETA stood out as the recipient due to its recognition as the best overall project.

Nichole Iannuzzi, Vice President of BETA Engineering addressed the council. She recognized the collaboration between members of the BETA group and the Town of Bristol and recognized Kevin Aguiar, Jay Cobleigh, Jared Linhares, and CB Utility. She further expressed gratitude for the collaboration with all stakeholders, emphasizing their pride in the 2023 award and recognition, underscoring the project's significant impact.

Members of the council expressed their sincere congratulations for the exceptional work in completing the Tanyard Brook project and acknowledged the contributions that led to the project's success.

Motion RE: Consent Agenda - To Approve the Consent Agenda

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as prepared and presented.

A. Submission of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

A1. Town Council Meeting - November 15, 2023

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to approve these minutes as prepared and presented.

B. Public Hearings

B1. Ordinance #2023-23 Chapter 28, Zoning, Sec. 28-1 (Definitions); Sec. 28-82 (Use regulations); Sec. 28-150 (Special use permit standards for various uses); Sec. 28-152 (Zoning modification permits); Article VI (Development Plan Review); Sec. 28-221 (Land nonconforming by area); Article IX, Division 6 (Low and Moderate Income Housing and Inclusionary Zoning); Sec. 28-408 (Zoning board of review); Sec. 28-409 (Variances and special use permits); Proposed New Sec. 28-161 (Adaptive reuse); Proposed New Sec. 28-414 (Unified development review) **(MISCELLANEOUS REVISIONS REFLECTING STATE LAW CHANGES) 2nd Reading for adoption**

a. Director Williamson re Planning Board Recommendation

b. (draft) Zoning Ordinance Amendments- (revised version)

c. (draft) Special Use Permit Standards - (revised version)

d. (draft) Permitted Use Table - (revised version)

Sweeney/Teixeira -Voted unanimously to close the public hearing

Sweeney/Teixeira _Voted unanimously to consider this action to constitute the

Second Reading for adoption of Ordinance #2023-23 based upon the recommendations received; incorporating the findings and recommendations from the Planning Board dated November 21, 2023, including the findings of consistency with the purposes of zoning and consistency with the Bristol Comprehensive Plan, with the following added amendments brought up during the Public Hearing:

- Section 28-150(e)(3) shall read:
"Shelters and enclosures must be kept a minimum of 50 feet from all lot lines. However, the Board may allow less than that if the abutting zone is other than residential or limited business."
- Section 28-150 (o) (2) shall read:
"Chicken coops and runs must be kept a minimum of 40 feet from all lot lines. However, the Board may allow less than that if the abutting zone is other than residential or limited business."

Prior to the vote being taken, Assistant Solicitor Tietz presented an overview of the proposed zoning amendment changes. He clarified that the legislative alterations constituted over 300 pages and incorporated more than 13 bills passed at the state level as part of a comprehensive "housing package." The primary objective of these legislative changes was to stimulate increased housing production within the state, with the changes set to take effect on January 1, 2024, in accordance with state law.

Assistant Solicitor Tietz explained that, while the town possessed some authority and flexibility to address low to moderate-income housing and affordable housing, collaborative efforts were required to formulate effective amendments. Despite the town's diligent efforts to address numerous state regulations, the sheer volume of regulations necessitated this initial attempt at local ordinances to meet state requirements and safeguard the town's interests. Some of these changes were mandated by state law. Tietz anticipated revisiting these proposed changes in the coming spring to assess their effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.

Emphasizing the need for consistency with state regulations, Assistant Solicitor Tietz highlighted various changes, including procedural notices, the elimination of the state housing appeals

board (now redirected to the superior court), modifications to affordable and inclusionary housing, adaptive use, special use permits by right or variance, unified development reviews, and zoning adjustments.

Director Williamson provided an update during the meeting, noting the presence of the zoning officer, Ed Tanner, and some planning board members. The primary focus of the planning board and staff was on establishing special use permit standards, involving a thorough review of 75 use cases. The board dedicated considerable time to deliberate and intentionally examine each scenario, proposing standards for all but cases where a yes or no decision was warranted.

Acknowledging the need for further examination, Director Williamson expressed gratitude to Zoning Officer Ed Tanner and Assistant Planner, Nick Tooth for their efforts in compiling information from various communities. She explained that the planning board held two lengthy meetings in November to review the proposed standards. The director mentioned the planning board's concerns about adaptive reuse and inclusionary zoning, and their plans to revisit and reevaluate these aspects.

Director Williamson noted a small grant has been secured to update the housing element of the comprehensive plan, providing potential additional tools for the town.

Director Williamson emphasized the need for ongoing collaboration with the solicitor's office due to the novelty of the legislation. Even as of the recent week, the board continued to reexamine the special use permit standards, proposing specific adjustments related to non-household domesticated animals and chicken hens. The proposed modifications include specifying setbacks to property lines for shelters and enclosures and establishing minimum distances for chicken coops and runs based on adjacent zones.

Director Williamson recommended the following revisions:

- Section 28-150(e) (3)
 - Proposed as *"Shelters and enclosures shall be no closer than fifty (50) feet to a neighboring residential dwelling unless the owner of the neighboring residence has provided written consent to the same."*
 - shall be amended to read **"Shelters and enclosures must be kept a minimum of 50 feet from all lot lines. However, the Board may allow less than that if the**

abutting zone is other than residential or limited business."

- Section 28-150 (o) (2)
 - Proposed as *"Chicken coops and runs shall be no closer than forty (40) feet to a neighboring residential dwelling unless the owner of the neighboring residence has provided written consent to the same."*
 - shall be amended to read **"The chicken coops and runs must be kept a minimum of 40 feet from all lot lines. However, the Board may allow less than that if the abutting zone is other than residential or limited business."**

Brian Clark, residing at 31 Evelyn Drive and a member of the planning board, addressed the council, emphasizing that he was speaking in his personal capacity that evening. He commended the herculean effort undertaken by Director Williamson and her staff, acknowledging the substantial workload involved. Clark stressed that the local community typically relies on knowledgeable boards, such as zoning and planning boards, to handle complex matters. However, he expressed concern that the proposed legislation seeks to undermine local control, allowing the state to push through decisions without considering the best interests of the town.

Mr. Clark anticipated an influx of decisions that would impact the town for decades, particularly highlighting the potential issues with adaptive reuse. He explained that the legislation could enable the conversion of commercial buildings into market-rate apartments without adhering to affordable housing guidelines, posing a long-term challenge. Clark expressed doubt about the likelihood of such converted units reverting to commercial use, as residential properties generally yield higher profits.

Mr. Clark raised concerns about the lack of communication from state representatives, noting that neither his state representative nor others from Bristol or Warren contacted the planning board before the legislation was introduced. Clark found this lack of communication troubling, as it left the local community unprepared to navigate the implications of the legislation on their own.

Vice Chairwoman Parella agreed with the concern about the legislation diminishing local control and emphasized the need for the planning board to stay informed and actively participate

in discussions with legislators. She shared that, before the meeting, interviews with planning board members and applicants had highlighted the importance of being well-versed in the legislative changes.

Vice Chairwoman Parella thanked Solicitor Tietz for the information shared during the meeting but noted that several questions remain unanswered. She specifically inquired whether the proposed conversion of manufacturing units pertains exclusively to vacant manufacturing buildings or includes those currently in use.

Solicitor Tietz clarified that the General Assembly's bill doesn't require the building to be vacant or abandoned for conversion. He expressed a belief that converting certain structures, such as butler buildings and concrete block buildings, might not be economically feasible due to the challenges of meeting regulatory requirements like windows, lighting, ventilation, and exits.

He suggested that the legislation might be more applicable to mill buildings and less intended for rural areas. While the exact intent remains unclear, Solicitor Tietz expressed greater concern about potential conversions affecting storefronts on Hope Street. He used the metaphor of "Once a cucumber becomes a pickle, it's hard to go back to a cucumber" to convey the difficulty of reversing such conversions once they occur.

Steve Katz, residing at 42 River Street and a member of the planning board, addressed the council, emphasizing that he was speaking in his personal capacity that evening.

Mr. Katz expressed deep disappointment, emphasizing that he believed the new legislation significantly diminishes local control. He emphasizes the uniqueness of Bristol compared to other towns like Central Falls, Providence, and Richmond, stressing that each locality has its distinct characteristics. The adaptive reuse section is particularly troubling to him, and he finds it disheartening that there was no consultation or communication from the State, leaving Bristol uninvolved in the decision-making process.

Laura Curtis, residing at 265 Hope Street spoke before the council, expressing apprehension about the term "enabling legislation." She also raised concerns about the streamlining of the application process, where planning now makes decisions without the involvement of zoning. Her question pertained to the current staffing shortage in planning and sought clarification

on the entity conducting the training for the planning board in zoning and the specifics of the training program.

Solicitor Teitz provided clarification, stating that the concept of unified development has been in the law since around 2014 or 2015, but its adoption was optional until recently. Historically, only larger cities like Cranston and Providence had implemented it, with Providence notably increasing its use in recent years. The recent change mandates that every community must now adopt unified development.

He assured that while the review process will still exist, it will now involve only one body instead of two. Regarding the training, Solicitor Teitz, along with Amy Goings, will conduct it. They will be present at a public planning board meeting and are also involved in a group led by Nancy Hess at the Division of Statewide Planning. This group is working on fulfilling the requirement for planning board and zoning board members, as well as Historic District Commission members, to have a certain number of continuing education hours each year. Solicitor Teitz mentioned his involvement in creating an hour-long course, which will eventually be accessible online for anyone, but in the interim, interested individuals can attend Bristol Planning Board meetings to hear it.

Chairman Calouro expressed concerns about the legislation, acknowledging its stated goal of simplifying the process of creating more affordable housing. Despite the positive intent, he finds the actual outcomes to be "absolutely horrible" and believes it puts all communities at risk. Chairman Calouro thanked everyone for their hard work in trying to mitigate the impact and affirmed the commitment to continue efforts to protect the community. He emphasized the need for ongoing engagement, suggesting a meeting with legislators to discuss various concerns and thoughts, particularly in relation to zoning, as the changes have significant potential consequences.

Councilman Sweeney posed a question about Robin Rug's inclusionary aspect, affirming that the 20% inclusionary requirement will remain unchanged. Solicitor Tietz responded, clarifying that Robin Rug was not initially inclusionary; the specific requirement was imposed by the Council in 2007-2008 and was later included in their zone change conditions. As a result, Robin Rug operates outside the inclusionary framework, However, is bound by the conditions set during the zone change(s).

(Move agenda Item)

*Sweeney/Parella- Voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to consider agenda item I6 at this time.

*It is hereby noted for the record that discussion and action concerning agenda item I6 appear, in place, as found within.

- B2.** CDBG application - Housing Proposals (public hearing and authorization to submit)

Sweeney/Teixeira -Voted unanimously to close the public hearing

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to approve the application for submission, adopt the resolution as presented and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign on behalf of the Town.

Prior to the vote being taken, Bob Plain, consultant with church community housing corporation addressed the council. Mr. Plane highlighted two improvement projects being proposed. One in the amount of \$400,000 for the Bristol home Repair program and one in the amount of \$500,000 for renovations to the Bristol Housing Authority bathroom repairs. He was requesting that the council authorize the Town Administrator , by resolution, to submit the CDBG Grant application for these proposals.

C. Ordinances

- C1.** Ordinance #2023-24 Chapter 17, Article II Alcoholic Beverages Establishments, Section 17-82 - Number of Licenses (to decrease the number of Class BV Liquor Licenses from 32-31) **(1st reading)**

Teixeira/Ley- Voted unanimously to consider this action to constitute the first reading of Ordinance #2023-24. Advertise in the local newspaper.

D. Licensing Board - New Petitions

D1. Nicole Ferreira, Leader of the Pack, 629 Metacom Avenue- Request for Dog Kennel License (New Ownership)

- a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to grant this license per the recommendations received and conditions, if any, as delineated, and also subject to conformance to all laws and ordinances and payment of all fees, taxes, and levies.

Prior to the vote being taken, applicant Nicole Ferreira, residing at 55 Sherman Avenue, spoke before the council. Ms. Ferreira presented an overview of the existing kennel, informing the council of her intention to assume ownership and maintain services for the canine clientele.

D2. Kyle Olsen, Star Laundromat f/k/a East Bay Laundromat, 26 Gooding Avenue re - Request a Public Laundry License (new ownership- **continued from November 15, 2023**)

- a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Water Pollution Control

- b. Letter from the applicant

Sweeney/Ley-Voted unanimously to grant this license per the recommendations received and conditions, if any, as delineated, and also subject to conformance to all laws and ordinances and payment of all fees, taxes, and levies.

Prior to the vote being taken, Clerk Cordeiro noted that the reason for its continuation was a possible misunderstanding regarding the nature of the process as a transfer. However, it should be clarified that laundry licenses do not involve transfers; they are only issued new licenses. She explained that the applicant couldn't attend today due to a prior commitment and submitted a letter to the Council, expressing regrets for

his absence. He seeks approval to essentially transfer and maintain the operation of the existing laundry facility under a new license.

E. Licensing Board - Renewals

F. Petitions - Other

G. Appointments

G1. Conservation Commission (2 full term members set to expire December 2026)

a. Glenn L. Donovan, 2 Rego Avenue,
interest/reappointment

b. Anthony Morettini, 46 Highland Road,
interest/reappointment

c. Kathryn D. Swanson, 150 Ferry Road,
interest/appointment

d. George Voutes, 17 Shore Road, interest/appointment

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to reappoint Glenn L. Donovan & Anthony Morettini to the Conservation Commission with a term set to expire in December 2026

G2. Board of Fire Engineers (1 term set to expire February 2024)

a. Fire Chief's Recommendation -Stephen Knapman

b.

Teixeira/Sweeney - voted unanimously in favor of the candidate for the ensuing term based on the recommendation of the Fire Chief.

G3. Board of Tax Assessment Review (1 full-term (D) member set to expire December 2026)

a. Erich Haslehurst, Chair, Democratic Town Committee re nomination Tracy Ramos (alternate member) for appointment as a full-term member and nomination of Cornelia "Nina" Murphy as alternate member

Teixeira/Ley- Voted unanimously to elevate Tracy Ramos as full member to the Board of Tax Assessment Review with the term to expire December 2026 and appoint Cornelia "Nina" Murphy as the alternate member to the Board of Tax Assessment Review with a term set to expire in December 2025

Prior to the vote being taken it was clarified that board appointments are political in nature, and recommendations for vacant positions align with the current political party Chairperson. Additionally, it was emphasized that, in compliance with the town charter, no more than two individuals from the same political party can serve as both full and alternate members. This adherence to state law was also highlighted.

G4. Personnel Board (1 term set to expire December 2027)

- a. Russell O'Connell, 1382 Hope Street,
interest/reappointment

Sweeney/Parella- Voted unanimously to reappoint Russell O'Connell to the Personnel Board with a term set to expire in December 2027

G5. Bristol Housing Authority (1 unexpired term set to expire January 2025)

- a. Kimberly Teves 32 Brooks Farm Drive,
interest/appointment
- b. Donna St. Angelo, 25 Duffield Road,
interest/appointment

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to instruct the Clerk to set a special meeting for interviews to be held at the convenience of the parties

G6. Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees (3 terms set to expire January 2024 2027)

- a. Al Wroblewski, 24 Burton Street
interest/reappointment
- b. Board Recommendation for reappointment
- c. Scheduled Interviews:
 - 1. Cara Cromwell, 349 Hope Street, Scheduled Interview
 - 2. Anne Marie Silvia, 75 Maple Lane, Scheduled Interview
 - 3. Caroline Jacobus, 35 Church Street, Scheduled Interview

Parella/Teixeira- Voted
unanimously to reappoint Al
Wroblewski to the Rogers Free
Library Board of Trustees with a
term set to expire in January 2027

Prior to the vote being taken, Clerk Cordeiro noted a Scribner's error in the board expiration date clarifying for the record the term was set to expire in January 2027.

At the conclusion of the board appointments, Chairman Calouro took a moment to express his deep gratitude and appreciation for all members of the community who volunteer their time to serve on one of the town's many boards and commissions. He acknowledged the invaluable contributions of these individuals, recognizing their commitment to the betterment of the community. Chairman Calouro emphasized the importance of their selfless efforts in helping to shape and enhance the town's governance. On behalf of himself and the members of the council he extended a heartfelt thank you to all those who dedicated their time and expertise to the collective well-being of the community.

H. Old Business

I. Other New Business Requiring Town Council Action

- 11.** Harbor Master Marsili re - Consideration of Proposed ordinance to include Insurance Requirements for Town Marina

- a. proposed ordinance 2024-XX

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted
unanimously to continue this

matter to a February 2024 council meeting.

Prior to the vote being taken, Chairman Calouro noted that after discussions with the Harbor Master it was recommended to continue to matter for further research.

I2. Town Administrator Contente re - Consideration of Traffic Calming Policy and Police department presentation.

- a. (draft) traffic calming policy
- b. (renderings) Pilot speed humps on Peck Avenue

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to continue to the January 17, 2024, council meeting for consideration of policy revisions.

Prior to the vote taken, Clerk Cordeiro noted a "received a meeting" item from Joe Balestracci in support of the traffic calming devices.

Town Administrator Content discussed ongoing efforts to implement policies aimed at reducing speeds, particularly in residential areas. He explained that Lieutenant Wozny has actively engaged with other communities, focusing on traffic calming policies involving physical changes to roadways. Traditional methods like radar and expensive tickets have limitations, requiring constant enforcement. The introduction of "chiclet" speed bumps, tested in a model area on Peck Avenue, aims to address speeding concerns. Administrator Contente acknowledged the initial challenges but expressed hope that residents would adopt. The model area serves as a pilot, with a proposed policy outlining criteria for implementing speed humps, including a petition process and police-conducted traffic studies. The Town Council would ultimately decide on budgeting and approval. Additional measures being explored include narrowing roadways and strategic tree plantings. The policy specifies that speed humps are suitable for 25 mph zones, emphasizing the importance of adherence to the established criteria.

Lieutenant Wozny provided the council with an overview of the traffic calming policy and model and eligibility.

It was confirmed that any road maintenance impacting a speed hump necessitates the responsible vendor to restore it to its original condition.

It was observed that the estimated cost for a series three speed humps in three areas, amounting to \$16,000, covered installation, signage, and painting.

Discussions ensued around the town's previous stance on adding speed bumps. Chairman Calouro inquired about the change in the town's position regarding speed bump installation, aside from the new design. DPW Director Parella explained that the primary concern was always related to emergency and public works vehicles. However, the new speed humps have distinct features, with angles that allow the passage of drainage and accommodate larger vehicles, including trash trucks with flat fronts. The DPW team conducted a thorough evaluation, and they are confident that these speed humps will not impede their services. Director Parella expressed support for the installation, emphasizing that they pose less of an issue than sewer caps and rising catch basins, assuring that they will not interfere with the town's services.

Discussions ensued regarding the procedures for the removal of speed humps. It was suggested that an amendment be made to incorporate the appropriate procedures for removal.

The question was raised regarding whether there is a standard limit for the number of speed humps that can be installed along a stretch of roadway. The response clarified that this determination would be made by an engineer and emphasized that the decision would be influenced by traffic data pinpointing areas of concern. It was highlighted that the determination might not solely rely on a standard number of feet, as other variables would also factor into the decision-making process.

Mason Brooks residing at 50 Peck Avenue addressed the council and expressed concerns about the installation of speed bumps on Peck Avenue. He questioned the criteria for their placement, citing the town's draft policy indicating a 70% approval rate. Mr. Brooks emphasized the need for thorough studies and public input before implementing such measures. He shared his perspective as a resident, driving a sports car, and stated that driving 35 miles per hour without speed bumps was unimaginable. Mr. Brooks questioned the fairness of the policy, as he felt his family's input was excluded from the decision-making process. He also raised concerns about the removal process and its potential impact on the recently paved road. Additionally, he inquired about the effectiveness of the speed reduction program,

mentioning a lack of visibility of speed enforcement and requesting a copy of the speed study.

In response, Town Administrator Contente acknowledged that there was no policy in place when the speed bumps were implemented but clarified that there has been a study on traffic calming for a few years. He defended the decision to install speed bumps, emphasizing his responsibility for public safety. Town Administrator Contente explained that his decision to install the speed bumps stemmed from complaints received and observations of children playing in the street. While expressing regret for any inconvenience caused, he defended the effectiveness of the speed humps, stating that the majority of residents, both on Peck Avenue and neighboring streets, supported them based on information received in the Town Administrator's Office.

Town Administrator Contente, drawing on his 20-year experience as a police officer, affirmed that, in his professional opinion, the speed humps are working, and he stood by the decision.

Katie Brooks. Residing at 50 Peck Avenue addressed the council and emphasized the importance of child safety but expressed concerns about the placement of speed bumps, noting that they are not near areas where children play. She highlighted that the wide space between the speed bumps could still allow speeding in front of those areas. Ms. Brooks suggested that consultation with neighbors could have led to a more thoughtful placement, such as in front of unbuildable lots. She also mentioned the absence of a posted speed limit sign on Peck Avenue and appreciated the Council's time and effort in crafting the well-written policy. Ms. Brooks thanked the Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. Ben Cormack, residing at 83 Peck Avenue and father to Tyler and Ryan Cormack, shared his observations on the effectiveness of the speed humps. He acknowledged their adequacy but noted that driving a truck straight down the middle does not significantly slow down. Mr. Cormack, who lives approximately 100 feet from one of the speed humps, suggested that there is room for improvement.

Nick Christiansen, residing at 80 Peck Avenue, shared his thoughts with the council. He expressed gratitude for the speed bumps, especially as a father of two girls who play along that street. While appreciating the safety aspect, Mr. Christiansen felt that the proposed threshold of 10% of vehicles exceeding the speed limit was high, believing that even 1 or 2% could pose a safety issue. He acknowledged that speed bump placements could

be challenging but emphasized the importance of situating them near areas where children play. Mr. Christiansen suggested installing speed bumps in advance of these locations to alert drivers to reduce speed. He added that the policy might be more favorable in such neighborhoods with smaller children, recognizing that not all demographics within a neighborhood may support speed bump areas.

Chief Lynch highlighted that in most communities, not every residential roadway has a speed limit sign. He explained that according to state law, the prima facie speed limit on any residential roadway in Rhode Island is 25 miles per hour, whether or not a sign is posted. Every operator is expected to be aware of this speed limit, as it is inherent in the law, and law enforcement can enforce the 25-mile-an-hour speed limit even without a posted sign.

Discussions arose regarding how to assess the 70% approval requirement. There was a suggestion to review and enhance the criteria for approval, incorporating tracking measures and refining the radius determination process. Questions were raised about the determining factor for reaching the 70% threshold, indicating a potential need for updating the form. Additionally, it was proposed to establish standards for including affected areas in the assessment process. It was noted that a revised policy would be presented to the council at its next meeting incorporating suggestions for revisions

13. Director of Parks & Recreation Rensehausen re - update on stage project

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted
unanimously to receive and file.

Prior to the vote being taken, Director Rensehausen presented an overview of the stage project, highlighting the necessity to relocate the proposed site due to concerns from CRMC about its placement in a flood zone. He provided details about the materials for the new structure and mentioned that the agreement with DEM required a gravel-access driveway.

Director Rensehausen informed the council that the project is moving to the bidding stage, expressing optimism about transferring a \$150,000 grant initially allocated for earthwork to support the project. Anticipated completion is set for summer.

Town Administrator Contente mentioned the potential return of last night's concerts by the Philharmonics, budget permitting, to utilize the new stage.

Councilman Ley emphasized the enhanced safety of the new location. Town Administrator Contente noted that he extended an invitation to the 4th of July committee to utilize the facility. However, they are not required to use it.

I4. Director of Parks & Recreation Rensehausen re -
consideration for recreational facility fee amendments

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted
unanimously to refer this matter
to the Town Solicitor so that he
may draft ordinance language for
Council consideration on January
17, 2024; And direct the solicitor
to incorporate language enabling
the passage of fee amendments
through resolution in the future.

Prior to the vote being taken, Director Rensehausen requested council consideration to increase some of the recreational facility fees to be more competitive with other facilities. He provided an overview of the proposed amendments.

Discussion ensued concerning the preference for making adjustments through resolutions as opposed to ordinances. It was suggested to refer to the solicitor to draft ordinance changes to the process by removing the requirement for changes to be made through ordinances and enabling the passage of fee amendments through resolution. Allowing for greater efficiency, similar to practices in other situations.

I5. Good Energy re Electricity Supplier Selection Process

- Voted unanimously to authorize
collaboration between Good Energy and
the solicitor for the negotiation of
the contract; and as recommended, with
the option to proceed with a managed
full requirements product and utilizing
previous RI buying Group bid to join
the seven-municipality buying group

Prior to the vote being taken, Patrick Roach from Good Energy approached the council and provided a background of the aggregated electricity program.

Mr. Roach explained that the proposed plan underwent public review and received approval from the State's Public Utilities Commission in late October. The joint recommendation in the packet suggests pursuing the implementation of the program through a managed load contract, aligning with the approach adopted by seven other communities in Rhode Island with electricity aggregation programs. He explained that this strategy involves collaborating with a single supplier within a buying group, utilizing a diversified purchasing strategy to achieve a fixed price through averaged purchases over time. He noted that the flexibility inherent in this approach allows for determining the duration of the fixed price, crucial in navigating volatile energy markets; and this flexibility is seen as valuable, especially in light of recent market fluctuations. Mr. Roach stated that it provides the opportunity to stay competitive with utility rates and adjust variables, such as the proportion of renewable energy, impacting the overall price.

Mr. Roach clarified the proposed course of action, emphasizing the need to negotiate a contract with the supplier NextEra Energy Services, the provider chosen by the Rhode Island buying group. He highlighted that NextEra Energy Services is currently the exclusive supplier offering the required product. The recommendation is to seek Council guidance to collaborate with staff and the solicitor to negotiate the contract with NextEra. This negotiation aims to secure approval from the Council and make the community the first to join the buying group, aligning with the suggested approach.

Vice Chairwoman Parella inquires if the town can opt not to proceed if dissatisfied with the proposed price. Mr. Roach recommends the town move forward with the program launch. He explains that in the managed load program, upon signing the contract, the exact price is unknown. However, the commitment is to launch the program with the supplier initiating purchases, and a commitment is sought from the supplier that the eventual price will be lower than the utility price at launch.

Chairman Calouro seeks clarification on whether Mr. Roach is requesting the council to commit without knowing the exact price. Mr. Roach explained that the managed product requires the supplier to make purchases that, when averaged, determine the price. While the exact price cannot be provided upfront, a commitment for it to be lower than the utility price at launch is sought, as demonstrated by seven other communities that successfully used this approach. Estimating savings at \$10-\$15 per month.

Chairman Calouro apologizes, expressing his initial understanding that the next step was to go out to bid and determine the price before making a decision. He seeks clarification on whether the proposal is to move forward without knowing the price and inquiries about the course of action if the price is unfavorable. Mr. Roach responds that the plan is to bring back a contract with sufficient safeguards for comfort, including a commitment that the price will be lower than the utility price.

Councilman Ley seeks clarification from Mr. Roach, asking if the request is to authorize negotiations with the solicitor for a contract that stipulates purchases must be below a certain amount of the standard last resort kilowatt-hour price. Clarifying that although the exact price is unknown, the negotiation's parameter is that it should be below a specific benchmark, which is the standard offer price. Mr. Roach affirms Councilman Ley's understanding, stating that the supplier is indeed taking on some risk. The supplier commits to implementing the strategy with the assurance that the program will not be launched unless the price is confirmed to be lower than what individuals would pay with the utility at that specific time

Councilman Sweeney inquires about the process, stating that after working on the contract, the next step would be to review it thoroughly before moving forward. It appears that the subsequent stage involves the review of the contract.

Chairman Calouro expresses concern, stating that it was not his understanding to commit first and then assess the details. He seeks clarification on whether the commitment involves anything beyond reviewing the contract, and if it entails accepting the contract. Mr. Roach reassures Chairman Calouro, stating that there is no commitment beyond the contract review, and the contract will be presented for thorough review before any decisions are made.

Discussions ensued about the roles and responsibilities regarding the proposed aggregated electricity program. Questions were raised about who the point person on the staff would be, with considerations for outreach to residents, contract pricing, and potential opt-outs. Good Energy clarified that they aim to handle customer support and workload, ensuring effective communication with residents.

Council members sought clarification on the commitment level required from the town, expressing concerns about moving forward without knowing the exact pricing details. Good Energy reassured

that the next step involves negotiating a contract, which will be thoroughly reviewed by the council before any commitment.

There was a request to provide a comparison between a managed load approach and committing to a specific price, highlighting the potential savings over a 12-month period. The council emphasized the importance of clear information for residents facing a decision. The council acknowledged the need to consult with the chief of police, who has expertise in the energy industry.

While expressing willingness to move forward, some council members stressed the need for more concrete information before committing the residents to the program. The discussion highlighted the desire for a clear understanding of potential savings and the impact on residents' choices before finalizing the decision.

6. Martin D. Wencek, Permitting Supervisor, Office of Water Resources/Permitting Section, Freshwater Wetlands Program, Department of Environmental Management re Notice for Application No. 22-0264 of KenDan, LLC to alter freshwater wetlands for Proposed Hotel Facility on Gooding Avenue - deadline to file comments, January 8, 2024.

- a. Edward and Emily Spinard, 35 Dartmouth Street - petition in opposition
(including signed petition by local residents)

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to instruct the Clerk to send a letter to DEM clarifying that the town has not taken a stance on the DEM application. The letter will communicate the town's concerns regarding wetland flooding, include a copy of the Silver Creek Drainage study, and inform DEM about the potential impacts of the proposed development of the future high school in the nearby area.

Chairman Calouro begins by acknowledging that typically, matters like this one are usually received and filed without much council input. However, he notes the receipt of a letter asking for specific adjustments, particularly seeking clarity on whether the town officially supports the project in question.

Chairman Calouro expresses his lack of awareness regarding any official council action in support or opposition to the project. He emphasized his belief in the local and state processes, acknowledging the challenging DEM process. While stating that the Council did not officially support the project, he suggests sending a letter to DEM expressing neutrality. The letter would also address the potential impacts in the area, citing a previous study commissioned by the town in 2007.

Councilman Sweeney concurred with the chairman's viewpoint but also suggested the importance of informing DEM about the potential impacts associated with the proposed development of the future high school in the nearby area; and the need to address flooding concerns and emphasized the importance of conducting a comprehensive review.

Ted Spinard, residing at 35 Dartmouth Street, reiterated the unanimous agreement among Council members to inform DEM about the serious flooding concerns related to the potential development. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive assessment of how the development could impact flooding and the construction of the new high school. Another concern was the applicant's claim of town support, which he urged the Council to clarify with DEM, stating that the town's position is still under review. Mr. Spinard expressed gratitude for the Council's consideration, acknowledged the effort of those gathering 100 signatures, and thanked everyone for their support

I7. Town Treasurer Hassell - re - Request to lock in energy contract with best practice

a. best practice energy power recommendation

Teixeira/Parella- Voted
unanimously to permit Best
Practice to enter into a contract
with a supplier for up to three
years.

Prior to the vote being taken, Clerk Cordeiro entered into the record that a new power recommendation was provided as "received at meeting."

Treasure Hassell presented to the council that the town is in the process of renewing its energy contract in Rhode Island. Out of the 39 communities, 19 have chosen best practices for better pricing. She proposed to allow Best Practices to enter into a contract with a supplier for up to 3 years. The previous

contract, with Consolation, is expiring, and they have been monitoring offerings from the League of Cities and Towns.

Currently, there are no savings due to being in a 6-cent contract coming out of Covid, and the energy landscape has changed dramatically.

Best Practices recommended a flexible approach on the spot market, with the lowest price found at 9 to 10 points with First Point Power. They suggest locking in the top 3 components of the fixed price (capacity, RPS, and ancillaries) for 3 years, as these components don't change much. The 2024 market is at a 12-month low, offering potential savings. The contract would provide flexibility to act quickly based on market changes.

Town Administrator Contente noted that the previous league contract was around 6 cents per kilowatt-hour, and if they were to lock in tomorrow, it would be around 10 cents. Despite the increase, it's better than the quotes received from the previous supplier, which were consistently around 11 cents or more.

The proposed contract would involve logging into a 3-year index, with the first 12 months fixed. There would be opportunities to take advantage of net metering credits, and the council would be informed about the next buying opportunity for 2025 in February or early March. The council expressed that the proposal seems reasonable and provides flexibility to adapt to market changes.

CF. Citizens Public Forum

Persons wishing to speak during the citizens public forum must notify the Council Clerk and sign in prior to the commencement of the meeting.

J. Bills & Expenditures

J1. RFP # 1025 - Statistical Update Revaluation

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to refer this matter to the Town Administrator and Tax Assessor to act in the best interest of the Town.

Prior to the vote taken, the Clerk read the following bids:

- Catalis Tax & CAMA, Inc., in the amount of \$155,907.00
- Vison Government Solutions, Inc., in the amount of \$197,000.00

J2. BID# 1026 - Library Strategic Planning Services

Sweeney/Parella- Voted unanimously to refer this matter to the Town Administrator and Library Director to act in the best interest of the Town.

Prior to the vote taken, the Clerk read the following bids:

- Transform Forward in the amount of \$32,000.00
- Constructive Disruption, LLC in the amount of \$22,800.00

K. Special Reports

L. Town Solicitor

M. Executive Sessions

M1. Town Administrator Contente Request for Executive Session Pursuant to RIGL § 42-46-5(a)(5) - Open Space Acquisition

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to convene in Executive Session pursuant to RIGL Section 42-46-5 (a) (5) concerning the Acquisition of Open Space at 10:39 PM.

Teixeira/Sweeney - Voted unanimously to resume open session and seal the minutes of the Executive Session at 10:57 PM.

Solicitor Ursillo announced that a motion was made and voted on in the Executive Session.

Consent Agenda Items:

(CA) AA. Submission of Minutes - Boards and Commissions

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

(CA) AA1. Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes, August 17, 2023

(CA) AA2. Bristol 4th of July General Committee Meeting Minutes, October 18, 2023

(CA) AA3. Zoning Board of Review Meeting Minutes, September 18, 2023

(CA) AA4. Zoning Board of Review Meeting Minutes, October 2, 2023

(CA) AA5. Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees Meeting, October 19, 2023

(CA) AA6. Bristol Planning Board Meeting Minutes, November 9, 2023

(CA) AA7. Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes, September 5, 2023

(CA) BB. Budget Adjustments

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to approve these adjustments"

(CA) BB1. Tax Assessor DiMeo re - Recommended Abatements & Additions - November 27, 2023

(CA) CC. Financial Reports

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

(CA) DD. Proclamations, Resolutions & Citations

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to adopt these Proclamations, Resolutions and Citations as prepared and presented"

(CA) DD1. Proclamation - Celebration of 125th Anniversary of the Knights of Columbus (signed)

(CA) EE. Utility Petitions

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to approve these petitions"

(CA) EE1. Water Pollution Control Facility - Sewer Permits

(CA) FF. City & Town Resolutions Not Previously Considered

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

(CA) GG. Distributions/Communications

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

(CA) GG1. Bid# 1022 tabulation - Screw Pump Repair - Main Lift Pumping Station

(CA) GG2. Bid # 1023 tabulation - 4th of July Ball 2024

(CA) GG3. Bid# 1024 tabulation - Emergency Medical Services - Paramedic

(CA) GG4. Town Clerk Cordeiro - Thank you letter to Alayne White for serving on the Zoning Board of Review

(CA) GG5. Town Administrator Contente to Robert West re - award Bid #966 (extension award) - On Call Carpentry Services

(CA) GG6. Town Administrator Contente to John Pacheco Masonry Co. re - award Bid #967 (extension award) - On Call Masonry Repair Service

(CA) GG7. Town Administrator Contente to Robert West re - Bid #968 (extension award) - On Call Interior & Exterior Painting Service

(CA) GG8. Town Administrator Contente to Paramedic Systems, Inc. re - award Bid # 1024 Award Letter - Emergency Medical Services- Paramedic

(CA) HH. Distributions/Notice of Meetings

(Office copy only)

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

- (CA) HH1. Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees Meeting, November 16, 2023
- (CA) HH2. The Commissioners of the Cemeteries, The North and East Burial Grounds Commission Meeting, November 15, 2023
- (CA) HH3. Planning Board Meeting, November 21, 2023
- (CA) HH4. The Bristol Planning Board Technical Review Committee Meeting, November 28, 2023
- (CA) HH5. Zoning Board of Review Meeting, December 4, 2023
- (CA) HH6. Bristol Planning Board Technical Review Committee Meeting, November 28, 2023
- (CA) HH7. Bristol County Water Authority Personnel Committee Meeting, November 30, 2023
- (CA) HH8. Historic District Commission Meeting, December 7, 2023
- (CA) HH9. Planning Board Meeting December 14, 2023 Cancelled
- (CA) HH10. Harbor Commission Meeting, December 4, 2023
- (CA) HH11. Conservation Commission Meeting, December 5, 2023

(CA) II. Claims (Referrals)

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to refer these items to the Insurance Committee and at its discretion to the Interlocal Trust"

- (CA) II1. Progressive Casualty Insurance c/o Marlin Dominguez - reimbursement for damage to vehicle
- (CA) II2. John Mattes, 7 Karen Ann Drive re claim for storm drain damages

(CA) JJ. Miscellaneous Items Requiring Council Approval

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to approve these items"

- (CA) JJ1. (late item) Justin Marks, Wink, 17 State Street re - Holiday Sales License Renewal

(CA) KK. Curb cut petitions as approved by the director of public works

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to grant these curb cuts per the recommendation of, and conditions specified by, the Director of Public Works"

(CA) KK1. Michael Santoni/ Alexis Pappas, 9 Sunset Road- request for curb cut

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Department of Public Works

There being no further business, upon a motion by Vice Chairwoman Parella, seconded by Councilman Sweeney, and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this meeting to be adjourned at 10:57