

At the Regular Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of North Kingstown, County of Washington, and State of Rhode Island, held in and for said Town, County, and State this 17th day of July, 2023 at the Town Hall Council Chambers, 80 Boston Neck Road, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT WERE: Gregory A. Mancini, President
Katherine K. Anderson
Lawrence C. Mandel
Matthew B. McCoy
Dr. Kimberly Ann Page

ALSO PRESENT: A. Ralph Mollis, Town Manager
Jeannette Alyward, Town Clerk
Susan A. Murray, Deputy Town Clerk
Matthew F. Callaghan, Jr., Town Solicitor

An audio recording and video recording of this meeting was made to supplement the written record.

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of North Kingstown held on July 17, 2023 was called to order by President Mancini.

2. Notice of Meeting being posted

Pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42-46-6(c), notice of this meeting has been posted on the Secretary of State's Website.

3. Salute to Flag

President Mancini led those in attendance in a salute to the flag.

I. PUBLIC HEARING

4. Community Development Block Grant Program Year 2022 Application

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously

VOTED: To open the Public Hearing.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To close the Public Hearing.

Motion by Councilor McCoy, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To authorize A. Ralph Mollis, as the Chief Executive Officer, to file this application for a Small Cities Community Development Block Grant with the RI Department of Housing for Program Year 2022.

5. Second Reading – Amendment to Chapter 2, Article V, Division 3

Motion by Councilor McCoy, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To open the Public Hearing.

Rickey Thompson, 194 Plain Road, asked what the Energy Advisory Commission is as he was unaware that it existed. Town Manager Mollis responded that this commission was created in 2018; however, there have not been any appointments made as there was a staffing concern. He further stated that with the net metering program, he and staff have been doing what the intent of this commission is.

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To close the Public Hearing.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To adopt an Ordinance in Amendment of Chapter 2, Article V, entitled, “Boards, Commissions and Committees”, Division 3, entitled, “Energy Advisory Commission” of the Code of Ordinances, Town of North Kingstown, and that this shall constitute the Second Reading thereof.

Clerk’s note: This deletes this section from the Code of Ordinances.

6. Second Reading – Amendment to Chapter 2, Article V, Division 4

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To open the Public Hearing.

President Mancini stated that the Council had asked the Manager to update and streamline our boards and commissions and this is part of that process. We want to do this in an open and transparent way, and we have heard some feedback from the public. He thinks he can speak for the Council that we will not do anything to jeopardize, in any shape or form, our water protections as it is our obligation to make sure our community has safe drinking water.

Ahren Cohen read the following statement:

“I have resided at 400 Forge Road since a very cold, icy, and snowbound day in March 1987, which, if my math is correct, is for 36 years. It certainly is not cold, icy, or snowbound tonight.

I have served on numerous committees, commissions, and boards during these past years, and I am here tonight as a resident, and not as a member of the Groundwater Committee since 2010 and the Conservation Commission since 2013. Here is the spoiler alert, I am standing here tonight to ask you to approve the concept of incorporating the now discharged Groundwater Committee’s charge in Section 2-286(a) Duties (2, 9, 10, and 11) of the Ordinance. And, I would encourage you to continue this discussion and approval process for another one to two months while some critical elements of this combination of important functions are transparently discussed and evaluated. I believe the following should be reviewed in the areas of:

- Personnel who have served in both organizations.
- Skill sets needed to function effectively.
- How to manage the increase in activities with the same number of people, I would suggest that a new commission be sized at 9 for a start.
- Taking an inventory of all services being provided to date to start prioritizing what will and won’t be done.
- Education and outreach.
- Identifying outside partners who can provide specialized services when needed.
- Establish links to organizations with which the commission will be working including, DPW, RIDOT, HARBOR, CRMC, DEM, Land Trusts, and others.
- Review and decide on how best to incorporate a GIS platform which will reduce time and effort spent on repetitive activities and identifying opportunities to improve our protection of resources within the Town.
- Approach to manage forever chemicals in our water supply.
- Tree Council work.

I also want to let everyone know that by doing the above before any final approval that we will have done the homework which I strongly believe should have been done before the first hearing. We have people who have given of their time but were not involved and not asked what they think could/should be done. What they have offered our town has been more than beneficial. They need to be heard and we need to incorporate all views on how to move ahead effectively with a broad spectrum of advisory activity for the benefit of the Town.

Kathleen Guarino, 139 Summit View Lane, read the following statement:

“Tonight, the Town Manager, Water Department, and Planning Department are recommending that the Town Council dissolve the Groundwater Committee of which I have been a member for the past two years and consolidate the Groundwater Committee’s charge with the charge of the Conservation Commission. The stated reason for this change is efficiency in general and specifically efficiency in the use of town staff. I am speaking for myself tonight as a private citizen.

I am very concerned about the process leading to this decision in that nothing was discussed with either the Groundwater Committee members or the Conservation Commission members before bringing the recommendation to the Town Council about a month ago. The Groundwater Committee could not even discuss it at one of our meetings as the Town Manager and the Water Department agreed that our regular meeting should not be held in June and July. There was a serious lack of transparency. The question is why.

Whatever happens tonight I would hope that the Town Council, in the future, ensures that the work of the volunteer boards which are advisory in nature are treated with the respect they deserve. When such a board, commission or committee makes a recommendation to the Town, I expect that it will be taken seriously. I don’t want to hear, “Oh, they are only advisory”. In other words, we don’t have to pay any attention to what they say.

Because of the lack of respect for our boards and committees, it has been increasingly difficult to attract good, qualified members when there are openings. By the way, as an aside, increasing the mandatory scientific qualified members to the Conservation Commission from 3 to 4 is also before you tonight. That will only make it more difficult to fill openings. I don’t know the reason for that change.

It is very disheartening to work long and hard on an issue for months, make a recommendation only to have that recommendation ignored and be told their role is purely advisory. Why would anyone apply, let alone a scientist.

Now for the reasons the Groundwater Committee should not be discharged tonight:

1. Water has never been so important and that is only going to get worse given the pressures of development and climate change.
2. Our drinking water and drinking water nationwide has been contaminated by the “forever chemicals” PFAS, poly fluoroalkyl. Remediation is going to be wildly expensive as communities nearby are finding out.
3. Our public drinking water is routinely monitored and tested for PFAS by the Town. What about those families who are still using private wells? To what degree have they been educated as to the contamination by PFAS that may be in their drinking water? Who is educating them about the danger? Who is going to pay for testing and remediation if necessary? Do citizens even know that it is very important that their drinking water be tested?
4. Asking the Conservation Commission to take on all the issues of the Groundwater Committee at this time is a bad idea. The Conservation Commission has a lot on their plate already without taking on the enormous issue of groundwater.
5. Many North Kingstown residents are concerned about the impact of future development on our groundwater. I share their concern. Transparency between the Town and its residents is desperately needed on this and other issues.

Based on all of the above, I request that the Town Council take my concerns very seriously tonight. The decision that you make this evening will surely have long lasting repercussions.”

Motion by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To close the Public Hearing.

President Mancini stated that based on Mr. Cohen's comments, Ms. Guarino's comments, as well as other people who expressed concerns regarding this issue, he would suggest that we ask the administration to come back with a proposal of having the Groundwater Committee as a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission and provide recommendations of defined roles.

Councilor Page stated that she thinks that Mr. Cohen and Ms. Guarino certainly provided comments and opinions that were thoughtful and should be considered. This wasn't meant to be a hurried gesture in terms of changing the ordinance. One thing she thinks should be clarified is that the Town contacted people over two months ago who have private wells to let them know of potential PFAS issues and advised them of various options. She further stated that everyone wants to ensure that we have safe water and some of their suggestions are good.

Councilor Mandel stated that the Council has asked to have the Conservation Commission and Groundwater Committee weigh in on this issue and asked the Manager if there have been any conversations with these committees. Mr. Mollis stated that we have canvassed the Conservation Commission but not the Groundwater Committee. We have been asked to put together a thorough evaluation of all boards and commissions. Regarding transparency, we have talked about this for months at several meetings. At the same time, we were asked as the administration to do that work, we did not feel it was appropriate to turn to advisory committees to ask their opinions on consolidation. Councilor Mandel stated that he must have misunderstood as he believes that the Council did ask to discuss this with those boards. Mr. Mollis feels that asking staff and the administration to go to these committees to find out what their thoughts are on this consolidation is unfair, as they would most likely object and the Council will agree not to consolidate, now staff is going to have to staff these committees and be the bad guys. If the Council wishes to leave these committees as they are, we are totally fine with that. Some of the concerns that Ms. Guarino spoke about is a perfect example as some of those issues are not in the charge of the Groundwater Committee. The intent of their role has been education and not having to worry about PFAS issues, that is the staff and administrations responsibility. If we are not going to consolidate these committees, we are okay with that and we will continue to staff these committees.

Councilor Anderson stated that she is wondering if this has to be so binary that we either consolidate or we don't. She feels that Mr. Cohen brought up some valid points. If we consolidate, how do we do it and to strengthen and improve the charge of both committees the input and output of both is important. She thinks what she is hearing tonight is that the process matters. She understands there may be some feedback that runs counter to what staff may feel, but ultimately it is for the Council to weigh and to determine the best path forward. She further feels that we will be able to find some consensus and a path forward or at the very least have that open honest discussion that does honor the service the members of this committee have provided. This is not as easy as simply consolidating these committees as Mr. Cohen has expressed. There are so many points to consider, and we need to do our due diligence and do this right as these issues are too important. Everyone agrees we want people participating in our democracy and the best way to encourage that is through discussion even if sometimes we don't agree.

Mr. Mollis stated that he doesn't disagree with anything Councilor Anderson has said. The point is these groups are informative and helpful and they are advisory. As for the consensus that we are looking for, the most effective way to accomplish that is to have a joint meeting with the Council and the Groundwater Committee. However, staff has put together a report as directed and regrettably he thinks we may have tarnished the relationship with this group, which we can overcome. Now, for us to go to them and say, the Council wants to hear why you shouldn't be consolidated, they will tell us all the reasons why our report is wrong, then we will have to come back to the Council and relay those concerns and comments. Again, there might as well be a joint meeting that way the Council would hear it directly from them. Councilor Anderson stated that she would be open to having that meeting, the more people we bring to the table the better. She wants to be clear that her intention is not to critique the process that has happened so far, but to say we have this feedback and figure out how to move forward. She doesn't think we should say should we consolidate, yes or no, but rather say if we are going to move forward, what does that look like.

Mr. Mollis stated that Mr. Cohen's comments were eye opening, and we can take them and run with them. We had a meeting today and we don't consider the comments that have been

expressed are a critique of the report. Ironically, we are well aware that the report that we gave to the Council is advisory only and whatever the Council's direction is we will handle.

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Councilor Page asked President Mancini to clarify his suggestion of having the Groundwater Committee be a subcommittee to the Conservation Commission. President Mancini stated that he would like to make a couple of comments before he clarifies his suggestion. He doesn't think staff should feel like they are the bad guys in any way. Based on discussions by the Council, staff, comments from the public and committee members, he has learned that there seems to be overlap between these two committees and he would like to streamline that. He has also learned that there are people on the Groundwater Committee who want to participate in our democracy, and he has learned more about what their function was along the lines of education. He doesn't think staff should feel vilified in any way, but this is open and transparent government. This is a public debate. The Council did direct the administration to look at ways to streamline these committees which has brought us to this discussion and debate, which is a good thing. We will make decisions in collaboration with the citizens and the administration. We will support staff 110% but this is the process and is not something out of the ordinary. Having said that, his thought is that the Groundwater Committee should be a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission. He thinks we should superficially identify their functions.

Councilor McCoy stated that based on the information that has been provided, the Conservation Commission was formed as the result of legislation which was enacted in 1960 and the duties of the commission are outlined in RIGL 45-35-2. Mr. Mollis stated that is correct as well as in our Ordinances, which closely mirrors that statute. Councilor McCoy stated that tonight, part of the discussion was amending duties of the existing Conservation Commission and asked if this is something we can do without modifying existing RI General Laws. Ms. LaFontaine stated that our ordinances are not identical but follow what the state laws allow us to do.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to have the Manager and staff come back to the Council with proposed modifications based on the Council's discussion and comments of the public.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To table an amendment to Chapter 2, Article V, entitled, "Boards, Commissions and Committees", Division 4, entitled, "Conservation Commission" of the Code of Ordinances, Town of North Kingstown.

7. Second Reading – Amendment to Section 2-1, (1)a and b and (2)

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously

VOTED: To open the Public Hearing.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To close the Public Hearing.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To adopt an Ordinance in Amendment of Section 2-1 of the Code of Ordinances, Town of North Kingstown, entitled, "Competitive Bidding Required", (1)a and b, entitled, "Quotations" and (2), entitled, "Sealing Bidding", and that this shall constitute the Second Reading thereof.

8. Second Reading – Amendment to Chapter 15, Article IV

Motion by Councilor McCoy, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To open the Public Hearing.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To close the Public Hearing.
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Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To adopt an Ordinance in Amendment of Chapter 15, Article IV of the Code of Ordinances, Town of North Kingstown, entitled, "Police Officers' Disability Pensions", and that this shall constitute the Second Reading thereof.

9. Second Reading – Amendment to Section 21-362 and Section 21-363

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To open the Public Hearing.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To close the Public Hearing.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To approve an Ordinance in Amendment of Section 21-362 of the Code of Ordinances, Town of North Kingstown, entitled, "Zoning Map" and Section 21-363, entitled, "Assessor's Plats", and that this shall constitute the Second Reading thereof.

(70 Pleasant Valley Road, Plat 129, Lot 3 and 84 Pleasant Valley Road, Plat 129, Lot 9)

10. Public Comment

Richard Welch, 8 Arrow Lane, stated that on July 11, 2023, he sent an e-mail to Town Manager Mollis and the Town Council regarding the lack of progress on the Route 403 bridge and all the issues that it's causing for the trucking industry, school busses, and the fire trucks. He further stated that Town Manager Mollis was the only one that responded. The Council needs to do something to get this project done.

Susan Tash, 7 Stillman Road, Saunderstown, stated that she is in favor of Agenda Item Number 15, the award of contract for engineering services for the Saunderstown Village Water Main Replacement Project. She hopes the Council approves it.

Georgine Edwards, 24 Saunders Road, Saunderstown, stated that she is also in favor of Agenda Item Number 15.

Thor Johnson, 32 Stillman Road, Saunderstown, stated that he would like to thank the Council for Agenda Item Number 15 as well.

Curtis Fisher, 104 Phillips Street, stated that we have serious issues with the Town's water supply and now the Town has agreed to bail out Jamestown because they need to clean out the muck in the storage area. He stated that we are risking our water supply to help Jamestown for the second time. He feels that maybe Jamestown should improve their problems and not rely on us.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To approve Consent Agenda Item Numbers 11 through 26 with the exception of Agenda Item Numbers 11, 14, 15, and 19.

11. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor McCoy and unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 22, 2023 as submitted by the Office of the Town Clerk.

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Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 12, 2023 as submitted by the Office of the Town Clerk.

Councilor Page abstained as she was not present for the June 12, 2023 meeting.

12. Receipt of Donation

VOTED: To accept with gratitude the following donation in the amount of \$15.00:

For: Beechwood Senior Center
From: Anonymous \$15.00

13. Approval of Extension of Contract

VOTED: To approve a five (5) year extension to the contract between the Town of North Kingstown and GovOS for the Land Evidence Recording System as follows:

Year 1	\$37,200.00 per year (no increase)
Years 2-5	\$40,920.00 per year

Additional Services:

Archival of Images	PDF/A .03 per image
Archive Storage	\$500.00 per year
Internet	\$2.50 per page to print to consumer without subscription
	\$1.50 per page to print to consumer with subscription
	(Revenue split is 50/50 between Town and GovOS)

Funding is from Records Preservation - Account Number 10803010-560605.

14. Award of Sole Source Contract

Motion by Councilor McCoy, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To award a sole source contract for three (3) years for the Department of Water Supply for Satellite Leak Detection Survey and Acoustic Field Verification to Asterra, 4180 La Jolla Village Drive, Suite 530, La Jolla, CA 92037, in the amount of \$59,000.00 per year.

Funding is from Water Main Repairs Account Number 44040030-540507.

15. Award of Contract

Motion by Councilor McCoy, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To award a Contract for the Department of Water Supply for Engineering Services for the Saunderstown Village Water Main Replacement Project to Pare Corporation, 8 Blackstone Valley Place, Lincoln, RI 02865, in the amount of \$130,800.00.

Funding for this project is from Water Service and Improvements Account 44040090-550701 - FY2024 - \$69,000 and FY2025 - \$61,800.

16. Authorization to enter into Agreements with Rhode Island Energy

VOTED: To authorize the Town Manager to enter into Agreements with Rhode Island Energy for On-Bill Repayment Programs to convert lighting to LED at McGinn Park and Ryan Park in the amounts as follows:

McGinn Park	\$2,803.74 per month for 60 months	Total Cost of Project \$168,224.20
Ryan Park	\$2,254.82 per month for 60 months	Total Cost of Project \$135,289.30

Funding for this project will be Year 1 - ARPA, Year 2 - ARPA and Budgeted Utility Accounts, Years 3-5 - Budgeted Utility Accounts.

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17. Ratification of Town Manager’s Approval

VOTED: To ratify the Town Manager's approval of retaining Epiq a Credit Monitoring Service/Identity Protection Company.

Funding is from the Insurance Deductible Account.

18. Ratification of Town Manager’s Approval

VOTED: To ratify the Town Manager's approval of retaining Rasky Partners, Inc., 14 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108, as a strategic communication firm relative to the April 22, 2023 cyber attack, in the amount of \$15,000.00.

Funding is from the Insurance Deductible Account.

19. Authorization for the Town Manager to execute a Construction and Maintenance Agreement

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the Town Manager to execute a Construction and Maintenance Agreement with the RI Department of Transportation regarding work associated with constructing curbing and sidewalks on Post Road between Camp Avenue and West Main Street and continuing on West Main Street to Brown Street.

20. Acceptance of a Rhode Island House of Representatives Legislative Grant

VOTED: To accept on behalf of the North Kingstown Police Department a Rhode Island House of Representatives Legislative Grant in the amount of \$2,000.00 to be used for four (4) officers to attend a Law Enforcement Active De-escalation Strategies (LEADS) Instructor Training.

21. Acceptance of a Rhode Island House of Representatives Legislative Grant

VOTED: To accept on behalf of the North Kingstown Police Department a Rhode Island House of Representatives Legislative Grant in the amount of \$2,500.00 to be used for three (3) officers to attend “Triple Cert” Instructor Training.

22. Class F Alcoholic Beverage License

VOTED: To approve the application for a Class F Alcoholic Beverage License by St. Paul’s Church, 55 Main Street, to hold a fundraiser benefitting the church on Saturday, December 9, 2023, from 3:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., subject to taxes and water paid to date.

23. Entertainment License (new)

VOTED: To approve the application for an Entertainment License by West Bay Community Theater, 25 Preston Drive, to hold an outdoor musical theater production on the grounds of the North Kingstown Town Beach Campus and bandshell on Saturday, August 12, 2023 (rain date Sunday, August 13, 2023), at 8:00 p.m., subject to taxes and water paid to date and compliance with the recommendations of the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Building Official, and the Planning Department.

24. Holiday Sales License (transfer)

VOTED: To approve the application for transfer of a Holiday Sales License from Off the Vine, LLC, dba Impressed Olive 1, 99 Brown Street, to Sun on Brown LLC, dba The Impressed Olive, 99 Brown Street, subject to taxes and water paid to date, receipt of a copy of their Rhode Island

Retail Sales Tax Permit, and compliance with the recommendations of the Fire Marshall and the Building Official.

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25. Holiday Sales License Renewals

VOTE: To approve to July 1, 2024 the following list of Holiday Sales License Renewals subject to taxes and water paid to date:

Business Name	DBA	Location of Business	Phone	Hours
Quaker Lane Bait & Tackle LTD		4019 Quaker Lane	294-9642	5:00 am- 7:30 pm
Cheryl A Fonseca	Pink Parasol Boutique	24 Brown Street	640-4539	10:00 am- 5:00 pm
Wasay Mini Mart LLC	Yorktown Market	6769 Post Road	569-0271	6:00 am- 12:00 am

All taxes/water assessments have been paid to date K O'Neill Collection Dept.

Date 7/11/23

26. Victualling License (new)

VOTED: To approve to December 1, 2023 the application for a Victualling License by Chipotle Mexican Grill of Colorado LLC, dba Chipotle Mexican Grill #3998, 118 Gate Road, subject to taxes and water paid to date; receipt of a Department of Health Certificate; receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy; receipt of a copy of their Rhode Island Retail Sales Tax Permit; and compliance with the recommendations of the Fire Marshall, the Police Department, the Planning Department, and the Building Official.

III. REPORTS

27. Report by the Town Manager

Town Manager Mollis gave the following report:

- IT Director Mike Forlingieri convened an ITAC Meeting on June 28th. It was a productive meeting where our current IT-related policies were discussed. It was recommended that we update our policies, which our IT Department is in the process of revising. This will be discussed at the next ITAC meeting this week, on July 19th. Our IT Department also brought ITAC up to speed on our April Cyber Incident.

The upcoming July 19th meeting will consist of a full Agenda where they will review our draft of revised policies, discuss outsourcing our GIS to bring the database up to modern standards, and further update and have discussion on our Cyber Incident.

- The R.I. Airport Corporation will be holding a virtual public information session for those communities who are home to an airport, as we are here in North Kingstown, this Wednesday, July 19th at 12pm. Session information can be found on the R.I. Airport Corporation's website as well as the Secretary of State's Open Meetings portion of their website.
- Due to a printing error with our vendor, real estate tax bills went out slightly later than scheduled this year. As a result, we have extended the due date for individuals to pay their real estate tax bills to August 15th in order to avoid interest and penalties. As a physical bill is not necessary to pay online, please feel free to utilize our website to access our payment portal.
- Some information on our Fire Department Apparatus --- Ladder 2 has been in for repairs and we expect to have repairs complete within 2 weeks; Engine 3 is currently out of service as it had a radiator failure, and the new radiator is on order; our new Engine 5 is targeted to be received early September; and our new Rescue 3 delivery is approximately 18 months out.

Also, our North Kingstown Fire Department received two apparatus awards as part of a National Antique Fire Truck Society event among antique fire apparatus from as far south as North Carolina and as far north as Canada. The first award was a plaque for the best hand or horse drawn fire apparatus. The second award was a Certificate of Recognition for our commitment to the restoration and maintenance of our "Washington HandTub". Chief Kettelle and Retired Fire Marshall Gordon Walsh were on hand to accept the awards. The "Washington HandTub" was purchased by the Wickford Fire Engine Company in 1885. A group of current and retired firefighters completed the restoration efforts for the Fire Department's 100th anniversary in 2017. It is currently housed at Callahan Road and is displayed during parades and other events within the community.

In other Fire Department-related news----while we have installed AEDs throughout our Parks and Playgrounds, we are still waiting for delivery on additional AEDs to implement our 4 Minute City Program and we are working on a program and quotes for the possibility of having Narcan Kits installed within the town's AED units. I will keep you up to date.

- Tonight, the Town Council approved my signing of a Construction & Maintenance Agreement as we move closer towards the construction of the Post Road/West Main Street Sidewalk Project. It is expected that DOT will finish the final design and field activities this Fall. They then anticipate a bidding process in early 2024 with construction most likely beginning in early 2025 with an anticipated completion date in late 2025 or early 2026. While that may sound like a long way off, late 2025 is just over 24 months away.

We've also discussed the proposed Wickford Roundabout with RIDOT. We are receiving some concerns from local businesses, public safety, RIDOT, and internally regarding this project. It should be noted that this project will require detours where the southern portion of Brown Street would be closed to thru traffic for 1 – 3 months next summer. We are discussing this project in more detail with RIDOT, and I expect I will be back before the Council at an upcoming meeting to further discuss this project with you.

And finally, Mayors and Managers had a meeting with the Governor's Office and RIDOT last week to discuss the State's Matching Paving Program. We expect 50% match on our paving, which could add an additional \$350,000 of paving work in our town, and we will be further discussing and applying for this money shortly.

- An update on the Middle School Project --- the Building Subcommittee met last week. It appears the Quidnessett site has been tabled for now. The Building Subcommittee provided a recommendation to the School Committee that they instruct the Architects and Project Manager to proceed with necessary testing for possible schools at the current Wickford Middle School site and Davisville Middle School site. The School Committee, at their Tuesday meeting, did not agree with the recommendation of the Building Committee and proceeded with approving testing at the Davisville Middle School site only, which would result in one Middle School.

It should be noted that the Town would need to turn over its fields at McGinn Park to the School Department for this project to be feasible. While I feel, as Co-Chair of the Subcommittee, that there are many disadvantages to the Town and students in having one large, non-centrally located Middle School in town, if Davisville Middle School becomes the recommendation as the site for one large Middle School, the Town will come up with a plan to replace these frequently utilized fields at McGinn.

It should be noted that I had shared an e-mail from Mario Carreno of RIDE with the School Department where he noted that two new, 600 student, Middle Schools at the two

existing Davisville and Wickford sites would be approximately 103,000 square feet by RIDE standards and would fit in within the Bond's Budget. This would avoid the transportation issues of one non-centrally located Middle School, avoid RIDE's regulations of limiting – and reducing - our Middle School students' extracurricular opportunities to one school, and would assist in maintaining our small town atmosphere by the avoidance of a 1,200 student Middle School.

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It should also be noted that if we were to proceed with one large Middle School at the Davisville Middle School site, the School Department would need to advise on its plans for what would be the closed Wickford Middle School site as well as it's redistricting plans. It should be further noted that, in compliance with State Law, the State Housing Director will review and consider any abandoned School Buildings for potential affordable housing.

Finally, in order to have a November Bond Referendum, the Town Council would most likely need to vote on scheduling the election at your August meeting.

And the Subcommittee will be discussing this further at our July 26th meeting.

It would be helpful if the Town Council had any input, direction, or questions after the conclusion of my Manager's Report.

- An update on Eve Clulow and 55 Brown Street --- at our last meeting we decided to have Eve come to your August meeting to provide an update on some of the challenges she is facing and potentially request an extension on the Amended Agreement. Eve reached out to me this weekend to let me know that her architect has redesigned her project which would eliminate additions to the building while still allowing for sufficient seating and theater capacity. They are putting the project out to bid with the hope that the construction costs will now be much less than anticipated. She is expecting to have the figures and a more concrete plan in August. At my request, subject to the Town Council's consideration, I asked that she put together a revised plan, contact me in August, and plan to appear before the Town Council with a comprehensive update at your September 11th meeting.
- And I hope everyone enjoyed our 4th of July Festivities. I want to thank our Recreation Director, Chelsey Dumas-Gibbs on organizing a great event with record setting food trucks and our Harbormaster for his work in having the barge moved closer for an excellent display. Also, our Police and Fire Departments for great work in public assistance, traffic control, and crowd control. The result was a great display and one of the largest crowds in recent memory.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

28. Resolution Discharging the Groundwater Committee (continued from June 12, 2023)

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To table a Resolution Discharging the Groundwater Committee.

V. NEW BUSINESS

29. Authorization to Install, Operate, and Maintain a Tide Gage at Brown Street

Motion by Councilor Anderson, seconded by President Mancini and was

VOTED: To continue to the Regular Meeting in August the authorization to install, operate, and maintain a Tide Gage at Brown Street to investigate if the data from the device at Quonset could be utilized in Wickford.

Councilor Page	-	Yes
Councilor McCoy	-	No
Councilor Anderson	-	Yes
President Mancini	-	Yes

30. Authorization to Investigate Nomination for Additional Rights-of-Way to Tidal Waters

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously

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VOTED: That the Town Council authorizes the Town to investigate potential nomination of the following two (2) rights-of-way (ROW) to the Coastal Resources Management Council for designation as public rights-of-way to the tidal waters of Rhode Island:

1. Town Beach
2. Mill Cove Causeway

31. Amendment to the Town Council Meeting Schedule

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To amend the Town Council Meeting Schedule for 2023 as follows:

- Change the Regular Meeting of August 21, 2023 to Wednesday, August 16, 2023

32. Correspondence

E-mails from:

- 06/13/2023 – Holly Quinn: NKSC Presentation.
- 06/13/2023 – Tom Walek: Concern about abandoned property.
- 06/14/2023 – Alison Thorsen: Middle School Project.
- 06/14/2023 – Holly Quinn: NKSC Presentation.
- 06/15/2023 – Glenna Stolzberg: Middle School Project, architect fees, bonds.
- 06/18/2023 – John Machata: Ryan Park Plan.
- 06/19/2023 – Donna Hutchinson: Future tax increases.
- 06/22/2023 – Kathleen Guarino: June Meeting & Groundwater Committee.
- 06/23/2023 – Kara Martone: Middle School Project.
- 06/26/2023 – Heather Murphy: Middle School Project.
- 06/26/2023 – Victoria Bennett: Middle School Project.
- 06/26/2023 – Megan Reilly: 03/01/2023 NKSC Building Subcommittee Meeting.
- 06/26/2023 – Peter Lussier: Middle School Project.
- 06/26/2023 – Robert Jones: NKSC Capital Request.
- 06/28/2023 – John Machata: Ryan Park.
- 07/04/2023 – Alex Cesaro: Aaron Thomas Fat Testing.
- 07/07/2023 – Bevin Winner: Thank You!
- 07/11/2023, 07/12/2023, and 07/13/2023 – Richard Welch: Bridge over Route 403.
- 07/13/2023 – Bill Seymour: Media Inquiry – Middle School Project.
- 07/14/2023 – Kathleen Guarino: Groundwater Committee.
- 07/14/2023 – David Wrenn: Groundwater Committee.
- 07/14/2023 – Heather Murphy: Bond for new middle school.
- 07/16/2023 – Janice McAleer: Groundwater Committee.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Jeannette Alyward
Town Clerk