

AGENDA

Special Meeting

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL

Hybrid Meeting

6th Floor Council Chambers and Zoom

April 25, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. MOMENT OF SILENCE**
- 4. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:**
 - 4.1 Earth Day Proclamation
 - 4.2 International Firefighters Day
 - 4.3 Eagle Scout Proclamations to be presented at Court of Honor 4/27/24
- 5. PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*) (2 minute limit)**
- 6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:**
 - 6.1 Consideration of a resolution concerning an application for the 2024 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program.
- 7a. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL**
- 7b. REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS**
- 8. NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):**
 - 8.1 Consideration of a resolution approving the 2024 Fair Housing Action Plan.
 - 8.2 Consideration of approval to waive the Building permit fees for work associated with the Small Cities Grant Funding application for improvements at Old Post Village, 763 Tolland Stage Road.
 - 8.3 Consideration and action on a resolution appointing Town Manager, Brian Foley to the Board of Directors of the Eastern Highlands Health District to fulfill a term of service through May 1, 2027.
 - 8.4 Financial Update for the Period Ending March 31, 2024
 - 8.5 Consideration of a Resolution to remove Jodie Coleman-Marzialo from the Historic District Commission (HDC) per Section C5-2 (iii) of the Tolland Town Charter and the setting of a Public Hearing for May 21, 2024 and notice be given to Jodie Coleman-Marzialo.

8.6 Consideration of a Resolution to remove Kathleen W. Bach from the Historic District Commission per Section C5-2 (iii) of the Tolland Town Charter and the setting of a Public Hearing for May 21, 2024 and notice be given to Kathleen W. Bach.

8.7 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions: None

9. OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):

10. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

11. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

11.1 04.02.24 Public Hearing Minutes

11.2 04.04.24 Budget Meeting Minutes

11.3 04.09.24 Special Meeting Minutes

11.4 04.09.24 Regular Meeting Minutes

11.5 04.17.24 Annual Budget Meeting Minutes

12. CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL

13. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

14. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS

15. PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*)
(3 minute limit)

16. ADJOURNMENT

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85771577297?pwd=ZVA0eTRZYkNNcm5hQUdpRGI0SmNDUT09>

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<https://www.tolland.org/town-council>

The Town of Tolland is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

Town of



Tolland

Proclamation

Earth Day

WHEREAS, on April 22, 1970, millions of Americans came together to celebrate the first Earth Day. Residents from all walks of life advocated that their fellow Americans identify, discuss and address environmental issues and called for action today for a better tomorrow; and

WHEREAS, we commemorate the 54th Earth Day this year, we take time to better understand the challenges that we continue to face locally, nationally and globally, and face those challenges with a spirit of connection to each other as well as the Earth and shared responsibility for its future; and

WHEREAS, Tolland has taken efforts towards addressing environmental issues and improving our natural spaces with trails blazed throughout the community and more underway, addressed forestry management concerns and welcomed alternative energy resources with solar and geothermal; and

WHEREAS, we know our work is not yet finished and must continue to protect our natural, protected spaces, redefine how we manage refuse and recycling and work creatively to make our community more energy independent.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Katie Stargardter, Chair of the Tolland Town Council, on behalf of the Town Council and community at large, recognize April 22 as Earth Day and encourage residents across the community to engage in educational awareness programs, take part or organize a community cleanup event, or discover and celebrate Tolland's natural spaces so that our community's legacy of stewardship will persevere for future generations.

Dated at Tolland, Connecticut, this 25th day of April, 2024.

Katie Stargardter, Chair
Tolland Town Council



Town of

Tolland

Proclamation

International Firefighters' Day

WHEREAS, Firefighters dedicate their lives to the protection of life and property; and sometimes that dedication is in the form of countless hours volunteered over many years, in others it is many selfless years working in the industry; in all cases it risks the ultimate sacrifice of a firefighter's life; and

WHEREAS, International Firefighters' Day (IFFD) is a time where the community can recognize and honor the sacrifices that firefighters make to ensure that their communities and environment are as safe as possible; it is also a day in which current and past firefighters can be thanked for their contributions; and

WHEREAS, International Firefighters' Day is observed each year on the 4th of May on where we remember the past firefighters who have died while serving our community or dedicated their lives to protecting the safety of us all; and show our support and appreciation to the firefighters worldwide who continue to protect us so well throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, hailing from all walks of life, they are our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, and friends. They protect us without wanting of recognition or reward. In our time of need they are there with courage, compassion and loyalty. They are the essence of the true meaning of community.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Katie Stargardter, Chair of the Tolland Town Council, on behalf of the Town Council and community at large, now call upon all citizens of the Town of Tolland and upon all patriotic, civic, and educational organizations to observe the day of May 4, 2024, in recognition of the patriotic service and dedicated efforts of our fire and emergency services personnel.

Dated at Tolland, Connecticut, this 25th day of April, 2024.

Katie Stargardter, Chair
Tolland Town Council

Town of



Tolland

Proclamation

*Honoring Caleb W. Patterson
on the Occasion of His Eagle Scout Court of Honor*

WHEREAS, Caleb W. Patterson resides in Tolland, Connecticut and is a member of Boy Scout Troop 2; and

WHEREAS, Caleb W. Patterson has dedicated himself to the goal of obtaining the Boy Scouts of America's most prestigious advancement known as Eagle Scout; and

WHEREAS, the conferring of an Eagle Scout rank is the highest achievement that can be bestowed upon a Scout. Such an accomplishment is an earned rank in that the recipient must perform and successfully complete the rigorous requirements exacted to achieve an Eagle Scout in the areas of leadership, community service, citizenship and outdoor skills, and

WHEREAS, less than five percent of all Scouts actually achieve this goal; and

WHEREAS, Having advanced through all of the lower ranks to attain the rank of Life Scout, and having completed more than the 21 required merit badges, Caleb also demonstrated strong leadership and tremendous scout spirit throughout his entire scouting career. Caleb served as a Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader, and Junior Assistant Scoutmaster. Caleb was also the Quartermaster of the 2023 NYLT program and is currently serving as the Senior Patrol Leader for the 2024 session, and

WHEREAS, Caleb planned and completed a very significant service project by leading a team in the design, construction and installation of 10 outdoor cat climbing structures at Our Companions Animal Sanctuary located in Ashford, CT. Caleb has been volunteering at Our Companions for the past three years, provides rehabilitation services for abandoned or abused cats and dogs before they are placed in their new "forever" homes, and

WHEREAS, Caleb W. Patterson, having completed the requirements and having been examined by an Eagle Scout Board of Review, has been found to be worthy of rank of Eagle Scout and will be honored and receive his award at an Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony on April 27, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Katie Stargardter, Chair of the Tolland Town Council, on behalf of the Town Council and the community at large, wish to honor Caleb W. Patterson for this noteworthy achievement and recognize his contributions and dedication. We commend him on the significant occasion of achieving the rank of Eagle Scout and wish him much luck and success in all his future endeavors. Dated at Tolland, Connecticut, this 27th day of April, 2024

Katie Stargardter, Chair
Tolland Town Council

Town of



Tolland

Proclamation

Honoring Garrett G. Bumps on the Occasion of His Eagle Scout Court of Honor

WHEREAS, Garrett G. Bumps resides in Tolland, Connecticut and is a member of Boy Scout Troop 2; and

WHEREAS, Garrett G. Bumps has dedicated himself to the goal of obtaining the Boy Scouts of America's most prestigious advancement known as Eagle Scout; and

WHEREAS, the conferring of an Eagle Scout rank is the highest achievement that can be bestowed upon a Scout. Such an accomplishment is an earned rank in that the recipient must perform and successfully complete the rigorous requirements exacted to achieve an Eagle Scout in the areas of leadership, community service, citizenship and outdoor skills, and

WHEREAS, less than five percent of all Scouts actually achieve this goal; and

WHEREAS, Having advanced through all of the lower ranks to attain the rank of Life Scout, and having completed more than the 21 required merit badges, Garrett also demonstrated strong leadership and tremendous scout spirit throughout his entire scouting career. Garrett served as an Assistant Patrol Leader, Den Leader, Patrol Leader, Scribe, and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. He is also an active and award-winning member of Tolland High School's DECA program where Garrett also served as an Officer of their State Board. In 2022 Garrett was selected for the US Senate Page program where he actively participated in the workings of our Federal Government at the US Capitol for six months, and

WHEREAS, Garrett planned and completed a very significant service project by leading a team in the design, implementation and training of the catalog record keeping system for the Tolland Historical Society. This new catalog system will allow the Society to record and track the many thousands of documents, artworks and artifacts that make up the history of our Town. Garrett researched the software capabilities, designed procedures for recording and then worked to train the Society members on the application and process. For many future generations, Tolland residents and historical scholars will have Garrett to thank for his efforts, and

WHEREAS, Garrett G. Bumps, having completed the requirements and having been examined by an Eagle Scout Board of Review, has been found to be worthy of rank of Eagle Scout and will be honored and receive his award at an Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony on April 27, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Katie Stargardter, Chair of the Tolland Town Council, on behalf of the Town Council and the community at large, wish to honor Garrett G. Bumps for this noteworthy achievement and recognize his contributions and dedication. We commend him on the significant occasion of achieving the rank of Eagle Scout and wish him much luck and success in all his future endeavors. Dated at Tolland, Connecticut, this 27th day of April, 2024

Town of



Tolland

Proclamation

*Honoring Matthew S. Bernard
on the Occasion of His Eagle Scout Court of Honor*

WHEREAS, Matthew S. Bernard resides in Tolland, Connecticut and is a member of Boy Scout Troop 2; and

WHEREAS, Matthew S. Bernard has dedicated himself to the goal of obtaining the Boy Scouts of America's most prestigious advancement known as Eagle Scout; and

WHEREAS, the conferring of an Eagle Scout rank is the highest achievement that can be bestowed upon a Scout. Such an accomplishment is an earned rank in that the recipient must perform and successfully complete the rigorous requirements exacted to achieve an Eagle Scout in the areas of leadership, community service, citizenship and outdoor skills, and

WHEREAS, less than five percent of all Scouts actually achieve this goal; and

WHEREAS, Having advanced through all of the lower ranks to attain the rank of Life Scout, and having completed more than the 21 required merit badges, Matthew also demonstrated strong leadership and tremendous scout spirit throughout his entire scouting career. Matthew served as a Troop Quartermaster and was a Patrol Leader twice, and

WHEREAS, Matthew planned and completed a very significant service project by leading a team to design, remove and install a new outdoor activity pavilion for the Tolland Green Learning Center. Matthew and his team demolished the existing unsafe structure and built a new, sturdy pavilion along with a new bench. The Tolland Green Learning Center and the United Congregational Church of Tolland community look forward to enjoying many years of shade and shelter for their playground due to Matthew's efforts, and

WHEREAS, Matthew S. Bernard, having completed the requirements and having been examined by an Eagle Scout Board of Review, has been found to be worthy of rank of Eagle Scout and will be honored and receive his award at an Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony on April 27, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Katie Stargardter, Chair of the Tolland Town Council, on behalf of the Town Council and the community at large, wish to honor Matthew S. Bernard for this noteworthy achievement and recognize his contributions and dedication. We commend him on the significant occasion of achieving the rank of Eagle Scout and wish him much luck and success in all his future endeavors. Dated at Tolland, Connecticut, this 27th day of April, 2024

AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Consideration of a resolution concerning an application for the 2024 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program.

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: April 25, 2024

ITEM SUMMARY: Prior to the submission of a Small Cities Community Development Block Grant application, municipalities are required to hold at least one public hearing to offer citizens the opportunity to comment on the Town's housing and community needs and discuss specific project activities in the areas of housing, economic development or community facilities which could be part of the Town's application for funding. Towns are also required to discuss the Program Income Reuse Plan.

The Public Hearing is an opportunity to educate and inform local residents about the project and to provide a forum for citizen input.

Major activity categories are: Acquisition, Housing Rehabilitation, Public Housing Modernization, Community Facilities, Public Services, and Economic Development. Projects funded with CDBG allocations must carry out at least one of three National Objectives: benefit to low- and moderate-income persons, elimination of slums and blight, or meeting urgent community development needs.

Maximum award limits:

- Up to \$2,000,000 for Public Modernization with priority State Sponsored Housing Portfolio (SSHP)
- Up to \$1,000,000 for Infrastructure associated with the development of Affordable Housing

The Human Services Department, along with the Project and Grants Manager, on behalf of the Town of Tolland anticipates applying for the maximum grant amount of \$2,000,000 under the Public Housing Modernization category for Improvements at Old Post Village, 763 Tolland Stage Road. In addition, the Town of Tolland will discuss its revolving loan fund with program income generated from the housing rehabilitation loan program.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY: No Matching Funds Required.

TOWN ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A.

COUNCIL ACTION DESIRED: Approval of Resolution

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

- Public Hearing Notice
- Draft resolution

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBE GIVEN that the Town of Tolland will conduct a public hearing by the Town Council on Thursday, April 25, 2024 at 7:00 pm at 21 Tolland Green, Tolland, CT 06084 to discuss the Fiscal Year 2024 Community Development Block Grant program and to solicit citizen input.

Maximum award limits:

- Up to \$2,000,000 for Public Housing Modernization with priority to State Sponsored Housing Portfolio (SSHHP).
- Up to \$1,000,000 for Infrastructure associated with the development of Affordable Housing (e.g., streets sidewalks, sewer lines, windmills).

Major activity categories are: Acquisition, Housing Rehabilitation, Public Housing Modernization, Community Facilities, Public Services, and Economic Development. Projects funded with CDBG allocations must carry out at least one of three National Objectives: benefit to low- and moderate-income persons, elimination of slums and blight, or meeting urgent community development needs.

The purpose of the public hearing is to obtain citizen's views on the Town's community development and housing needs and review and discuss specific project activities in the areas of housing, economic development, or community facilities which could be part of the Town's new Application for funding for the year 2024.

Also, the public hearing will be to give citizens an opportunity to make their comments known on the program and for approval of the Program Income Reuse Plan, if applicable. If you are unable to attend the public hearing, you may direct written comments to the Town of Tolland Department of Human Services, 21 Tolland Green, Tolland, CT 06084 or you may telephone 860-871-3611. In addition, information may be obtained at the above address Monday-Wednesday 8:00am – 4:30 pm, and Thursday 8:00am-7:30pm.

The Town Manager's Office on behalf of the Town of Tolland anticipates applying for the maximum grant amount of \$2,000,000 under the eligible activity Public Housing Modernization with priority to State Sponsored Housing Portfolio (SSHHP). In addition, the Town will maintain its revolving loan fund with program income (principal and interest) generated from prior housing rehabilitation loan programs.

The Town of Tolland promotes fair housing and makes all programs available to low- and moderate-income households regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, age, lawful source of income, familial status, learning disability or physical/mental disability, or sexual orientation.

All are encouraged to attend. The public hearing is accessible to the handicapped. Any disabled persons requiring special assistance or non-English speaking persons should contact Michael Wilkinson, ADA Coordinator at 860-871-3627 at least five days prior to the hearing. The Town of Tolland is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.

Dated this 12th and 22nd day of April, 2024
Brian Foley, Town Manager

Agenda Item #6.1

Consideration of a resolution concerning an application for the 2024 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Federal monies are available under the Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program, administered by the State of Connecticut, Department of Housing pursuant to Public Law 93 -3 83, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 127c, and Part VI of Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Commissioner of Housing is authorized to disburse such Federal monies to local municipalities; and,

WHEREAS, it is desirable and in the public interest that the Town of Tolland make application to the State for \$2,000,000.00 in order to undertake a Small Cities Community Development Program and to execute an Assistance Agreement therefore, should one be offered.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town of Tolland Town Council:

1. That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for State Assistance imposed by Part VI of Chapter 130 of The Connecticut General Statutes; and,
2. That the filing of an application by the Town of Tolland in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000.00 is hereby approved, and that the Town Manager of the Town of Tolland is hereby authorized and directed to file such Application with the Commissioner of the Department of Housing, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required by the Commissioner, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an Agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, rescissions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of the Town of Tolland.

Approved by the Tolland Town Council on , 2024

Agenda Item #8.1

AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Consideration of a resolution approving the 2024 Fair Housing Action Plan.

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: April 25, 2024

ITEM SUMMARY:

Every community which receives Department of Housing Small Cities funding is required to affirmatively further fair housing even if the grant only provides assistance to non-housing related activities. Those actions are detailed in the Fair Housing Action Plan.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY: N/A

TOWN ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A.

COUNCIL ACTION DESIRED: Approval of Resolution

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

- 2024 Fair Housing Action Plan
- Draft Resolution

FAIR HOUSING ACTION PLAN

TOWN OF TOLLAND

I. Policy Statement

It shall be the policy and commitment of the Town of Tolland to ensure that fair and equal housing opportunities are granted to all persons, in all housing opportunities and development activities funded by the town, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, lawful source of income, familial status, national origin, ancestry, age or mental or physical disability. This shall be done through a program of education, an analysis of impediments, and designation of a Fair Housing Officer and development of a procedure for complaints of discrimination. This plan will incorporate the directives of state and federal laws and executive orders, including, but not limited to:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Fair Housing Act – Title VIII of the Civil Rights Action of 1968, as amended
- Executive Order 11063, as amended by Executive Order 12259
- Section 104(b) of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended
- Section 109 of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended
- Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended
- Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended
- Executive Order 11246 (as amended by Executive Orders 12375 and 12086)
 - Equal Opportunity under HUD contracts and HUD-assisted Construction Contracts
- Executive Order 12892, Leadership and Coordination of Fair Housing
- Connecticut General Statutes 46a-64c as amended

The Town of Town of Tolland commits to providing and promoting racial and economic integration in any housing development financially supported with DOH funding and will take affirmative steps to reach beneficiaries from all racial and ethnic groups as well as the physically or mentally handicapped and families with children and to reach a broad range of income eligible beneficiaries for appropriate and applicable housing opportunities.

II. Selection of Fair Housing Officer

In accordance with Title VIII, Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended, the Fair Housing Officer below has been designated to handle fair housing complaints and activities.

Beverly Bellody
Human Services Director
21 Tolland Green
Tolland, CT 06084
860.871.3600
bbellody@Tollandct.gov

The Fair Housing Officer is responsible for the intake and processing of all housing complaints as well as implementation of the Fair Housing Plan activities and actions. While not expected to be an “expert” in Fair Housing Laws, at a minimum, the officer will be familiar with the complaint process and federal and state laws, which address Fair Housing. Records which show the date, time, nature of complaint and decisions made in the complaint process will be fully documented. A separate file will maintain a record of all housing discrimination complaints and follow-up actions.

III. Complaint Process

Housing discrimination complaint forms such as Forms HUD-903 and HUD-903A (Spanish version) from HUD, as well as, a summary of actions which may constitute housing discrimination, and instructions for completing and filing housing discrimination complaints will be made available to citizens at Town Hall, 21 Tolland Green, Tolland, CT 06084. Complaints need not be made on official forms to be valid.

Forms will also be distributed to lenders, realtors, and at other public places such as the Library periodically.

The Fair Housing Officer will reasonably assist the complainant in submitting the complaint to the appropriate body by providing assistance in explaining the form and/or contacting the appropriate office and allowing the use of town phones for communication.

The individual(s) filing the complaint will then be advised of the option of filing directly with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) within one year after an alleged violation, the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) by filing a notarized complaint within 180 days of the alleged violation, or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or with all agencies simultaneously. The individual should also be advised of the option of filing suit, at his/her expense in Federal District Court or State Court within two years of an alleged violation. The individual should be further advised that if he/she cannot afford an attorney, the Court may appoint one and that a suit may be commenced even after filing a complaint, if the individual has not signed a conciliation agreement and an Administrative Law Judge has not started a hearing. A court may award actual and punitive damages and attorney's fees and costs.

The Fair Housing Officer will keep a record of the progress on the number of complaints filed, actions taken, and the status of each complaint.

IV. Opportunity Mapping

Using the Connecticut Opportunity Map, which is available at the DOH website, the town has determined that the target area for the proposed project or activity is a High Opportunity area.

V. Implementation and Action Steps

The town will take specific action steps and implementation activities over the next three-year period following the guidelines provided by DOH.

Action Steps 1, 2, 9, 10, 11 or 12 (Set I)

Minimum (1) selection

Promote fair housing enforcement and education

11. Appoint a fair housing officer, have him or her trained on their duties and responsibilities as a fair housing officer, and publicize the person's name, contact information, and job responsibilities.

Action Steps 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14 or 15 (Set II)

Minimum (1) selection

Ensure local planning documents affirmatively further fair housing

4. Publish the municipality's POCD on its website.

Additional Steps

The Town of Tolland will adopt annually a Fair Housing Policy Statement and a Fair Housing Resolution as an indication of its commitment to Fair Housing Month during the month of April.

The Town of Tolland will display its fair housing policies/procedures and ADA policies and grievance procedures on its website.

The Town of Tolland will display Fair Housing posters identifying the town's Fair Housing Officer, title, address and phone number in prominent locations. In addition, fair housing information will be distributed outside of traditional municipal locations including local realtors and banks.

All advertising of residential real estate owned by the Town of Tolland for sale, rent or financing will contain the Fair Housing logo, equal opportunity slogan as a means of educating the home seeking public that the property is available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, national origin, age, ancestry, or lawful source of income. All bid advertisements by town sponsored programs must include the phrase "Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer." The type of logo, statement or slogan will depend on the type of media being used (visual or auditory). All logos/statements must appear at the end of the advertisement.

VI. Analysis of Impediments

The Town will cooperate and assist the state with its periodic Analysis of Impediments and conduct a review of policies, practices and procedures that affect the availability and accessibility of housing.

VII. Timetable

The Town will carry out the above action steps within three years of the adoption of this Plan.

VIII. Amendments

The Town Council shall amend and revise this Plan as required to keep current with state/federal affirmative action and equal opportunity policies and procedures

and local actions and activities to further the purposes of this Plan.

Brian Foley
Town Manager

DATE

Agenda Item #8.1

Consideration of a resolution approving the 2024 Fair Housing Action Plan.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

Whereas, All persons are afforded a right to full and equal housing opportunities in the neighborhood of their choice; and

Whereas, Federal fair housing laws require that all individuals, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, be given equal access to all housing-related opportunities, including rental and homeownership opportunities, and be allowed to make free choices regarding housing location; and

Whereas, Connecticut fair housing laws require that all individuals, regardless of age, ancestry, color, learning disability, marital status, intellectual disability, national origin, physical disability, mental disability, race, religious creed, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, status as a veteran, lawful source of income, use of a guide dog, and familial status be given equal access to all housing-related opportunities, including rental and home ownership opportunities, and be allowed to make free choices regarding housing location; and

Whereas, The Town of Tolland is committed to upholding these laws, and realizes that these laws must be supplemented by an Affirmative Statement publicly endorsing the right of all people to full and equal housing opportunities in the neighborhood of their choice.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town of Tolland hereby endorses a Fair Housing Policy to ensure equal opportunity for all persons to rent, purchase, obtain financing and enjoy all other housing-related services of their choice on a non-discriminatory basis as provided by state and federal law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Town Manager of the Town of Tolland or his designated representative is responsible for responding to and assisting any person who alleges to be the victim of an illegal discriminatory housing practice in the Town of Tolland and for advising such person of the right to file a complaint with the State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or to seek assistance from the CT Fair Housing Center, legal services, or other fair housing organizations to protect his or her right to equal housing opportunities.

Adopted by the Town of Tolland on , 2024.

Agenda Item #8.2

AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Consideration of approval to waive the Building permit fees for work associated with the Small Cities Grant Funding application for improvements at Old Post Village, 763 Tolland Stage Road.

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: April 25, 2024

ITEM SUMMARY:

In May 2024, the Town of Tolland, on behalf of the Tolland Housing Authority, intends to submit an application for a Small Cities Community Development Block Grant for improvements to Old Post Village, a property located at 763 Tolland Stage Road. The Housing Authority is appointed by Town Council and are the property owners of Old Post Village. As part of the application, the Town will need to submit a project budget, which includes costs for anticipated permits and fees to be paid by the grant award. Municipal applicants that waive Town fees for building permits will receive more points towards their overall score.

Building permit fees are regulated in our Town Code A173-4. Under Section K, it states: “The Town Council may, in other instances and for good cause shown, waive the building permit fee, except for the portion assessed by the State of Connecticut, required of nonprofit entities that have Board or Commission members appointed by the Town Council, receive funds from the Town, or lease a Town facility.” Therefore, the Housing Authority, as property owners of Old Post Village, would need Town Council approval to have their building permit fees waived for this project.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

The estimated total project value is \$3,000,000.00, which would incur building permit fees of \$66,023.00, plus filing fees for additional associated permits. If the permit fees are not waived by Town Council, these fees would be paid by the selected contractor, who is paid directly from grant funding.

The State fee of 26 cents per \$1,000 of the job value cannot be waived. The State fee for this project would be \$780.00.

TOWN ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A.

COUNCIL ACTION DESIRED: Approval of Resolution.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

- Chapter A173-4. Fees. Building permits.
- Draft resolution

§ A173-4. Building permits. [Adopted 6-12-1990 ; amended 8-17-1999 ; 8-26-2003 ; 7-8-2008 ; 3-23-2010 ; 7-26-2011]

The Tolland Town Council adopts the following fee schedule applicable to all building permits:

- A. Fire Code compliance inspection for one- or two-family dwellings: \$25.
- B. Building Code compliance inspection for one- or two-family dwellings: \$25. This fee is included in the building permit fee. An additional fee of \$25 may be assessed for every reinspection after the first reinspection, for the same violation.
- C. Plan review fee for Fire Code compliance for all other use groups: \$100. This fee is included in the building permit fee if the structure is built.
- D. Residential Building Code compliance plan review fee: \$50. This fee is included in the building permit fee if the structure is built.
- E. Building Code compliance fee for all other use groups: \$100. This fee is included in the building permit fee if the structure is built.
- F. The building permit fee is based on each \$1,000 or portion thereof of a structure's value. A fee shall be charged for each \$1,000 of said value at the rate of \$30 for the first \$1,000 of estimated cost, plus \$15 for each additional \$1,000 of estimated cost. This fee also applies to all mechanical construction and demolition. **[Amended 6-12-2012]**
- G. Filing fee for mechanical construction, inclusive of elevators, electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilating and air conditioning, refrigeration, low-voltage wiring systems, sprinklers, etc., as deemed necessary by the Building Official and/or the State of Connecticut Basic Building Code or the General Statutes of Connecticut: filing fee of \$10 if value is covered by project with a building permit.
- H. Certificate of occupancy processing fee: \$5. This fee is included in the building permit fee.
- I. Penalty for work commencing prior to issuance of a permit. In addition to the permit fee, the penalty shall be equal to the original permit fee; provided, however, that in no event shall the penalty be less than \$200 nor greater than \$1,000 per offense. This subsection shall not be enforced at the direction of the Building Official in emergency situations such as no heat, hot water, power, etc.
- J. Subsequent purchasers of residential property who determine after the purchase that appropriate building permits were not acquired shall not be assessed a fine for any remedial work done to come into compliance with the Building Code. However, regular permit fees for work shall apply.
- The Town Manager or his designee shall waive the building permit fee required by reason of activity by or on behalf of the Town or Board of Education, whether by contract or otherwise, except for the portion assessed by the State of Connecticut and except in those cases where there are other available funds to pay for the fee without impact to the completion of the project. The Town Council may, upon request of the Board of Education, review any decision made by the Town Manager in this regard for which it feels it would be adversely impacted. The Town Council may, in other instances and for good cause shown, waive the building

permit fee, except for the portion assessed by the State of Connecticut, required of nonprofit entities that have Board or Commission members appointed by the Town Council, receive funds from the Town, or lease a Town facility.

L. The Building Official is authorized to waive all Town fees related to building permits for work on crumbling foundations. The waiver shall not apply to any fee required to be charged by the State of Connecticut. At the discretion of the Building Official the waiver may include fees for electrical, plumbing or other building fees. **[Added 11-8-2016]**

- (1) The waiver only applies to work for the direct replacement for the existing foundation. At the discretion of the Building Official, the fees may be waived for permits for other related work required to restore the structure to its previously permitted condition.
- (2) Upon waiver of the fee, the Building Official shall notify the homeowner, in writing, that the fee has been waived, including the amount of all fees waived.
- (3) This waiver provision shall be effective December 1, 2016. Work that has commenced but not been completed prior to this effective date may be eligible for a refund of said fees.

Agenda Item #8.2

Consideration of approval to waive the Building permit fees for work associated with the Small Cities Grant Funding application for improvements at Old Post Village, 763 Tolland Stage Road.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council hereby waives the Building permit fees for work associated with the Small Cities Grant Funding application for improvements at Old Post Village, 763 Tolland Stage Road.

Approved by the Tolland Town Council on _____, 2024

Agenda Item # 8.3

AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Consideration and action on a resolution appointing Town Manager, Brian Foley to the Board of Directors of the Eastern Highlands Health District to fulfill a term of service through May 1, 2027.

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: April 25, 2024

ITEM SUMMARY: The By-Laws of the Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) afford the Town of Tolland two representatives on the District's Board of Directors. One seat has traditionally been filled by the Council Chair and the other by the Town Manager. The Council has indicated its desire to appoint Town Manager, Brian Foley for a three year term of service.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY: No direct financial impact on the Town. It is in the Town's interest, however, to maintain full representation at the EHHD "table".

TOWN ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A

COUNCIL ACTION DESIRED: Consideration of the resolution.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

- Draft Resolution

Agenda Item # 8.3

Consideration and action on a resolution appointing Town Manager,
Brian Foley to the Board of Directors of the Eastern Highlands Health District to fulfill a
term of service through May 1, 2027.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that Brian Foley is hereby appointed as a member of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Highlands Health District for a term of service through May 1, 2027.

Approved by the Tolland Town Council on _____, 2022.

Agenda Item #8.4

ITEM: Financial Update for the Period Ending March 31, 2024

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: April 25, 2024

ITEM SUMMARY: Lisa A. Hancock, the Director of Finance and Records, has prepared a financial update for the third quarter.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY: The Financial Summary is attached.

TOWN ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A

COUNCIL ACTION DESIRED: N/A

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

- o Financial Update

TOWN OF TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT

STATEMENT OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

BUDGET AND ACTUAL - GENERAL FUND

For the period ending 3-31-24

				3/31/2024		Variance With FY 22-23	3/31/2023		3/31/2023		Estimated		FY 23-24	
	Original Budget	Revised Budget	FY23/24	Encumbered	Revised Budget		3/31/2023	vs.	3/31/2024	6/30/2024	to	Variance		
			Actual				Actual	3/31/2024			With Budget	FOR Estimated	Negative = short	
Revenues:														
Property taxes	\$ 50,153,076	50,153,076	49,979,807			173,269	48,008,963	1,970,844	50,334,139			181,063		
Intergovernmental	1,338,748	1,338,994	1,614,012			-275,018	1,404,975	209,037	1,712,997			374,003		
Intergovernmental - Education	8,937,693	8,937,693	4,558,086			4,379,607	4,557,963	123	9,113,403			175,710		
Licenses, Permits & Fees	357,200	357,200	264,086			93,114	311,845	-47,759	392,491			35,291		
Charges for services	363,640	363,640	411,959 *			-48,319	667,511	-255,552	355,040			-8,600		
Investment and Miscellaneous Income	201,000	201,000	772,475			-571,475	411,886	360,589	1,013,000			812,000		
Other financing Source - Transfer in	200,000	286,800	0			286,800	8,261	-8,261	0			-286,800		
Other financing Source - Use of Fund Balance/Stabilization									0			0		
Total revenues & Other Financing Source	\$ 61,551,357	\$ 61,638,403	\$ 57,600,425			-4,037,978	\$ 55,371,404	\$ 2,229,021	\$ 62,921,070			\$ 1,282,667		
*This number will be reduced by \$151,418.27 for Ambulance Revenue to be transferred to the Ambulance Reserve Fund.														
Expenditures:														
Administrative	\$ 3,501,603	3,510,340	2,665,716	24,182	820,442	2,612,116	77,782	3,540,255				-29,915		
Planning and community development	468,849	470,685	334,465			136,220	323,054	11,411	460,098			10,587		
Human Services	484,428	484,679	339,417	19,019	126,243	339,899	18,537	474,581				10,098		
Library Services	450,569	452,523	301,713	10,353	140,457	329,449	-17,383	427,523				25,000		
Recreation Services	171,236	173,092	140,173			32,919	116,293	23,880	172,792			300		
Public works	4,893,486	4,911,156	3,250,921	167,540	1,492,695	3,300,783	117,678	4,916,769				-5,613		
Public safety services	2,245,195	2,246,771	1,059,058	57,569	1,130,143	1,100,853	15,774	2,169,521				77,250		
Record, financial services, Debt & Contingency	6,026,685	5,993,051	4,838,206	150	1,154,695	4,888,089	-49,733	5,979,600				13,451		
Board of Education	42,989,855	42,989,855	30,165,217			12,824,638	29,357,386	807,831	42,989,855			0		
Other Financing Uses - Transfer for Capital Plan	319,451	406,251	406,251			0	255,880	150,371	406,251			0		
Other Financing Uses - Transfer for other, ERF, CNRE undefined						0		0				308,397	-308,397	
Other Financing Uses - Transfer for other - Municipal Stabilization Fund								0				407,688	-407,688	
Total Expenditures and Other Financing Uses	\$ 61,551,357	\$ 61,638,403	\$ 43,501,137	\$ 278,813	\$ 17,858,452	\$ 42,623,802	\$ 1,156,148	\$ 62,253,330	\$ -614,927					
Excess of Revenues over Expenditures (Exp over Rev)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,099,288	\$ -278,813	\$ 13,820,474	\$ 12,747,602	\$ 1,072,873	\$ 667,740	\$ 667,740					

Revenue Highlights:

Revenues are estimated to exceed the budget by \$1,282,667. This is mainly due to unanticipated Intergovernmental Revenues and Investment income. If all revenues do as well as estimated, we will not need to use the amount budgeted for the use of fund balance. **These estimates are subject to change as the year continues.**

Property Taxes – Total tax collections are estimated to exceed the budget by \$181,063. Current Levy is estimated to exceed the budget by \$60,528. Motor Vehicle supplemental taxes are estimated to exceed the budget by \$26,551. Prior year collections are estimated to exceed the budget by \$40,924 and delinquent interest and liens are estimated to exceed the budget by \$40,000. The State collected telecommunications taxes had an increase in assessments which resulted in an excess of \$13,060.

Intergovernmental Revenue – is estimated to exceed the budget by \$374,003. \$368,207 of this amount is for unanticipated municipal revenue sharing revenue that was approved by the State of CT after the beginning of the fiscal year. A portion of this excess will be reallocated to the Municipal Tax Stabilization fund \$276,155 and Capital Non-Recurring fund \$92,052 pursuant to the Municipal Tax Stabilization Ordinance.

Intergovernmental Revenue – Education - is anticipated to exceed the budget by \$175,710 mainly due to Education Cost Sharing Revenue that was reinstated by the Legislature after our budget was adopted. A portion of this excess will be reallocated to the Municipal Tax Stabilization fund \$131,533 and Capital Non-Recurring fund \$43,845 pursuant to the Municipal Tax Stabilization Ordinance.

Investment & Miscellaneous Income – We have exceeded our budget estimate and anticipate another excellent year for investment returns. We are beginning to see slight reductions in interest earnings rates but not too drastic just yet. If the interest rates remain constant, I am estimating that we will exceed the budget by \$812,000. This estimate is subject to change as the year proceeds.

Expenditure Highlights:

Overall **estimated** expenditure savings are \$101,158. This is mainly due to savings from attrition netted with other expenditure shortfalls. Transfers within and/or between departments will be addressed within the fourth quarter. You will notice in the financial report on the first page that it appears that the budget will be overdrawn by \$614,927. This is not truly the situation. The amounts reflected as anticipated transfers out are shown because I am expecting them to occur. They will not occur until year-end pursuant to the Municipal Tax Stabilization Ordinance and also entries will be made for the approved transfer for the Education Reserve fund in April. A budget will be put into the report in the fourth quarter for these items and the net impact will be the \$101,158 estimated savings.

There is an estimated shortfall within the Administrative Services budget of about \$29,915. This is mainly due to insurance claim deductibles and legal fees. We anticipate offsetting any shortfall with savings from attrition.

We have experienced some employee attrition in several departments. Some of the savings were used to hire temporary staff where we could. Attrition savings are reflected with the Human Services, Library, Fire Department and Revenue Collection Offices. Some of these savings may have to be used as the year progresses to cover other shortfalls. \$68,000 of the savings noted as part of the Public Safety budget is due to attrition with State Troopers and the hiring of a lower cost trooper replacement and a lower fringe benefit rate. This is subject to change with additional changes forthcoming with our replacement of our retired Resident State Trooper.

Other Financing Uses – The amounts to be transferred as noted under the highlights for the Intergovernmental revenue above will be reflected as a transfer out of the general fund to the appropriate funds. It also includes an amount of \$172,500 for the April Council approval for Board of Education Reserve fund request for savings in their budget in FY 22-23. The transfers for the CNRE and Municipal Tax Stabilization Ordinance requirements (\$543,585) will not be done until year-end pursuant to the ordinance. The total other financing uses amounts to \$716,085.

There have been no inter-department transfers except for the funds moved from payroll contingency to cover the negotiated wage increases.

Budgetary Fund balance could possibly result in an increase for \$667,740 with these revenue and expenditure estimates.

ECHIP Update

With updates through March 2024, after IBNR and Risk Corridor and estimated reserves to be used in FY24-25, the ECHIP cash balance is now estimated at \$1,797,905 for 6/30/24. This cash balance amount is higher by \$401,554 from the estimated amount in January.

Agenda Item #8.5

AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Consideration of a Resolution to remove Jodie Coleman-Marzialo from the Historic District Commission (HDC) per Section C5-2 (iii) of the Tolland Town Charter and the setting of a Public Hearing for May 21, 2024 and notice be given to Jodie Coleman-Marzialo.

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: April 25, 2024

ITEM SUMMARY: The Town Council at their last meeting expressed interest in evaluating the membership makeup of the Historic District Commission which has resulted in significant and numerous complaints received from residents regarding professionalism and decorum. The reason(s) for removal of Jodie Coleman-Marzialo are occurrences of lack of professionalism and decorum; difficulties following procedure; being disrespectful to residents during HDC meetings; displaying a lack of impartiality during HDC meeting proceedings.

Historic District Commissioners are appointed by the Town Council to five-year terms. In accordance with Chapter 96 of the Town Code as enabled by Chapter 97a of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Commission consists of five permanent members and three alternate members. The current Commission consists of the following members:

Member Name	Seat Name	Start Date	Term Expiration
Ann Deegan	Seat 1	11/12/2019	11/12/2024
Celeste Senechal	Seat 2	9/19/2022	11/12/2025
Kathleen W Bach	Seat 3	11/12/2021	11/12/2026
Frederick Day-Lewis	Seat 4	11/12/2023	11/12/2028
Jodie Coleman-Marzialo	Seat 5	11/12/2022	11/12/2027
(Vacant)	Alternate 1	11/12/2021	11/12/2026
John Hughes	Alternate 2	11/12/2023	11/12/2028
Morgan (Mariah) Bumps	Alternate 3	11/12/2022	11/12/2027

Section C5-2 of the Tolland Town Charter provides that “The Town Council may remove any member from any appointed board, commission, committee, or agency who serves without compensation as follows: (i) upon such member's unexcused absence from three consecutive meetings of the board, commission, committee, or agency, whether regular or special meetings; (ii) upon such member's unexcused absence from 50% or more of the meetings, whether regular or special meetings, of the board, commission, committee, or agency within a calendar year, unless otherwise provided by the General Statutes; or (iii) for any other reason the Town Council deems sufficient provided that the member of such board, commission, committee, or agency is given notice and an opportunity to be heard at a formal hearing.”

FINANCIAL SUMMARY: N/A

TOWN ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A

COUNCIL ACTION DESIRED: Motion to schedule the Public Hearing for May 21, 2024 and notice thereof given to Jodie Coleman-Marzialo.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

1. Section C5 of the Tolland Town Charter
2. Chapter 96 of the Tolland Town Code
3. Chapter 97a of the Connecticut General Statutes
4. Draft Resolution

CHAPTER □
Appointments by the Town Council

§ C5-1. Appointments.

The Council shall appoint, whether for full terms or to fill vacancies, the members of all boards, commissions and offices authorized by Chapter □ of this Charter and those others deemed necessary by the Council. This shall be done at a meeting to be held not later than 60 days after the municipal election or as the Council deems necessary. Interim appointments shall be made within 60 days of the vacancy.

§ C5-2. Terms.

The terms of appointment to any appointive board, commission or office shall not exceed four years unless specified by this Charter or by ordinance. Despite the expiration of a term, the holder of an appointive position shall continue to hold office until a successor has been appointed and qualified. The Town Council may remove any member from any appointed board, commission, committee, or agency who serves without compensation as follows: (i) upon such member's unexcused absence from three consecutive meetings of the board, commission, committee, or agency, whether regular or special meetings; (ii) upon such member's unexcused absence from 50□ or more of the meetings, whether regular or special meetings, of the board, commission, committee, or agency within a calendar year, unless otherwise provided by the General Statutes; or (iii) for any other reason the Town Council deems sufficient provided that the member of such board, commission, committee, or agency is given notice and an opportunity to be heard at a formal hearing.

§ C5-3. Minority Representation.

The number of members of any political party who may be appointed to any board or commission shall not exceed the number prescribed by the General Statutes.

§ C5-4. Eligibility.

No person shall be eligible for appointment to any board, commission, office or similar body except the Town Attorney, the Town Manager and the Director of Health, who is not at the time of appointment a resident of the Town at least 18 years of age. Any person except the Town Attorney, the Town Manager and the Director of Health who ceases to become a resident of the Town shall thereupon cease to hold appointive office.

§ C5-5. General Powers and Procedures.

Appointive boards, commissions and offices shall have the power and duties conferred or imposed by this Charter, by ordinance or by the General Statutes. Each board or commission shall choose a Chairperson and a Secretary and make rules for the conduct of its meetings and the execution of its duties. Such rules and the minutes of all meetings shall be filed with the Town Clerk for public inspection. Members of appointive boards and commissions shall serve without compensation, except the Town Attorney, Director of Health and such others as the Council may appoint. Necessary expenses incurred in the performance of duties may be paid from an appropriation

authorized for that purpose.

§ C5-6. Town Attorney.

Biennially, the Council shall appoint a Town Attorney to serve a term coincident with the Town Council. A purchase order shall be issued with the financial considerations subject to approval by the Town Council. The Town Attorney may be removed at any time by the affirmative vote of five council members. The Town Attorney shall be an attorney at law admitted to practice law in the State of Connecticut. The Town Attorney shall appear for and protect the rights of the Town in all actions, suits or proceedings brought by or against it or any department, office, agency, board or commission. The Town Attorney shall be the legal advisor of the Council, Manager and all officers, boards and commissions in all matters affecting the Town and shall, upon written request, furnish them with a written opinion on any question of law involving their respective power and duties. Copies of all opinions shall be forwarded to the Council. Upon request by the Council, the Town Attorney shall prepare or approve forms of contract or other instruments to which the Town is a party or in which it has an interest. The Town Attorney shall have powers, with the approval of the Council, to appeal from orders, decisions and judgments and to compromise or settle any claims by or against the Town.

§ C5-7. Director of Health.

The Council shall join a Health District or appoint a Director of Health, in accordance with General Statutes. The Health District or Director shall be responsible for the preservation and promotion of public health. The Health District or Director shall interpret and enforce the health and sanitary laws of the State and Town.

§ C5-8. Board of Assessment Appeals.

The Council shall appoint a Board of Assessment Appeals consisting of three members. Two members shall have alternating terms of four years, and one member shall have a term of two years. Biennially thereafter, the Council shall appoint two members, one to a four-year term and one to a two-year term to succeed the members whose terms expire.

§ C5-9. Other Commissions.

The Council shall have the power to appoint boards and commissions as provided by ordinance, and shall have the authority to create or eliminate boards or commissions as appropriate. It shall determine the number of members and length of service.

Chapter 96

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

§ 96-1.	Purpose.	§ 96-5.	Standards and exemptions.
§ 96-2.	District boundaries.	§ 96-6.	Variances.
§ 96-3.	Historic District Commission.	§ 96-7.	Enforcement.
§ 96-4.	Certificate of appropriateness.	§ 96-8.	Appeals.

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Tolland 10-8-1991 by Ord. No. 48 . Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES

Zoning — See Ch. 170.

§ 96-1. Purpose.

It is the purpose of this chapter, through the establishment herein of the Tolland Green Historic District, to preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics and appearance of the Tolland Green and of the buildings which surround it while respecting the rights and wishes of those who own property within the district. It is the intent of this chapter that the requirements set forth herein be construed with these purposes in mind and be administered with common sense.

§ 96-2. District boundaries.

The Tolland Green Historic District shall consist of the area shown on the map attached hereto as "Boundaries of the District."¹ It includes the properties described in the report of the Historic District Study Committee as well as the historic Tolland Green itself. The boundaries of the Historic District shall include the properties described to a depth of 300 feet or to the rear property line, whichever is less.

§ 96-3. Historic District Commission.

A. Membership. There is hereby established an Historic District Commission. The Commission shall consist of five members and three alternate members, all of whom shall be electors of the Town holding no salaried Town office. At least one of the regular members and one of the alternate members shall be residents of the Historic District if there are such residents willing to serve. In addition, at least one other regular member shall be either a resident of the district or shall be an officer, director or other representative of a nonresidential private property owner within the district. The members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Town Council, and the regular members shall be appointed in such a manner that the term of one member shall expire each year from the effective date of this chapter establishing the Commission; and the Town Council shall also appoint three alternate members to the Commission, whose terms shall expire three years, two years and one year from said effective date. Thereafter, the Town Council shall appoint successors to regular and

1. Editor's Note: The map and boundary description are on file in the Town offices.

alternate members to terms of five years, except that an appointment to fill a vacancy shall be for the duration of the unexpired term of a regular or alternate member.

Any member or alternate may be appointed for another term or terms. All members shall serve without compensation. Each member and alternate member shall continue in office until his successor is duly appointed.

B. Powers and duties. The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

- (1) To hear and decide applications for certificates of appropriateness.
- (2) To hear and decide applications to vary or modify strict adherence to the requirements of this chapter.
- (3) To designate application forms and procedure and to set an application fee not to exceed the costs of publication of necessary legal notices.
- (4) To make periodic reports to the legislative body.
- (5) To provide information to property owners and others involving the preservation of the district.
- (6) To suggest pertinent legislation.
- (7) To initiate planning and zoning proposals.
- (8) To cooperate with other regulatory agencies and civic organizations and groups interested in historic preservation.
- (9) To comment on all applications for zoning variances and special exceptions where they affect historic districts.
- (10) To render advice only on sidewalk construction and repair, tree planting, street improvements, storm drainage devices, curbs, street parking and traffic flow.
- (11) To furnish information and advisory assistance in connection with any capital improvements program involving the Historic District that is not otherwise subject to this chapter.
- (12) To consult with groups of experts.
- (13) To exercise any other powers granted to historic district commissions pursuant to the Connecticut General Statutes, § 7-147a through 7-147k, not inconsistent with the terms of this chapter.

§ 96-4. Certificate of appropriateness.

- A. No building or structure shall be erected, altered, restored, moved or demolished within the Tolland Green Historic District until after an application for a certificate of appropriateness as to exterior architectural features has been submitted to the Commission and approved by said Commission. "Exterior architectural features" shall include such portion of the exterior of a structure as is open to view from a public street. For the purposes of this chapter, exterior architectural features which are located on the side or to the rear of buildings or structures and are only incidentally visible from a public street shall not be considered "open to view." No industrial, commercial, business or home industry or occupation parking areas shall be newly created without a certificate of appropriateness from the Commission. The style, material, size and location of permanent outdoor signs, fences,

monuments, flagpoles and streetlighting within the Tolland Green Historic District shall also be under the review of the Commission. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to extend to the color of paint used on the exterior of any building or structure or to temporary structures, tents or signs placed on the Green in conjunction with events or activities sanctioned by the Town Council.

- B. The Commission shall hold a public hearing upon each application for a certificate of appropriateness unless the Commission determines that such application involves items not subject to approval by the Commission. The Commission shall fix a reasonable time and place for such hearing. Notice of the time and place of such hearing shall be given by publication in the form of a legal advertisement appearing in a newspaper having a substantial circulation in the municipality not more than 15 days nor less than five days before such hearing.
- C. A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, and the concurring vote of a majority of the members of the Commission shall be necessary to issue a certificate of appropriateness. Within not more than 65 days after the filing of an application, the Commission shall pass upon such application and shall give written notice of its decision to the applicant. When a certificate of appropriateness is denied, the Commission shall place upon its records and in the notice to the applicant the reasons for its determination, which shall include the basis for its conclusion that the proposed activity would not be appropriate. In the notice to the applicant, the Commission may make recommendations relative to design, arrangement, texture, material and similar features. The Commission may issue a certificate of appropriateness with stipulations. Evidence of approval shall be by certificate of appropriateness issued by the Commission. Failure of the Commission to act within said 65 days shall constitute approval, and no other evidence of approval shall be needed.

§ 96-5. Standards and exemptions.

- A. No certificate of appropriateness need be issued for alterations or structures which are of such a minor nature as to not significantly impact the building involved or the district. Such minor items shall, at a minimum, include the following list, which may be added to by the Commission from time to time.
 - (1) Mailboxes.
 - (2) Trellises for the support of plants or vegetation. In addition, no certificate is necessary for shrubbery, trees or vegetation of any kind.
- B. In reviewing applications for certificates of appropriateness, the Commission shall not disapprove modern materials or methods of construction so long as the final result remains visually appropriate and does not unduly obscure architectural detail. In that the Tolland Green contains a mixture of buildings from different periods in history, the Commission shall consider the age and character of the individual building involved. In passing on appropriateness as to exterior architectural features, buildings or structures, the Commission shall consider, in addition to other pertinent factors, the type and style of exterior windows, doors, light fixtures, signs, aboveground utility structures, mechanical appurtenances and the type and texture of building materials. In passing upon appropriateness as to exterior architectural features, the Commission shall also consider, in addition to any other pertinent factors, the historical and architectural value and significance, architectural style, scale, general design, arrangement, texture and material of the architectural features involved and the relationship thereof to the exterior architectural style and pertinent features of other buildings and structures in the immediate neighborhood. No application for a certificate of appropriateness for an exterior architectural feature, such as a solar energy system, designed for the utilization of renewable resources shall be denied unless the Commission finds that the feature cannot be installed without substantially impairing the historic character and appearance of the district. A certificate of

appropriateness for such a feature may include stipulations requiring design modifications and limitations on the location of the feature which do not significantly impair its effectiveness. In passing upon appropriateness as to parking that is under its jurisdiction, the Commission shall take into consideration the size of such parking area, the visibility of cars parked therein, the closeness of such area to adjacent buildings and other similar factors. In passing upon a demolition request, the Commission shall consider the historical significance of the building or structure involved, its relationship to the district as a whole and whether its importance is outweighed by public health and safety concerns.

- C. In its deliberations, the Commission shall act only for the purpose of controlling the erection, demolition or alteration of buildings, structures or parking which are incongruous with the historic or architectural aspects of the district. The Commission shall not consider interior arrangement or use.
- D. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior feature in the Tolland Green Historic District which does not involve a change of design thereof nor prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration or demolition of any such feature which the Building Inspector certifies is required by the public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition or under a permit issued by the Building Inspector prior to the effective date of establishment of the district.

§ 96-6. Variances.

Where, by reason of topographical conditions, district borderline situations or because of other unusual circumstances solely with respect to a certain parcel of land and not affecting generally the district in which it is situated, the strict application of any provision of this chapter would result in exceptional practical difficulty or undue hardship upon the owner of any specific property, the Commission, in passing upon the applications, shall have power to vary or modify strict adherence to said sections or to interpret the meaning of said sections so as to relieve such difficulty or hardship, provided that such variance modification or interpretation shall remain in harmony with the general purpose and intent of said sections so that the general character of the district shall be conserved and substantial justice done. In granting variations, the Commission may impose such reasonable and additional stipulations and conditions as will, in its judgment, better fulfill the purposes of said sections. The Commission shall, for each variation granted, place upon its records and in the notice to the applicant the reasons for its determinations.

§ 96-7. Enforcement.

- A. If any action taken or ruling made by the Commission or any part of this chapter has been violated, the Commission may, in addition to other remedies, institute an action in the Superior Court for the judicial district of Tolland, which Court shall have jurisdiction to restrain such violation and to issue orders directing that the violation be corrected or removed. Such order may direct the removal of any building, structure or exterior architectural feature erected in violation of said sections or any bylaw or ordinance adopted under said sections or the substantial restoration of any building, structure or exterior architectural feature altered or demolished in violation of this chapter. This chapter shall be enforced by an enforcement official, who is hereby authorized to inspect and examine any building, structure, place or premises and to require, in writing, the remedying of any condition found to exist therein or thereon in violation of any provision of this chapter. The enforcement official shall be appointed by the Commission and shall serve at its pleasure. In clear cases where no Commission action is necessary, he is authorized to waive application to the Commission for such ruling.
- B. The owner or agent of any building, structure or place where a violation of any provision of this chapter or of any regulation or ordinance adopted under said sections has been committed or exists,

or the lessee or tenant of an entire building, entire structure or place where such violation has been committed or exists, or the owner, agent, lessee or tenant of any part of the building, structure or place in which such violation has been committed or exists, or the agent, architect, builder, contractor or any other person who commits, takes part or assists in any such violation or who maintains any building, structure or place in which any such violation exists, shall be fined not less than \$10 nor more than \$100 for each day that such violation continues; but if the offense is willful, the person convicted thereof shall be fined not less than \$100 nor more than \$250 for each day that such violation continues. The Superior Court for the Judicial District of Tolland shall have jurisdiction of any such offenses, subject to appeal as in other cases. Each day that a violation continues to exist shall constitute a separate offense. All costs, fees and expenses in connection with actions under this section may, in the discretion of the Court, be assessed as damages against the violator, which, together with reasonable attorney's fees, may be awarded to the Commission. Any funds collected as fines pursuant to this section shall be used by the Commission to restore the affected buildings, structures or places to their condition prior to the violation wherever possible, and any excess shall be paid to the Town of Tolland.

§ 96-8. Appeals.

Any person or persons severally or jointly aggrieved by any decision of the Commission may, within 15 days from the date such decision was rendered, take an appeal to the superior court in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, § 7-147i, as it may be amended.

A 97a

Cited. 196 C. 596; 227 C. 71.

Cited. 29 CA 28.

A 97a

Cited. 196 C. 596, 602, 607.

Because part (Sec. 7-147a et seq.) provides comprehensive, detailed legislative scheme for establishment of historic district, including approval of legislative body, and because referendum authorized by town charter is not such a legislative body, provision of town charter is inapplicable to adoption of historic district ordinance in accordance with part and has no place in such scheme. 62 CA 298.

Sec. 7-147a. Historic districts authorized. Definitions. (a) As used in this part: “Altered” means changed, modified, rebuilt, removed, demolished, restored, razed, moved or reconstructed; “erected” means constructed, built, installed or enlarged; “exterior architectural features” means such portion of the exterior of a structure or building as is open to view from a public street, way or place; “building” means a combination of materials forming a shelter for persons, animals or property; “structure” means any combination of materials, other than a building, which is affixed to the land, and shall include, but not be limited to, signs, fences and walls; “municipality” means any town, city, borough, consolidated town and city or consolidated town and borough; “appropriate” means not incongruous with those aspects of the historic district which the historic district commission determines to be historically or architecturally significant.

(b) Any municipality may, by vote of its legislative body and in conformance with the standards and criteria formulated by the Department of Economic and Community Development, establish within its confines an historic district or districts to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places associated with the history of or indicative of a period or style of architecture of the municipality, of the state or of the nation.

(c) The legislative body of any municipality may make appropriations for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this part.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 1; February, 1965, P.A. 221, S. 2; P.A. 80-314, S. 1; P.A. 86-105, S. 1; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6, S. 210(e); P.A. 04-20, S. 3; 04-205, S. 5; May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, S. 30; P.A. 11-48, S. 142.)

History: 1965 act added provision requiring district to conform to standards and criteria of historical commission; P.A. 80-314 added Subsec. (a) containing definitions and divided earlier provisions into Subsecs. (b) and (c); P.A. 86-105 added definition of “appropriate” in Subsec. (a); June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6 and P.A. 04-20 replaced the Connecticut Historical Commission with the Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film, effective August 20, 2003; P.A. 04-205, effective June 3, 2004, and May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, effective May 12, 2004, both replaced Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film with Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism; P.A. 11-48 amended Subsec. (b) to replace “Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism” with “Department of Economic and Community Development”, effective July 1, 2011.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727; 196 C. 596.

Subsec. (a):

Includes objects embedded in the earth, such as posts, stakes and foundations connected to objects rising above the surface and very heavy objects “affixed” to the ground by gravity, but not isolated objects that rest lightly on the surface of the ground that can easily be moved. 282 C. 672.

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Sec. 7-147b. Procedure for establishment of historic district. Prior to the establishment of an historic district or districts, the following steps shall be taken:

(a) The legislative body shall appoint or authorize the chief elected official of the municipality to appoint an historic district study committee for the purpose of making an investigation of a proposed historic district or districts. The legislative body of a municipality which proposes to establish more than one district may establish more than one committee if the proposed districts are not contiguous to each other nor to any existing historic district. Each committee established under the provisions of this section shall consist of five regular and three alternate members who shall be electors of the municipality holding no salaried municipal office. Such alternate members shall, when seated as provided in this section, have all powers and duties of a member of the committee. If a regular member of such committee is absent or has a conflict of interest, the chairman of the committee shall designate an alternate to so act, choosing alternates in rotation so that they shall act as nearly equal a number of times as possible. If any alternate is not available in accordance with such rotation, such fact shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

(b) The historic district study committee shall investigate and submit a report which shall include the following: (1) An analysis of the historic significance and architectural merit of the buildings, structures, places or surroundings to be included in the proposed historic district or districts and the significance of the district as a whole; (2) a general description of the area to be included within the district or districts, including the total number of buildings in each such district or districts listed according to their known or estimated ages; (3) a map showing the exact

boundaries of the area to be included within the district or districts; (4) a proposed ordinance or proposed ordinances designed to create and provide for the operation of an historic district or districts in accordance with the provisions of this part; (5) such other matters as the committee may deem necessary or advisable.

(c) The historic district study committee shall transmit copies of its report to the Department of Economic and Community Development, the planning commission and zoning commission, or the combined planning and zoning commission, of the municipality, if any, and, in the absence of such a planning commission, zoning commission or combined planning and zoning commission, to the chief elected official of the municipality for their comments and recommendations. In addition to such other comments and recommendations as it may make, the Department of Economic and Community Development may recommend either approval, disapproval, modification, alteration or rejection of the proposed ordinance or ordinances and of the boundaries of each proposed district. Each such commission, board or individual shall deliver such comments and recommendations to the committee within sixty-five days of the date of transmission of such report. Failure to deliver such comments and recommendations shall be taken as approval of the report of the committee.

(d) The historic district study committee shall hold a public hearing on the establishment of a proposed historic district or districts not less than sixty-five nor more than one hundred thirty days after the transmission of the report to each party as provided in subsection (c) of this section, except that, if all such parties have delivered their comments and recommendations to the committee, such hearing may be held less than sixty-five days after the transmittal of the report. The comments and recommendations received pursuant to subsection (c) of this section shall be read in full at the public hearing.

(e) Notice of the time and place of such hearing shall be given as follows: (1) Written notice of the time, place and purpose of such hearing, postage prepaid, shall be mailed to the owners of record of all real property to be included in the proposed historic district or districts, as they appear on the last-completed grand list, at the addresses shown thereon, at least fifteen days before the time set for such hearing, together with a copy of the report of the historic district study committee or a fair and accurate synopsis of such report. A complete copy of the report, a copy of all recommendations made under subsection (c) of this section, a map showing the boundaries of the area to be included in the proposed district and a copy of the proposed ordinance shall be available at no charge from the town clerk during business hours or shall be mailed, upon request, to any owner of record of real property in the proposed historic district or districts with the notice of the hearing; and (2) by publication of such notice in the form of a legal advertisement appearing in a newspaper having a substantial circulation in the municipality at least twice, at intervals of not less than two days, the first not more than fifteen days nor less than ten days and the last not less than two days before such hearing.

(f) The historic district study committee shall submit its report with any changes made following the public hearing, along with any comments or recommendations received pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and such other materials as the committee may deem necessary or advisable to the legislative body and the clerk of the municipality within sixty-five days after the public hearing.

(g) The clerk or his designee shall, not later than sixty-five days from receipt of such report, mail ballots to each owner of record of real property to be included in the proposed district or districts on the question of creation of an historic district or districts, as provided for in sections [7-147a](#) to [7-147k](#), inclusive. Only an owner who is eighteen years of age or older and who is liable, or whose predecessors in title were liable, to the municipality for taxes on an assessment of not less than one thousand dollars on the last-completed grand list of the municipality on real property within the proposed district, or who would be or would have been so liable if not entitled to an exemption under subdivision (7), (8), (10), (11), (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (20), (21), (22), (23), (24), (25), (26), (29) or (49) of section [12-81](#), may vote, provided such owner is the record owner of the property, thirty days before the ballots must be returned. Any tenant in common of any freehold interest in any land shall have a vote equal to the fraction of his ownership in said interest. Joint tenants of any freehold interest in any land shall vote as if each joint tenant owned an equal, fractional share of such land. A corporation shall have its vote cast by the chief executive officer of such corporation or his designee. No owner shall have more than one vote.

(h) The form of the ballot to be mailed to each owner shall be consistent with the model ballot prepared by the Historic Preservation Council of the Department of Economic and Community Development established pursuant to section [10-409](#). The ballot shall be a secret ballot and shall set the date by which such ballots shall be received by the clerk of the municipality. The ballots shall be mailed by first class mail to each owner eligible to vote in such balloting at least fifteen days in advance of the day on which ballots must be returned. Notice of balloting shall be published in the form of a legal advertisement appearing in a newspaper having a substantial circulation in the municipality at least twice, at intervals of not less than two days, the first not more than fifteen days or less than ten days and the last not less than two days before the day on which the ballots must be returned. Such ballot shall be returned to the municipal clerk, inserted in an inner envelope which shall have endorsed on the face thereof a form containing a statement as follows: "I, the undersigned, do hereby state under the penalties of false statement that I am an owner of record of real property to be included in the proposed historic district and that I am, or my predecessors in title were, liable to the municipality for taxes on an assessment of not less than one thousand dollars on the last grand list of the municipality of real property within the district, or who would be or would have been so liable if not entitled to an exemption under subdivision (7), (8), (10), (11), (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (20), (21), (22), (23), (24), (25), (26), (29) or (49) of section 12-81." Such statement shall be signed and dated. Any person who intentionally falsely signs such ballot shall be guilty of false statement as provided in section [53a-157b](#). The inner envelope, in which the ballot has been inserted by the owner, shall be returned to the municipal clerk in an outer envelope endorsed on the outside with the words: "Official ballot". Such outer envelope shall also contain, in the upper left corner of the face thereof, blank spaces for the name and return address of the sender. In the lower left corner of such outer envelope, enclosed in a printed box, there shall be spaces upon which the municipal clerk, before issuance of the ballot and envelopes, shall inscribe the name, street and number of the elector's voting residence and the date by which the ballot must be returned, and before issuance the municipal clerk shall similarly inscribe such envelope with his name and address for the return thereof. All outer envelopes shall be serially numbered. The ballots shall be returned to the municipal clerk by the close of business on the day specified, and such clerk shall compare each ballot to the list of property owners to whom such ballots were mailed to insure that each such ballot has been properly signed and returned.

(i) If two-thirds of all property owners voting cast votes in the affirmative, the legislative body of the municipality shall by majority vote take one of the following steps: (1) Accept the report of the committee and enact an ordinance or ordinances to create and provide for the operation of an historic district or districts in accordance with the provisions of this part; (2) reject the report of the committee, stating its reasons for such rejection; (3) return the report to the historic district study committee with such amendments and revisions thereto as it may deem advisable, for consideration by the committee. The committee shall submit an amended report to the legislative body within sixty-five days of such return. The committee need not hold a public hearing other than the one provided for in subsection (d) of this section, notwithstanding any changes in its report following such hearing, unless the legislative body has recommended a change in the boundaries of the proposed district or districts. The legislative body of the municipality may authorize another ballot of the owners within a proposed district or districts to be cast, other than the balloting provided for in subsection (g) of this section, notwithstanding any changes in the proposed ordinance following such balloting, if the boundaries of the proposed district in which the owners' property is situated are changed.

(j) Any ordinance, or amendment thereof, enacted pursuant to this part, which creates or alters district boundaries, shall contain a legal description of the area to be included within the historic district. The legislative body, when it passes such an ordinance, or amendment thereof, shall transmit to the municipal clerk a copy of the ordinance or amendment thereof. Such ordinance, or amendment thereof, shall be recorded in the land records of the municipality in which such real property is located and indexed by the municipal clerk in the grantor index under the names of the owners of record of such property.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 2; 1963, P.A. 600, S. 1; P.A. 75-52; P.A. 77-338, S. 1; P.A. 80-314, S. 2; P.A. 87-167; P.A. 91-135, S. 1; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6, S. 210(e), 235; P.A. 04-20, S. 3; 04-205, S. 5; 04-257, S. 4; May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, S. 30; P.A. 11-48, S. 125, 126.)

History: 1963 act amended Subsec. (c) to extend time for recommendations after receipt of report from 60 to 90 days and to authorize Connecticut historical commission to recommend re boundaries of proposed districts, amended Subsec. (d) to extend time within which hearing is to be held, amended Subsec. (e) to provide for sending a copy or synopsis of the study committee's report, together with a copy of the recommendations under Subsec. (c), a map and a copy of the proposed ordinance to property owners, amended Subsec. (f) to provide for inclusion of list of all buildings in report of committee and amended Subsec. (g) to provide for balloting by property owners; P.A. 75-52 added Subsec. (i) re ordinance contents; P.A. 77-338 deleted requirement in Subsec. (d) that hearing be held not less than 120 days after report; P.A. 80-314 amended Subsec. (a) to allow more than one committee and to include provisions for alternate members, amended Subsec. (b) to include in requirements for report consideration of architectural merit, description of area to be included, map of exact boundaries, proposed ordinance etc., amended Subsec. (c) to include combined planning and zoning commissions and to replace previous provision requiring that recommendations be read at hearing with provision for turning over recommendations to committee, amended Subsec. (d) to require that hearing be held not less than 65 days after report sent to commissions unless conditions specified in exception are met, amended Subsec. (e) to require 15 rather than 20 days' notice and to allow towns to have available on request rather than to automatically send out complete report and other data,

amended Subsec. (f) to change deadline from 60 to 65 days and deleted specific accounting of report contents, amended Subsec. (g) to set deadline for mailing ballots and to replace general provisions for voting and action on result with detailed provisions for voting, deleted former Subsec. (h) re proposed amendments to ordinance replacing it with further voting detail, added Subsec. (i) re actions taken following vote and relettered former Subsec. (i) as Subsec. (j) and added requirement that copy of ordinance be sent to municipal clerk; P.A. 87-167 amended Subsec. (i) to reduce the affirmative vote requirement from 75□ to two-thirds of all owners voting; P.A. 91-135 amended Subsec. (g) to transfer authority to mail ballots from the legislative body to the town clerk or his designee and amended Subsec. (h) to require that the ballot be consistent with a model ballot prepared by the Connecticut historical commission; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6 and P.A. 04-20 replaced the Connecticut Historical Commission with the Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film in Subsec. (c), and June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6 also amended Subsec. (h) to substitute Historic Preservation Council of Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film for Connecticut Historical Commission, effective August 20, 2003; P.A. 04-205, effective June 3, 2004, and May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, effective May 12, 2004, both replaced Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film with Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism; P.A. 04-257 made technical changes in Subsec. (h), effective June 14, 2004; P.A. 11-48 amended Subsecs. (c) and (h) by replacing “Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism” with “Department of Economic and Community Development”, effective July 1, 2011.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727; 196 C. 596; 227 C. 71.

Cited. 43 CS 297.

Subsec. (g):

Each condominium unit owner entitled to a vote proportionate to his freehold interest in the land. 196 C. 596.

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Sec. 7-147c. Historic district commission. (a) Once an historic district has been established, the historic district study committee shall cease to exist and thereafter an historic district commission shall perform all the functions of the committee relative to the new district and to administering the provisions of this part.

(b) The historic district commission may from time to time, by following the procedure for creation of an historic district provided for in section [7-147b](#), suggest that an historic district be enlarged or that additional districts be created. Where additional property is to be included within an existing district, the owners of such additional property shall vote pursuant to subsection (g) of section [7-147b](#).

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of section [7-147b](#), the legislative body of the municipality may enact amendments to the ordinance or ordinances of an historic district established pursuant

to this part if such amendments do not involve changing district boundaries or the creation of new districts. No amendment shall be enacted until the substance of such amendment has first been submitted to the historic district commission having jurisdiction over the district affected for its comments and recommendations and either its comments and recommendations have been received or sixty-five days have elapsed without receipt of such comments and recommendations. The historic district commission may suggest amendments to the legislative body.

(d) The historic district commission established under the provisions of this part shall consist of five regular and three alternate members, who shall be electors of the municipality in which the district is situated holding no salaried municipal office. The ordinance shall provide that one or more of the members or alternates of the historic district commission shall reside in an historic district under the jurisdiction of the commission, if any persons reside in any such district and are willing to serve on such commission. Such alternate members shall, when seated as provided in this section, have all powers and duties of a member of the commission. If a regular member of said commission is absent or has a conflict of interest, the chairman of the commission shall designate an alternate to so act, choosing alternates in rotation so that they shall act as nearly equal a number of times as possible. If any alternate is not available in accordance with such rotation, such fact shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The method of appointment shall be fixed by ordinance. The appointments to membership in the commission shall be so arranged that the term of at least one member shall expire each year, and their successors shall be appointed in like manner for terms of five years. Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term and in the same manner as the original appointment. The commission shall elect annually a chairman, a vice-chairman and a clerk from its own number. Each member and alternate shall continue in office until his successor is duly appointed. All members and alternates shall serve without compensation. Any member or alternate may be appointed for another term or terms.

(e) The historic district commission shall adopt rules of procedure not inconsistent with the provisions of this part. The commission may adopt regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of this part to provide guidance to property owners as to factors to be considered in preparing an application for a certificate of appropriateness.

(f) The historic district commission shall keep a permanent record of its resolutions, transactions and determinations and of the vote of each member participating therein.

(g) A copy of any ordinance creating an historic district adopted under authority of this part, amendments to any such ordinance, maps of any districts created under this part, annual reports and other publications of the historic district commission and the roster of membership of such commission shall be transmitted to the Department of Economic and Community Development. The historic district commission shall also file with the department at least once every year a brief summary of its actions during that year, including a statement of the number and nature of certificates of appropriateness issued, any changes in the membership of the commission and any other information deemed appropriate by the historic district commission.

(h) The historic district commission may accept grants and gifts, employ clerical and technical assistance or consultants and incur other expenses appropriate to the carrying on of its work,

subject to appropriation by the municipality or receipt of such grants or gifts and may expend the same for such purposes.

(i) A municipality which has more than one historic district may establish more than one historic district commission if the districts are not contiguous.

(j) Any historic district commission established under this section may, unless prohibited by charter, ordinance or special act: (1) Make periodic reports to the legislative body; (2) provide information to property owners and others involving the preservation of the district; (3) suggest pertinent legislation; (4) initiate planning and zoning proposals; (5) cooperate with other regulatory agencies and civic organizations and groups interested in historic preservation; (6) comment on all applications for zoning variances and special exceptions where they affect historic districts; (7) render advice on sidewalk construction and repair, tree planting, street improvements and the erection or alteration of public buildings not otherwise under its control where they affect historic districts; (8) furnish information and assistance in connection with any capital improvement program involving historic districts; (9) consult with groups of experts.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 3; P.A. 77-338, S. 2; P.A. 80-314, S. 3; P.A. 86-105, S. 2; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6, S. 210(e); P.A. 04-20, S. 3; 04-205, S. 5; May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, S. 30; P.A. 11-48, S. 143.)

History: P.A. 77-338 added Subsec. (b) re procedure for inclusion of individual's property in district after its establishment; P.A. 80-314 deleted previous Subsec. (b), inserted new material concerning enlarging districts or creating new ones and ordinance amendments as Subsecs. (b) and (c), placed provisions for commission membership, appointments, etc. in Subsec. (d) rather than Subsec. (a) as previously, amending provisions for alternate members and adding provision concerning vacancies and reappointments, placed provision for adopting rules in Subsec. (e) rather than Subsec. (a) and added provision concerning regulations providing guidance for property owners in preparing applications, added Subsecs. (f) and (g) re permanent records and information required to be sent to the state historical commission, amended provision re acceptance of grants and gifts and employment of personnel, formerly in Subsec. (a), and designated it as Subsec. (h) and added Subsecs. (i) and (j) re multiple commissions and further powers; P.A. 86-105 amended Subsec. (d) to require that one or more residents of historic district be included on commission as members or alternates; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6 and P.A. 04-20 replaced the Connecticut Historical Commission with the Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film, effective August 20, 2003; P.A. 04-205, effective June 3, 2004, and May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, effective May 12, 2004, both replaced Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film with Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism; P.A. 11-48 amended Subsec. (g) to replace "Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism" with "Department of Economic and Community Development" and "department", effective July 1, 2011.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727; 227 C. 71.

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Sec. 7-147d. Certificate of appropriateness: Parking areas. (a) No building or structure shall be erected or altered within an historic district until after an application for a certificate of appropriateness as to exterior architectural features has been submitted to the historic district commission and approved by said commission.

(b) No building permit for erection of a building or structure or for alteration of an exterior architectural feature within an historic district and no demolition permit for demolition or removal of a building or structure within an historic district shall be issued by a municipality or any department, agency or official thereof until a certificate of appropriateness has been issued. A certificate of appropriateness shall be required whether or not a building permit is required.

(c) The historic district commission may request such plans, elevations, specifications, material and other information, including in the case of demolition or removal, a statement of the proposed condition and appearance of property after such demolition or removal, as may be reasonably deemed necessary by the commission to enable it to make a determination on the application. The style, material, size and location of outdoor advertising signs and bill posters within an historic district shall also be under the control of such commission. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to extend to the color of paint used on the exterior of any building or structure.

(d) No area within an historic district shall be used for industrial, commercial, business, home industry or occupational parking, whether or not such area is zoned for such use, until after an application for a certificate of appropriateness as to parking has been submitted to the commission and approved by said commission. The provisions of this section shall apply to the enlargement or alteration of any such parking area in existence on October 1, 1973.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 4; 1963, P.A. 600, S. 2; P.A. 73-473, S. 1; P.A. 80-314, S. 4.)

History: 1963 act redefined "exterior architectural features", deleted stone walls, fences, signs, light fixtures, steps and paving from purview of certificate and excluded exterior paint color from provisions of section; P.A. 73-473 added Subsec. (b) re parking areas; P.A. 80-314 deleted "restored, moved or demolished" and removed definition of "exterior architectural features" from Subsec. (a), added Subsec. (b) re certificates of appropriateness, added Subsec. (c) including provisions re signs and exterior paint color, previously in Subsec. (a), and stating what information is necessary for commission's decision on application and relettered former Subsec. (b) as Subsec. (d).

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727; 196 C. 596.

Cited. 29 CA 28.

Subsec. (d):

A reading of the word "occupational" that restricts it strictly to for-profit commercial or industrial uses would render other words unnecessary surplusage, which would violate basic tenet of statutory construction that legislature does not intend to enact meaningless provisions;

Subsec. plainly and unambiguously encompasses parking for private elementary educational facilities because legislature drafted statute with language clearly intended to subject a broad variety of nonresidential parking uses to historic district regulation; legislature's enactment of Sec. 7-147k(b) which exempts from provisions of historic district act "any property owned by a nonprofit institution of higher education, for as long as a nonprofit institution of higher education owns such property" further supports a construction of Subsec. subjecting nonprofit private elementary school to jurisdiction of commission. 284 C. 838.

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Sec. 7-147e. Application for certificate. Hearing. Approval. (a) The historic district commission shall hold a public hearing upon each application for a certificate of appropriateness unless the commission determines that such application involves items not subject to approval by the commission. The commission shall fix a reasonable time and place for such hearing. Notice of the time and place of such hearing shall be given by publication in the form of a legal advertisement appearing in a newspaper having a substantial circulation in the municipality not more than fifteen days nor less than five days before such hearing.

(b) □nless otherwise provided by ordinance, a majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum and the concurring vote of a majority of the members of the commission shall be necessary to issue a certificate of appropriateness. Within not more than sixty-five days after the filing of an application as required by section [7-147d](#), the commission shall pass upon such application and shall give written notice of its decision to the applicant. When a certificate of appropriateness is denied, the commission shall place upon its records and in the notice to the applicant the reasons for its determination, which shall include the bases for its conclusion that the proposed activity would not be appropriate. In the notice to the applicant the commission may make recommendations relative to design, arrangement, texture, material and similar features. The commission may issue a certificate of appropriateness with stipulations. Evidence of approval, as referred to in section [7-147d](#), shall be by certificate of appropriateness issued by the commission. Failure of the commission to act within said sixty-five days shall constitute approval and no other evidence of approval shall be needed.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 5, 7; 1969, P.A. 37; P.A. 73-473, S. 2; P.A. 80-314, S. 5; P.A. 86-105, S. 3.)

History: 1969 act changed deadline for commission action in Subsec. (a) from 60 to 120 days; P.A. 73-473 specified parking as well as exterior architectural features as concern of certificate of appropriateness; P.A. 80-314 deleted reference specifying parking or exterior architectural features, changed number of times notice to appear in newspaper from seven to two and add specific time requirements, deleted requirement that commission record applications and activities and deleted former Subsec. (b) and placed in new Subsec. (b) procedure for action on application, changing deadline for action to 65 days, adding provisions re quorum, voting and denial of application or issuance with stipulations; P.A. 86-105 reduced newspaper notice requirements to one publication and provided that the bases for commission's determination shall be included in any notice of denial of certificate of appropriateness.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727; 196 C. 596.

Subsec. (a):

Failure to republish notice of continuance of a hearing in newspaper did not violate Subsec. 49 CS 498.

Subsec. (b):

In appeal from a decision by historic district commission, reviewing courts are limited to determining whether reason or reasons stated by commission are supported by substantial evidence in the record. 285 C. 755.

Although commission mailed notice of denial of the application to applicant 68 days after filing of the application, applicant was not entitled to automatic approval of the application on that basis since commission had acted within 65 days after filing of the application and applicant had actual notice of the commission's decision. 108 CA 682.

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Sec. 7-147f. Considerations in determining appropriateness. Solar energy systems. (a) If the commission determines that the proposed erection, alteration or parking will be appropriate, it shall issue a certificate of appropriateness. In passing on appropriateness as to exterior architectural features, buildings or structures, the commission shall consider, in addition to other pertinent factors, the type and style of exterior windows, doors, light fixtures, signs, above-ground utility structures, mechanical appurtenances and the type and texture of building materials. In passing upon appropriateness as to exterior architectural features the commission shall also consider, in addition to any other pertinent factors, the historical and architectural value and significance, architectural style, scale, general design, arrangement, texture and material of the architectural features involved and the relationship thereof to the exterior architectural style and pertinent features of other buildings and structures in the immediate neighborhood. No application for a certificate of appropriateness for an exterior architectural feature, such as a solar energy system, designed for the utilization of renewable resources shall be denied unless the commission finds that the feature cannot be installed without substantially impairing the historic character and appearance of the district. A certificate of appropriateness for such a feature may include stipulations requiring design modifications and limitations on the location of the feature which do not significantly impair its effectiveness. In passing upon appropriateness as to parking, the commission shall take into consideration the size of such parking area, the visibility of cars parked therein, the closeness of such area to adjacent buildings and other similar factors.

(b) In its deliberations, the historic district commission shall act only for the purpose of controlling the erection or alteration of buildings, structures or parking which are incongruous with the historic or architectural aspects of the district. The commission shall not consider interior arrangement or use. However, the commission may recommend adaptive reuse of any

buildings or structures within the district compatible with the historic architectural aspects of the district.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 8; P.A. 73-473, S. 3; P.A. 80-314, S. 6; P.A. 81-326.)

History: P.A. 73-473 added specific provisions concerning certificates of appropriateness for parking; P.A. 80-314 added Subsec. (b) re exclusion of consideration of interior space except to recommend adaptive reuse and expanded considerations for certificate concerning exterior features with specific references to doors, windows, signs, etc.; P.A. 81-326 added provisions concerning issuance of certificate of appropriateness for exterior architectural feature designed for utilization of renewable resources.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727; 196 C. 596; 227 C. 71.

Subsec. (a):

Commission may consider historic value and significance of buildings in their existing locations, including outbuildings, as a “pertinent factor” in denying an application for alterations. 285 C. 755.

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Sec. 7-147g. Variations, permissible when. Where, by reason of topographical conditions, district borderline situations or because of other unusual circumstances solely with respect to a certain parcel of land and not affecting generally the district in which it is situated, the strict application of any provision of this part would result in exceptional practical difficulty or undue hardship upon the owner of any specific property, the commission in passing upon applications shall have power to vary or modify strict adherence to said sections or to interpret the meaning of said sections so as to relieve such difficulty or hardship; provided such variance, modification or interpretation shall remain in harmony with the general purpose and intent of said sections so that the general character of the district shall be conserved and substantial justice done. In granting variations, the commission may impose such reasonable and additional stipulations and conditions as will, in its judgment, better fulfill the purposes of said sections. In addition to the filing required by subsection (b) of section [7-147e](#), the commission shall, for each variation granted, place upon its records and in the notice to the applicant the reasons for its determinations.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 9; P.A. 80-314, S. 7.)

History: P.A. 80-314 required that record of granted variance and commission's reasons for granting it be kept.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727; 196 C. 596.

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Sec. 7-147h. Action by commission to prevent illegal acts. (a) If any provision of this part or any action taken or ruling made by the historic district commission pursuant to the provisions of said sections or of any regulation or ordinance adopted under said sections has been violated, the commission may, in addition to other remedies, institute an action in the superior court for the judicial district wherein such violation exists, which court shall have jurisdiction to restrain such violation and to issue orders directing that the violation be corrected or removed. Such order may direct the removal of any building, structure or exterior architectural feature erected in violation of said sections or any bylaw or ordinance adopted under said sections or the substantial restoration of any building, structure, or exterior architectural feature altered or demolished in violation of said sections or any regulation or ordinance adopted under said sections. Regulations and orders of the commission issued pursuant to said sections, or to any regulation or ordinance adopted under said sections, shall be enforced by the zoning enforcement official or building inspector or by such other person as may be designated by ordinance, who may be authorized to inspect and examine any building, structure, place or premises and to require in writing the remedying of any condition found to exist therein or thereon in violation of any provision of the regulations or orders made under the authority of said sections or of any regulation or ordinance adopted under said sections.

(b) The owner or agent of any building, structure or place where a violation of any provision of this part or of any regulation or ordinance adopted under said sections has been committed or exists, or the lessee or tenant of an entire building, entire structure or place where such violation has been committed or exists, or the owner, agent, lessee or tenant of any part of the building, structure or place in which such violation has been committed or exists, or the agent, architect, builder, contractor, or any other person who commits, takes part or assists in any such violation or who maintains any building, structure or place in which any such violation exists, shall be fined not less than ten dollars nor more than one hundred dollars for each day that such violation continues; but, if the offense is wilful, the person convicted thereof shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars nor more than two hundred fifty dollars for each day that such violation continues. The superior court for the judicial district wherein such violation continues or exists shall have jurisdiction of all such offenses, subject to appeal as in other cases. Each day that a violation continues to exist shall constitute a separate offense. All costs, fees and expenses in connection with actions under this section may, in the discretion of the court, be assessed as damages against the violator, which, together with reasonable attorney's fees, may be awarded to the historic district commission which brought such action. Any funds collected as fines pursuant to this section shall be used by the commission to restore the affected buildings, structures, or places to their condition prior to the violation wherever possible and any excess shall be paid to the municipality in which the district is situated.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 10; P.A. 73-473, S. 4; P.A. 74-183, S. 166, 291; P.A. 76-436, S. 145, 681; P.A. 78-280, S. 1, 127; P.A. 80-314, S. 8.)

History: P.A. 73-473 included reference to parking; P.A. 74-183 substituted court of common pleas for circuit court and included reference to "county or judicial district"; P.A. 76-436

substituted superior court for court of common pleas, effective July 1, 1978; P.A. 78-280 deleted reference to "county"; P.A. 80-314 divided section into Subsecs. (a) and (b), replaced former provisions for proceedings to prevent unlawful acts with provisions for proceedings in superior court and added provisions concerning court costs, attorneys' fees and fines.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727; 196 C. 596.

Provision authorizing imposition of fines is directory rather than mandatory and the trial court's decision to refrain from imposing fines did not preclude it from awarding attorney's fees to commission; court's order to comply, standing alone, without affirmatively labeling defendant as a violator, is sufficient to implicate the court's authority under section to award attorney's fees to commission for its successful enforcement action; court may award attorney's fees, costs and expenses related to defense of a counterclaim under section. 152 CA 161.

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Sec. 7-147i. Appeals. Any person or persons severally or jointly aggrieved by any decision of the historic district commission or of any officer thereof may, within fifteen days from the date when such decision was rendered, take an appeal to the superior court for the judicial district in which such municipality is located, which appeal shall be made returnable to such court in the same manner as that prescribed for other civil actions brought to such court. Notice of such appeal shall be given by leaving a true and attested copy thereof in the hands of or at the usual place of abode of the chairman or clerk of the commission within twelve days before the return day to which such appeal has been taken. Procedure upon such appeal shall be the same as that defined in section [8-8](#).

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 11; P.A. 76-436, S. 282, 681; P.A. 78-280, S. 1, 127; P.A. 80-314, S. 9.)

History: P.A. 76-436 substituted superior court for court of common pleas and added reference to judicial district, effective July 1, 1978; P.A. 78-280 deleted reference to county; P.A. 80-314 provided that appeal be made returnable to court in same manner as that prescribed for "other" civil actions.

See Sec. 51-197b re administrative appeals.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727. In appeals from administrative zoning decisions, decisions will be invalidated, even if they were reasonably supported by the record, if they were not supported by substantial evidence in the record; in an appeal from decision of a commission, the record is reviewed to determine whether there is factual support for commission's decision; should substantial evidence exist in record to support any basis or stated reason for commission's decision, the court must sustain that decision. 284 C. 838. Although judicial review of land use decisions is deferential, it is not a rubber stamp as a court cannot take view in every case that discretion exercised by local zoning authority must not be disturbed, for if it did the right of appeal would be empty. Id. Although defendant's decision in this case was guided by proper statutory factors under Sec. 7-147f, the application of those factors was not supported by

substantial evidence and, therefore, was an abuse of its discretion; because neighborly animosity and outcry are not, without more, factors for defendant's consideration under Sec. 7-147f(a), testimony does not support defendant's conclusion in this case. Id. This section and Sec. 8-8, when read together, do not provide for statutory aggrievement in historic district commission appeals. 325 C. 765.

If an appeal has been taken and the trial court remands a case to commission, the scope of the remand order determines the finality of the trial court's judgment for appeal purposes. 108 CA 682.

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Sec. 7-147j. Exempted acts. Delay of demolition. (a) Nothing in this part shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature in the historic district which does not involve a change in the appearance or design thereof; nor to prevent the erection or alteration of any such feature which the building inspector or a similar agent certifies is required by the public safety because of a condition which is unsafe or dangerous due to deterioration; nor to prevent the erection or alteration of any such feature under a permit issued by a building inspector or similar agent prior to the effective date of establishment of such district.

(b) If a building in an historic district is to be demolished, no demolition shall occur for ninety days from issuance of a demolition permit if during such time the historic district commission or the Department of Economic and Community Development is attempting to find a purchaser who will retain or remove such building or who will present some other reasonable alternative to demolition. During such ninety-day period the municipality may abate all real property taxes. At the conclusion of such ninety-day period, the demolition permit shall become effective and the demolition may occur. Nothing in this section shall be construed to mandate that the owner of such property sell such property or building.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 6; 1963, P.A. 600, S. 3; P.A. 80-314, S. 10; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6, S. 210(e); P.A. 04-20, S. 3; 04-205, S. 5; May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, S. 30; P.A. 11-48, S. 144.)

History: 1963 act deleted restriction on maintenance or repairs involving a change of material or outward appearance; P.A. 80-314 deleted references to construction, reconstruction and demolition and inserted references to "erection" and added Subsec. (b) re demolition procedure; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6 and P.A. 04-20 replaced the Connecticut Historical Commission with the Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film, effective August 20, 2003; P.A. 04-205, effective June 3, 2004, and May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, effective May 12, 2004, both replaced Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film with Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism; P.A. 11-48 amended Subsec. (b) to replace "Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism" with "Department of Economic and Community Development", effective July 1, 2011.

Cited. 153 C. 160; 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727.

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Sec. 7-147k. Prior districts unaffected. Validation of prior creations and actions. Nonprofit institutions of higher education excluded. (a) The provisions of this part shall in no way impair the validity of any historic district previously established under any special act or the general statutes. Any and all historic districts created under the general statutes, prior to October 1, 1980, otherwise valid except that such districts, district study committees, municipalities or officers or employees thereof, failed to comply with the requirements of any general or special law, and any and all actions of such districts or historic district commission, are validated.

(b) The provisions of this part shall not apply to any property owned by a nonprofit institution of higher education, for as long as a nonprofit institution of higher education owns such property.

(1961, P.A. 430, S. 12; P.A. 80-314, S. 11; P.A. 06-196, S. 39.)

History: P.A. 80-314 expanded validation to cover districts created before October 1, 1980, and added Subsec. (b) excepting property of nonprofit higher education institutions from provisions of Secs. 7-147a to 7-147k; P.A. 06-196 made a technical change in Subsec. (b), effective June 7, 2006.

Cited. 171 C. 199; 189 C. 727.

Subsec. (a):

Validation of the Farmington Historic District by statute rendered moot the basis for complaint. 189 C. 727.

Subsec. (b):

Where express exceptions are made, legal presumption is legislature did not intend to save other cases from operation of statute; the enactment of section indicates that legislature, when it desires to do so, knows how to exempt specific kinds of educational institutions from historic district regulation. 284 C. 838.

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Secs. 7-147l and 7-147m. Method of balloting; eligibility to vote; balloting on prior districts. Sections [7-147l](#) and [7-147m](#) are repealed.

(1963, P.A. 600, S. 4, 5; 1971, P.A. 333; 1972, P.A. 127, S. 8; P.A. 75-158; P.A. 78-285; P.A. 80-314, S. 12.)

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Secs. 7-147n and 7-147o. Reserved for future use.

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□Cited. 196 C. 596.

Sec. 7-147p. Historic property ordinances authorized. Definitions. (a) As used in this part: “Historic property” means any individual building, structure, object or site that is significant in the history, architecture, archaeology and culture of the state, its political subdivisions or the nation and the real property used in connection therewith; “altered” means changed, modified, rebuilt, removed, demolished, restored, razed, moved or reconstructed; “erected” means constructed, built, installed or enlarged; “exterior architectural features” means such portion of the exterior of a structure or building as is open to view from a public street, way or place; “building” means a combination of materials forming a shelter for persons, animals or property; “structure” means any combination of materials, other than a building, which is affixed to the land, and shall include, but not be limited to, signs, fences and walls; “municipality” means any town, city, borough, consolidated town and city or consolidated town and borough.

(b) Any municipality may, by ordinance and in conformance with the standards and criteria formulated by the Department of Economic and Community Development, designate within its confines an historic property or properties to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of individual buildings and places associated with the history of or indicative of a period or style of architecture of the municipality, of the state or of the nation.

(c) The legislative body of any municipality may make appropriations for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this part.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 1; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6, S. 210(e); P.A. 04-20, S. 3; 04-205, S. 5; May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, S. 30; P.A. 11-48, S. 145.)

History: June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6 and P.A. 04-20 replaced the Connecticut Historical Commission with the Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film, effective August 20, 2003; P.A. 04-205, effective June 3, 2004, and May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, effective May 12, 2004, both replaced Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film with Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism; P.A. 11-48 amended

Subsec. (b) to replace “Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism” with “Department of Economic and Community Development”, effective July 1, 2011.

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Sec. 7-147q. Procedures for establishment of historic properties. Prior to the designation of an historic property or properties, the following steps shall be taken:

- (a) The legislative body shall appoint or authorize the chief elected official of the municipality to appoint an historic properties study committee for the purpose of making an investigation of one or more proposed historic properties. The legislative body of a municipality which proposes to establish more than one historic property may establish more than one committee. An already existing historic properties commission or an historic district commission established in the municipality pursuant to part I of this chapter may be appointed to make this investigation. Each committee established under the provisions of this section shall consist of five regular and three alternate members who shall be electors of the municipality holding no salaried municipal office. Such alternate members shall, when seated as provided in this section, have all powers and duties of a member of the committee. If a regular member of such committee is absent or has a conflict of interest, the chairman of the committee shall designate an alternate to so act, choosing alternates in rotation so that they shall act as nearly equal a number of times as possible. If any alternate is not available in accordance with such rotation, such fact shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- (b) The historic properties study committee shall investigate and submit a report which shall include the following: (1) An analysis of the historic significance and architectural merit of the buildings, structures, objects or sites proposed as historic properties; (2) a map showing the exact boundaries of the area to be designated as the historic property or properties; (3) a proposed ordinance or proposed ordinances designed to designate and provide for the protection of an historic property or properties in accordance with the provisions of this part; and (4) such other matters as the committee may deem necessary or advisable.
- (c) The historic properties study committee shall transmit copies of its report to the Department of Economic and Community Development, the planning commission and zoning commission, or the combined planning and zoning commission, of the municipality, if any, and, in the absence of such a planning commission, zoning commission or combined planning and zoning commission, to the chief elected official of the municipality for their comments and recommendations. In addition to such other comments and recommendations as it may make, the Department of Economic and Community Development may recommend either approval, disapproval, modification, alteration or rejection of the proposed ordinance or ordinances and of the boundaries of each proposed historic property. Each such commission, board or individual shall deliver such comments and recommendations to the committee within sixty-five days of the date of transmission of such report. Failure to deliver such comments and recommendations shall be taken as approval of the report of the committee.

(d) The historic properties study committee shall hold a public hearing on the designation of each proposed historic property not less than sixty-five nor more than one hundred thirty days after the transmission of the report to each party as provided in subsection (c) of this section, except that, if all such parties have delivered their comments and recommendations to the committee, such hearing may be held less than sixty-five days after the transmittal of the report. The comments and recommendations received pursuant to subsection (c) of this section shall be read in full at the public hearing.

(e) Notice of the time and place of such hearing shall be given as follows: (1) Written notice of the time, place and purpose of such hearing, postage prepaid, shall be mailed by certified mail to the owner or owners of record of the real property to be included in each proposed historic property, as they appear on the last-completed grand list, at the addresses shown thereon, at least fifteen days before the time set for such hearing, together with a copy of the report of the historic properties study committee or a fair and accurate synopsis of such report. A complete copy of the report, a copy of all recommendations made under subsection (c) of this section, a map showing the boundaries of the real property to be included in each proposed historic property and a copy of the proposed ordinance shall be available at no charge from the town clerk during business hours or shall be mailed, upon request, to any owner of record of real property in the proposed historic property or properties with the notice of the hearing; and (2) by publication of such notice in the form of a legal advertisement appearing in a newspaper having a substantial circulation in the municipality at least twice, at intervals of not less than two days, the first not more than fifteen days nor less than ten days and the last not less than two days before such hearing.

(f) The historic properties study committee shall submit its report with any changes made following the public hearing, along with any comments or recommendations received pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and such other materials as the committee may deem necessary or advisable to the legislative body of the municipality within sixty-five days after the public hearing.

(g) The owner or owners of record of a proposed historic property may object to the proposed designation by submitting to the historic properties study committee or to the legislative body of the municipality a notarized statement certifying that the person filing such objection is the entire or partial owner of the property and objects to the designation. Unless persons holding fifty per cent or more of the ownership interest in a proposed historic property object to the proposed designation within thirty days following the public hearing held pursuant to subsection (d) of this section, the legislative body of the municipality shall, by majority vote, take one of the following steps: (1) Accept the report of the committee as to the proposed historic property and enact an ordinance to designate the historic property and provide for its regulation in accordance with the provisions of this part; (2) reject the report of the committee, stating its reasons for such rejection; or (3) return the report to the historic properties study committee, with such amendments and revisions as it may deem advisable, for consideration by the committee. The committee shall, within sixty-five days of such return, submit an amended report to the legislative body and mail by certified mail a copy of the amended report to the owner or owners of record of each proposed historic property covered by the report. The committee need not hold a public hearing other than the one provided for in subsection (d) of this section. Unless persons

holding fifty per cent or more of the ownership interest in a proposed historic property object to the proposed designation within thirty days of receipt of the amended report by written submission in the manner set forth in this subsection, the legislative body of the municipality may accept or reject the amended report as provided in this subsection.

(h) Any ordinance, or amendment thereof, enacted pursuant to this part, which designates or alters historic property boundaries, shall contain a legal description of the area to be included within each historic property. The legislative body, when it passes such an ordinance, or amendment thereof, shall transmit to the municipal clerk a copy of the ordinance or amendment thereof. Such ordinance, or amendment thereof, shall be recorded in the land records of the municipality in which such real property is located and indexed by the municipal clerk in the grantor index under the names of the owners of record of such property.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 2; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6, S. 210(e); P.A. 04-20, S. 3; 04-205, S. 5; May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, S. 30; P.A. 11-48, S. 146.)

History: June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6 and P.A. 04-20 replaced the Connecticut Historical Commission with the Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film, effective August 20, 2003; P.A. 04-205, effective June 3, 2004, and May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, effective May 12, 2004, both replaced Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film with Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism; P.A. 11-48 amended Subdiv. (c) by replacing “Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism” with “Department of Economic and Community Development”, effective July 1, 2011.

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Sec. 7-147r. Historic properties commission. (a) The first ordinance enacted by a municipality to designate any historic properties shall provide for the creation of an historic properties commission and for the termination of the historic properties study committee or committees. The historic properties commission shall administer the provisions of this part relative to all historic properties then or thereafter designated by the municipality and, relative to such historic properties, the commission shall have all of the powers and duties that historic district commissions have over historic districts pursuant to part I of this chapter except as is otherwise provided in this part. A municipality may designate an historic properties commission to administer historic districts in accordance with part I of this chapter in the event that no historic district commission exists when the historic properties commission is created. A municipality may designate an existing historic district commission to administer historic properties in accordance with this part.

(b) The historic properties commission may from time to time, in accordance with section [7-147q](#), initiate the designation of additional historic properties or the enlargement of the boundaries of an existing historic property.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 3.)

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Sec. 7-147s. Certificate of appropriateness. (a) No building or structure located within the boundaries of an historic property shall be erected or altered until after an application for a certificate of appropriateness as to exterior architectural features has been submitted to the historic properties commission and approved by such commission. No earthworks or site of recognized historic or archaeological importance within the boundaries of an historic property shall be altered until after an application for a certificate of appropriateness has been submitted to the historic properties commission and approved by said commission.

(b) No building permit for erection of a building or structure or for alteration of an exterior architectural feature within the boundaries of an historic property and no demolition permit for demolition or removal of a building or structure within the boundaries of an historic property shall be issued by a municipality or any department, agency or official thereof until a certificate of appropriateness has been issued. A certificate of appropriateness shall be required whether or not a building permit is required.

(c) The historic properties commission may request such plans, elevations, specifications, material and other information, including in the case of demolition or removal, a statement of the proposed condition and appearance of property after such demolition or removal, as may be reasonably deemed necessary by the commission to enable it to make a determination on the application. The style, material, size and location of outdoor advertising signs and bill posters within the boundaries of an historic property shall also be under the control of such commission. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to extend to the color of paint used on the exterior of any building or structure.

(d) No area within the boundaries of an historic property shall be used for industrial, commercial, business, home industry or occupational parking, whether or not such area is zoned for such use, until after an application for a certificate of appropriateness as to parking has been submitted to the commission and approved by said commission.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 4.)

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Sec. 7-147t. Procedure for application for certificate. In reviewing and acting upon applications for certificates of appropriateness, the historic properties commission shall follow the procedures set forth in section [7-147e](#) for use by historic district commissions in reviewing applications for certificates of appropriateness affecting historic districts.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 5.)

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Sec. 7-147u. Considerations in determining appropriateness. Except as otherwise provided in this part, in reviewing and acting upon applications for certificates of appropriateness, the historic properties commission shall apply the same standards and take into account the same considerations as set forth in section [7-147f](#) for use by historic district commissions in reviewing applications for certificates of appropriateness affecting historic districts. In passing upon the appropriateness of alterations to earthworks or sites of historic or archaeological importance, the commission shall consider, in addition to any other pertinent factors, their value and significance, size, design, arrangement, texture and materials. In its deliberations, the historic properties commission shall act only for the purpose of controlling the erection or alteration of buildings, structures, objects, sites or parking that are incongruous with the historic or architectural aspects of the historic property.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 6.)

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Sec. 7-147v. Variations, permissible when. Where, by reason of topographical conditions or location or because of other unusual circumstances, the strict application of any provision of this part would result in exceptional practical difficulty or undue hardship upon the owner of the historic property, the commission in passing upon applications shall have power to vary or modify strict adherence to the provisions of this part, provided such variance or modification shall remain in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this part so that the historic and architectural aspects of the historic property shall be conserved. In granting variances or modifications, the commission may impose such reasonable stipulations and conditions as will, in its judgment, better fulfill the purposes of this part. The commission shall, for each variance or modification granted, place upon its records and in the notice to the applicant the reasons for its determinations.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 7.)

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Sec. 7-147w. Action by commission to prevent illegal acts. If any provision of this part, or any action taken or ruling made by the historic properties commission pursuant to the provisions of this part or any regulation or ordinance adopted pursuant to this part, has been violated, the historic properties commission shall have, in addition to other remedies, those remedies available to historic district commissions as provided in section [7-147h](#).

(P.A. 84-286, S. 8.)

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Sec. 7-147x. Appeals. Any person or persons severally or jointly aggrieved by any decision of the historic properties commission or of any officer thereof may appeal such decision in the same manner and according to the same procedure as set forth in section [7-147i](#) for appeals from the decisions of the historic district commissions.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 9.)

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Sec. 7-147y. Exempted acts. Delay of demolition. (a) Nothing in this part shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature within the boundaries of an historic property which does not involve a change in the appearance or design thereof; nor to prevent the erection or alteration of any such feature which the building inspector or a similar agent certifies is required by the public safety because of a condition which is unsafe or dangerous due to deterioration; nor to prevent the erection or alteration of any such feature under a permit issued by a building inspector or similar agent prior to designation of such historic property.

(b) If a building within the boundaries of an historic property is to be demolished, no demolition shall occur for ninety days from issuance of a demolition permit if during such time the historic properties commission or the Department of Economic and Community Development is attempting to find a purchaser who will retain or remove such building or who will present some other reasonable alternative to demolition. During such ninety-day period the municipality may abate all real property taxes. At the conclusion of such ninety-day period, the demolition permit shall become effective and the demolition may occur. Nothing in this section shall be construed to mandate that the owner of such property is under any obligation to sell such property or building.

(P.A. 84-286, S. 10; June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6, S. 210(e); P.A. 04-20, S. 3; 04-205, S. 5; May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, S. 30; P.A. 11-48, S. 147.)

History: June 30 Sp. Sess. P.A. 03-6 and P.A. 04-20 replaced the Connecticut Historical Commission with the Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film, effective August 20, 2003; P.A. 04-205, effective June 3, 2004, and May Sp. Sess. P.A. 04-2, effective May 12, 2004, both replaced Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film with Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism; P.A. 11-48 amended Subsec. (b) by replacing “Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism” with “Department of Economic and Community Development”, effective July 1, 2011.

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Agenda Item #8.5

Consideration of a Resolution to remove Jodie Coleman-Marzialo from the Historic District Commission per Section C5-2 (iii) of the Tolland Town Charter and the setting of a Public Hearing for May 21, 2024 and notice be given to Jodie Coleman-Marzialo.

MOTION that the following resolution be introduced and set down for a Public Hearing on May 21, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in Tolland Town Council Chambers or through Zoom:

DRAFT RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Tolland Town Council, with notice given, hereby remove Jodie Coleman-Marzialo from the Historic District Commission per Section C5-2 (iii) of the Tolland Town Charter for the following reasons: occurrences of lack of professionalism and decorum; difficulties following procedure; being disrespectful to residents during HDC meetings; displaying a lack of impartiality during HDC meeting proceedings. This removal is effective the date of the swearing in of the replacement Historic District Commission member.

Approved by the Tolland Town Council on _____, 2024.

Agenda Item #8.6

AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Consideration of a Resolution to remove Kathleen W. Bach from the Historic District Commission per Section C5-2 (iii) of the Tolland Town Charter and the setting of a Public Hearing for May 21, 2024 and notice be given to Kathleen W. Bach.

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: April 25, 2024

ITEM SUMMARY: The Town Council at their last meeting expressed interest in evaluating the membership makeup of the Historic District Commission (HDC) which has resulted in significant and numerous complaints received from residents regarding professionalism and decorum as well as Commission meeting attendance. The reasons for removal of Kathleen W. Bach are occurrences of lack of professionalism and decorum; difficulties following procedure; being disrespectful to residents during HDC meetings; displaying a lack of impartiality during HDC meeting proceedings; issues with meeting attendance.

Historic District Commissioners are appointed by the Town Council to five-year terms. In accordance with Chapter 96 of the Town Code as enabled by Chapter 97a of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Commission consists of five permanent members and three alternate members. The current Commission consists of the following members:

Member Name	Seat Name	Start Date	Term Expiration
Ann Deegan	Seat 1	11/12/2019	11/12/2024
Celeste Senechal	Seat 2	9/19/2022	11/12/2025
Kathleen W Bach	Seat 3	11/12/2021	11/12/2026
Frederick Day-Lewis	Seat 4	11/12/2023	11/12/2028
Jodie Coleman-Marzialo	Seat 5	11/12/2022	11/12/2027
(Vacant)	Alternate 1	11/12/2021	11/12/2026
John Hughes	Alternate 2	11/12/2023	11/12/2028
Morgan (Mariah) Bumps	Alternate 3	11/12/2022	11/12/2027

Section C5-2 of the Tolland Town Charter provides that “The Town Council may remove any member from any appointed board, commission, committee, or agency who serves without compensation as follows: (i) upon such member's unexcused absence from three consecutive meetings of the board, commission, committee, or agency, whether regular or special meetings; (ii) upon such member's unexcused absence from 50% or more of the meetings, whether regular or special meetings, of the board, commission, committee, or agency within a calendar year, unless otherwise provided by the General Statutes; or (iii) for any other reason the Town Council deems sufficient provided that the member of such board, commission, committee, or agency is given notice and an opportunity to be heard at a formal hearing.”

FINANCIAL SUMMARY: N/A

TOWN ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A

COUNCIL ACTION DESIRED: Motion to schedule the Public Hearing for May 21, 2024 and notice thereof given to Kathleen W. Bach.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

1. Section C5 of the Tolland Town Charter
2. Chapter 96 of the Tolland Town Code
3. Chapter 97a of the Connecticut General Statutes
4. Draft Resolution

Agenda Item #8.6

Consideration of a Resolution to remove Kathleen W. Bach from the Historic District Commission per Section C5-2 (iii) of the Tolland Town Charter and the setting of a Public Hearing for May 21, 2024 and notice be given to Kathleen W. Bach.

MOTION that the following resolution be introduced and set down for a Public Hearing on May 21, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in Tolland Town Council Chambers or through Zoom:

DRAFT RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Tolland Town Council, with notice given, hereby remove Kathleen W. Bach from the Historic District Commission per Section C5-2 (iii) of the Tolland Town Charter for the following reasons: occurrences of lack of professionalism and decorum; difficulties following procedure; being disrespectful to residents during HDC meetings; displaying a lack of impartiality during HDC meeting proceedings; issues with meeting attendance. This removal is effective the date of the swearing in of the replacement Historic District Commission member.

Approved by the Tolland Town Council on _____, 2024.



TOWN of TOLLAND/ 21 Tolland Green, Tolland Connecticut 06084

MEMO

TO: Town Council
ATTN: Brian Foley, Town Manager
FROM: SaraBeth Nivison, Executive Assistant
DATE: April 25, 2024
RE: Current Board & Commission Vacancies – Agenda Item #8.7

The table below illustrates all vacancies as of April 17, 2024 on Town Boards and Commissions appointed by the Town Council:

Office	Person Appointed/Term
Agriculture Commission-Alternate	ONE VACANCY: To fulfill a term through 7/09/25 Membership currently includes Dem (1), Rep (3), Unf (2)
Blight Review Committee	TWO VACANCIES: To fulfill terms through 01/01/25 and 01/01/27 Membership currently includes Dem (4), Rep (0), Unf (0)
Board of Assessment Appeals - Alternate	ONE VACANCY: To fulfill a term through 11/5/25 Membership currently includes Dem (1) Rep (2) Unf (0)
Board of Building Appeals	FIVE VACANCIES: To fulfill terms through 11/08/23 and 11/05/25 Membership currently includes Dem (0), Rep (0), Unf (0)
Cable Advisory Board	TWO VACANCIES: To fulfill terms through 6/14/25 Membership currently includes - None
Historic District Commission - Alternate	TWO VACANCIES: To fulfill terms through 11/12/2026 & 11/12/27 Membership currently includes – Dem (4), Rep (2), Unf (1)
Housing Authority	ONE VACANCY: To fulfill a term through 6/30/28 Membership Includes Dem (0), Rep (2), Unf (2)
Inland Wetlands Commission – Alternate	TWO VACANCIES: To fulfill a term through 11/5/25 Membership currently includes Dem (2) Rep (1) Unf (2)
Permanent Celebration Committee	ONE VACANCY: To fulfill term through 11/6/24 Membership currently includes Dem (2), Rep (2), Unf (2)

Planning & Zoning Commission - Alternate	ONE VACANCY: To fulfill a term through 11/11/25 Membership currently includes Dem (1), Rep (4), Unf (0)
Tolland Non-Profit Housing Corporation	TWO VACANCIES: To fulfill terms through 07/01/26 Membership currently includes Dem (4), Rep (1), Unf (0)
Tolland Water Commission	THREE VACANCIES: To fulfill terms through 01/31/24 & 1/31/27 Membership currently includes Dem (0), Rep (1), Unf (3) Members need to be on the Tolland Water System.
Veterans Recognition Commission	ONE VACANCY: To fulfill a term through 10/31/25 Membership currently includes; Dem 90), Rep (2), Unf (3)
Veterans Recognition Commission - Alternate	ONE VACANCY: To fulfill a term through 9/14/24 Membership currently includes Dem (0) Rep (2) Unf (3)
Water Pollution Control Authority	THREE VACANCIES: To fulfill terms through 08/26/24 and 08/26/26 Membership currently includes Dem (0), Rep (1), Unf (1)
Water Pollution Control Authority - Alternate	TWO VACANCIES: To fulfill terms through 08/26/24 Membership currently includes Dem (0), Rep (1), Unf (1)
Zoning Board of Appeals – Alternate	ONE VACANCY: To fulfill a term through 11/11/25 Membership currently includes Dem (2), Rep (3), Unf (1)

Appointments:

Re-Appointments:

BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
TOLLAND, CT

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING
6th Floor Council Chambers
April 2, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

2024 APR -4 AM 10: 23

Katherine Stargardter

MEMBERS PRESENT: Katherine Stargardter, Chair; Jacob Marie, Vice Chair; Jennifer Buckler, Chris Moran, Alexander Noonan, Joseph Sce, Colleen Yudichak

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Foley, Town Manager; Mike Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services (Zoom); Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent; Lisa Hancock, Director, Finance & Records (Zoom); Bev Bellody, Director, Human Services; Kathy Pagan, Town Clerk (Zoom); Scott Lappen, Director, Public Works

1. **Call to Order:** Ms. Stargardter called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Ms. Stargardter read the following statement:

As public discourse regarding our town budget continues, I call again for decorum both within and outside of this Council Chamber. As leaders in our community, we should be setting a high standard with the manner in which we govern ourselves. Supporting or even tolerating attempts to mislead the public on the backs of our budget is deplorable and unworthy of our community. I'm sure my colleagues, including Councilor Marie would agree. I believe our Town Council members all want to make the best decisions for our town and while we may not always agree on the specifics, respecting each other's opinions, approaches, and priorities is essential for us to work together and be deserving of the confidence the public has in us. As we enter this public hearing and looking ahead to the budget vote on Thursday evening, I ask that we conduct ourselves with civility and courtesy to both those with whom the Council interacts and with each other.

[Due to technical difficulties, the Council stood in recess until 7:08PM.]

Ms. Stargardter reread her statement.

2. **Public Hearing Item:**

2.1 2024-2025 Budget Proposed by the Town Manager

Town Government	\$14,144,408
Capital Improvement Reserve Fund	\$ 397,395
Board of Education	\$45,071,148
Debt Service	<u>\$ 5,376,489</u>
Total Proposed Budget	\$64,989,440

Mr. Foley reviewed the presentation Town of Tolland Public Hearing, April 2, 2024

- Budget Summary FY 2024-2025
- Town Revenues 2024-2025
- Fund Balance
- Expenditures
- Mill Rate Impact of the Financial Plan
- Tax Impact
- Capital Budget
- Types of Funding Methods
- FY 24-25 Town of Vernon Water Pollution Control Plant Upgrade
- FY 24-25 Significant Capital Projects Funded by the General Fund
- FY 24-25 Significant Capital Projects Funded by Non-Referendum Bonds/School Construction Grants
- FY 24-25 Significant Capital Projects Funded by Other Sources
- Past 5 Year General Fund Capital Contributions

- Total Debt Management Plan Schedule 2024-25 through 2028-29
- Budget Schedule

3. Public Participation

Mr. Moran motioned to open the Public Hearing.

Ms. Buckler seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Fran Weigand, Stafford Springs, noted that she is retired, was the Director of the Senior Center, and is a former resident. She has seen a lot of growth over the years and is representing the administration of the Senior Center as well as the seniors. She would like the Council to consider making the part-time assistant position full time. The person in the position goes above and beyond, works longer than her hours, and does not get overtime. The position merits being full time. The Director has a lot of responsibilities, including watching elderly people, and the Assistant needs to be able to do this as well when the Director is not available. She hopes the Council considers reinstating the position. It is only 10 hours. Additionally, the building is bulging, and people have been turned away from the exercise program. The building would be funded with grant money and not impact taxpayers.

Rebecca Levine, 64 Tolland Farms Road, commented that she is a frustrated and concerned parent of two children in TPS. Like others, they moved to Tolland for the school system over seven years ago. It was one of the best in the state. Since then, Tolland is not even in the top ten. In the beginning, her girls prospered and without the teachers and paraeducators she does not know how well her daughters would have done academically and socially. Ms. Levine commented that one of her daughters is on the spectrum and the other suffers from anxiety. With the help of staff, including the music teacher, they have improved and gained self-confidence. Ms. Levine reviewed the three budget proposals and is disheartened and disappointed. The proposed budget of 4% with the 16.5 reductions in positions and programs is a travesty. Fundamental programs and classes will be lost. Co-teaching is necessary for those with a learning disability and provides one-on-one attention to those who learn differently. The 6.98% budget is equally upsetting because a para, music teacher and others would be lost. She hopes the Council understands what this does to those who benefit from such programs and teachers. Many who do not have children or will have children in the TPS have complained that they will pay more in taxes. Ms. Levine commented that taxpayers benefit when students receive higher levels of education because it increases the chance that they will be employed and their wages will pay for Social Security and Medicare. Ms. Levine commented that unfortunately she would lean toward the 4.84% budget only because fewer teachers would be lost but the program reductions are immense. Every year beneficial programs and positions are cut. Students from underfunded schools do not perform as well. Larger class sizes, fewer advanced classes, and the loss of learning, world language, and child development decline the quality of education. Additionally, people will stop moving to Tolland and students who live in Tolland will go to different high schools or move away. She asked that they think of future generations yet to graduate and those who do go to Tolland and will miss out when neighboring towns offer so much.

Julie Wlodarczyk, 15 Harriet Drive, asked that the Council pass the BOE budget as-is. She has three kids who have graduated from TPS and asked them what their most influential experiences and programs were. The first was World Language. Her son was inspired by the teachers and received AP credit which helped him in college. The other program was Child Development which was already cut. Her daughter participated in the program and is pursuing a teaching degree. Her inspiration was the teacher and the program. Ms. Wlodarczyk commented that she wonders how many students will not pursue education because they have not had the introduction. If the goal is for Tolland to be attractive to new families with children, the education system has to be competitive. She works for a district in another town which is adding world language classes and starting them earlier. Tolland is talking about less and it scares her for the future of Tolland.

Claudette Morehouse, 89 Merlot Way, asked that the Council consider lowering the 5.2% to a more realistic and reasonable amount. The tax will impact her home and many others because they have not had potable water for seven years due to road salt contamination. They cannot sell their homes and are being held hostage in the town. They cannot downsize etc. and nothing in the budget will help them. Taxpayer money is being spent on repeated water testing and they are apparently getting new curbing and catch culverts when the others are fine. Additionally, as a business owner she works in many homes in town and sees the real struggles. Some are just sad. Seniors on fixed

incomes, single-income families, and low-income families – these are the people the Council is asking to dig deeper. Inflation impacts them, not just the town's budget. Ms. Morehouse finds it disturbing that some dismiss the significant population to fill the agenda of more. She asked when it is enough. Tolland will run out of other people's money. She asked that the Council find a way to help seniors and those households below median income from being further decimated. They are friends, families, and neighbors. The Council is to make decisions that represent all of Tolland. She asked that they are considered.

Liza Nowicki, 176 Timber Trail, commented that she has two children in TPS, and they are the reason they moved to Tolland in 2011. The schools had a great reputation and ratings. Since then, the landscape has changed. The trend has been to do more with less. Last year, her eighth grader received her course offering book for THS. She was ecstatic about the Early Childhood Education Program and would like to be a teacher. She was going to take all three courses but when she got to THS, the program was gone. It has taken until now to convince her that it is not coming back. Ms. Nowicki commented that others will not know the program existed and will miss out on the opportunity. Now, other opportunities such as world language, computer science, and band at TIS are on the chopping block and will be missed. She asked how the schools are doing this. Children are part of the community, and although not voters, the reason many people live in Tolland. The Council is in a unique position, and she hears the concern for increased taxes. At the January 23rd meeting she heard that the town is financially healthy. She explained that there are ways to offset taxes for those who need help, but it should not come at a cost to the children.

Adrienne Charboneau, 5 Crossen Drive, expressed concern regarding the proposed increase in property taxes. She looked at surrounding towns' mill rates for a comparison and Tolland is the highest. Ms. Charboneau cited examples: Willington 32, Coventry 31, Vernon 33, Stafford 36, and Ellington 34. While there cannot always be an apples-to-apples comparison, Tolland is far higher. She also noted the mill rate increases and, other than FY2015/16, what is proposed is the highest tax increase in the last 10 years. The average tax increase over the past 12 years was 0.61 mills. The proposed increase of 1.94 mills is more than three times the average. Additionally, if other districts in CT held their mill rates, Tolland would rank 19th highest out of 492 tax districts. Ms. Charboneau commented that this could scare new residents and businesses away leading to a decrease in revenue. Lastly, the housing market is strong, and values are not expected to decrease any time soon. Homes are being reassessed this year. She asked why they need to wait for the actual numbers to apply them to the budget this year. It was mentioned that the new assessed values would not be applied until next year's budget. She asked why they could not estimate the increase in taxes from the increase in the home market value now and use it to keep the mill rate close to the same. Future expenditures are estimated, and future revenue should be estimated as well. She asked that the Council reconsider the proposed budget and associated mill rate increase to reduce the property tax burden on residents.

Samar Bush, 20 Forest Lane, commented that she supports the 4.84% increase in the Town Manager's recommended budget. They moved to Tolland for various reasons but one was for their child to start in kindergarten and progress through TPS. She has had a child in each school, and it has been disheartening to see the schools be underfunded for over a decade. She would like to see the BOE be able to implement their 5-year budget plan, and this begins with it receiving the 4.84% increase. She also supports expanding the town's tax relief program long term and challenged the Councilors to find ways to decrease the increase in the mill rate by using sources such as the fund balance.

Rebecca Risely, 103 Mountain Spring Road, commented on those who spoke of those who care about the schools and keeping them funded while not caring about other residents. Ms. Risely explained that this is not true. The community is varied and many care about everyone and support programs for seniors and those who are struggling. They work together to lift those who cannot afford things, so they do not continue to reduce the school system where students receive assistance. Regarding the comment on this being the largest increase in 10 years, it is because they have not kept up and thus either a large increase is needed, or the school system will decline and not thrive. She encouraged at least supporting the budget integrated in the town budget. It is reasonable, fair, and doable for the community. There are ways to fund it without a large tax increase. Funds are available to relieve taxpayer burden. This is the time to use them.

Christina Plourd, 101 Metcalf Road, commented that if \$1M is taken from the fund balance to provide for operating costs and it is not replaced the following year, there would be a \$2M increase in taxes the next year. If money is continually taken from the fund balance, and not replaced, over the course of eleven years, it will be drained. It is not sustainable for the future students of Tolland. She has one child in TPS, and another will go next year. They are having a great time, and it is a great system. The budget has been positioned as town vs. BOE. She asked that the Council look

at responsible spending, lower the tax increase, keep people in town, make people want to stay, and make businesses want to start in Tolland. She asked that they find the balance. She will support the Council.

Karen Moran, 50 Merlot Way, commented that she is concerned about the sound bite around the mill rate and how high it is. It is hard to compare Tolland to other towns given varied factors. Willington is part of a regional district and does not have a high school to support. It is not fair to compare Tolland to Willington. There are few comparable districts even in Tolland's DRG because they participate in regional districts, or they do not have four schools. She asked that people use care in listening to such comments and budget for Tolland. The schools have been underfunded for too long. Ms. Moran commented that she no longer has kids in the school system but values it as a large asset to the town for her property value. The housing inventory is 95% single family homes meaning families will want to come to Tolland. The majority will want a great school system. She asked that they pass a responsible budget including that of the BOE.

Kenny Trice, 53 Doe Run, commented on a slide Mr. Foley presented of the town expenses. He believes he said that they are not doing anything new or providing additional services and the increases are due to contracts etc. If this is the case, what was stated is a harsh reality of life – costs go up. Many have differing perspectives but one cannot expect their electric bill to be the same for ten years. Costs go up. When they do not, the service or product, if not enhanced through efficiencies, has become obsolete. He has heard about cuts to the schools since 2011 and they are done every year. They just need to figure it out.

Lisa Burns, 214 Slater Road, commented in support of reviewing the budget one more time - 5.6% is too high. She represents a number of people who are trying to figure out how to fix their homes with crumbling foundations. It is still happening. She had to come up with \$50K+ out of pocket to fix her foundation. To ignore people in Tolland, the epicenter of crumbling foundations, who also have to endure huge expenses is not reasonable. Others have contaminated water issues. They are town citizens who deserve to be considered. They support the schools, but they cannot be the only focus. Those with other types of expenses deserve to be heard and considered in Tolland's budget. Ms. Burns commented that while she does not support 5.6%, she supports something that is more fiscally responsible and includes the entire community. Everyone agrees that students deserve a good education but the rest of the community and how they manage their funds needs to be considered as well. Costs do go up, and it is expected, but they need to be fiscally responsible. One has to work with what they have if the money is not in the checkbook. The 5.6% would be the highest budget increase that she has seen and does not believe it is fair to the town. A statement will be made at the referendum but why can they not consider it now? She asked that they go back, reconsider, and find where pieces can be taken out.

Dana Philbin, 11 Harvest Lane, commented that she is a member of the BOE, a taxpayer, and mom of two TPS students. She moved to Tolland in 2015. When her children were going to be entering preschool, they needed to decide on the best place to raise their children. Tolland checked the boxes with the school system, small town charm, and she knew people who were raised in town and are raising their children in town as well. Since 2015, many items have eroded. As a community member, she commented that it is their job to be fiscally responsible with the budget, properly fund all departments, and discuss the town as a whole. The BOE, fire department, senior center, recreation department, and others are departments of the town. She hears people speak of being fiscally responsible which is not cutting, reducing, or eliminating. It is finding and utilizing the proper resources, using the reserve fund, UISF, and others and applying them to the respective budget areas to not increase the mill rate and taxes to an extent that they become a burden to the single mother of four, senior citizens on a fixed income, or the mother who cannot work due to hardship. The town has several opportunities for aid and asked that they be utilized. There is an opportunity to properly fund Tolland and she implored the Council to work together to find out how they can use the town's 5-year budget plan and the BOE's plan. She asked that it be a town conversation. They have a unique opportunity to make a statement and improve Tolland as a whole for all students, staff, family members, and residents.

Andrew Mangiafico, 7 Lorraine Drive, commented on the 5.56% increase. People are saying it is too high, but it is a number. It does not mean anything until one looks at the reasons for it. There is an extraordinary situation that requires a massive investment. An extraordinary situation cannot be attacked with ordinary solutions or what has worked in the past because the problem is bigger. One has to look at creative solutions and different ways of solving the problem. The schools have had a chronic, massive underinvestment and the bill has come due. They also cannot ignore people who truly cannot afford the increase, but they cannot let this hold them back from what needs to be done to move forward. They also cannot trample people. They need to do what is right for the town as a whole while

taking care of those who need it. Mr. Mangiafico noted the Green and asked if it should not be used because some people cannot access it. They should access it more and be a responsible community and use resources to ensure everyone can access it. The schools are an asset that needs investment and if people cannot afford it, resources need to be used, understanding there are limits, and creative solutions examined; otherwise, they will not get out of the hole. If everything is cut, next year the increase could be 10% or 15%. He noted that it is nice to see bipartisan agreement and parties work together to move forward for what is best for Tolland.

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented that she supports the 4.84% budget increase with emphasis on using some of the fund balance to decrease the mill rate. She encouraged the Council to come up with a 5-year budget plan to help the entire town for the future. She returned to Tolland for the exceptional schools and understands the importance of maintaining the town's resources and services. While she no longer has students in the TPS, she appreciates the value of town services, infrastructure, and amenities. It is crucial that they strike a balance between adequately funding the town's needs and ensuring that property taxes are manageable for all. She does not want people to have to leave town due to property taxes or because schools are not offering services and opportunities for the youngest residents. Using the fund balance to offset the budget and decrease the mill rate can help alleviate some of the financial burden on homeowners while supporting essential services and initiatives in town. Ms. Costa advocated for work to be done on the 5-year plan to help alleviate future budget woes. She asked that the Council consider this approach and work together so Tolland is a vibrant and welcoming community for all residents.

Marliee Beebe commented that between 2019 and 2023 the social security cost of living (COLA) rate increases were over 20%. This reflected the impact of the COVID years. The corresponding mill rate increase was approximately 6.6%. It shows an exemplary effort to control mill rate increases. She commended the Council and town management. The flip side is that there are needs across the board including assistance at the Senior Center, Public Works, the Recreation Department, and the BOE. Increases have been so minimal that they are trying to dig themselves out of a hole. If they do not step up this year, the hole will be bigger next year; however, they need to assist those on fixed incomes and make a significant effort to educate citizens about tax credit programs available from the state and town. They are not tax deferrals and applications are available on the website. She asked that the Chair mention the programs. What is available, if people qualify, would pretty much defray the tax increase being discussed. Ms. Beebe supports the budget presented.

Mary Rose Duberek, 37 Ryan Road, commented that she appreciated the Chair's initial statement. Each department has shared what it takes to run their operation and she has to believe them. Once the budget decision is made, with consideration of the comments and what is needed for the town, she asked that they do their best as a bipartisan response to encourage members to vote "yes". Each Councilor is making the decision that the budget is what is needed. It is an individual vote but as those elected to run the town, they need to hear what is needed from the departments and provide support. Nothing is perfect and not everyone can be happy, but they are all members of one community and work together. The Council is negotiating, researching, and communicating with each other. As a citizen she appreciates this but wishes more people would vote and believes they would if the elected officials took a more proactive stance in supporting the budget.

Jason Philbin, Harvest Lane, commented that he is hopeful that they pass the Town Manager's budget. Money from previous tax years can be invested in the town. This includes a thriving town that supports its school system, residents, and town departments as a whole. It can be done with a little tax increase by using funds in the fund balances. The BOE passed a budget, and this is the first step in stopping the underfunding of the schools. It is a disservice to residents to ignore the underfunding issue and not invest tax money in the town. Everyone has expenses and the town has a surplus of money that can be used to lift the burden on residents. The phrase "fiscally responsible" and thinking, along with the underfunding of the schools and the town over the last eleven years, was not fiscally responsible and neither is continuing that trend. He asked that the BOE and Town Manager's budget be supported. It is needed by the town.

Mark Mitchell, 45 Shores Drive, commented that he reviewed the budget. The budget has \$45M for the school system and only \$14M for the town. He is surprised by how small the town budget is and it raises questions if the town has enough resources to serve the community. In terms of the school budget, \$45M is a lot and he did not see the annual cost per child online. He sees an opportunity to have such basic metrics available that would allow citizens to relate to the information. Mr. Mitchell commented that a citizen told him that there is never transparency on the school budget and the expenditures. Mr. Mitchell explained that he saw the \$45M on the school website, and perhaps it is because he is using an Android phone, but he did not see a budget breakdown or presentation of where or how the money would

be spent. The person also said that at year end, the school district says that it does not have enough money to put together a presentation on how the money was spent, which would be a cornerstone of accountability. Mr. Mitchell commented that he is an accountability expert and \$45M merits disclosure regarding expenditures. He explained that the person's concern was that money was devoted to the school library and very little went to it, but no one could account for where the money went. This lack of transparency undermines confidence in government. The Council has an opportunity to create greater transparency for greater confidence in the budget. Mr. Mitchell offered to volunteer his time and talent to provide additional insights. He hears that everyone comes to Tolland for education so something good is in town and worth continuing in a positive way.

Ms. Stargardter noted that the BOE budget is on its website and includes metrics including the per pupil cost. Further, the monthly BOE agenda and meeting packets, on the BOE website, have a financial disclosure review of the expenditures. The BOE and the town work hard to be transparent. It is public money.

Toni Maura, 42 Center Road, commented that she supports the entire town budget. In terms of the data points, the per pupil expenditure for FY22/23 for Tolland was \$18K. In context, in Connecticut, Tolland is the 132nd lowest of 164 districts recorded, placing it in the lowest bracket. She would like to see the numbers move and the Council get creative looking at other ways to support the entire community – senior citizens, single parents, those living below the median income and think of creative ways outside of an increased tax burden. Ms. Maura noted that she supports the proposed budget with assumptions.

George Ulrich, Fish and Game Road, commented that other towns have lower mill rates because they have industry. In Tolland's history, it has turned down items that would have brought in tax dollars such as fast-food restaurants and a motel and created the mess. The only way to have more money for the schools is to have more businesses. Mr. Ulrich commented that the true school budget is 6.35%. 1.51% was moved from the school budget to the town's budget - \$676K. Thus, if the school did not receive anything, it would still have a 1.51% increase over last year.

Heather McCann, 62 Crossen Drive, commented that her home has a crumbling foundation, and she has two children in the school system. They are a dual income household and are not wealthy. They are active in the community and understand the importance of supporting not only the schools but also seniors, those on fixed incomes, and lower income families. The need to appropriately fund the entire community and readily accessible funds are available.

Amanda Hickey, 11 Mitchell Circle, commented that she moved to town for the schools. Her oldest son graduated from THS in 2021 and she has children at TMS and TIS. Her kids love the schools and have benefitted from services that may be disappearing. The future of Tolland depends on the success of the schools. She supports the budget.

Mr. Noonan motioned to close the Public Hearing.

Mr. Marie seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Adjournment**

Mr. Moran motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM

Mr. Noonan seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken.

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,



Lisa Pascuzzi
Town Council Clerk

Town Council Chair

Thu 3/28, 4:55 PM

Town Council

Whoops,

On Thu, Mar 28, 2024 at 2:46 PM Frances Weigand wrote:

Dear

Chair Kaite Stargardter and Council Members:

I am Frances Weigand, former director of the Tolland Senior Center.

I want to begin this letter by thanking you, Katie, for your recognition of the need our seniors in Tolland have. I was a participant on zoom for the budget meeting that was held this past Monday evening. Thank you for addressing the issues. I understand balancing the budget is not an easy task. Thank you all for the great job you have been doing.

I have one request. I'd like for all of you to seriously consider increasing the Administrative Assistant position at the senior center, by adding 10 more hours moving it from part time to full time.

Having worked there for 32 years *without an assistant*, I can attest to the amount of work this position holds. The senior population has increased exponentially since I retired in 2020. And so has the workload.

Human Services Director, Bev Bellody, initially put this request into her budget, indicating the need, but that request never made it to the table.

The person now in this position works over time every week to complete the necessary work. She is not compensated monetarily for this over time. It is also required of this position to fill in for the director when the director is on vacation, or ill, or attending networking meetings. This places greater responsibility on this position, again without monetary compensation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. In advance, I appreciate anything you can do. I look forward to seeing you all at the April 2 public hearing for the budget meeting.

Sincerely,

Frances Weigand

860/428/45782

Thu 3/28, 9:20 PM

Town Council

Hello,

I support using the surplus to support the Board of Education budget. Our town has spent generations supporting education. I understand that continuing to live in the home you raised a family in, even after that family has moved, on is a difficult financial situation. However, as with all costs, the costs of a quality education increases. Tolland is rich with family homes, we should continue to fully fund education, in order to continue to draw families to purchase these homes. This is the only way to continue ensure we have a growing, vibrant community.

Thank you,

Adam Bender

103 Goose Ln, Tolland, CT 06084

Fri 3/29, 6:49 PM

Town Council

Good Friday Chairwoman Stargardter, Vice Chairman Marie, members of the Tolland Town Council and Town Manager Foley,

I would like to express my support for the budget as outlined by the Town Manager to be put forward by the Town Council to the public at large for consideration at the May 7th Referendum. As the town is seeing a notable increase in economic activity, further investment in the UConn area that tends to spill over into neighboring communities including our own, and a rise in new housing opportunities (notably multifamily housing), investment in our community will ensure our town remains attractive to prospective residents while supporting programs and services for existing residents.

However, I do believe a greater portion of the Tax Stabilization Fund could and should be used to offset the impact of the mill rate. Especially as we are heading into a revaluation year that could significantly impact resident's home values negatively or positively in the next budget cycle. Minimizing significant shifts in the mill rate without impacting programs or services, while recognizing ongoing financial struggles due to inflation and other economic hardships and allowing for a more measured reaction to any changes in property values next year.

Town increases are modest and meeting core needs for governmental services and staff, with logical adjustments to the town's debt service plan. Meanwhile, the Board of Education's 5-year bi-partisan strategic financial plan for future budgets gradually stabilizes funding levels to be on par with surrounding communities and simultaneously prioritizing cost-avoidance programs in the school system to ensure Tolland students feel that they can succeed in the Tolland Public Schools.

I do hope, whatever decision is reached on April 4th, it can be done with a reasonable level of bi-partisanship. As some of you know in my prior role on Town Council, I've been through four budgets. Two I experienced as a part of a super-minority where our voices did not necessarily matter our could tip the scales of the final vote. One of those years was 2020, where we neither adjusted the mill rate nor could have a referendum due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The other, I voted no because the majority reduced Town Manager Rosen's budget and I felt we ought to support our newly hired manager at the time feel they were supported by the council, though I still voted yes at the referendum. Ultimately, Mr. Rosen left for another community shortly before my second term and wonder if a lack of trust in their abilities impacted their decision to leave Tolland.

The second term saw a mixed bag for our two years in a majority role. We sought to support our interim Town Manager Lisa Hancock who presented a reasonable budget, but ended in a party-line vote of 4-3 that failed referendum, due in part to more active public campaigning against the budget by my colleagues. We succeeded the second time after a 5-2 bi-partisan vote and limited or no open opposition by those who dissented. This 5-2 vote was almost identically repeated in 2023 with new Town Manager Foley, maintaining a majority of the budget he presented and passed as Tolland has gradually seen a rise in participation over the past four years. It is my hope this trend continues, even if turnout is abysmal at less than 20-25% of residents voting.

I hope you give this budget the manager put forward a fair shot to the public. If you support it, make your case in subsequent public sessions and throughout your community and encourage even more residents to learn and make an informed vote. If you oppose the budget, make it clear why and where you feel the budget could be adjusted (reductions/increases in spending, use of funds to offset the mill rate, etc.). But i echo Town Manager Foley from prior discussions and prior budgets to not actively torpedo or tarnish this budget or undercut the process with statements/opinions that may not be entirely accurate or verified with factual information.

I do not envy any one of you. There are many reasons why I stepped back from Town Council after four years of service. The pressures put upon you can be immense and overwhelming, both emotionally and intellectually as some of you will or have experienced first-hand certainly factored into that decision for me personally. I frankly don't miss those moments and the struggles internally that can arise among neighbors and even friends. But I respect that it is a part of the process. It is what makes our democracy and serving on Town Council a truly unique

experience. It can at times be excitingly fast and excruciatingly slow, cordial and contentious, rewarding and thankless.

I wish all of you the best with your final decision, that you put the best interests of the town's future into your deliberations, and that we have a successful Referendum in May. I believe this can be accomplished with a united support for this year's budget proposal. And I hope that going forward you continue to build positive relationships with your peers, staff and those you serve. Reaching out across the aisle and sharing yourself with those you normally would not work with makes for a more productive and trusting team.

Sincerely,

Steve Osier (Jones)
514 Old Stafford Road

Sat 3/30, 1:01 PM

Town Council

To the Tolland Town Council,

First let me start be saying a big thank you to all of you for volunteering your time to serve our community.

In 1986 when we purchased our home in Tolland our real estate taxes were under \$2,000.00 per year. We had trash pick-up two times per week and our home had a septic and well. Today almost 40 years later we still have that well & septic and trash pickup once per week. The dump / transfer station has been closed, now anytime I have bulky waste I need to pay extra to have it collected. In 2023 we wrote a check to the Town of Tolland for almost \$8,000.00 for real estate and car taxes (both older vehicles). We have one less out building then we had in 1986 and have not made any huge changes to our home. That is a 300% increase over the last 38 years. If I live for the next 20 years how much will my taxes cost me and how will I be able to afford to stay in Tolland and my home? How will any senior be able to continue to live in Tolland the town that we call home, and do so on a fixed income?

The average Social Security COLA over the last ten years is 2.8% which includes the last three years of 5.9% in 2022, 8.7% in 2023, and 3.2% for 2024. The increases in SSI do not come close to keeping pace with our current tax burden never mind the new taxes that will be generated over the next ten years. The average COLA over the last 20 years is only 2.6%.

This year Tolland will be reassessing our property values. We all know that will increase our tax burden. Taxes combined with the ever increasing mil rate makes Tolland very unattractive for seniors and those on fixed incomes.

My wife and I raised three wonderful children that went through the Tolland school system. It seems to me that we had the same problems back then with funding for the BoE. No one wants to see our children suffer; in fact I would like to see our school system improve. The stronger our school system the stronger our town is. I just believe that something needs to be done about the mandates that are being placed on public education. These mandates are under and or non-funded. Even those mandated that are fully funded are paid for with our tax dollars. I always felt that it was my responsibility as a parent to provide my children with the things that they needed to become caring, intelligent, functioning members of our society. Today it seems more like it is the community's responsibility to help raise its children. Today you get a "free" breakfast, lunch, and computer, physical and mental health care. The list goes on and on. Where does this stop?

I also believe that as a town we need to take a closer look at the way the BoE is spending the school budget. What are more important, more smart boards or more teachers? I hear about teachers, classes, and positions being cut but no one is telling us about all of the classes, technologies, and positions being added. As a family we had to make strategic budgetary decisions to keep our household afloat while putting three children through college. It's time that our school system needs to take a serious look at needs vs wants.

Best Regards,

Mark Schmidt —369 Gehring Rd

Sun 3/31, 10:55 PM

Town Council

Dear Council Members,

I know that you are busy working on the town budget and I felt the need to speak out on a line item concerning ten additional hours for the Senior Center Administrative Assistant bringing a part-time position to a full-time position.

I have been an active member of the Senior Center for ten years and have witnessed the incredible growth of its membership that has progressively taken place year after year. I have had a front-row seat to this tremendous growth as an active member and volunteer. The Director of the Senior Center has worked tirelessly to present a host of new programs attracting countless new members. She was sorely in need of some help beyond the scope of volunteers and a part-time assistant was hired. Due to the increased activity at the Center and its challenging space limitations, the Assistant is now working a full-time schedule which, in large part, requires constantly moving furniture to accommodate various activities in addition to her Administrative duties.

The Senior Center Administrative Assistant needs to be compensated for her diligence and dedication to the Center. Please increase her hours to maintain the integrity of our Town of Tolland Senior Center. This facility and its Seniors deserve it.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Rosemarie Capuano
41 Tolland Green

4/1, 9:15 AM

Town Council

It has come to my attention that the council is considering a 5.6% tax increase. I would like to voice my opposition to this proposal. In this inflationary economy it puts more of a burden on already pressured household budgets such as ours without a discernible return. As a 28 year resident of Tolland I'm sure the council can find areas where the budget can be trimmed to avoid such a drastic increase.

Richard Daniotti
172 Crystal Lake Rd

Tolland, CT

Mon 4/1, 11:42 AM

Town Council

Hello,

It has come to our family's attention that the council is considering a 5.6% tax increase. We would like to voice our opposition to this proposed huge tax increase. It puts more of a burden on our already limited household budget. We have been in Tolland for almost 30 years. I'm positive the town council can find areas to trim the budget and avoid this proposed increase.

Thank you, Sheila M. Deprey and family

Mon 4/1, 12:41 PM

Town Council

I am writing in support of the proposed town manager's budget. There are wonderful, hopeful balances that gives this community something to look forward to. Thank you to all for your diligence on this issue, this is a tough process.

Melissa Moser

Mon 4/1, 1:15 PM

Town Council

Dear Council,

I am writing to you today as a parent of a 6th and 9th grader in the Tolland Public Schools in support of fully funding the Board of Education budget.

We moved our family to Tolland for the outstanding education for our children. However, over the past several years we have experienced the schools being impacted with cuts due to continued reductions within the budget. As a result, our children's opportunities from extracurriculars, interventions for various subjects, options for electives, teachers and courses have been cut extensively. It is quite concerning to think of more teachers and programs being cut from an already lean system.

The students currently and in the future deserve the best opportunity for growth and further reductions to TPS will continue to be limiting for our children. Our children deserve to be as competitive as students from other districts. The proposed elimination would be a significant loss for the long-term success of our students.

Respectfully,

Jenifer Gietek

Mon 4/1, 2:32 PM

Town Council

Good afternoon, Tolland Town Council,

I am a Tolland High School graduate, current Tolland resident, I have 3 daughters that have attended Tolland Public Schools, one is a class of 2023 graduate, a junior and an eighth grader, and I have been a TPS volunteer in various roles through the years.

This week, as you review the BOE budget, please support the BOE adopted budget and minimize cuts that will negatively impact our students and the TPS community. As a parent, and invested member of the community, I am seeing firsthand the impact previous cuts have made on our already declining school system, such as diminished quality of education, loss of important classes and programs, reduced safety standards, athletics and more. The future outlook of our school system is concerning.

I understand the difficult position that our town leadership is in and appreciate all that you're doing for the town.

We appreciate the TPS teachers and want them to have all of the support they need. Please make providing a quality education program to Tolland students a priority.

Thank you for your time,

Kimberly Santini

Mon 4/1, 3:10 PM

Town Council

Hello TC,

I'm exhausted, I can only imagine that you all are as well. I'm sending on my last effort email as I know the budget is finalized on Thursday.

Please keep the BOE budget intact WITH assumption. Please consider using some of the unassigned fund to offset taxes.

The attacking of neighbors is too much - maybe social media is truly the end of humanity. Going forward prior to budget season please consider hosting info sessions. I believe it's owed to all residents- informative, non-politically charged, info sessions. Consider hosting these with the super. Throw in a food truck or a bonfire, and I'm sure people will attend! Ignorance is bliss, I

guess- but there are many people in town who want to be informed and just don't know how to get factual, non biased info. No spins, no gimmicks- hard facts that are easy to understand!

Anyway... about 4 years ago, one of you were sitting on this side of the email asking TC for the very same thing. So maybe the TC can work together and think outside the box and tap into a small portion of those reserves, the unassigned balance increased almost by 3 million since that letter was penned.

I'm keeping the faith!

Thanks for all you do,

Toni Moura

Tolland, Ct

Resident

Town and school volunteer

Mom

Mon 4/1, 6:02 PM

Town Council

Dear Tolland Town Council,

I am a parent of four Tolland Public School students: 2 graduates, and 2 current high schoolers. I have seen firsthand how years of cuts have negatively impacted my children throughout their school careers by the offering of less elective courses, extracurricular programs, and enrichment activities. I am truly concerned for further cuts affecting our student community and their ability to be competitive as they apply to college or pursue job aspirations. Chronic budget cuts can result in limiting students' exposure to diverse subjects and experiences, potentially narrowing their educational opportunities and stifling their creativity and interests.

As a Board of Education member, I consistently heard about the needs in our younger grades for additional teachers to lower class sizes, additional paraeducators to assist in overwhelmed classrooms, additional interventionists to assist with our yearly increasing special needs population, additional guidance counselors and mental health staff to assist students with so many mental health and emotional concerns. It is seemingly impossible to ever add resources when year over year the board is faced with debilitating cuts.

The Board of Education submitted a 6% budget increase last year, which was unfortunately reduced to 3%. This year they are again working towards increasing funding in an attempt to

get to a place of continued stability for the district going forward. I was pleased to see that the entire board, both Democrats and Republicans, pushed for a 4.84% or higher increase. Please work with them to finally end the unnecessary underfunding and town discord and instead fully fund our town's greatest asset.

Our children deserve the best education possible.

Thankyou,
Sophia Shaikh

Mon 4/1, 6:26 PM

Town Council

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to ask you to please fully fund the Board of Education budget request. I have three children, one recent graduate, and two others currently in school in Tolland and it's frustrating to see cuts being made to their education year after year.

All of my children play or have played on school teams, all pay-to-play, which has been extremely costly. How will parents be able to afford the extracurriculars their children enjoy plus costs for tutoring if necessary? With increased class sizes, especially considering that some high school class sizes for my boys have been up to 26 students, more children will require more one-on-one attention and extra help. For working parents like myself and my husband it is not only the extra costs but the ability to access after school tutoring easily due to time constraints. These kinds of stressors impact families both financially and personally.

My youngest is an excellent student who will be interested in taking honors level courses, AP level courses and electives in the high school. The faculty reductions that could occur if the school budget is decreased further will impact those opportunities for him as courses are eliminated. I have already witnessed the limited elective class options as my two older children have progressed through middle school and high school. The middle school hardly has any electives to choose from now and the high school has limited selection which is further limited due to the block schedule. My middle son, who is a senior, is currently taking an elective course which has sparked his interest in potentially choosing a college major. This course is likely going to be eliminated if the proposed BOE cuts are implemented. Students should be able to explore their interests and academic strengths through elective courses outside of their basic academic requirements.

For younger students, it's incomprehensible that they could lack the opportunity to participate in band at the intermediate school, computer education at the middle school, language offering in

the middle school. Computer education has already been limited over the years at Birch Grove and TIS, yet it is a skill almost every student will need as they enter the workforce. Beginning Spanish in the middle school has allowed some of my children to progress farther in language in high school, which has been great as most colleges expect 3 years of a language. My kids have had the opportunity to take an additional year or it has allowed them to add another meaningful elective, which can be helpful during the college application process to present themselves as well-rounded students.

No one wants their taxes to increase, but considering town funds are in a great place, it seems reasonable that we should utilize them to do what is necessary and responsible to have a robust school system for our students and for our community overall.

Thank you for understanding that our children are our future and our schools are important to our town and to our family.

Sincerely,
Kimberly Giordano

Town Council

Good evening,

I am writing again to ask you to please do what's best for the children of our community. Tolland continuously underfunds the Board of Ed budget and this needs to change! Please let the community vote for the budget with the least cuts and see what happens.

Sincerely,
Amy Green
32 Anthony Road South

Town Council

Dear Council,

I am writing to you today as a parent of a fourth grader in Tolland Public Schools in support of fully funding the Board of Education budget. As a taxpayer, I am hopeful that Town funds will be utilized to achieve the goal of an exceptional, highly-rated and fully-funded school district.

We began a family in Tolland in hopes of providing our daughter an excellent education, unfortunately we have witnessed years of reductions due to low budgeting, which has been very disappointing. Our daughter is an excellent student and voracious learner, however like so many students, is understandably impacted by reductions in positions and programming. Every student deserves the best opportunities for growth and further reductions to TPS will continue to be limiting for our children.

As well as academically, our schools also need to have the resources to properly handle the mental health concerns that are impacting our children at school daily. I am concerned with the rise of anxiety in students post-pandemic and understand that it is overwhelming the staff at the younger schools. Increasing class sizes and further overwhelming teachers will continue to negatively impact students with increased needs.

Our children deserve to be as competitive as students from other districts as they move onto higher learning or trades. The elimination of band at TIS, Computer Science in the middle school, and the reduction of language opportunities are detrimental losses for the long-term success of our students.

Lastly, it is my understanding that as teaching positions are eliminated, newer teachers are the ones lost. My daughter has a newer teacher who has had such a tremendously positive impact on her, it would be a tragedy for our school system to lose her. With so many high school positions poised to be eliminated, we are going to lose valuable resources to our children unnecessarily.

Thank you,
Meredith Werstak

Mon 4/1, 7:20 PM

Town Council;

Writing again to ask the Town Council to support the TM's proposed BOE budget as is. Seeing the information that was sent out late last week by Dr Willett (on behalf of the BOE). This information is startling to say the least. The thought of either the yellow or red scenarios (see attached) becoming our reality is of grave concern to us as parents of middle/high schoolers.

Please take any and all resources you have to secure this budget as is for the town, so the BoE can avoid taking MORE OPPORTUNITIES away from our children- especially those in higher grades who don't have time on their side. My household is still reeling at the decision to cut the early childhood education program last year, just as our oldest transitioned to the high school. This is a major opportunity taken from our child who is interested in early childhood education.

How are all residents not upset with not offering this?!?! We need teachers to thrive as a community and a country, but we can't do anything to plant seeds while they're young and making career decisions? Now, this year, MORE programs will be lost -will it be music? Computer science? World languages? ALL of these?

Each will just devastate more families and do less to set our kids up for success in life. The trajectory we are on is not sustainable and we cannot keep riding the wave of a good 2015 ranking with our current course offerings, there are marked differences.

In an exchange copied from the minutes at the 1/23/24 TC meeting "Ms Stargardter asked if Ms. Hancock had ever seen the fund balance at this height of a percentage of expenditures. Ms. Hancock responded that it has been close, but not this high.'

We are very much in favor of the town utilizing creative ways with existing excess funds to offset tax increases and thus decrease the mill rate/potential tax increase to residents- thereby supporting ALL residents who live in Tolland. Please use it. With 72% of tolland households being families, the schools absolutely should NOT suffer as a consequence because this decision was made based on a small minority.

We'd also like to understand better the ECS fund - it seems just by its title it should be used by educators, for education. In Tolland I'm not sure that's the case, why? To quote Senator Gordon -who attended last weeks BoE meeting- when asked about the ECS fund's intent to be used for education, he responded 'I agree that the money that we have that we want to focus on education should be going to education".

Please use surplus reserve funding however it is necessary to salvage opportunities and keep Tolland schools competitive and desirable.

Thank you,
Tom and Liza Nowicki
176 Timber Trail
Sent from my iPhone

Mon 4/1, 8:15 PM

Town Council;

Brian Foley;

Walt Willett

Dear Town Council Members,

As a former chair of the Board of Education for four years, I have had a front row seat to four years of budget discussions and decisions affecting our district. I was relieved and hopeful to see that the new board was able to put through a much needed percentage increase and were in agreement that a significant one was necessary. I am also happy to see that a five-year plan is being looked at. There has been so much negative back and forth over the years, pitting elected officials against each other and putting the BOE and the Town at odds unnecessarily.

As a parent of three public school students, I am in a unique position. I have a son graduating, a daughter that just started Pre k 3, and another daughter at the middle school. I am literally your target audience. The cuts that would occur will significantly impact my children and will mean that my youngest will not have the same opportunities as my eldest children. The class sizes, especially in grades K-5 keep climbing and with the reduction of the 6th grade team on the table, it doesn't look like the middle school will offer much relief to students or staff. The intervention rates keep growing and growing and for years I have heard our administrators ask for help, which we haven't been able to give them. Children are falling through the cracks and teachers are overwhelmed. We can't let this continue. The idea of Computer Education being eliminated at TMS seems ridiculous. How can we not see that students need this important class for lifelong computer skills? The possibility of languages being cut or reduced significantly at the middle and high school is very disappointing. Our students deserve well-rounded educational opportunities as students in other districts have.

I hope that the Town Council can continue the work that the Board of Education tried to do by adopting their budget. They are working together in a bipartisan manner to try to put a stop to years of damage being done by underfunding the school system and get it back on course. Please pay attention to the numbers, a 1.7% increase over 11 years is not maintaining a healthy district. It's time to come together and do better for our children. Thanks for taking the time and reading this email.

Best,

Ashley Lundgren

Mon 4/1, 8:28 PM

Town Council;

Philip Mazzilli <philip.mazzilli@gmail.com>

To the Town Council Members,

We support the BOE budget proposal and the current budget funding scenario that the Town Manager has included in his proposed budget.

It's imperative that we increase the funding to our schools and town functions so that we remain competitive with the education and services provided with surrounding towns. In 2015 we moved to Tolland because of the reputation of its school; only to see the BOE funding sputter to less than 2% increases over the past 10 years. It's time to get creative and work together to support a budget that not only supports our future but provides at least a level services budget.

We support the proposed BOE and TM budget with no further reductions. We need to focus on adding value to the Town of Tolland for the future of our current citizens, students, property values and the dynamic future residents we hope attract so that we can ensure Tolland continues to grow, maintain and thrive as a prosperous place to live.

Sincerely,

Philip & Jessica Mazzilli
255 S River Rd

Mon 4/1, 8:28 PM

Town Council;

Brian Foley;

Hello Town Council and BOE,

In anticipation of the Hearing tomorrow night, I would like to restate my (a) complete support for the town's budget increase (necessary to fund basic services in our town), (b) support for the town to take over the USIF debt, and (c) request that more of the Tax Stabilization Fund and the Unassigned Fund-Fund Balance be used to offset taxes.

Thank you,

Kate Howard-Bender
103 Goose Lane

4/1/24

Town Council

Dear Town Council,

I wanted to take this opportunity to write and share my opinion regarding the various budget scenarios that have been brought forth by Dr. Willett and the Tolland Board of Education. Even though I work hard to stay up to date on all BoE budgets matters, I appreciated level of detail given in the recent breakdown of budget scenarios document listed in yellow, green and red that allowed us to really see what is at stake here.

I am writing to express my support for the full amount of the budget that the Board of Ed has presented to you and that no further cuts to that budget be made. I recognize these decisions are not made lightly and that this is a complicated issue. I will note that it blows my mind that the amount of cuts listed in the red column of the document mentioned above is even a possibility being considered...I'm not sure how we could come back from cuts like those. I know we can do better.

I write this as a proud member of Tolland and a concerned parent and I appreciate your time reading this.

Tabitha McKown
65 Wildwood Rd
Tolland

Mon 4/1, 9:24 PM

Town Council

Back on March 6th I sent the email below.

Almost a month later and the need to emphasize it seems greater now.

Please put your support behind the budget the BOE put forward and support the education of Tolland's children.

Dear Mr. Foley and Town Council Members:

Please support the budget put forth by the board of education for the Tolland Public Schools. As disheartening as it is, further reductions will be a detriment to the education of the children of Tolland.

As it is this is a bare minimum budget, offering nothing new for students only cuts. It's beneficial for everyone to invest in this town's schools.

Please be supportive leaders.

Jennifer Abramo
Parent of a THS 10th grader

Mon 4/1, 4:00 PM

Hello TC and BOE Dr W and TM Foley

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to urge the Tolland Town council to consider maintaining a level services budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Given the challenges faced by our community, it is crucial to prioritize stability and continuity in essential municipal services and those for our students staff and administrators at the schools

Furthermore, I propose utilizing some of the funds available in the town's various municipal funds for tax stabilization purposes THIS YEAR, but work to develop a long term plan for creating a sustainable budget for all in town. These funds present an opportunity to alleviate the burden on taxpayers, while ensuring the delivery of necessary services remains uninterrupted.

Additionally, I advocate for the Town to take over the USIF fund payment, as it rightfully belongs under municipal management. This move will streamline administrative processes and ensure efficient allocation of resources for the benefit of our community.

While we often hear about those that cannot afford a tax increase, and nobody wants them, however maintaining a robust town where we have folks wanting to move to town is an advantage for Tolland as well

Last week I listened with intent to the BOE meeting and a 21st century place of work -today we aren't offering a lot of what was mentioned and we aren't offering our students the opportunity to learn many 21st century skills

I trust that the Town Council shares my commitment to the well-being of all of our residents and the prudent management of public finances. Thank you for considering these suggestions, and I look forward to your thoughtful deliberation on this matter tomorrow.

Please support a level services budget -anything less will be a disservice to our town employees, students, & residents

Best regards,

Liz

Thanks!

Liz

Liz Costa

Town Council

I have one request, that you please fully fund the BOE budget.

As a school district our schools have been underfunded for years. As you are well aware we are behind comparable districts in school funding. With an average budget increase of 1.7% in eleven years, how can we say this is sustainable?

Although my family of 6's median income is significantly lower than our towns median income, we must invest in our schools. Of course I don't want my taxes to increase but for our town and schools to thrive we must properly invest in our schools.

One way to achieve this goal while not highering taxes is to use some of our town's general fund balance. For example, the unassigned fund balance has over \$1.2 million above what is required by policy. Why not use that money to help keep our tax increase to a minimum?

Please look at all the avenues you can to approve a budget that fully funds the BOE and allows our town to grow and thrive. Look past your political affiliations and work together.

Wishing you all the best,

Teresa Carey

38 Nedwied Rd.

Mon 4/1, 10:06 PM

Town Council

To whom it may concern ,

We moved to Tolland 12 years ago for the education system . We love the town , the people of Tolland and our kids love their teachers. We have some of the hardest working teachers who go above and work tirelessly to provide a good education for our children in the town of Tolland and I'm grateful for them everyday . Since moving here our taxes have gone up every year and yet the services keep becoming less. We are loosing valuable teachers and classes , athletics and academics are being cut. We have excess funding that should be used towards education , toward a dedicated full time police and fire department , for our seniors . This fund needs to be allocated . People can't afford to keep having taxes go up and resources go down we are loosing students to other school systems, people moving out due to increase rise in taxes or having street take overs that we sit by and watch since we don't have a dedicated police department . We don't have a dedicated resource officer in each school , class sizes are increasing to unobtainable numbers with less and less teachers and course offerings. Every year it seems more and more people are opting to leave THS. As a town Tolland should hang its hat and invest in the people of the town instead of showcasing the size of our wallet with surplus savings that doesn't mean anything when the town isn't investing the money into what truly matters.

Saving for a rainy day when it's pouring in our town doesn't make sense .

Meghan K. Soroka

Mon 4/1, 10:54 PM

Town Council

Dear Members of the Town Council,

I am writing to express my full support for your unanimous approval of the education budget.

Our schools are struggling and it is not ok. No public school system should struggle, let alone one in a town with funds available like ours.

People who don't support the children of Tolland say the education in our town is "fine". My family and MANY others didn't move here for "fine". My family moved here for a robust school system with rigor, diverse high school course offerings, and a strong foreign language program that, when we bought our home in 2005, started at the elementary school level. Think about how that has changed in Tolland. It is truly sad.

What happened? You know what happened. Please don't let it continue.

Sincerely,
Amanda Doyle
8 Lakeview Drive Extension

4/2/24
Yesterday, 8:56 AM
Town Council

Dear Town Council Members,

I'm writing to you as a concerned grandparent who wants the best education for my grandchildren and all the kids in our town. I've been keeping an eye on the Board of Education meetings, and I was really impressed with the plan they came up with for the next five years.

I believe that passing the Republican Board of Ed budget is the right thing to do. It's important for our kids to have all the resources they need to learn and grow. With the budget proposed by the Republican Board of Ed, we can make sure our schools have what they need to support our children's education.

My daughter moved back to town because of the schools. I want to make sure that they stay in the town that they grew up in. From what I've seen there is a path forward that benefits everyone in town. Please find a way. I urge you to listen to the voices of families like mine and pass the Republican Board of Ed budget. Let's give our kids the chance to succeed in school and in life.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Betty Sue

4/2/24
Town Council

Hello,

I am emailing today to express my support for the budget. I would support more funding for the BOE budget if that option was available. I have 2 children currently in the school, 5th and 10th grade. My youngest child has 25 kids in his class and having that many 10 year olds in one class has negatively affected his learning. His amazing teachers spend more time redirecting students than actually teaching lessons. My 10th grader has missed out on many elective class options so far. There are huge waitlists for elective classes that will help students be more well rounded, such as the culinary classes. Other school districts have many more class options than Tolland and our children are falling behind. The thought of the current 5th grade class continuing with 25 kids in classes in 6th grade is awful. My son wants to take honors classes, those classes do not work with 25 kids. I really hope that the town can put forth a fair budget, supporting all aspects of the community we live in. No one wants higher taxes, myself included, however our current school children deserve the same great education of years past and that deserve to graduate with an education that sets them up to be competitive with other surrounding towns. Please fund the full BOE budget!

Thank you,

Meredith and Jamey Dodge

53 Timber Trail

Sent from my iPhone

4/2/24

Good Morning,

My family and I are hoping that the Town Council will fund the Education Budget to the best of its ability using any and all revenue sources available. We hope that the Town Council puts forth a budget that gives the town's education sector its due services after years of underfunding and cuts. We are hoping to be able to support a robust town budget that puts education at the epicenter of a vibrant town plan.

Best,

Sarah and Joe Goldman

4/2/24

Dear Tolland Town Council,

TC Goal 4C - Improve transparency and communication to the public regarding the town budget process.

Pg 12 of the Public Hearing Presentation has an * next to Debt Service and explains "*Although this reflects an increase in this budget, it is a reclassification out of the Operating Budget to Debt Service." That is not transparent. Under the TTM proposal the debt that is "reclassified" is added to Debt Service, but it is not coming "out of the Operating Budget". The BoE budget has not been reduced by that amount before being increased by the proposed 4.84% or \$2,081,293. The BoE budget proposed in the Town Manager's budget will actually have \$2.7M (2.08M + 650,000) in new spending. That needs to be communicated clearly.

If the goal is to give the BoE an effective 6.35 % increase in new spending, then please be transparent and state that. Honestly lay out the BoE requested 6.35% increase of \$2,730,722 for a 24/25 budget of \$45,720,577. Get rid of the smoke and mirrors approach. Do not add to our already high Debt Service obligation (compared to neighboring towns). Don't complicate an already higher-than-normal overall spending increase and much higher-than-normal tax increase proposal. In order to get anything even close to this proposal passed at referendum, you must be transparent, direct, non-partisan, and factual.

Shifting the BoE's share of debt payments to Debt Service may make sense eventually, but not as part of this year's budget process. You need to take your time to draft a new agreement and properly amend Town of Tolland Code 176-24 Policy 25 Town of Tolland and Tolland Board of Education Utility Internal Service Policy/Agreement which was adopted by both the TC and BoE in 11-2013 and amended on 7-13-2021. Wouldn't you need to hold a Public Hearing to further amend said Agreement and related Town of Tolland Policy 25 before absolving the BoE from any further payments? It's interesting to see that Stafford BoE has line item 830 (\$490,000) in their budget for debt service which they explain includes the solar lease payment contribution returned to the Town of Stafford. Their electricity payments have decreased by approximately \$350,000. This seems to be similar to the original intent of the BoE/Town of Tolland UISF Agreement. If it hasn't worked out in Tolland as intended, then it needs a thorough study and discussion before just adding the payments to another account.

If you remove the \$650,000 addition from Debt Service and find legitimate use of another \$100,000 - \$200,000 of fund balance, you should be able to come to a budget that still provides a sufficient increase for the town budget, 4.84% for the schools (\$2.1M on top of 23/24 funding level), and a tax increase of under 4%. It would show that you have listened to residents who would like an increase in the BoE budget and to those who may struggle with another 5.2% on top of the very high taxes we already pay in Tolland. I would support that budget.

Thank you for considering all points of view,
Deb Goetz
176 Kate Lane

4/2/24

Eric Nelson

Town Council

I want to add my voice to the conversation concerning the proposed property tax increase and the horrible idea of ruining our historic town green with sidewalks.

First, those of us on a fixed income have a very difficult time with the taxes we already pay here. I'm sure that some of the increase is necessary. I'm also sure that some of it is not. How much for that sidewalk?

And as for the sidewalk on the green: There is a very easy fix to the imaginary problem of the wheelchairs not having access for gatherings on the green. MOVE THE GATHERINGS TO A LARGER, SAFER PLACE WITH MORE PARKING THAT ALREADY IS ACCESSIBLE FOR WHEELCHAIRS. Or does that make too much sense?

No tax increase. No sidewalk.

April 2, 2024

Dear Members of the Tolland Town Council and Town Manager:

Thank you for the opportunity to share public comment during this budget season.

Tax season reminds me of making soup from a stone. The folktale Stone Soup likely has its roots in oral tradition, and has morphed and spanned continents in its retelling and writing. A common theme in these retellings has to do with the ingenuity of a hungry traveler, who convinces neighbors through good humor and careful timing that a little bit of this, and a little bit of that, would surely improve the soup, started with a simple stone. Tolland is an excellent community, with solid services. In tax season, all of the neighbors vote for a mil rate that we feel will keep our services high quality, and maybe even make them better. A little bit of this, and a little bit of that, from all of our neighbors, make a fine soup. Or at least, that's the idea. Part of our taxes each year are squirreled away into a variety of funds, stuffing the pantry, as it were. This is grounded in good theory, as having healthy savings is fiscally responsible, on a variety of levels. Now that our stores are overflowing, it's time to look at what's on the table as well as what's in the pantry as we figure out what to cook, in order to maintain our services, with the goal of making them even better.

Tolland can move forward using the tax dollars that are in savings to level out the tax burden in the current proposed budget, and maintain the services proposed. Doing so would not put Tolland's AAA rating at risk, nor would it increase risk to the town's ongoing financial security. Rather, using a strategically calculated portion of the fund balance(maintaining the minimum balance per best practice) to offset the proposed mil rate would ensure that the budget proposal

that is ultimately moved to the residents honors the contributions of past neighbors, and protects current neighbors from undue burden, while maintaining critical, foundational town services. Tolland has many excellent town services, and takes pride in its fiscal prudence. And yet, we must jointly realize that at some point, we will not be adding enough to the pot, to make something wonderful. If the Tolland Public Schools, in particular, are faced with a budget lower than the proposed 4.84% increase (with the UISF payment removed), the kinds of cuts that will be made will be far less than palatable to current and prospective residents alike — reducing critical positions such as World Language, English, Science, and a Librarian, to name just a few. We will be effectively taking the stone out altogether, leaving nothing but hot water. Timing is everything, and this time of abundance makes it easier to ensure that Tolland's core services will remain robust. Please use all means possible to present a reasonable budget that maintains full funding for services while softening the tax impact for current residents, by utilizing a responsible amount of the fund balance. Let our past selves help us now. Most importantly, please present a budget to residents which includes the proposed 4.84% increase (with the UISF payment removed) for the Board of Education budget, so that we can continue to be an attractive town for young families to settle and stay, and keep our property values high. Thank you for considering these comments, and for your service to the town of Tolland.

Sincerely,
Kate Vallo

4/2/24

Hello,

The Town Council has the responsibility to appropriately fund our schools and BoE budget. This has not happened in several years and our children and staff have lost programs, effective learning environments and services.

For the first time in several years, we have a Board of Education attempting to work together in the best interest of our school system. The budget adopted by the Board is still lacking appropriate funding but it is a start in building back the capacity of Tolland Public Schools. As the Town Council, please do your part with adopting the budget and consider using the Reserve Fund if necessary to offset tax costs. We moved to Tolland prepared to pay the taxes required to have our children grow in excellent schools. To our disappointment, Tolland seems committed to building a retirement community at our expense.

Caroline Hargraves
28 Charles St, Tolland, CT 06084

4/2/24

Dear Town Council Members,

Hi, my name is Mila Thompson, and I'm a junior at Tolland High School. I'm writing to talk about something super important: our education. I really want to make sure we get the best education possible for our future. I've been hearing a lot about how our schools haven't been getting enough money for the past 11 years. That's a long time! And it's not good because it means we might miss out on stuff we need to learn. I'm worried because I've heard that if we keep not getting enough money, things like computer classes and language classes might have to go away. That would be a bummer because those are things that could help us in the future. Also, I've noticed that some of my friends are struggling in school, especially in the younger grades. It's sad because they might not be getting the help they need. And I've seen more kids feeling really stressed and anxious lately. We need support for our mental health too. So, I'm asking you, please, can we make sure our schools get enough money? I know it's probably complicated, but all us kids really want is a good education so we can have a bright future. Thanks for listening.

Sincerely,

Mila Thompson

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
TOLLAND, CT
2024 APR -9 AM 8:23
Katherine Stargardter

**BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING
6th FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND ZOOM**

April 4, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

Members Present: Katherine Stargardter, Chair; Jacob Marie, Vice Chair; Jennifer Buckler, Chris Moran, Alexander Noonan, Joseph Sce, Colleen Yudichak

Members Absent: none.

Also Present: Brian Foley, Town Manager; Lisa Hancock, Director, Finance & Records; Mike Wilkinson, Director, Administrative Services (Zoom), Scott Lappen, Director, Public Works

1. Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02P.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance - Recited

3. Moment of Silence - Observed

4. Consideration of the Town Council's Proposed FY 2024-2025 Budget

Ms. Stargardter commented that after hearing community input and reviewing the numbers, she would like to see the mill rate get to 3%.

Mr. Marie commented that he would like to see a spending increase of about 3%, not a mill rate increase of 3%. Ms. Hancock noted that this would be about a 4.14% spending increase overall. Ms. Stargardter commented that this is one way of calculation.

Mr. Moran commented that it is important to think about the mill rate while being mindful of the overall budget increase but the impact on taxpayers is what will be felt the most. He agrees with the 3% range. It would fund the town but not hurt people's wallets too much.

Mr. Sce agreed that the 3% ballpark seems like a good number. He reviewed the mill rate increases over the years and while they have varied, there have not been multiple years of 3-5% increases. The town does not have the appetite for it. If they go with a 3% increase, while close to 10% over three years seems like a lot, considering what needs to be funded, it seems like a reasonable number.

Ms. Buckler commented that it seems that the mill rate has been the concern and 3% is a good compromise. She wishes they could take everyone's situation into consideration but overall, 3% is a good area to land.

Ms. Yudichak agreed that after listening to everyone, 3% is a good number but she would not mind a number a little higher. She would like to hear what people would like to see in the budget before deciding.

Mr. Marie commented that he would like to see it a little lower than 3%. Historically, from a percentage standpoint, looking at the increases that have passed, the average has been lower, and he has concerns about the budget passing referendum and would not want to see a budget go out multiple times. He could support 3% but how they get there is important. He does not want to make a large withdrawal from the funds as this could put the town in a bad position in regard to its rating. The bond rating is being reviewed this year. Thus, he would like to see a town budget of \$14,114,908 with a reduction of \$510K and

add funding for a sergeant, \$5K for EMT stipends, \$500 for senior programming as well as a discussion about a public works laborer position. For the BOE, he would like to see a budget of \$44,320,148, a \$750K decrease from the Town Manager's proposed budget. There would be no change to Debt Service or Capital as proposed by the Town Manager. Mr. Marie would like to increase the use of the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund (MTSF) to \$178K, an increase of \$100K from what was proposed. This works out to a 3.3% tax increase.

Mr. Noonan commented that he would like to provide more support to the seniors and include something additional for public safety and EMS.

Mr. Moran asked Mr. Marie if his numbers included additional money for the Senior Center. Mr. Marie confirmed that he included \$500 for programming. He did not include funding for the part-time assistant position. Mr. Moran commented that he would like to consider additional funding for the position. The programs have grown exponentially over the last few years.

Ms. Yudichak noted that she requested numerous scenarios from Ms. Hancock and would not mind moving the \$650K to the debt side as proposed by the Town Manager. Ms. Yudichak explained that she asked Ms. Hancock for six scenarios. She highlighted 5.17% which includes using \$178K from the MTSF, an additional \$100K from fund balance, increasing the hours of a Senior Center employee (\$14,924), \$5K for ambulance stipends, and \$500 for programming at the Senior Center. The BOE budget would be reduced by \$250K.

Ms. Stargardter requested the following information: change in Town Government, \$14,139,832, 4.41%; BOE, \$44,821,148, 4.26%; debt service, \$5,376,489, 14.39%; capital improvement, \$397,395, 24.4%.

Ms. Stargardter asked for clarification on the use of fund balance. Ms. Yudichak explained that it was originally \$78K and she is speaking of increasing it by another \$100K. For all of the scenarios, she is speaking of using \$178K from the MTSF. Ms. Stargardter asked if this is without fund balance and just funds from the MTSF. Ms. Yudichak commented that they would use an additional \$100K from fund balance.

Mr. Moran called a point of information and asked if all of the Councilors received the options being discussed. Ms. Stargardter noted that when a request is made by a Councilor, the Council's Rules & Procedures require all Councilors to receive the information through the Chair and Vice Chair.

Ms. Stargardter asked the Town Manager to provide the information provided to Ms. Yudichak to all of the Councilors. Per Rules & Procedure, all e-mails from any Councilor should be copied to the Chair and Vice Chair as well as the replies. Mr. Foley noted that last year they provided different scenarios for Councilors but will provide the information.

The Council stood in recess as of 7:24PM.

The Council returned to session at 8:13PM.

Ms. Stargardter referred to the file received from Ms. Hancock. She noted that the numbers for the grand list for revenues are different than those on the spreadsheet shared with Councilors when the Town Manager's proposed budget was sent. She referenced page 66 of the Budget Book and the scenario Ms. Hancock e-mailed to the Council (file: 2025 Colleen 1 Reduce BOE 250K). When Ms. Stargardter plugs in the Town operating budget, BOE operating budget, debt service, and capital improvement, the total expenditure is \$64,734,864. The total revenue line is the same but there is a difference at the top of the page. Ms. Hancock explained that what is in the Budget Book would have been a 5.2% tax increase. They received better information from the Assessor due to the Board of Assessment Appeals having completed

its work. The numbers used in the Budget Book were on the higher side but with firmer numbers, there was a better impact on the mill rate than what was originally presented. With the new adjustments, the Town Manager's proposed tax increase is 5.04%. She was going to share this with the Council this evening and used this new basis for scenarios prepared for Ms. Yudichak and Mr. Marie.

The Council stood in recess as of 8:18PM.

The Council returned to session at 8:41PM.

Ms. Stargardter noted that since not everyone had the same information on the budget, she asked Ms. Hancock to review any changes applicable to the budget.

Ms. Hancock noted that caveat that she did not want to interrupt the Council's thought process this evening. When the Council wanted to run scenarios, she was going to explain the grand list calculation would change. She tried to put forward the best in all scenarios that would be discussed in the future and apologized for any confusion. Ms. Stargardter noted that rules and procedures are in place to allow for every Councilor to have the same information. Unfortunately, this did not happen. They need to get to a place where all Councilors have the same information, and it can be shared with the public.

Ms. Hancock referenced page 66 of the Budget Book. The net grand list number is \$1,193,011,629, the same starting point. There are two programs, the elderly program and Ordinance 60. Those numbers changed based on application information shared by the Assessor. The total is \$7,455,900. In the Budget Book, it was \$7,755,900. The number for New Construction remained the same at \$1,500,000. In the Budget Book, they estimated a \$140,000 reduction to the grand list for Crumbling Foundations, but they did not receive any requests, so it was reduced to \$0. In regard to Corrections and Assessment Appeals, in the Budget Book it was \$5,508,000. This included motor vehicle changes, but they broke out the changes for motor vehicles. In turn, Corrections and Assessment Appeals is now \$1,008,000. Of the \$5,508,000, \$4,000,000 has to do with motor vehicles. It was split so the motor vehicles now show under the respective tax calculation and the remainder stayed under real estate. The second to the last line on the page which was \$194,891,060 is now \$190,891,060, a reduction of \$4M. In turn, this will change revenue numbers based on the mill rates and the mill rate calculated for the different scenarios.

Ms. Hancock explained that the new subtotal for Net Taxable Grand List after adjustments, (originally \$1,181,107,729) is now \$1,186,047,729. Net Adjusted Collectible Grand List at 99.0% is \$1,174,187,252 (previously \$1,169,296,652).

Ms. Stargardter noted that this brings the Town Manager's proposed budget to 5.05%. Ms. Hancock noted that she calculated 5.04%.

Ms. Stargardter noted that ten additional files were shared with the Council this evening along with a detailed e-mail. Some Councilors had this information available when considering the budget but not all did. It is disappointing.

Mr. Moran asked when the numbers were available. Ms. Hancock responded that she had them on Tuesday.

Ms. Stargardter noted that the public did not have the information for the Public Hearing held on Tuesday. Ms. Hancock explained that during a budget process, councils deliberate based on what they would like for revenues and/or expenditures. Often, a mill rate is not calculated until the budget is completed albeit this town has shown a mill rate throughout the process; however, the mill rate may change after the budget is adopted if there is new revenue information. She had better information and did her best to do what would help the Council.

Ms. Stargardter commented that she is not comfortable setting a budget this evening. She spent a significant amount of time reviewing the numbers. They received a lot of public input, much of which is about the impact of a tax increase to the residents. Many times at the Public Hearing they heard concerns about a tax rate change. To know that the work the Councilors did in advance of the meeting was not on a level playing field is disingenuous. If she had different information and did not share it, others would likely share the same feeling. Additionally, she is uncomfortable that they will now discuss different numbers than those available at the public hearing. She is not comfortable with this in the legislative body of her town.

Ms. Stargardter asked Mr. Foley about the timeline in regard to the budget process.

Mr. Sce called a point of information and commented that he understands that the Chair is not comfortable, and asked what if the rest of the Council is comfortable. The numbers are budget numbers – the starting numbers and the ending numbers. None of them are exact and they can change. The revised revenue numbers are not significant. They can still move forward discussing expenses. They know revenue will change a little bit. He asked why they need to stop tonight.

Ms. Stargardter explained that she asked for the timeline.

Mr. Sce asked if the Chair is not comfortable, if the Council could still move forward. Ms. Stargardter noted that she is free to express her discomfort and has not made a motion to go in any direction. She only asked about the timeline. No other decisions have been made or proposed at this time. They are awaiting information about the timeline.

Mr. Noonan motioned to continue the meeting.

Ms. Stargardter noted that the meeting is ongoing. They are awaiting an answer to her question.

Mr. Moran called a point of information. He asked if, as far as they know, if only Mr. Marie and Ms. Yudichak received the information on Tuesday and not the town. Ms. Hancock noted that this is correct.

Mr. Sce called a point of information. He asked what the Council was waiting on.

Ms. Stargardter noted that they are waiting on the timeline she requested regarding the budget process.

Mr. Foley explained that the nuance is getting the absentee ballots printed in time. The information would be needed by the morning of April 11th. Thus, the Town Clerk would need the information no later than April 10th.

Ms. Stargardter motioned to hold a Special Meeting on Monday, April 8, 2024, to set the Town Council budget.

Mr. Moran seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Marie commented that given what Ms. Hancock stated it is a relatively modest change to the rate and not entirely out of the ordinary in terms of municipal budgeting and will put pressure on town staff. He would like to have a proposal that receives the majority of the votes this evening and is not in favor of holding a Special Meeting. Mr. Moran commented that he does not feel comfortable because they did not all have the same information. Amongst other things, what is most important to residents is the impact on their pockets. The public also did not have the same information. Ms. Buckler agreed with Mr. Moran. She commented that individuals are downplaying what happened – there is information that was provided on Tuesday to two Councilors but not to the Chair, other Councilors, or the public. No matter how small the impact, it is a transparency issue. As Councilors they all have the right to have the

information when it becomes available, and the public should have had it as well because it was available prior to the public hearing. They are being told that Ms. Hancock wanted to present the information to the Councilors but was told by the Town Manager not to give it to anyone who did not ask for it. Ms. Buckler commented that she is uncomfortable with this and moving forward without a chance to consider the information. This calls for a Special Meeting. Ms. Stargardter commented that without being transparent to the public and the entire Council, making a decision this evening is the wrong thing to do.

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Buckler, Moran, Stargardter

Opposed: Noonan, Sce, Yudichak, Marie

Abstentions: none

Motion failed.

5. Approval of Budget Resolution

Ms. Stargardter motioned to pass the Town Manager's Budget as presented.

Ms. Buckler seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

The Chair called the roll.

The Chair was in question.

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Buckler, Moran, Stargardter

Opposed: Noonan, Sce, Yudichak, Marie

Abstentions: none

Motion failed.

Ms. Stargardter motioned to pass the Town Manager's budget in terms of appropriations for Town Government, Board of Education, Debt Services, and General Fund for Capital less non-tax services using the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund of \$200,000 and the remainder from Unassigned Fund Balance to bring them to a mill rate of 3.0%.

Mr. Moran seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Noonan requested clarification of the motion. Ms. Stargardter reviewed the motion. Mr. Noonan asked if they would ask for specifics including the Senior Center and arbitrate for additional public safety such as a sergeant. Ms. Stargardter explained that the motion is to approve the Town Manager's budget for spending. Whatever is in that budget, in terms of these items is the motion. Mr. Marie confirmed that they would make up the difference with unassigned fund balance to reach a 3.0% mill rate increase. He asked Ms. Hancock for the amount. Ms. Hancock noted that she would need to run the scenario. It would likely be a significant change to unassigned fund balance. Ms. Stargardter noted that she cannot identify the number at this time due to the lack of transparency. Mr. Marie commented that he assumes that such a large withdrawal would not be advisable based upon the goal of maintaining a healthy fund balance. Ms. Hancock noted that this is correct. She would not advise this, but it is the Council's decision. Ms. Stargardter noted that prior to the change in the numbers, the unassigned fund balance was over 14.25%. The policy is to keep it between 10-15%. Mr. Moran asked if Ms. Hancock is not recommending it because she does not have all of the information. Ms. Hancock responded that if she knows what the Council would like to do, she can do the calculations. Her concern is the bond rating and believes it is important to keep the fund balance secure at this time. A significant amount of debt will be issued over

the next few years. It is imperative to keep the AAA bond rating, or they will spend over \$500K or so. Mr. Moran noted that he agrees with keeping the AAA bond rating but with the numbers, they would still be over 14%. Ms. Hancock responded that her concern is that if they dip into fund balance it will weaken the town's status with the rating agencies. This week, a rating agency came out with new criteria. Tolland has carried a AAA rating due to its strong fund balance, policies, and strong financial management. One of the rating agencies reached out to her yesterday and stated that they are changing their criteria, and that Tolland will be reviewed. One item they look at is the fund balance. Ms. Hancock is concerned that if they dip into the fund balance too drastically, they will lose the AAA rating under the new criteria. Mr. Moran asked if the new criteria is different than the 10-15%. Ms. Hancock explained that the town has an internal fund balance policy of 10-15%. An overall basis of 10-17% is usually an acceptable guideline; however, in a community such as Tolland they do not have a commercial base like other AAA communities. What has helped Tolland keep its AAA rating are its significant reserves. The new criteria have not been released but she spoke with the agency yesterday and shared an e-mail with the Council from the bond financial advisor that discusses this. Until the town gets through the new rating process, she is nervous about using any significant amount of fund balance because it could potentially impact the rating. If the rating is reduced, she believes the S&P rating will follow. Ms. Stargardter asked if a loss in services would impact the bond rating. Ms. Hancock responded that they have never discussed this. Ms. Stargardter asked if increasing home values impact the bond rating. Ms. Hancock responded that they do. Ms. Stargardter asked how closely the rating agencies hold the quality of education in a town as it relates to home price values. Ms. Hancock explained that they do not look at the quality of education. They look at the educational levels and education budgets. Ms. Stargardter asked if they would look at the fact that over the past ten years, they have increased the education budget by under 1.15% and are discussing major cuts this year. Ms. Hancock responded that as far as she knows, they do not look at this. Ms. Hancock offered to have the bond advisor join the meeting. Ms. Stargardter responded that this would be excellent if they could have the meeting at a time when all of the information was available to the Council, but they do not.

Ms. Buckler asked where the information is from regarding the change in the criteria for the bond rating. Ms. Hancock explained that she does not have it yet, but the rating agency wants to meet with her fairly soon to review the town information. There is a chance the town could be downgraded. Ms. Buckler asked where the information is from that the town could be downgraded. Ms. Hancock responded that it is from information she received through a discussion she had yesterday with the rating agency. The rating agency sent her an e-mail that stated that the criteria are changing, and the e-mail was only sent to those who could be affected. When she read it, she felt it was important to call them since the only way the town can go is down. When she spoke with the agency, the response was that she was right. The only way the town can go is down. Ms. Buckler confirmed that the e-mail only went to municipalities that could be affected. Ms. Hancock explained that the e-mail stated that Tolland was one of the communities identified as one that could have an adjustment based on the new criteria. The new criteria was not identified, but they want to have a meeting to review the fund balance and other items under the criteria to determine if the town will retain the AAA rating or be downgraded. Ms. Buckler asked if it could be an audit. Ms. Hancock explained that it would be a rating review, not necessarily an audit per se. Ms. Buckler commented that the agency could just be looking at the town. Ms. Hancock responded that they are looking at the town and a number of other communities which could potentially be downgraded. Her concern is that if they do anything drastic, it could impact their decision. This is her opinion, having worked with rating agencies. The Council can decide what it wants to do. Ms. Buckler explained that she is concerned they may be crying wolf. The town has had lower fund balances and maintained the AAA rating and currently there is no indication that the criteria is changing. Ms. Hancock explained that there is an indication that the criteria is changing but they have not yet told her what it is. Her understanding is

that the weight on the financial management may not be as strong as in the past and the fund balances are what has helped. She saw the financial advisor today and asked him to be available this evening in case the Council has any questions, and she can have him join the meeting. Ms. Buckler explained that her concern is that because there is nothing yet concrete, that this is merely Ms. Hancock's opinion. Ms. Hancock is just guessing, and they do not know if going forward there will be a drastic change. They do not want to go below the guidelines or get close to the bottom end, but she feels Ms. Hancock is trying to sway the Council by scaring them into thinking that they could lose the AAA rating. She cannot say how or why but not to do it. Ms. Hancock responded that she received a document from the financial advisor this evening that identifies information behind the reasoning of not using fund balance. Ms. Stargardter read the e-mail aloud. In the e-mail, it referenced a proposal to reduce the fund balance by approximately \$2.6M. Ms. Stargardter noted that the proposal on the floor does not reduce fund balance by more than \$2.6M. Ms. Hancock explained that she does not know the number until she calculates what the Council would like to do. Ms. Stargardter commented that Ms. Hancock is giving advice without knowing the actual numbers and this is troubling. Ms. Hancock explained that she would need to see the actual numbers. Her advice is to not devastate the fund balance. If the Council decides to use fund balance, that is its prerogative. Given the uncertainty of the new rating process, she cannot say what will happen. If the Council decides to use \$500K from fund balance and there is no impact, it is fantastic, but she cannot say what will happen. She would feel more comfortable if they could keep it stabilized but the Council is the policy maker. She is only stating how she feels.

Mr. Noonan commented that it sounds like if one knows a long winter is coming and does not know how it will be, he is not burning all his wood right now.

Mr. Sce asked if the bond rating drops due to taking money from the unassigned fund balance, how long it would take to recover. Ms. Hancock explained that it could take years. Mr. Sce confirmed that they would be jeopardizing the town's interest rate for the next several years on bonds that are issued. The \$500K savings could turn into a \$1M expense given the interest over 20 years.

Mr. Marie asked if they use a large withdrawal from fund balance etc. if they are creating a hole for next year. Ms. Hancock responded that they would. She added that the ECS money has been on hold but from today's meeting she understands that this will affect the FY205/26 budget. Ms. Stargardter called a point or order noting that this is a guess on financial information that is unknown. Mr. Marie commented that he is thinking of the future and with the rating agency coming there is uncertainty. The fund balance is high, but he does not want to take a chance in a critical year. If they want to explore using the fund balance, it is something they need to discuss.

Mr. Moran asked who received the information about the ratings agencies before this evening. Ms. Hancock responded that it went to Mr. Sce and the Town Manager. Mr. Moran explained that his frustration is that the ground is changing, and they are learning new information and considerations this evening. Time is spent considering the budget and it is frustrating to have new information now. They should have all had the same information going into tonight.

Ms. Stargardter referenced the e-mail from the financial advisor. She explained that the motion on the floor does not reduce the fund balance by more than \$2.6M. She asked if the same cautions apply when they do not meet the criteria. Ms. Hancock responded that they do because at this point, she is concerned, as is the financial advisor, that they need to be cautious with any significant change to fund balance. Ms. Stargardter asked why she is advising differently than the financial advisor. Ms. Hancock responded that she is not. He is on the same page. Ms. Stargardter noted that the financial advisor is concerned about reducing the fund balance by \$2.6M. Ms. Hancock noted a second e-mail from the financial advisor where he agreed in regard to being uncomfortable using any fund balance at this time. Ms. Stargardter expressed her substantial frustration that the information was not provided to everyone on Council until after the meeting started. It is disrespectful to the Council and the public. Ms. Hancock

read the e-mail aloud. Ms. Stargardter noted that within the e-mail the advisor states that a decrease of fund balance by \$2.6M would reduce the fund balance percent to about 12.9%. The motion is for a fund balance of over 14.25%. The policy is for between 10-15%. She asked what the year-to-year impact would be if the bond rating were to drop, which she does not wish to happen. Ms. Hancock referred to the analysis and stated that it is over \$500K. Ms. Stargardter commented that the year-to-year impact of \$500K amortized over 20 years is approximately \$25K/year. Use of fund balance, taxpayers funds, to pass a level service budget on the town side and a budget with service reductions the BOE is willing to accept, knowing there are a number of revenue sources about to come on the books, including the cannabis shop that provides a 3% sales tax to the town, a new apartment complex along with property taxes on vehicles and personal property, at least one new business, and the opportunity to talk about stabilizing the BOE budget to continue to provide the services new homeowners are looking for and support the value of homes is not anywhere close to the percentage the financial advisor is warning about. It seems like the right thing to do.

Ms. Yudichak confirmed that the financial advisor could join the meeting to address questions.

Mr. Moran commented that the only department making any cuts is the BOE. The town is always in the lowest quartile of per pupil spending and is lagging behind in terms of numbers. He expressed frustration that any further cuts to the BOE would be in addition to those already made. The BOE budget was voted on and then supported in a bipartisan fashion. The BOE is not at a level services budget and cutting more is concerning.

Mr. Noonan asked Mr. Moran to elaborate. Mr. Moran explained that in the Town Manager's budget, there are no additions or reductions in services on the town side but there are reductions to the BOE side. The Council would not be making the first pass of cuts to the BOE budget. In the BOE budget the Council is looking at there are five position reductions and nineteen program reductions. Anything more would be deeper cuts and shortsighted for the town. If they continue down this road, it will be too late to reverse course. It will impact property values and is not good for students. While it is important to maintain a AAA bond rating and stay in the top end of the range, it is imperative to provide at least the services currently before the Council for students, the town, and property values. He does not want to see any more cuts.

Ms. Buckler commented on a chart sent in an e-mail from Dr. Willett to parents. As it stands, five positions are being reduced. She has been focused on the BOE because it is the only piece receiving reductions. In one scenario, the 4%, they would have 16.5 position reductions if UISF is not removed. They are not looking at such reductions in other proposed budgets. It is wonderful they have been able to maintain in other areas but any further cuts to the BOE would mean more reductions.

Mr. Sce commented that he understands why others agreed on the 3% as the intent was to use the unassigned fund balance, which is a horrible financial decision. He was on the BOE 10-11 years ago and what is being discussed and presented tonight is almost identical to those discussions. Schools were rated in the top 10, positions were being cut, and the schools were deteriorating. Every year it was the same conversation, yet according to the budget history they held 2-3% every year. The Superintendent says how great the schools are and how well students are doing. He talks about the SAT scores, graduation, and where students are going. Mr. Sce asked with "sky is falling" and "disaster is happening" all these years, how students are doing so well. The same thing happens every year. Mr. Moran asked if they are still in the top 10. Mr. Sce responded that when he was on the BOE, they were never near the top 10. On the Niche rating scale, Tolland ranks 59th. Coventry, with a lower budget, is ranked 49th. Mr. Sce asked how a school system that spends less per pupil ranks higher. Tolland has a good school system, and it has been for many years. They are not talking about annihilating the school system, but they need to be reasonable and prudent with the tax increase.

Ms. Buckler noted that a question was posed to Dr. Willett during the joint meeting if it was just a game and that he would find the money and not cut positions. He responded that it is not. He tried to make it as best as he could down to teaching classes himself. This would be unheard of in the districts she is from. Someone else noted that other districts are adding programs. A blanket statement that the schools are phenomenal and doing well is subjective. It is not true on all levels. Teachers and staff are great, dealing the best they can with what they have to work with. Over sixteen people at the Public Hearing and numerous e-mails expressed concern about the BOE budget. The Superintendent has added concerns as well. Historically, programs have been cut.

Mr. Marie noted that he served on the BOE for four years. Often, they hear that things will be very bad, but he has not seen the cuts or reductions be as devastating as they said they would be. A budget is an estimate. The numbers follow and often there are savings. From a Council perspective, this is only part of the story. The other part is that the proposed increase is very high especially when compared to what passes at referendum. If they use unassigned fund balance to pay for it, they are digging a hole for next year. The budget would be hard enough to pass as is and he asked if they could imagine how hard it would be next year unless unassigned fund balance is used again which would bring them close to the 10% mark. He does not see how the plan is sustainable. It is great that the BOE Chair and Vice Chair want to work with the Council, and he has heard great ideas about bringing in revenue but at the end of the day, it is a big increase, chances of it passing are slim to none, and there is not a sustainable long-term plan to use the unassigned fund balance for it. He cannot support what has been presented.

Mr. Moran commented that they are hearing from parents who say that their students are struggling, and he feels an obligation to listen to all residents. They respect Ms. Hancock's opinion on the budget but relegate Dr. Willett's advice to something that does not mean anything. It is unfortunate that they are not thinking of the whole town.

Ms. Stargardter commented that this is the year to use more fund balance yet not trigger the financial advisor's level of concern nor one that brings them below, or even close, to the floor of the policy. Fund balance was supplemented by over \$1M last fiscal year due to work by the Finance Department. The projection is for the fund balance to increase over \$400K. They are looking at a use of funds that is financially appropriate to offset and meet the needs of the town and the BOE. Next year, more resources will be coming in than this year. While she is not predicting what will happen, she does not believe this use of fund balance puts them in a hole they cannot get out of. Continual reductions to the BOE put home values at constant risk. She is a single mom of three kids with a mortgage and a single income which is hers. She has a 4 -bedroom home that was great when they were a 2-income family. At some point, she will not want to live in her home because it will be too big, and she will want to be able to sell it for at least what she bought it for. Another family will purchase the home and will want to move to town for the same reason she and others did – because the schools have been good. Ms. Stargardter explained that she attended Coventry schools and has friends who went to Tolland schools and got more than she did in terms of electives. When she sat with her high school freshman and reviewed the elective choices, there were more than she had. She wanted this for her kids and is why she is in Tolland. When she goes to sell her house, another family will be interested in it and if the schools and their offerings are not good, it will impact the value of her home. This year, they have the opportunity to reset the trajectory of the BOE spending from that of a downward one to a stable one. They have an opportunity to create stability in a budget that has not been presented in the past and using a moderate increase of fund balance seems appropriate. They will be better positioned next year when there are known revenue sources to continue on a 5-year plan of stability for the BOE. Ms. Stargardter noted that It is time to take a strong step forward and put a strong budget before the town.

The motion was reviewed as being the Town Manager's proposed budget with \$200K from the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund and the rest from unassigned fund balance to bring them to a 3% mill rate increase.

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Buckler, Moran, Stargardter

Opposed: Noonan, Sce, Yudichak, Marie

Abstentions: none

Motion failed.

Mr. Marie motioned to amend the Town Manager's budget with the following categories: Town Government, \$14,114,908; BOE, \$44,320,148; Debt Service, \$5,376,489; Capital, \$397,395 and increase the use of the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund from \$78,000 to \$100,000.

Mr. Sce seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Moran commented that the motion brings the BOE down just shy of \$1M. It may not be their fault that they are in this hole, but it is their responsibility to right the ship and create stability. They are asking for a percentage increase to make up for years of underfunding and while it cannot be done all in one year, they need to think of the long-term future of the town. The current motion does not right the ship or create stability for the BOE and students.

Mr. Marie noted that it is about a \$750K decrease from what was proposed for the BOE in the Town Manager's budget. It is an increase from the current year's budget. A budget that either cannot pass referendum or puts them in a bad place with funds does not help education either.

Mr. Moran noted that \$750K is approximately the salary and benefits of ten positions. They are talking about impacting real people and students.

Mr. Sce called a point of clarification. They are talking about positions, not people. There is not a definitive reduction of physical staff.

Mr. Moran assumes the Superintendent will try to limit the number who will lose their jobs, but students will be impacted when class sizes increase, or programs are reduced.

Ms. Sce noted that they do not know that class sizes will increase. Mr. Moran responded that they will based on information from the public.

Ms. Buckler commented that she grew up in South Windsor with great schools. At the time, Tolland's district was up and coming. When it was her time to raise her family, Tolland was a consideration as well as South Windsor but due to the demand for homes, they could not get into the town because of the schools. There is a direct correlation between home prices and schools. The other night, the speaker who talked of the district where she works that is adding programs is an employee of the South Windsor school district. Ms. Buckler noted that she loves being in Tolland, a smaller town without as much growth. When she moved to town, she was happy with the schools but is concerned that if they are cutting programs and not properly funding the schools, eventually there will be an impact. Families who can afford to move to better districts will do so. She does not want to see this happen but does not want her kids to miss out on opportunities they could have in another town. Ms. Buckler explained that she has a mortgage and student debt. She cannot afford private schools, tutoring, or to pay to make up for programs that are lost. She is grateful for the opportunities her kids have in the school system but fears losing the opportunities and not being able to supplement them. She would rather properly fund the schools. An increase in taxes would cost less for her than to pay for a tutor or make up for extracurricular activities. Ms. Buckler has a student in special education and does not know what she would do if she had to supplement their education. Financially, this makes more sense for her.

Ms. Yudichak asked about the overall tax increase in the motion.

Mr. Marie estimated it to be 3.3%. He noted that he would like to add a sergeant, public works laborer, \$5K for EMT stipends, and \$500 for senior programming.

Mr. Marie motioned to amend the motion to add funds on the town side to cover a sergeant, a public works laborer, \$5,000 for EMT stipends, and \$500 for senior programming.

Mr. Sce seconded the motion.

Discussion:

It was clarified that that the motion is to reduce the Town Manager's proposed budget by \$750K for the BOE which has UISF removed.

Mr. Moran confirmed that \$14,114,908 is lower than the Town Manager's proposed budget. He asked if Mr. Marie is proposing specific cuts. Mr. Marie explained that he would ask the Town Manager and his staff to find the reductions to meet the number minus the items he has specifically requested. Mr. Foley confirmed that Mr. Marie wants to add the items noted and cut the town budget to \$14,114,908.

Ms. Yudichak asked about the overall dollar figure given the requests. Mr. Marie noted that the Town Manager's proposal was \$14,144,408 and Mr. Marie's proposal is a net cut of \$35K. This includes money for the sergeant, a stipend for EMTs, and senior programming so the request would be for the funds for a public works laborer. Ms. Stargardter explained that the motion is to change the town total spending to \$114,114,908 and within that amount, include a sergeant, a public works laborer, \$5K for EMT stipends, and \$500 for senior programming and ask the Town Manager and staff to make other changes to bring it to that amount.

Mr. Sce noted that the difference is \$29.5K.

Mr. Moran asked if this factors in the cuts that will be needed for the four additional items noted. Ms. Stargardter explained that the motion is for the town to make it work within the parameters of the motion. Cuts will need to be made elsewhere in the town-side budget to reduce it by \$29.5K and to include the additions in the motion. The cost of the items noted in the motion would be offset by other reductions.

Ms. Buckler commented that Mr. Marie is asking the town to reduce items it is requesting and asking for items the town is not requesting.

Ms. Stargardter requested an estimate of the cost for the four items noted in the motion.

Mr. Foley noted the following: sergeant, \$15,000; public works laborer, \$61,705 including benefits; \$5,000 EMT stipends; \$500 Senior Center programming. The additions total \$82,205. With the \$29.5K, the total impact is \$111,705.

Ms. Yudichak noted that she would not want to lose staff for the additional items. Mr. Foley responded that they would.

Mr. Sce confirmed that the \$300K from unassigned fund balance is not being removed from the Town Manager's proposed budget and \$178K (originally \$78K) is being added from the MTSF. He noted that 3.3% is an expense increase without considering the adjustments to revenue so it would be a little lower. Mr. Sce noted that this is still not as low as he hoped but they cannot cut too much, and it has to pass referendum. He believes it is a reasonable ask.

Ms. Stargardter asked Mr. Marie about the \$5K EMT stipend and does not recall this being discussed during previous budget discussions. Mr. Marie noted that they are suffering from a volunteer crisis and if they can put more toward what EMTs receive it may help. Ms. Foley noted that the increase to stipends was for volunteer firefighters in the amount of \$2.5K. It was through consensus with the Public Safety Director. Ambulance Salaries increased \$7K due to union contracts. Chief Littell noted that they have had a difficult time hiring staff as it is a competitive market.

Ms. Stargardter noted that the Superintendent estimated that one position is \$72-\$75K. The motion is a reduction of ten positions and thus ten fewer adults in front of students. She reminded the Council about Dr. Willett's concern regarding early education class sizes. The BOE discussed the class size impact if more positions were reduced and many high school class sizes exceed what is recommended. With the reductions in the Town Manager's proposed budget, the class sizes at THS would increase. The BOE discussed more impacts than would be in the budget it passed including removing co-teaching, TEAMS in grade 6, and the impact on the interventionists. Ms. Stargardter is concerned about the 30% increase in the intervention numbers in early education mentioned by Dr. Willett. This could lead to increased special education costs as students advance. Removing seven additional positions with a \$750K reduction would have a substantial impact. She is opposed to this.

Mr. Moran commented that the motion is based on information neither the Council nor the public received, and it is frustrating. He is unsure why they are committing \$5K to public safety when a public safety study is underway. They should first see what the study says. Additionally, the proposal does not include making the administrative position at the Senior Center full-time from part-time which seemed to be a priority. He supports this.

Ms. Buckler commented that it does not seem to make sense to ask for additions on the town side that were not requested and suggest reducing items that were requested. A lieutenant did a presentation, but nothing was indicated that a sergeant was necessary, but Mr. Marie wants to cut from areas where there will be an impact. If the motion did not make cuts to the BOE and included having a sergeant, it may make more sense, but she cannot understand the logic for requesting items there is not a basis for. The Council will get insight from the public safety study and she does not believe there is a basis for adding money there. It is concerning to suggest additions when cutting from public education. They benefit daily from education through i.e. doctors etc.

Mr. Sce commented that the police budget was cut by almost \$70K. It did not increase like the other departments. Mr. Moran called a point of information. He noted that it was not a cut but a result of having more junior troopers. Mr. Sce explained that the budget was reduced. The request is to reduce the reduction. Additionally, no one is saying they do not need education.

Mr. Marie noted that the Council has no authority on where the BOE makes reductions. The Council is the policy maker of the town, and he believes the additions make sense. Mr. Marie requested to make a directive through the Council to direct the Town Manager in regard to what he would like to see changed in the budget.

Mr. Moran motioned to amend the motion to add \$100,000 from the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund to bring the total to \$200,000 from the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund.

Ms. Buckler seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Moran explained that the additional \$100K would cause there to be less of a reduction to the BOE. Ms. Stargardter clarified that Mr. Moran was asking to increase the BOE budget by \$100K with an increase in funding from the MTSF. Mr. Moran noted that this is correct.

Ms. Stargardter noted that the motion was to increase the BOE budget by \$100K and increase the revenue from the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund. This would not change the impact on the mill rate. It only increases spending and revenue by the same number.

Ms. Buckler continued to second with this clarification.

Discussion:

Mr. Marie asked Ms. Hancock for her thoughts on this. Ms. Hancock responded that she does not have any thoughts on this. It is a Council decision, and it knows how she feels. She advised that the Council remember that next year it will either need more revenues or use money from fund balance.

Mr. Sce asked Ms. Hancock about the impact on the MTSF. Ms. Hancock noted that up to \$300K may be taken each year. The current balance is \$362K. If the funds are not used for a one-time expense, the money will be needed next year.

Ms. Stargardter clarified that the current motion, with amendments, is for \$200K total from the MTSF and \$300K from fund balance.

Mr. Sce confirmed that \$500K would be needed to cover next year.

Ms. Stargardter confirmed that the Town Manager's proposed budget recommended using \$300K from the unassigned fund balance. In FY24, \$200K was budgeted to be used. She asked if fund balance is used in the budget most years. Ms. Hancock responded it is used in some years. Ms. Stargardter noted that they have used it for the past three years toward the operating budget. She confirmed that the estimated balance for the MTSF at the end of this fiscal year is \$770,140 and is comfortable using \$200K from the fund. During the original discussions, the Finance Director recommended using \$78K over four years. Mr. Stargardter noted that \$200K can be used over three years and close to another \$200K could be used in the fourth year assuming no additional funds are received into the fund over the next four years. Thus, a multi-year plan of funds is available without asking for additional money from taxpayers.

Mr. Moran noted that trash services increased approximately \$200K. Ms. Stargardter explained that the following year will be flat. Mr. Moran noted that some of the money could be used to step into the trash increase. Public Works will no longer need to rent a grader so there will be \$25K in savings.

Mr. Marie clarified that the amendment changes his proposal from \$100K to \$200K and not \$178K to \$278K.

Ms. Yudichak confirmed that \$29K still needs to be found for the town side. Mr. Foley noted that \$111K is needed, \$82K in addition to the \$29.5K funding decreases. Ms. Yudichak commented that they could lose a public safety person or someone in Town Hall with this proposal.

Ms. Stargardter noted that the vote before the Council is on the amendment to the motion.

The original motion was moved and seconded. A clarification was made, and the clarification was seconded. An amendment to the motion is now on the floor.

The motion before the Council is to amend Mr. Marie's motion to change the BOE decrease from \$750K to \$650K and change the revenue from the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund from \$100K to \$200K.

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Buckler, Moran, Noonan, Sce, Marie, Stargardter

Opposed: Yudichak

Abstentions: none

Motion passed 6-1.

Ms. Stargardter reviewed the amended motion.

The motion before the Council is a \$650K reduction of the Town Manager's budget to the BOE, a \$29.5K reduction from the town government budget with specific additions that need to be accommodated within the reduced funding, and a total of \$200K from the MTSF. It was noted that \$650K is \$651K.

The total for the BOE would be \$44,420,148 which is a \$651K reduction from the Town Manager's budget. Ms. Yudichak commented that she cannot support Mr. Marie's proposal. It risks losing dedicated staff which would be nonsensical especially since they have Troop C and the sergeant being recommended would only oversee three troopers rather than the traditional six. She would like to cut the EMT stipends

to \$2.5K. A study is being done and she questioned how they would hire someone if that is the recommendation. The \$2.5K would be in the professional line and not specific for EMTs. The \$500 should be easy for the Senior Center programming. Ms. Yudichak would like to add a staff position to the town side but does not believe this is the right time and cited the request for a public works laborer. She is comfortable with a 3.5%-3.8% budget going to referendum. Ms. Yudichak would like: \$2.5K to the Professional line for Ambulance Services; \$500 for the Senior Center. She would like to change the reduction of \$651K to the BOE to \$400K. Ms. Stargardter noted that this would result in a mill rate increase of 3.8%. The Town Manager's proposed mill rate increase was 5.0%. The original mill rate increase proposed by Mr. Marie was approximately 3.22%. Ms. Yudichak noted that she would remove the sergeant and the public works laborer. Ms. Stargardter explained that these were internal changes and would not impact the bottom line.

Ms. Yudichak motioned to amend the motion to remove the addition of the sergeant, remove the addition of a public works laborer, reduce the EMT stipend from \$5,000 to \$2,500, and leave the increase for Senior Center programming at \$500; all of this in the Town Government Total Expenditure of \$14,114,908 and to amend the reduction in Board of Education to a \$400,000 reduction, or \$44,671,148 for a total mill rate of 38.75 or a 3.80% mill rate increase.

Mr. Marie seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Noonan asked if money was available after the retirement of a trooper this fiscal year. At the presentation, Lieutenant Hayward explained that they had the money to pay a sergeant due to the retirement of a trooper. Mr. Noonan recalled that \$80K was available for public safety. Ms. Stargardter explained that Administrative Trooper Eklund retired during the current fiscal year. The temporary replacement has a lower bill so there are savings in the current fiscal year in the public safety line. Ms. Hancock believes it is between \$50K-\$70K. Mr. Noonan asked if they have between \$50K-\$70K allocated toward public safety how it is not able to be included. Ms. Stargardter explained that any unexpected funds/savings go into the unassigned fund balance. Savings do not carry over into the following year on the same line. Ms. Stargardter noted that this assumes that the savings were not moved to other lines in the budget. The charter allows the Town Manager to move up to 3% of a line in the budget without Council approval. Ms. Noonan asked if a sergeant is added in this fiscal year if they would spend the money if it was saved for the end of this fiscal year. Ms. Stargardter clarified that she believes the question is if they move from an administrative trooper to a sergeant in the current fiscal year if they would still be within the total budget for the current fiscal year. She believes that the answer is yes, they would be saving money in the current fiscal year. This does not impact the budget currently before the Council. Mr. Noonan commented that he does not understand how they can say that they will be paying for it when there is a vacancy. Ms. Stargardter explained that the town currently has four resident state troopers. Mr. Noonan commented that his understanding was that Lieutenant Hayward asked for a sergeant to be on the road for the young troopers. He is ready to pass the budget, but is frustrated that Councilors are saying that society benefits from education, and he agrees, but public safety is needed. To throw this away when there are savings for it disappoints him. They can move money anywhere and this is not just about the schools. He likes that they will support the Senior Center and money is going toward public safety.

Ms. Buckler confirmed that the town currently has four resident troopers. To have a sergeant, the increase would be \$15K. She believes to have a sergeant they would need to reduce one trooper and is unsure this is necessary. There is every indication that the town is safe, and safety would not be increased if a sergeant is added. She does not see a benefit in the additional cost.

Mr. Moran asked Mr. Foley to speak to the need for a sergeant.

Mr. Foley explained that he provided the job description of a sergeant to the Council. A sergeant would remove a trooper from patrol and would be an in-house supervisor for three troopers. In his opinion, he wants four troopers on the road. The four troopers currently have a sergeant. Troop C suggested that they have a personal sergeant. The general accepted practice is to have one sergeant for six or seven officers. In any department, a sergeant overseeing three officers would be seen as overspending. Moreover, he sent the statistics to the Council and the town is safer than it was ten years ago. Mr. Foley explained that the role of a sergeant is much different. He would not want to have a supervisor and lose a patrol trooper in town. He will do as directed by the Council but does not believe it is smart. He added that the four troopers will age and as they gain seniority, will earn more. The numbers in front of the Council will contractually increase. A sergeant will cost more than the most senior trooper the town has ever had by \$15K. Mr. Foley commented that he does not know one person who would say that the town would be safer by taking a trooper off the road and having a sergeant.

Ms. Stargardter explained that they are asking for a considerable reduction in services on one side of the budget and not the other. She is not comfortable with this.

Mr. Marie commented that he would like to see a sergeant as well but understands that they need to present something at referendum, and it will only happen if there is a compromise. As far as public safety, he would like to get better data on crime.

Mr. Noonan agreed. Going forward, they need more troopers. They have two roving SROs for four schools, and this is not enough. Mr. Foley noted that while budgeted, they do not have any at this moment. Mr. Noonan commented that more public safety is needed, especially in the schools.

Mr. Foley confirmed that two SROs are in the BOE budget and has discussed this with the Superintendent. Various items are under consideration.

Ms. Stargardter clarified that SROs are part of the BOE budget and included in the budget before the Council. Cutting BOE funding will not help make the positions more attractive.

Mr. Noonan and Mr. Marie noted that this is an item they would like to explore and discuss further.

Ms. Buckler asked for more information. Mr. Foley explained that in some places, troopers are pulled off the road and used as SROs, but other options are less expensive. Ms. Buckler confirmed that the Council cannot direct the BOE how to spend its money. She too expressed the importance of public safety.

Ms. Stargardter confirmed that the SROs have always been under the BOE budget as far as Mr. Foley is aware and the town has spent a significant amount of money on capital improvements in regard to safety. She asked if the town could assign a trooper as an SRO and pay for it. Mr. Foley noted that he would need to consult with the BOE.

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Buckler, Moran, Yudichak, Marie, Stargardter

Opposed: Noonan, Sce,

Abstentions: none

Motion passed 5-2.

Discussion:

Ms. Buckler commented that she would like to see consideration of additional funding to offset cuts to the BOE and utilize the unassigned fund balance to do so.

Mr. Marie noted that he would like to vote on the motion as amended.

Mr. Moran commented that the BOE budget has more cuts than he would like to see.

Ms. Stargardter motioned to amend the motion to reduce the Town Government side by an additional \$200,000 for a total town reduction of \$229,500 and move the \$200,000 to the Board of Education side for a total Board of Education reduction to \$200,000 from the Town Manager's Proposed Budget and use an additional \$300,000 from fund balance for a mill rate increase of 3.11%.

Ms. Buckler seconded the motion.

Discussion:

[Note: Mr. Sce left the meeting at 12:05AM and noted that he would return via Zoom.]

Ms. Stargardter noted that the amendment would be a 2.75% budget increase on the town side.

Ms. Yudichak asked Mr. Foley how many staff members would be the \$229.5K. Mr. Foley responded that he would need to review it and discuss it with Ms. Hancock. Ms. Yudichak commented that it is an eye-for-an-eye. They are willing to skim back because they want more for the BOE. She asked if others are ok with 3-4 people being laid off. Ms. Stargardter commented that she is not ok with it, but it is already happening on the BOE side. Ms. Yudichak noted for the record that it is an eye-for-an-eye.

Mr. Marie commented that he is absolutely against using any more fund balance than has already been suggested and is a hard "no".

Ms. Yudichak called a recess.

Mr. Marie seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Noonan noted that he has to be at work in five hours.

Motion passed unanimously.

The Council recessed at 12:08AM.

[Mr. Sce returned to the meeting via Zoom at 12:14AM.]

The Council meeting resumed at 12:29AM.

Ms. Stargardter withdrew her motion.

Ms. Buckler agreed with the motion withdrawal.

Mr. Marie motioned to call the question.

Ms. Yudichak seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Noonan, Sce, Yudichak, Moran, Buckler, Marie

Opposed: Stargardter

Abstention: none

Motion passed 6-1.

Ms. Stargardter reviewed the amended motion.

CATEGORY	TOWN MANAGER PROPOSED AMOUNT	TOWN COUNCIL AMOUNT
<i>Town Government</i>	\$14,144,408	\$14,114,908
<i>Board of Education</i>	\$45,071,148	\$44,671,148
<i>Debt Service</i>	\$ 5,376,489	\$ 5,376,489
<i>Capital</i>	\$ 397,395	\$ 397,395
TOTAL	\$64,989,440	\$64,559,940

This includes making a change within the Town Government line directing the Town Manager to add \$2,500 for an EMT stipend and \$500. for Senior Center programming within this budget. In addition, the general fund balance as applied will include, as the Town Manager proposed, \$300,000 from fund balance and \$200,000 from the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund.

The motion reads:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby adopts a FY 2024-25 Town Operating and Capital Budget in the amount of \$64,559,940 to be appropriated as follows:

CATEGORY	TOWN MANAGER PROPOSED AMOUNT	TOWN COUNCIL AMOUNT
<i>Town Government</i>	\$14,144,408	\$14,114,908
<i>Board of Education</i>	\$45,071,148	\$44,671,148
<i>Debt Service</i>	\$ 5,376,489	\$ 5,376,489
<i>Capital</i>	\$ 397,395	\$ 397,395
TOTAL	\$64,989,440	\$64,559,940

*Said appropriations shall require an increase of 1.41 mills for a mill rate of 38.74 for a 3.78% increase.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, pursuant to the requirements of the Town Charter,
is authorized to advertise this budgetary outlay as part of the April 17, 2024, Annual Budget
Presentation Meeting held hybrid at 7:00 p.m.*

Ms. Hancock confirmed that the fund balance use is \$300,000 and the use of the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund is \$200,000.

Ms. Stargardter confirmed the BOE amount and noted that it is a 3.91% increase over last year.

Ms. Hancock confirmed the numbers as follows:

Town Operating \$14,114,908; BOE, \$44,671,148; Debt Service, \$5,376,489, Capital, \$397,395
Total: 64,559,940; Mill Rate, 38.74; Tax Increase, 3.78%; Total Mill Increase, 1.41 mills; Overall expenditure budget, 4.89% increase for \$3,800,583.

Ms. Hancock forwarded the information to the Council.

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Noonan, Yudichak, Marie

Opposed: Sce, Moran, Buckler, Stargardter

Abstentions: none

Motion failed (3-7).

Ms. Yudichak motioned to add a sergeant back in, reduce the Board of Education budget by an additional \$50,000, leave \$2,500 to the Ambulance category, \$500. to the Senior Center, use \$200,000 from the Municipal Tax Stabilization Fund, and use \$300,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance.

Mr. Marie seconded the motion.

Mr. Marie motioned to call a question on the motion.

Ms. Yudichak seconded the motion.

Ms. Stargardter noted that she is troubled by calling a question without any discussion.

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Noonan, Sce, Yudichak, Moran, Marie,

Opposed: Buckler, Stargardter

Abstentions: none

Motion passed (5-2).

Ms. Stargardter reviewed the motion before the Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby adopts a FY 2024-25 Town Operating and Capital Budget in the amount of \$64,559,940 to be appropriated as follows:

CATEGORY	TOWN MANAGER PROPOSED AMOUNT	TOWN COUNCIL AMOUNT
<i>Town Government</i>	<i>\$14,144,408</i>	<i>\$14,114,908</i>
<i>Board of Education</i>	<i>\$45,071,148</i>	<i>\$44,621,148</i>
<i>Debt Service</i>	<i>\$ 5,376,489</i>	<i>\$ 5,376,489</i>
<i>Capital</i>	<i>\$ 397,395</i>	<i>\$ 397,395</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>\$64,989,440</i>	<i>\$64,509,940</i>

*Said appropriations shall require an increase of 1.37 mills for a mill rate of 38.70 for a 3.67% increase.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, pursuant to the requirements of the Town Charter,
is authorized to advertise this budgetary outlay as part of the April 17, 2024, Annual Budget
Presentation Meeting held hybrid at 7:00 p.m.*

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Noonan, Yudichak, Marie

Opposed: Sce, Moran, Buckler, Stargardter

Abstentions: none

Motion failed (3-4).

Ms. Yudichak asked Ms. Hancock how they would get to a 3.5% without any reductions to the town side. Ms. Hancock explained that if speaking strictly of expenditure reductions, they would need a reduction of \$75,000, need to find \$75,000 in revenue, or some combination to get to a 3.50% tax increase.

Ms. Buckler recalled Ms. Yudichak's original motion,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby adopts a FY 2024-25 Town Operating and Capital Budget in the amount of \$64,559,940 to be appropriated as follows:

CATEGORY	TOWN MANAGER PROPOSED AMOUNT	TOWN COUNCIL AMOUNT
Town Government	\$14,144,408	\$14,114,908
Board of Education	\$45,071,148	\$44,671,148
Debt Service	\$ 5,376,489	\$ 5,376,489
Capital	\$ 397,395	\$ 397,395
TOTAL	\$64,989,440	\$64,559,940

Said appropriations shall require an increase of 1.41 mills for a mill rate of 38.74 for a 3.78% increase.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, pursuant to the requirements of the Town Charter,

is authorized to advertise this budgetary outlay as part of the April 17, 2024, Annual Budget

Presentation Meeting held hybrid at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Moran seconded.

Discussion:

Ms. Stargardter confirmed that this does not include the sergeant but does include the \$2,500 EMT stipend and \$500. for the Senior Center within the Town Government line. Mr. Noonan asked for the vote count on the original proposed amendment made by Ms. Yudichak. Ms. Stargardter confirmed that the motion failed 3-4. The following were opposed: Sce, Moran, Buckler, Stargardter. Ms. Stargardter reviewed the Total Council Amounts and mill rate information associated with this motion.

A roll call vote was taken:

In favor: Yudichak, Marie, Moran, Buckler, Noonan

Opposed: Sce, Stargardter

Abstentions: none

Motion passed (5-2).

6. Approval of a resolution authorizing the form of the ballot for the May 7, 2024 budget referendum and any subsequent budget referendum; the time and place for the budget referendum; authorizing the Town Manager or his designee to place the required legal notices in the local newspapers; and authorizing the preparation and printing of an explanatory text and the mailing of same to local residents and in addition sent out via the Town's Tolland Notification system and included with absentee ballots in accordance with the provisions of CT General Statutes 9-369b explaining the budget referendum question.

Mr. Marie motioned,

WHEREAS, the Tolland Town Council has adopted a proposed FY 2024-2025 Town Operating and Capital Budget to be considered by the Tolland electorate at a May 7, 2024 budget referendum; and

WHEREAS, the Council must now establish the appropriate ballot language for this referendum and the date, time and place of said referendum;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tolland Town Council the following:

- 1. The ballot question for the May 7th referendum shall be worded as follows:**

"Shall the Town of Tolland's proposed 2024-2025 budget of \$64,559,940, reflecting a spending increase of \$3,008,583 or 4.89% which requires an estimated tax rate of 38.74 mills for an increase of 1.41 mills or 3.78% be adopted? Yes/No."
- 2. The time and place for the referendum shall be between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on May 7, 2024 at the Library Program Room.**
- 3. The Town Manager or his designee is hereby authorized to place the required legal notices in the Journal Inquirer and other places as conditions permit, advertising the May 7, 2024 Referendum and the April 17, 2024 Hybrid Annual Budget Presentation Meeting.**
- 4. The Town Manager or his designee is authorized to prepare and print an explanatory text and the mailing of the same to local residents; to be included with absentee ballots and documented via the Town's Tolland Notification system in accordance with the provisions of CT General Statutes 9-369b explaining the budget referendum question.**

Mr. Noonan seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

A roll call vote was taken.

In favor: Noonan, Sce, Yudichak, Moran, Buckler, Marie, Stargardter

Opposed: none

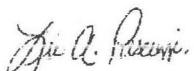
Abstentions: none

Motion passed unanimously.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned without objection at 12:57AM

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Pascuzzi
Town Council Clerk

Town Council Chair

MINUTES

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
TOLLAND, CT

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING
April 9, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

2024 APR 11 PM 5:58

Members Present: Katherine Stargardter, Chair; Jacob Marie, Vice Chair; Jennifer Buckler, Chris Moran, Joseph Sce, Colleen Yudichak

Members Absent: Alexander Noonan

Also Present: Brian Foley, Town Manager; Lisa Hancock, Director, Finance & Records (Zoom); Mike Wilkinson, Director, Administrative Services (Zoom); Megan Massa, Projects/Grants Manager; Bev Bellody, Director, Human Services; Carl Dojan, Assistant Fire Chief

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:06PM.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited
3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Observed
4. **PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:** none
5. **PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*) (2-minute limit)

Kathy Bach, 255 Tolland Stage Road, read a personal statement. She noted 44 years of integrity, of elected, appointed, and volunteer service to Tolland as well as 44 years of respected service, ability to make big picture decisions, be objective no matter her personal beliefs, ability to look at all sides of an issue, to follow the federal and state statutes and guidelines, to respect a property owner's major investment, to be fair to all, and to compromise. She has had 44 years of service when others did not step up to serve and has made the best decisions for the most people based on the rules or guidelines of the boards or commissions. She has had 44 years that represent the support and vote of Republicans and Democrats of Tolland, the appointments of CT General Assembly leaders both Republican and Democrat, and the appointments by governors, both Republican and Democrat. Ms. Bach asked what the Council is looking for in a commissioner on the Historic District Commission, especially one who wishes to continue to serve her community.

James Zimmer noted that he is the attorney for Ms. Kathleen Bach.

He made the following statement on the record as her attorney:

Members of the Town Council, item No. 8.6 on the agenda for tonight should be heard only in executive session. Furthermore, pursuant to section C5-2 of the Tolland Town Charter, any Commission member must receive sufficient, advanced, written notice advising them of the reasons for the hearing that is proposed, and any Commission member is entitled to a full and fair opportunity to be present at, heard at, and offered a full defense at, a separate, private, due process hearing.

Good evening, thank you very much for your time.

[Ms. Bach presented her dossier to the Council Clerk. Attached.]

Renie Besaw, 230 Grant Hill Road, commented that budget season can be difficult. That said, the last meeting was difficult to watch. The Council behaved in a way that was at a minimum disrespectful and disappointing, but overall unacceptable. The Chair should be an example for others but in the most recent meeting, the Chair berated staff and other Councilors. It was an embarrassment to watch. To be

disrespectful of staff in public is a personnel issue that could be problematic for the town. The Chair does not get to dictate what others are allowed to say or choose their vocabulary because they do not agree with it or like it. The Chair should have the town at the forefront, not their personal likes and agenda. Ms. Besaw encouraged the Council to consider choosing a chair that can have collaboration, consideration, and the town as a whole as their primary goal. Ms. Besaw does not think the current Chair is capable of this based on the last meeting.

Sharron Laplante, 168 Weigold Road, commented that she has known Ms. Bach for a while. Ms. Laplante has lived in town for 30 years and Ms. Bach has lived in town longer. Ms. Bach knows a lot about the town's history and the history of the Historic District. She also knows a lot of people in town, the rules and regulations of the Historic District, as well as the state and federal rules and regulations. She is fair and equitable to all who present to her at the Commission. Ms. Laplante cannot think of any reason why the Council would want to dismiss her. There is not a town in the state which would not want to have her. She knows what she is doing, plays fair, and follows the rules. If one does not know her, Ms. Laplante recommended that one review the records and read about what she has done. She can do her job and does it well. Ms. Laplante noted that she knows what Ms. Bach does at the Historical Society and one could not ask for a better President.

Dennis Deegan, 689 Tolland Stage Road, apologized for being frustrated at the last meeting but the source of it is that it appears that the Council, while they may have discussions in executive session, around the dais when something comes up, it seems to be one member of the Council having a conversation with Mr. Foley without a lot of input or views from others. The Council is doing a lot of work but at the same time, it is important that the public, which the Council is serving, hears thoughts about the issues, in this case about the HDC. Mr. Deegan asked, from a standpoint of transparency, that the Councilors vocalize their thoughts and opinions as often as possible. It is important for the public to understand what they are thinking, and why.

Jodie Coleman-Marzialo, 79 Tolland Green, noted that she is the Chair of the Tolland Green Historic District Commission. When she joined the Commission in 2009, she was honored by a call from a Councilor about becoming an alternate. Ms. Coleman-Marzialo purchased a home in 1999 in the Historic District. The heart of the Historic District, then and what remains the same, is the charge which says, "it is the purpose of this Chapter, through the establishment herein on the Tolland Green Historic District Commission, to preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics and appearance of the Tolland Green, and of its buildings which surround it, respecting the rights and the wishes of those who own property within the District. It is the intent of this Chapter that the requirements set forth herein be construed with these purposes in mind and be administered with common sense." Ms. Coleman-Marzialo reviewed some of what the Historic District has done. In 2010, a neighbor letter was sent to Historic District residents and real estate agents. It was also posted on the website to inform people of rules and guidelines. In 2015, they assisted in the Tolland 300th Celebration by opening doors of private residences to house tours. Ms. Coleman-Marzialo had over 200 people see the interior of her home. Further, they assisted with Tolland Green Days, a great educational opportunity. In 2018, Tolland was awarded CT State Scenic Road status. In 2020, they asked for more resources to be posted on the website including, "The Green, An Endangered Asset" by Barbara Cook. In 2021, a revised neighbor letter was sent to Historic District residents and real estate agents. It was posted on the website as well. In 2023, to assist, educate, and provide information to the public, they published the Tolland Green Historic District Design Guidelines with the assistance of the State Historic Preservation Office. This was distributed and posted on the website. On March 28th, Ms. Coleman-Marzialo requested that three additional resources be

posted on the website regarding renewable energy, the National Park Service Guidelines, the State Historic Preservation Office's Handbook for Historic District Commissions but they town has not posted them. Ms. Coleman-Marzialo noted that she has not received a response and assumes the town is refusing to post them. She is here due to misunderstandings and uniformed opinions about the HDC. Many think the brick-faced house with front-facing solar panels is part of the Historic District, but it is not. They must follow the Town Code, the CT State Statutes, and the Secretary of the Interior Guidelines found on the National Parks Services website. Ms. Coleman-Marzialo cited the verbiage in regard to the Certificate of Appropriateness. She noted that she received feedback that some perceive her as rude, inappropriate, or out of line when they ask, discuss, or compare a COA applicant's electricity usage and inquire about energy efficiency measures that have been taken. Her intention is not to be rude, inappropriate, or "out of whack". She cited the guidelines regarding energy efficiency for historic homes. Ms. Coleman-Marzialo explained that she has only been doing her job as Chair to protect and preserve the distinctive appearance and characteristics of the 300-year-old, Nationally Registered Historic Green.

Dave Geissler, 238 Anderson Road, commented that he suspects that they are asking for resignations due to the sidewalk. If this is the case, he is disappointed where if one disagrees with what one thinks, they will be removed from office and many people will need to be replaced. The state said that Tolland Green is ADA acceptable. The PZC disagreed and voted down having a cement sidewalk on the Green. The Commission requested clarification from the Council and the Town Manager but did not receive it. After they unanimously voted that it was inappropriate to put a cement sidewalk on the Green, they asked for other options and did not receive any information. Mr. Geissler added that everyone on the committee, which Ms. Coleman-Marzialo and Ms. Bach are on, voted against the sidewalk as well. The Historical Society also said, "no". They run the museums, Courthouse, and the Benton Homestead. The Committee which runs the parade and scarecrow contest also said the sidewalk is inappropriate. The leadership of the Farmers Market said the sidewalk is inappropriate. The Council has an option to determine if the sidewalk is advisable, worth doing, and helpful to the community. Mr. Geissler commented that there is a difference between one saying something cannot be done and saying that something cannot be done because one does not want to do it. The Council is in charge of the town, and he hopes they will reconsider the suit regarding the sidewalk and evaluate its value to the community. Those opposed to the sidewalk are not hard, evil people. They just believe there are other options and he asked that they reevaluate if they are doing something that will be beneficial to the community and if there are other ways to do it.

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented that her dad was in a wheelchair and would not have been able to access the Green as it is now. Plenty of people do not have access to an electric chair. People of good favor agree and disagree about the Green. Ms. Costa commented that it needs to be made accessible to all. In regard to the HDC, she does often does not agree with Ms. Coleman-Marzialo but noted that she has improved. Ms. Costa noted that she does not agree with most of what Ms. Bach stated but believes people deserve the opportunity to improve. The Council should not remove anyone from the HDC, but they should know the charge and how to speak to people. Ms. Costa noted that she was dumbfounded about Ms. Coleman-Marzialo questioning Mr. Hughes and saying that he got his house at a low price. Robert's Rules are not something people are born knowing. With counsel and training, people deserve the opportunity to improve. She encouraged the Council to maintain the positions on the Commission until the Commissioners no longer want to serve.

Shawn Lappen, 168 Mountain Spring Road, commented that a new well will be drilled on his property soon and hopes it will rectify the water contamination issue and complete his saga. He is thankful for Mr.

Wilkinson's communication and hopes there will not be any further delays with the town's insurance company.

Susan Lucek Hughes, 95 Tolland Green, commented she wanted to address some misinformation and misconceptions about the sidewalk. The Council is aware, educated, and informed of the accessibility issue on the Green. ADA compliance is a federal law. She has a family member in a wheelchair. Accessibility is needed and has been deemed around the world important enough to make a law. The Green is not, nor has ever been, accessible. As the Chair of the Commission on People with Disabilities, they have been asking for over four years for accessibility on the Green. The DOT state highway reconstruction does not make the Green ADA compliant or accessible. She challenged anyone to take a wheelchair across the grass or on the existing sidewalks. Ms. Lucek Hughes commented that she received an e-mail from a resident this week sharing a story of how he got stuck when using the existing sidewalk with his wheelchair. Everyone has seen a gentleman on the road, in the dark, in a wheelchair. Regardless of where he is going, he is a human being, member of the community, resident of the town, and deserves respect. Everyone deserves respect and accessibility. No one has a right to decide who does not get accessibility. There will be disagreement, but disability rights are human, basic rights.

6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS: none

7a. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL:

- Firehouse Subcommittee – Ms. Yudichak noted that the bay doors are up but there may be a change order and the firehouse is moving along. At the last meeting they discussed adding the Assistant Fire Chief as an Alternate to the Subcommittee. She added that there will be many upcoming change orders. A Special Meeting was held yesterday for a site walk of stations 140 and 440.
- ARPA – Ms. Yudichak noted that given the significant savings on the grader, next week the Subcommittee will meet to discuss a couple of small items.
- Road Salt Task Force – Mr. Sce noted that they met in executive session. Ms. Stargardter added that they are receiving updates and hopes to have information available for the public soon.

7b. REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS

- Planning & Zoning Commission - Mr. Moran provided an update from last night's meeting.
- Recreation Advisory Committee – Ms. Yudichak provided an update from last night's meeting.
- Economic Development Commission – Mr. Marie provided an update from last week's meeting.
- Agriculture Commission – Mr. Sce provided an update from the April 1st meeting.
- Permanent Celebration Committee – Ms. Buckler provided an update.
- CRCOG - Ms. Stargardter provided an update. Discussions include legislative policies under consideration.
- Eastern Highlands Health District – Ms. Stargardter noted they will meet next week.

8. NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):

- 8.1 Consideration of a resolution approving a transfer of \$172,500 from the BOE's audited unexpended balance as of June 30, 2023 to the Education Reserve Fund.
Mr. Foley provided background information on this item.

Ms. Stargardter confirmed that this request has already gone through the BOE. Mr. Foley noted that as required it must go through the Council as well.

Ms. Yudichak motioned,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby approves the transfer of \$172,500 from the BOE's audited balance as of June 30, 2023 pursuant to the request for these funds by the Board of Education.

Mr. Sce seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

8.2 Review of Revised Fire Study Proposals

Mr. Foley provided background information on this item.

[Mr. Paul Bishop from CGR and Mr. Bill Sturgeon from Fitch & Associates were in attendance via Zoom.]

Ms. Yudichak asked about the significant reduction in price by CGR. Mr. Bishop explained that after conversations with the Council and follow-up, they learned the key questions and will be able to work with the town to provide the answers. The methodology changed a bit with only one person doing a site visit, saving on travel time and personnel. Additionally, proposals include a contingency and given the quality of the data and the firm's ability to work through it quickly, allowed them to reduce the contingency.

Mr. Moran commented that he believes it is good to have the study. They will have objective information so they can make informed financial decisions. He appreciates CGR narrowing the scope, so it meets the needs of the town.

Ms. Stargardter asked Mr. Foley if the Chief and some of the public safety personnel are comfortable with the revised proposals as they were with the initial ones. Mr. Foley responded that he believes so. These proposals are pared down. Ms. Stargardter noted that the Council has allocated funds, yet both exceed this amount. She asked how they would find the delta. Mr. Foley estimated that approximately \$15K would be needed. He will meet with the Financial Director to discuss the options and present them to the Council. Ms. Stargardter asked what needs to happen next to move forward. Mr. Foley responded that would like to get the Fire Chief's opinion, but they can move when the Council is ready.

Mr. Marie asked if any changes were made to the Fitch & Associates proposal. Mr. Sturgeon noted that no changes were made. They only addressed the questions and referenced where the answers could be found in the document.

Ms. Yudichak commented that she hoped the Council would vote this evening. She asked the Assistant Chief Dojan if he could provide any input. He referred to Mr. Foley. Mr. Foley noted that the Chief's preference was Fitch & Associates.

Ms. Yudichak motioned to approve moving forward with the proposal made by Fitch & Associates LLC.

Mr. Marie seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Buckler asked if there is a difference between the proposals. Mr. Foley responded that they are comparable. He does not have a preference and would lean

toward the preference of the Fire Chief. Ms. Buckler asked if funding is in place. Mr. Foley responded that \$30K was committed by the Council for the proposal. The bids exceeded this amount so the town will need to find \$15K and would explore how to do so. Mr. Moran clarified that they are voting to approve the proposal of Fitch & Associates LLC. Ms. Stargardter noted that per the Town Manager, if the additional funding needs Council approval, it would be presented. Mr. Sce asked if they move forward, what the timing is and if the town is ready. Mr. Foley responded that the town is ready and understands that both firms would be ready to start.

Ms. Yudichak amended the motion to select Fitch & Associates LLC as the preferred vendor subject to the Council hearing the proposed financing for the endeavor at its next meeting, Mr. Marie seconded.

Discussion: Ms. Stargardter clarified that the motion is to select Fitch & Associates LLC as the preferred vendor. They will ask the Town Manager to present a funding plan at the next Council meeting. If Council approval is required, the Council would consider it for approval; otherwise, if a sharing of information, the Council will hear the information. Ms. Stargardter requested that the Town Manager also provide a timeline at the next meeting and provide regular updates in the Town Manager's Report.

Mr. Wilkinson noted that he will reach out to Mr. Bishop.

All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

8.3 Consideration of a resolution amending the membership of the Firehouse Sub-Committee.

Mr. Foley provided background information on this item.

The Subcommittee Chair has requested that Assistant Fire Chief Dojan be appointed as an alternate. Ms. Yudichak noted that the Subcommittee voted on having the Assistant Chief be an alternate when the Chief is not available so the motion may need to be amended.

A brief discussion took place. It was decided that the motion would stand as-is.

It was noted that the Assistant Chief has been a been part of the Subcommittee and would be an excellent addition. He is a great source of knowledge.

Mr. Moran motioned,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby amends the membership of the Firehouse Sub-Committee to include Carl Dojan, Assistant Fire Chief as an Alternate member.

Amended Membership:

Brian Foley, Town Manager

Scott Lappen, Public Works Director

Bev Bellody, Human Services Director

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director

John Littell, Fire Chief/Public Safety Director

Megan Massa, Projects/Grants Manager

Up to 2 Town Council members (Councilor Yudichak, Chair as Town Council Chair's designee and Councilor Marie as the Vice Chair.)

Carl Dojan, Assistant Fire Chief, Alternate

Mr. Marie seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

- 8.4 Continuation of discussion of current sidewalk policy as it pertains to the use of the temporary ADA Grass Mat, costs associated with its use and subsequently charging groups who use the Green for events to pay all or a portion of those fees.

Mr. Foley provided background information on this item.

Ms. Stargardter reviewed the discussion at the last meeting. Her recommendation is to hold off on charging fees this calendar year and revisit it after seeing how things unfold with the sidewalk.

Mr. Marie noted that he does not want to deter use of the Green, but they need to have a replacement plan for the mat after this calendar year tied to the estimated attendance. He noted that if a replacement mat is not needed, he would like the fees paid to be returned to the groups which contributed.

Mr. Sce asked how long the mat has been in place and if being in place for a prolonged period of time reduces its life. Mr. Foley confirmed that the mat has remained in place but if it was in storage, it would extend its life. They wanted to leave it in place for the Tree Lighting and Menorah ceremonies. The ground froze so taking it up would have caused damage and they want to have access to the Green in the spring. It will be moved as needed for the Farmers Market and other groups. Mr. Sce noted that since the Farmers Market is part of the town, it would not make sense to charge them as the money would just be going back to the town and asked if there would be an exemption to town functions. Mr. Foley explained that the town would need to pay to replace the mat so it should fund it as well if they are asking others to do so. He recommended tabling the discussion of funding until they know more about what will happen with the sidewalk.

Mr. Moran agreed that there is a competing interest and noted that the fees should not be prohibitively high. An e-mail from the Agriculture Commission raised a concern similar to Mr. Sce's. Mr. Moran agreed with Ms. Stargardter's recommendation.

Ms. Buckler agreed with the Chair's recommendation as well. The hope is for a more permanent solution in the future, but it is something to consider.

Mr. Marie noted that it would be helpful to calculate how much would be needed for replacement so they know what would need to be collected.

This item was tabled. Mr. Foley will work with Public Works to do the best they can for this calendar year. Pending legal outcomes, this can be discussed as needed.

- 8.5 Consideration and action on scheduling a public hearing for April 25, 2024 concerning an application for the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program and discuss the Town's Program Income Reuse Plan.

Ms. Stargardter noted that April 23rd is the second night of Passover. She and the Vice Chair, in coordination with the Town Manager's Office, agreed to move this meeting to April 25th as a Special Meeting.

Mr. Foley provided background information on this item.

Ms. Bellody explained that at the Public Hearing they will need to review the details of the grant and what is available for funding. It will provide an opportunity for citizens to understand the program, what is available, and to comment. The program income plan will be reviewed as well. This is money derived from the housing rehab program. Additionally, other federal requirements will be noted.

They have been working cooperatively with Elderly Housing Management which manages Old Post Village and has secured funding for an architect to do the plans. One of the requirements is to have complete architectural plans.

Ms. Massa explained that after the Public Hearing, there will be agenda items related to the project. One will be a resolution for the Town Manager to sign the paperwork for the grant application. An update to the Fair Housing Plan will also be needed and will require a resolution. Further, they will ask the Council to waive building permit fees.

Ms. Buckler motioned to schedule the public hearing for April 25, 2024, as outlined in agenda item 8.5.

Mr. Moran seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

8.6 Discussion of current membership of the Historic District Commission and the setting of a Public Hearing on April 25, 2024.

Mr. Foley provided background information on this item.

Mr. Foley noted that there has been a plurality of e-mails over the past couple of months in relation to decorum and professionalism from the Historic District Commission (HDC). With that, they are examining section C5-2 of the Charter. Nothing has been decided at this point. If the Council moves forward, a resolution for removal would be needed and would require notice. In regard to executive session, the town attorney provided an opinion, which he confirmed with FOIA, that executive session is not needed. A resolution would go to a public hearing and then a vote.

Ms. Stargardter confirmed that the process at this point is for consensus from the Council to request a resolution, possibly more than one, to be presented at the April 25th meeting for the Council's consideration. The resolution(s) would include information regarding why they are considering removing members of the HDC, provide notice to such member(s), and set a public hearing date for the following meeting on May 14th.

Ms. Yudichak commented that she watched several meetings and while there is concern, she noted that perhaps someone else could take over the Chair position.

Ms. Stargardter commented that she, as the liaison to the HDC, has made several attempts to work with its Chair on procedure and came up with ideas including having the Town Clerk provide training on procedure. The Town Clerk's Office created and sent a new document to all board and commission members. Her efforts to work with the HDC Chair were not accepted and offers for different meetings and opportunities were not accepted. The Town Manager has also attempted to work with members of the Commission on improvements to the process. Mr. Foley commented that the number of complaints regarding decorum and professionalism is concerning. When people hear/watch the meetings, it is beginning to have an effect on the public's confidence in the town as

a whole and its ability to govern. He respects all who serve on boards and commissions. This is a matter of culture which is directly affected by professionalism and decorum. In his belief, it is time for a culture change. Mr. Foley noted that he does not have a vote.

Mr. Sce inquired about procedure regarding executive session and if the town has checked with its attorney. Mr. Foley responded that he has. The town attorney disagreed that an executive session was needed. At the request of the Council Chair, the attorney confirmed this with the FOIA Commission.

Mr. Marie commented that he has never seen so much controversy around a board or commission. He believes this is a necessary next step in the process.

Mr. Moran agreed with Mr. Marie and noted that it is important to pay attention to feedback from the community. He believes they should move forward.

Ms. Buckler noted that this has been an ongoing issue without improvement. They are not taking this lightly nor rushing into a decision. They will do their best to follow procedure and it would be unwise to not take into consideration what they have heard from the public.

Ms. Yudichak asked if the town's attorney can communicate with other parties' attorneys. Mr. Foley confirmed that this has taken place.

The Council did not object to asking the Town Manager to bring before the Council for consideration at its next meeting resolutions stating why they are considering removal of Jodie Coleman-Marzialo and Kathy Bach from the HDC, provide notice to each, and set a public hearing for May 14, 2024. The Chair directed the Town Manager to take this action.

8.7 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions. - none

9. OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS): none

10. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

- Electronic Recycling & Shredding Event – April 27th; Mr. Foley thanked Ms. Nivison and the CERT volunteers.
- Board of Assessment Appeals – met last week; reductions to 6 accounts were made totaling \$111K; 13 appeals were filed.
- Development
 - Full building permits were issued for the Girl Scout camp.
 - Santini Development – moving along well.
 - Tri-Town Gymnastics – moving and building a 15K square foot facility on Tolland Stage Road
 - BUDR Grand Re-Opening, April 17th, 8:30AM
 - Starbucks – paperwork has been filed with the state.
- Youth Services Bureau – Will have a day at the Capitol.
- Library – Bruce John will perform a music & movement program on April 12th at 11AM; 500 solar eclipse glasses were distributed over the past 2 weeks.

- Agricultural Commission – Website launched for the Farmers Market on the Green; will meet with them and other stakeholders; Mr. Foley invited the Farmers Market on route 74 to merge with the others on Sunday.
- Conservation Commission – The Big Foot and Unicorn Tracking Event went well.
- Grants – Mr. Foley thanked Ms. Massa for her work on the \$22K for the Barbara Pettijohn Media Center. They have submitted for final consideration. Mr. Foley noted they will seek donations for the remainder of the needed funds.
- Fire Station 340 – going well.
- Polar Plunge – Mr. Foley thanked Public Safety and the CT State Police. This benefitted Special Olympics and was held at Crandalls Pond. Beach improvements have been made and they will improve upon the pond and make repairs. Mr. Foley thanked Mr. Watt, Mr. Lappen, and Mr. Russell for their efforts. He thanked Mr. Peck as well.
- State Police – Currently, they do not have a contract, but an attorney has been assigned. They spoke regarding the information the town would like to see.
- UCONN Basketball Team Return - An additional trooper was provided. Mr. Foley thanked Chief Littell and his staff for setting up the apparatus and flag.
- Permanent Celebration Committee – First Farmers Market, May 5th

Mr. Marie commented that the Big Foot & Unicorn Tracking Event put Tolland on the map. Mr. Foley added that it received great media attention.

11. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 11.1 03.20.24 Budget Meeting Minutes
- 11.2 03.21.24 Budget Meeting Minutes
- 11.3 03.25.24 Budget Meeting Minutes
- 11.4 03.26.24 Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Marie motioned to approve the minutes as laid out in 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4.

Mr. Moran seconded the motion.

Edits: Ms. Yudichak thanked the clerk.

All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

12. CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL

- E-mails (26) regarding the public hearing; included in the packet.
- E-mails (4) regarding the Town Manager Budget
- E-mail regarding the Senior Center
- E-mail expressing concern about curbs in the Vineyards.
- E-mail discussing moving events off the Green in consideration of ADA.
- E-mail regarding transparency and Thursday's budget meeting.
- E-mail regarding behavior at Thursday's meeting.
- E-mail expressing concern about using Debt Service for the BOE
- E-mail supporting education.
- E-mail regarding the Chair's behavior toward others.
- E-mail expressing concern about changing the HDC membership.
- E-mails (2) expressing interest in filling the Alternate seat on the HDC.
- Email regarding resignation from the HDC.
- E-mail regarding a FOIA request from the HDC.

- E-mail regarding concerns about HDC behavior.
- E-mail expressing concern about the Chair's behavior at Thursday's budget meeting.
- E-mail regarding the portable mat on the Green and the Agricultural Commission
- E-mail expressing concern about HDC members being removed.
- E-mail expressing concern about the BOE and asking why a sergeant was added back.
- E-mail thanking the Chair for her leadership last week at the budget meeting.
- E-mails (136) to date regarding the BOE budget: 100 in favor; 36 opposed

13. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

- Chair Hour, Thursday, April 11th, Library. BOE Chair Tony Holt, PCC Chair Mary Pat Soucy, and HDC Chair Jodie Coleman-Marzialo are scheduled to join her.
- Annual Budget Presentation, April 17th, 7PM, Council Chambers (hybrid)
- Annual Budget Presentation, April 18th, 12PM, Senior Center

14. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS

- Ms. Yudichak requested a citation for Tolland Communicator Week (911 dispatch) but did not receive a response from the Chair or Vice Chair. In turn, Ms. Yudichak wrote her own and read the following, "Our 911 operators are the ultimate first responders, the unsung heroes in emergencies and crises. Their knowledge and professionalism are crucial as they make critical decisions, gathering information and swiftly dispatching necessary aid all in a calm manner. As residents we trust them to make life-saving decisions. Thank you to all the men and women who work 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to ensure that we have the help we need in whatever situation we face. I am forever thankful for your critical service to saving lives. Colleen Yudichak." Ms. Stargardter noted that she did not receive an e-mail regarding this. Ms. Yudichak added that she will deliver something to the dispatch center from the Council. Ms. Yudichak noted that last week she requested that an agenda item be added for the April 25th meeting to discuss bond ratings and how they could impact the town's credit rating. She heard back from the Vice Chair but not the Chair. Ms. Yudichak commented that for over a month and a half she has been working on the budget by herself. She noted that she has been shut out on certain things and the Republicans have spoken with her and she added that there is nothing wrong with this. Ms. Yudichak commented that last Thursday was the worst meeting she has ever witnessed and sat in. It was a disgrace to the community, and she apologized to all of Tolland and town staff. It should never have happened. The Chair spent countless hours in the Finance Office before becoming Chair. Ms. Yudichak noted that she did not mind and assumed it was data collection. In the filibuster for over 5 hours, she tried to trick new members and confuse people with a lack of respect for Council members yelling, "I have the floor", "you can't speak", "you're out of line", and that certain words could not be used. Ms. Yudichak commented that she is concerned about leadership. The divisiveness of the Council, as compared to the last two years, is awful and saddens her. She noted that they are better than this. They are elected leaders and need the community to have faith and trust in them. She challenged the members to do better, treat each other with dignity, and follow Robert's Rules. While there will be mistakes along the way, they need to trust staff and build confidence with the public.
- Ms. Buckler commented that she believes there has been a lot of chatter about Thursday's meeting and what information was shared and not shared. She is not aware of whether it was intentional, but the information which was not shared was not just scenarios run by Ms. Yudichak and Mr. Marie but revenue numbers which had changed. Ms. Hancock and the Town Manager were aware of the changes on Tuesday and the information was not shared with the rest of the Council. An e-mail exchange took place with Mr. Sce regarding the bond rating and not shared with others. It was frustrating going into a meeting where a decision regarding the budget was

going to be made and not having all necessary information and working on an even playing field with other Councilors. Ms. Buckler does not think it was malicious, but it appears Ms. Yudichak, Mr. Marie, and the Republicans had the information and did not know that she, Ms. Stargardter, and Mr. Moran did not. Ms. Buckler did not blame any of the Councilors for the information not being shared. They should all work together but it feels uneven. Talk on social media was that they were only running scenarios. Ms. Buckler clarified that there was information that should have been shared and they had to scramble to get the information.

- Mr. Sce commented that he thought at a prior meeting Ms. Hancock stated that the Assessor modified the numbers and that there would be changes to revenue based on these estimates. At the time, she did not have firm numbers. He inquired if there would be a change to the elderly assistance numbers and she responded that they had not been changed as of yet. Mr. Sce explained that the numbers provided on April 4th could still change before a final mill rate is calculated. People say that there is a lack of transparency and no clarity. He does not believe it was intentional but followed existing procedures. The impact was 0.0014% on revenue. Large numbers were not being hidden. In retrospect, it would be better to be more transparent going forward.
- Mr. Moran commented that he is not imputing negative intentions. All would want the same information, and this is what was frustrating to him. He understands that the numbers change but wishes all had them. It is important that they respectfully disagree when they disagree. All are doing what they believe to be in the best interest of the town.
- Ms. Yudichak commented that they can all do better. She asked that they reset, learn from the past, and move forward.

15. PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION (on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council) (3-minute limit)

Sharron Laplante, 168 Weigold Road, commented that she is addressing new Councilors regarding removing members from the HDC. It is not about procedure, attendance, decorum, or professionalism. She does not believe Ms. Stargardter and Mr. Foley are being properly honest. It is about the Putin approach to an opposition opinion. If one does not do as another says, they are gone. Ms. Bach and Ms. Coleman-Marzialo protect the Historic District as members of the HDC. They do their job with fairness and dedication and are volunteers. Ms. Laplante asked that new Councilors talk to people in town and learn what they think. The Town Manager and Chair hate that the HDC and others do not want a cement sidewalk on the Green. They want to get rid of those who say "no" to the sidewalk and put their yes-men in. The HDC is designed to protect the Historic District. When denied, people will hate the person who said it. This needs to be taken into consideration. Regarding decorum and professionalism, Mr. Foley will not speak to Ms. Bach about matters unrelated to the Green. She cited the town-owned building that needs repair. She asked the new Councilors to speak to others and find the truth. It is not about the behavior of the HDC members.

Michelle Harrold, 194 Sugar Hill Drive, commented that she watched Thursday's meeting, and it was frustrating. The Chair did a good job handling the situation that left a lot of Councilors on a different footing. She ensured everyone was on the same page and challenged the numbers provided. It was professional and had she been a man, they may not be discussing that she challenged the numbers in a way that was unprofessional. Ms. Harrold worked with the Chair when she chaired the Birch Grove Building Committee, and she was a fabulous chair. She can get consensus and to mention that she should not be Chair is saddening. They are trying to bring the town together and it is very divided.

Dave Geissler, 238 Anderson Road, apologized for not being organized the first time he spoke. In terms of professionalism, he is disappointed that when he spoke the Town Manager was smiling at him and it was uncalled for. When another person spoke, he threw his hands up. He should sit and take it like a man and Mr. Geissler expected more from him than his reactions to public speaking. He commented that in his first two experiences with the Chair before this evening he found her to be unprofessional and was surprised when she spoke of giving professional advice to the HDC. He noted that she smirked at him one of the times he had contact with her. Lastly, another Councilor was laughing, smiling, and yawning. He believes this was disrespectful as well. If they are talking about the ethics of others, perhaps they should improve themselves.

Jennifer Cordier, 14 Austin Drive, commented on the Historical Society. She is concerned because she knows Ms. Coleman-Marzialo well. She dedicates her time, energy, and resources to protect the history and historical aspects of the town – one of the reasons Ms. Cordier's family moved to Tolland. Ms. Coleman-Marzialo can be aggressive when defending something she believes in, and Ms. Cordier hopes they look at what the Historical Society is about – protecting history. Once they tarnish history, nothing will be left. Those who preserve history are important to the town and society as a whole. They need to look at the role of the Historical Society and what it is supposed to defend. Ms. Cordier noted that in this meeting the Councilors were respectful to each other, and she hopes this continues.

Mary-Pat Soucy, 111 Torry Road, commented on the historic district dismissal. Someone texted her that Ms. Bach was asked to resign. She asked the Council about the process and what the resolutions would state.

Ms. Stargardter noted that this is an opportunity for the public to provide comments. It is not a back-and-forth discussion.

Ms. Soucy commented that she is interested in seeing the evidence and that as the Chair of the Permanent Celebration Committee (PCC) she should be careful. She wants to ensure everyone understands why this is moving forward this way. She has received e-mails after events and the public is hard. They are all volunteers. If someone does not display the perfect decorum perhaps it can get testy, but the person is still a public servant of the town. They are all working hard. She hopes they are careful about making a final decision that will set a precedent for other commissions and committees in town.

Claudette Morehouse, 89 Merlot Way, thanked Ms. Yudichak for her words regarding Thursday's meeting. She watched it and it was painful. It was a filibuster meeting, there was disrespect shown to the Finance Director, and no one stood up to call a point of order to stop it. She may have had changed numbers, but in looking at the minutes and the video, she stated that she had them and given the opportunity she could have explained them to everyone but was not given the chance. They call for decorum on other boards, but it happened for six hours. The Finance Director has worked hard for many years for the town, received awards for her accomplishments, and was buried because of a few e-mails that did not have a lot of substance. People can improve and she hopes they do. Ms. Morehouse asked if there was an apology from the entire Council to Ms. Hancock. She was humiliated in a public meeting and deserves an apology in a public meeting.

Dennis Deegan, 679 Tolland Stage Road, commented that leadership is not just agreeing with what people want but doing the right thing. He has followed the HDC for a couple of years. The Council Chair has had it in for the HDC Chair since day one and has not supported the Commission. Mr. Foley has taken the same approach. It is deplorable. Mr. Deegan commented that the Councilors own what happens on the Council. The culture has to change, and it begins with the Council. A

couple of Councilors are toxic in how they approach things. He does not know who is involved in corporate life, but one can spot behavior and body language. Some can read body language and cultural change needs to take place. He is completing his fact findings and noted that it looks like he will be submitting an ethics complaint to the Council and the Ethics Commission. Mr. Deegan referenced the Ethics Code, Connecticut General Statute. He noted that retaliation is missing as well as behavior against town residents and/or the town at large. If the Ethics Commission rejects it, he will turn it over to the Council, and if rejected, he will probably go to the Office of the Attorney General. Once he has his facts together, he will have it in writing. Bad behavior goes on and it needs to change. The town deserves better. His read on a number of the members is that they are trying to do the right thing, but bad behavior is going on. He does not know if it is known that a Councilor had a member of another commission call the two members being discussed and told them to resign before this evening. Mr. Deegan commented that hopefully everyone knows this because their name and reputation is on the line.

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented that she could imagine that someone was smiling, laughing, and yawning as she was up late last night and is doing the same. She noted that relative to the scenarios of Ms. Hancock and Ms. Yudichak it was inappropriate that Ms. Hancock did not send the information out because Ms. Yudichak was referring to it. How could anyone understand the scenarios if Ms. Yudichak made them with Ms. Hancock? Once Ms. Yudichak referred to the scenarios it was imperative that all members have the information. Ms. Costa congratulated the Council on its decorum this evening and noted it is far better overall. Fighting took place between everyone last week and this is not their personality. She noted that the Historical Society and the HDC are different. One is a paid society that receives donations, and the other is a named commission of the town. There was some inappropriate behavior, and there is a tenuous culture on the Commission, but she believes people should have the opportunity to improve. This may be an opportunity to provide counsel. She noted that at least one other member of the Commission has inappropriate behavior as well. It is appropriate to provide counsel to the two members and allow them to continue with strict guidelines as to how they need to handle themselves.

Heather McCann, 62 Crossen Drive, commented that she feels bad for Ms. Stargardter and Mr. Foley who are taking a beating tonight and it is not totally justified. Ms. McCann attended the last meeting until 1AM and it was not pretty. Some Councilors were caught off guard and did not have the same information as others. The Chair had to quickly regroup and work within the realization that she did not have the same information. A recess was requested, and the Chair returned, she realized that she still did not have information and did an excellent job maintaining and running the meeting following this. By the end, everyone seemed to be doing ok. Ms. McCann commented that this is very atypical for the Chair. To be flustered was a one-time occurrence. She is intelligent. Having been in the room during the recess, Ms. McCann commented that snide remarks were made by other Councilors, even those coming across as always saying and doing the right thing. People should not throw stones.

Susan Lucek-Hughes, 95 Tolland Green, commented on the Council and communication with the public. Before the election, she reached out to everyone who was running and asked them to answer questions about accessibility in town. She heard from every member currently sitting on the Council and she appreciates this. In the face of everything that has been said, they are all doing a great job.

Marilee Beebe, 90 Rhodes Road, commented that it is unfortunate that at the Council meeting on April 4th that both financial information and spreadsheet showing various budget scenarios were

provided to certain Councilors and not others including the Chair. The information was provided in response to e-mail requests and/or in-person conversations with staff. In 28 years of serving on various boards and commissions making fact-based decisions, and almost 40 years of participating in the town budget process, she has never seen anything like this. A few weeks ago, town staff emphasized to the Chair and Vice Chair of the building subcommittee that all questions needed to be submitted far enough in advance so all members could receive the information. This is in contrast to providing information only to select Councilors while withholding it from others. Minimizing the importance of the information does not change the seriousness of the actions. It is a lapse of protocol. In no professional scenario she has been associated with would this action be tolerated. Setting the town budget is arguably the most important responsibility of the Council. Its impact on the citizenry is unparalleled and ensuring that all Councilors are examining and considering the same data set, budgetary details, and scenarios is paramount no matter how minimal. It goes to accuracy and decision-making but more importantly to honesty, transparency, professional conduct, and working together for the betterment of the town. They know better and must do better.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Marie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:33PM

Mr. Sce seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned without objection.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Pascuzzi
Town Council Clerk

Town Council Chair

Kathy Bach
Political and Community Service Data

Elected and Appointed Offices

Protection and Preservation of Historic Properties, 8/21-2/22 Speaker of the House appointment
Judicial Selection Commission, 2008 - 2011 gubernatorial appointment
Justice of the Peace, 2001 – current
Tolland Green Historical District Commission, 2011 - present
CT Regional Council of Governments 195 Corridor Study Committee, 2005 - 2012
Tolland Town Council - 2001-2007
 Chairperson 2005-07,
 Vice-Chairperson 2001-03
 Open Space Land Acquisition Committee 2003-07
Tolland Green (Preservation) Steering Committee - Chairperson 2002-2004
Town of Tolland Senior Center Building Committee - Chairperson, 1997-99
Office of Policy & Management, procurement of private services assignment, 1995-98
Candidate for State Representative – 1992, 1994 & 1996
Secretary of the State Citizenship Task Force – 1992-94
Town of Tolland Library Town-wide Study, spear headed project
Member of the Tolland Board of Education – 1983 to 1993
 Chairperson 1989-91
 Negotiations Committee – 1989-91
 Superintendent Search Committee, Chairperson, 1990-91
 Secretary – 1985-89
 Facilities Committee – 1983-89

Activities

Old Tolland County Jail & Museum-initiated town restoration of wooden exterior, 2022
Old Tolland County Court House-oversaw cupola and bell tower restoration 2018-21
United Congregational Church- oversaw steeple restoration, 2016-2018
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving- Community Fund Selection Committee, 2019
Tolland Historical Society – President, 2011 to present
 Board of Directors, 1993 - present
 Annual Antiques Show Director, 1992 - 2017
Old Tolland County Jail Museum - Director, 2002 – present
 Founded the Museum Student Intern program for 7th -12th Graders 2009
The Loomis Chaffee Parent's Association Board, 1995-2000
Tolland Congregational Church - various committees, 1979-2022, currently status is inactive
 Trustee Chair 2016 to 2022
 Business Committee 2014, Chair 2015 to 2022
 Choir 2001 - 2023
Tolland Republican Town Committee, 1983 - 2018; Membership, 2010; Chairperson, 1997-2002;
 Elections Committee, 1993-97; Treasurer, 1985-90; Candidate Recruitment Committee, 1983-93
Pi Beta Phi National Fraternity for Women, 1970 - present
 National Fraternity Housing Corporation Board, 2011-2015, Secretary
 Campus Association, 1970-72, President, Philanthropies, Panhellenic Representative
 Chapter President, 1971-72 & Panhellenic Council President, 1970-72
 Alumni Association, 1972 - present, President, Vice-President, Program Chairperson
 Chapter House Corporation to CT Alpha Chapter, 1972-2011*, President, V.P.,
 *Alumnae Advisory Council to CT Alpha Chapter, *during a 2 year hiatus from CHC
Cornell Club of Greater Hartford
Gettysburg College, Phi Gamma Delta (FIJI) Parents Association Chairperson 1999-02
Tolland Library Association, 1980- 2000 when it dissolved
35th Senatorial District Committee, 1987-97
Grassroots East, 2nd Congressional District Committee, 1989-1997
Vice President, Connecticut Federation of Republican Women, 1991-1997
Connecticut Conversations, Issues Circle Group, 1992-97
Visiting Nurse & Community Care Outreach Center Steering & Marketing Committees, 1992-94
Past President, Auxiliary to the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association
Member, Auxiliary to the American Veterinary Medical Association during its existence
Girl Scouts, 17 years - Attained Highest Rank of Curved Bar (today known as Gold Award)
Boy Scouts, 16 years - Advancement Chairperson, 1992-98, Founded Tolland Explorer Post 111, 1982
Tolland Junior Woman's Club, various committees
Greater Hartford Jaycees, 1974-79, Director, 1977-79 Greater Hartford Open, 1974-82
Connecticut Special Olympics State Games, 1977 Personnel Coordinator

Honors

Tolland Citizen of the Year, 1988, Rockville Chamber of Commerce Education Award, 1987
Channel 3, Jaycee & Jaycee Women's Connecticut Outstanding Citizen Award, 1985
Who's Who, Colleges and Universities edition and current professional edition
Various Civic, Scouting and Political Awards

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL

HYBRID MEETING

April 9, 2024 – 6:15 PM

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
TOLLAND, CT

2024 APR 11 PM 6:25

Katherine Stargardter

Council Members Present: Katherine Stargardter, Chair; Jennifer Buckler, Chris Moran, Colleen Yudichak, Jacob Marie; Vice Chair

Council Members Absent: Alexander Noonan, Joseph Sce

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:21 PM by Katherine Stargardter.
- 2) **Executive Session:** At 6:21 PM, Jacob Marie motioned, seconded by Chris Moran, to go into Executive Session and invited Pat McHale, Brian Foley and Mike Wilkinson to join, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0 to discuss a Fire Union negotiations. The Executive Session concluded at 6:59 PM.
- 3) **Adjournment:** Jennifer Buckler motioned, seconded by Chris Moran to adjourn at 6:59 PM with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Katherine Stargardter, Chair

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
ANNUAL BUDGET PRESENTATION MEETING MINUTES TOLLAND, CT

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING
6th Floor Council Chambers or Zoom
April 17, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

2024 APR 22 AM 11:20

Katherine Stargardter

Members Present: Katherine Stargardter, Chair; Jacob Marie, Vice Chair; Jennifer Buckler, Chris Moran, Alex Noonan (Zoom), Joseph Sce (Zoom), Colleen Yudichak

Members Absent: none

Also Present: Brian Foley, Town Manager; Lisa Hancock, Director, Finance & Records (Zoom); Mike Wilkinson, Director, Administrative Services (Zoom); Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent; Bev Bellody, Director, Human Services (Zoom)

1. **Call to Order:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance - recited**
3. **Moment of Silence - observed**
4. **Annual Budget Presentation**

4.1 Pursuant to C9-9 of the Town of Tolland Charter, the Town Council shall arrange for an annual budget presentation. The annual budget presentation is intended to provide information and encourage public discussion.

Ms. Stargardter reviewed the following:

Town of Tolland, Town Council's Annual Budget Presentation

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

April 17, 2024

- Agenda and Purpose
- Budget and Community Planning Timeline
- Changes to Expenditures
- Impact to Town Services
- Board of Education
- Significant Cost Drivers for the BOE Budget
- Town Council Budget
- BOE Adjustments
 - Mr. Holt, Chair of BOE, noted that the initial Board request included five reductions. The Board met last night and recognized that there was no good news and that it would be difficult. Mr. Holt noted that this is not doom and gloom but reality. The Board instructed Dr. Willett to continue to look for alternate revenue sources and will do the best it can with what it has. The Board appreciates the Council's support and looks forward to continued conversations.
 - Dr. Willett noted that they appreciate the efforts of the Council, which worked hard to do its best and continues to do so. This includes the Town Manager as well. Last night, the Board did due diligence to provide the best outcomes for students and the community. It is difficult in a year with reductions, but the Board found a way with the 3.91% that will be great for Tolland. It is tough to see adjustments made, and they always come at a price. At this point, there are seven reductions, but they will do their best to continue the excellence the school system has had in the past and will have in the future. Dr. Willett noted that a document that illustrates the impacts is available on the BOE website:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tST7LvgUZozSxgcladj9GHzidLP4TVU/view>
 - Jayden Regisford, Member of the BOE, commented that the Board's discussion focused on how to save whatever positions they could given the circumstances. He thanked Dr. Willett, Mr. Holt, the Board, and the Council for making the adjustments necessary.
 - Dana Philbin, Member of the BOE, commented that they have had many difficult budget meetings. The Board proposed a budget with five position reductions as well as program reductions. With the situation it was put in, they are also losing the following at THS: 1 ELA teacher, 1 social studies teacher, 2 science teachers, 1 PE/health teacher, 1 paraprofessional

librarian. They are also losing a K2 educator. These are not only positions, but also people. Today, at the Finance & Facilities Committee meeting, they discussed ensuring that educators are in front of special education students in order to comply with IEPs and 504s. If there are gaps, it impacts general education which will snowball and tier I students will become tier II students etc. which will cost the district, and town, more money. Ms. Philbin hopes they think of cost savings and there is an opportunity to fund the entire town including the BOE budget. She thanked the Councilors who advocated for the entire town, including for a robust budget for the schools. It is people, curriculum, programs, classes, and class sizes. THS is being greatly impacted.

- Capital/Debt Services Summary
- Additional Budget Highlights
- The Budget: Expenditures
- The Budget: Revenues
- Estimated Taxes – Residential & Commercial
- Comparable Communities
- The Budget Referendum Question
- Where to vote and when
- Online Resources
- Additional Resources
- Annual Budget Referendum
 - Tuesday, May 7 from 6AM to 8PM
Tolland Library Program Room
- Questions and Comments

Mr. Sce asked if this presentation will be repeated elsewhere. Ms. Stargardter noted that it will be presented again tomorrow at the Senior Center, 12PM. Mr. Sce asked if they could correct the presentation. He commented that it is misleading in terms of the various departments that are shown to be receiving an increase in the budget and debt increasing by 14%. The BOE shows an increase of 3.91% and Debt Service shows an increase of 14.39%. Mr. Sce commented that this is inaccurate. In budgeting, the budget number moves when the liability is moved, and this is not being done. The budget number is kept where a liability no longer exists, creating an inaccurate and misleading presentation of debt and the BOE budget. Debt Service increased by less than 1% and the BOE budget increased 5.5%.

5. Public Participation

George Ulrich, Fish and Game Road, commented that he agrees with Mr. Sce. The school budget is much higher than is pointed out and people do not realize this. Hopefully, they will be back in mid-May, and it will be fixed.

Andy Powell, 21 Clearbrook Drive, noted that his comment reflects only his position as a citizen and not his elected position. That said, he noted that they are working to increase the commercial viability of route 195 and seeing expansion of the economic base. As a citizen, Mr. Powell asked what drove the increase in legal costs.

Ms. Stargardter explained that they have seen increases in legal costs over the past couple of years and have a number of legal cases that need to be addressed. There are legal costs associated with guiding the town through the contaminated well issues. It is not a rate increase for the town attorney. Mr. Foley confirmed that the town attorney renewal did not have a rate increase; however, they have brought in additional counsel, yet they are coming in at a similar rate. Mr. Powell asked how many resident state troopers are in town. Ms. Stargardter responded that there are currently four and there is a contract to continue to have four. Mr. Powell asked about the value of having a sergeant and if it would be an on-the-road or an administrative position. Mr. Foley explained that a sergeant would be \$15K more than the highest paid trooper. It is an administrative position with the ability to go on the road. It is debatable whether it would benefit a town of Tolland's size. Mr. Powell commented that in the presentation, the projected increase is shown for other towns. He recommended showing the current mill rate as well to provide a better view. Mr. Powell asked about the seven reductions for the BOE and if they are people or positions. Dr. Willett explained that it is both. Mr. Powell asked if a performance review on the grant administrator has been done in regard to if the grant awards have been paying for the position. Mr. Foley responded that they have, and then some. He noted that the staff person has also picked up the responsibility of project management which is not in the job description. She applies for all grants but holistically, the town is not eligible for many of them due to its status of not being an impoverished town. They are working with CRCOG and CCM on this. Mr. Foley believes the staff person is worth every penny, and then

some. She brings money in. Mr. Powell recommended, since it is a fairly new position, that the payback be shown. In terms of debt administration and closure, there used to be a graph of outstanding bonds. The high school bond is close to the end, and it may be interesting to present it to the public. Debt retirement should be presented as well. Ms. Stargardter noted that this was presented as part of the capital budget presentation. In terms of grants, the Grants Manager applied for, and the town was awarded \$700K to replace the tennis courts. This was in the capital plan and would have been bonded. Additionally, pickleball courts at Heron Cove were in the long-term plan and the town was awarded a \$400K grant. Thus, she concurred with Mr. Foley and agreed to present the cost/benefit. It will be included in the Town Manager report.

Kate Howard-Bender, 103 Goose Lane, commented that she is grateful that the Council moved the UISF to town funding. This is where it belonged ten years ago. She thinks of how much could have been invested in the schools had this been done when the issue first came up. Schools do not make money. They educate and create the future. The increase for the BOE means they are losing at least seven positions. She is still distraught that the Council decreased the BOE budget by \$400K. Schools will open regardless and show up for the students. She noted the hard work of those advocating for the schools – the center of the community. Ms. Howard-Bender acknowledged the work being done to bring in businesses to ameliorate the tax burden. She wishes they had used more of the tax stabilization fund and tapped into the large unassigned reserve fund.

Mr. Moran asked for elaboration on the budget numbers presented and UISF. Ms. Stargardter explained that the numbers are what the Council voted on and were passed by a majority vote. The percentages are a reflection of those numbers.

Tony Holt, 67 Mile Hill Road, noted that he is the Chair of the BOE. He commented in regard to Councilor Sce's comment. There is no benefit to the Board in trying to hide information or having a sleight of hand with numbers. The intent is to be transparent. Anyone with questions should go to the website, e-mail the Board, or reach out to Dr. Willett. Explanations will be provided informed decisions may be made.

Mr. Sce spoke in regard to Mr. Holt's comment. Mr. Sce recommended changing the presentation to reflect 5.5% for the BOE and taking off the increase in Debt Services. Ms. Stargardter commented that what is presented is what needs to be presented as what is shown is what was voted on by the Council on April 4th. Mr. Sce commented that it is a reclassification. It does not change what was voted upon. Ms. Stargardter commented that she does not disagree with Mr. Sce's comments, but the Council voted on four numbers – a total budget that included a call out of the four numbers. The budget cannot be changed at this point. The Director of Finance confirmed the numbers. His information is fully documented in the budget documents. Mr. Sce commented that it is misleading because they are summarizing the information incorrectly. He is not saying to change what was voted upon but to correct the beginning balances to show the reclassification. Ms. Stargardter believes they are being transparent, and this conversation is on the record. She does not disagree with what he is saying. Mr. Sce believes it should be discussed and added that perhaps they should present more accurate, and clearer information. They are misleading people. Ms. Yudichak called a point of order and noted that they are in Public Participation. Ms. Stargardter noted that she disagrees with Mr. Sce's conclusion. They are not misleading people. The information is publicly available, and it has been discussed at length. It is not misleading.

Kate Vallo, 80 Tolland Green, commented that she has a senior at THS and started tuning into the budgets when her daughter was in kindergarten. At that time, the BOE portion of the budget was about 80% and has started to erode over the past 10-12 years. It is now 69%. She noted that moving some of the debt service to the town may have had an impact, but she is glad that it was moved. Ms. Vallo commented that this may speak to shifting values in town but hopes it does not and that the Council can be a leader to help the town refocus on supporting education. It helps support property values, encourages young families to move in, and keeps the town vibrant. It is important to fund all of the town. Ms. Vallo is grateful for her children's education as a parent, educator, and neighbor. She hopes people can think about values and support education in Tolland. Additionally, she is concerned that Mr. Sce feels that items are being misrepresented and that he can verify this at a more appropriate time.

Rebecca Risely, 103 Mountain Spring Road, commented that she tries to stay objective but has a student at THS who will be impacted by the cuts. She has heard Councilors who want to separate the town and BOE budgets. The BOE creates a budget and a single budget for the town is created. It is one town. The BOE is a big part of the town and the budget because students are a big part of the town. At the last meeting, several Councilors spoke of wanting to prevent town employees from losing jobs. Teachers are town employees and seven jobs, or positions, are being lost~~and 120 people~~.

are attached to the positions. She asked if they are aware of the impacts the cuts will have on students and teachers. Currently, there are three PE/health teachers that teach 740 students in grades 9-12 and they are reducing this to two. She noted additional reductions of seven to five in English, seven to five in science, and five to four in social studies based on the directory. When thinking about the cuts, she hopes they know what they are doing.

Claudette Morehouse, 89 Merlot Way, commented that she is concerned about Mr. Sce's comments. If the numbers are not correct, it does not change the number they are voting on, but it is misleading. During the six-hour budget meeting, members were in a "gruff" because they were not given the right information to make a decision but are asking people to vote on a budget without the correct numbers. This is not transparent. It is misleading and unfair to voters. Ms. Morehouse commented that she would like verification from Ms. Hancock.

Ms. Stargardter asked if Ms. Hancock could respond.

Ms. Hancock noted that the numbers are not incorrect. They are the numbers voted on by the Council. She explained that for clarification, and included in the Town Manager's budget book, is a statement that although Debt Service increased by 14.39% (\$676K), it was a reclassification from the Board of Education budget and the Town budget to Debt Service. She explained that it was a reclassification of money already in the budget. Ms. Hancock understands what is being stated but the numbers presented are the numbers that were voted on and must be displayed as they are. The only thing that can be done is to add a footnote if so desired.

Ms. Stargardter confirmed that a footnote can be added. She will update the presentation.

Deirdre Goldsmith, 21 Marlboro Glade, commented that if they are making adjustments, revisions, or corrections, the general public will be confused. They see a percentage increase and will think education is getting more but it took a hit this year and is a disaster. When making revisions, she asked if they could include that there is a loss and not an increase. People will not understand. Ms. Goldsmith thanked the Councilors who supported adequately funding the education budget.

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented that adding the footnote is smart. It makes it transparent. That said, they need to look long term. Her friend left the Tolland school system their student was in a class of 24. The teacher had difficulty controlling the student and recommended an IEP. He went to a school system with a class size of 16 and did not need an IEP. Everyone is happy. Ms. Costa questioned if by cutting the education budget they are continuing to add IEPS and 504s because teachers cannot control 24-25 young students. The IEPS and 504s have to be funded. It is federally mandated. They are cutting for the rest of the students and likely adding to the budget in the future.

Ms. Yudichak commented that she does not think any of the Councilors addressed the budget "willy nilly" for six hours. Many people are disappointed with the vote, particularly her vote, and it does not sit well with her, but they represent 14K people. She does not believe an "eye for an eye" in regard to another \$200K was an appropriate comment by the Chair at that meeting.

Mr. Marie commented that it is a difficult process, especially when there is a high number to start. Decisions were not made lightly. It was a compromise and there are parts he likes and parts he does not. It is what they could get the majority to agree on. They have to look at the entire town. The Council voted on its goals and supporting education was one of them but there were also fiscal goals. They want to look out for taxpayers, particularly those on fixed incomes. This is what he tried to take into consideration. Additionally, he looks forward to continuing to cooperate with the BOE and whatever voters decide on May 7th.

Mr. Moran commented that his hope is that the Council will stand behind the budget. Information is available. He encouraged people to review it or reach out. He supports adding the footnote if it adds clarity. They worked tirelessly on the budget and there were compromises that they are not happy with but he hopes the Council will be united and put its best foot forward so the public will have confidence in the Council.

Ms. Buckler commented that in looking back at the process, most disappointing is hearing Councilors say they represent all of Tolland. It has no meaning because they had overwhelming support for the BOE budget as it was approved by the BOE and presented by the Town Manager. They received 100 e-mails supporting the BOE budget as it was since cuts were already made. At the public hearing, there was overwhelming support for the BOE. For one to say they represent all of Tolland, she asked where the people are who say they want to cut more from the BOE. While there was a sprinkling, the support for the BOE budget was overwhelming. A number of Councilors are not supporting what the

townspeople are saying they want. She asked how they can say they support the people when they are not listening to the people. Everyone has an opinion but when they see so many people in support, she feels that is what the town wants. She is disappointed in how some Councilors voted and hopes in the future they can do better.

Andy Powell, 21 Clearbrook Drive, noted that he is speaking as a private citizen. He explained that one can look at a budget and talk about cuts. In real numbers, he does not believe the BOE, nor the town's numbers are being cut. They are being increased and there are drivers for this. Money does not equate to the quality of education. In terms of dollars, Hartford spends double what Tolland does. Hartford graduates 34% of students and 12% go on to secondary education. Tolland graduates 99.4% of students with more than 80% going on to secondary education. It is not a question of money being spent, it is programs, curriculum, and parental support at home. The latter is one of the greatest indicators of educational success. Mr. Powell noted that the community supports education – it supports it at home. People will look at the numbers and say that the BOE is not being cut – the number is being increased. He appreciates the Council's stewardship of the resources in reserve. Temptation to go after that money has ramifications for the town and for its AAA bond rating. Only four towns in CT have a AAA rating. Mr. Powell noted that by not dipping into the pool of money, saves money over time. The finance team has done a good job of explaining this. When he came to Tolland 22 years ago, foreign language was taught in elementary school, and it moved. There were more opportunities for advanced placement classes, and they have been lost, yet they are spending more on education. It is the other costs associated with education that are the drivers. Mr. Powell would like to have the programs but because the focus is on the numbers, they lose sight that it is not the dollars being spent, it is the programs and curriculum that make the difference. Mr. Powell cited the examples of the street sweeper and pavement management system and how without those, they realized the problems that resulted. At times, in the short term, what reduces, or does not increase the mill rates, and ends up costing more. Focusing on curriculum and programs rather than raw dollars is the goal. The power of a Tolland education can put people in space. It was not because of the money but because of programs, the curriculum, and the people involved. He would like the Council to fully support the referendum and encourage the vote. If this is the best case for all services, they need to push people to vote.

Jen Gallichant, 150 Timber Trail, commented as both the Vice Chair of the BOE and a parent. She thanked Ms. Stargardter, Mr. Moran, and Ms. Buckler for responding to her son's e-mail sent to the Council. Her son is a junior. She heard that most said they cared about education, and it was disappointing that not all the Councilors answered the e-mail. The BOE should not hold debt. The Council did not do the BOE a favor, it did the right thing. Education is a part of the community and the town. There were options to fund every department in town with a lower mill rate and keep funds healthy, but it did not happen. Ms. Gallichant commented that they are reducing eight positions and six of them have people in them. Decisions were made. She asked that they stand behind the decisions and move on.

Ms. Yudichak commented that she will fully support the budget.

Ms. Stargardter noted that she does and will support the budget. Supporting the budget is in the best interest of the town and addressing issues of debate during a previous meeting are not productive at this point. On May 7th she will vote "yes" and believes voting "yes" for this budget is in the best interest of the town. She promised that all seven Councilors considered the budget with a lot of effort. The final vote was not done lightly. They do not always agree, but they came together and there is a Town Council Budget that she supports. Ms. Stargardter hopes the rest of the Council will support the budget and on May 7th there is a successful referendum with a great turnout. It is in the best interest of the town for registered voters to consider the budget, what it means to them, what it means to the town, and to make their decision at the ballot box. A lot of deliberation and consideration went into the budget. She does not believe anyone is happy with every line but this is the outcome of compromise and working as a team. They found an agreement that the majority of the Councilors voted for. The Town Council's Budget is moving forward. The referendum will be on May 7th in the Library Program Room, 6AM-8PM.

6. Adjournment

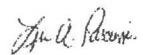
Mr. Marie motioned to adjourn at 8:22PM.

Ms. Buckler seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,



Lisa Pascuzzi
Town Council Clerk

Town Council Chair