

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 26th day of February, 2024 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
James M. Callaghan, 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 February 26, 2024 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.

The Council took Item Number 5 next.

I. SPECIAL BUSINESS

5. Presentation by Marcum, LLP and receive and file the Annual Audit Report

Kyle Connors of Marcum, LLP gave the following presentation:



**Town of North Kingstown
2023 Financial Statements**

February 26, 2024 | Presented by: Kyle Connors, CPA

MARCUM
ACCOUNTANTS • ADVISORS

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Introduction

- 01 Presentation will review the Town's 2023 financial statement audit results
- 02 Feel free to ask questions at any time

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01210001

Town General Fund

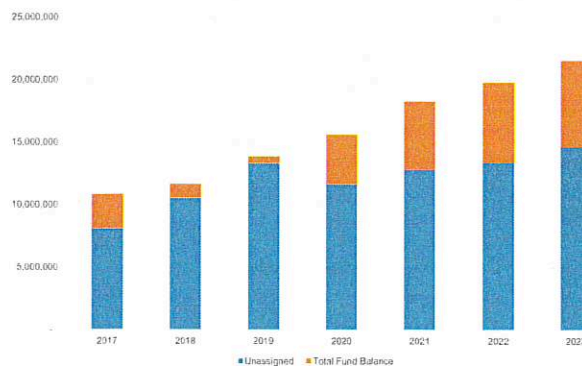
- Total Fund Balance increased by \$1.7 million
- Unassigned Fund Balance = \$14.7 million
- Unassigned Fund Balance represents 14.4% of Operating Budget
- Current level is within healthy target of 8-16% of budgeted expenditures

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01210001

Fund Balance: Last Seven Years



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01210001

Results of Operations

- Revenues were above budget by \$1.35 million
- Property taxes \$2.1 million below what was anticipated
 - Motor vehicle budgeted for locally but not assessed locally – State revenue covered MV excise
- Intergovernmental revenue \$2.5 million above what was budgeted
- Investment income \$855 thousand above budget
- Tax collection percentages:
 - *98.9% collection of current year assessment*

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01/21/2024

Results of Operations (Continued)

- Expenditures were \$229 thousand below appropriated amounts
- Favorable results in these areas:
 - *Town clerk and elections*
 - *Public Works*
- Unfavorable results in these areas:
 - Finance
 - Information Systems
 - Fire

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01/21/2024

School Department

- Unrestricted fund ended year with assigned fund balance of \$5.9 million which is 8.0% of operating budget
 - \$963 thousand earmarked at year end for encumbrances
- Fund balance decreased in current year by \$1.0 million
- Revenue was favorable compared to the budget by \$423 thousand
 - Predominately due to investment earnings

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01/21/2024

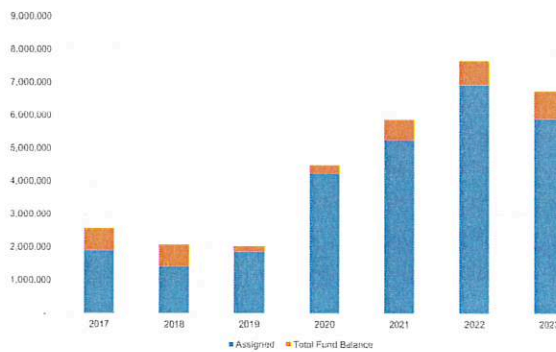
School Department (Continued)

- Expenditures were \$276 thousand above appropriations
 - Favorable variance in fringe of \$1.0 million offset but unfavorable variances split amongst salaries, professional services, supplies / materials and capital outlay
- School expended \$1.5 million in Federal ESSER funds that were new in 2023
- School Lunch Fund recognized net decrease in net position of \$121 thousand for a total of \$2.0 million

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School Department Fund Balance: Last Seven Years



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Water Department

- Operating revenues amounted to \$4.9 million, an increase from prior year revenue of \$4.2 million
- Operating expenses were \$3.2 million, an increase from prior year amount of \$3.0 million
- Operating income of \$1.7 million in 2023 compared to \$1.3 million operating income in 2022
- Fund has net position of \$16.7 million – with a net position of \$8.7 million unrestricted for operational use

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Sewer Department

- Operating revenues amounted to \$1.6 million, consistent with prior year revenue of \$1.6 million
- Operating expenses were \$1.2 million, a decrease from prior year amount of \$1.5 million
- Operating income of \$434 thousand in 2023 compared to \$100 thousand operating income in 2022
- Fund has net position of \$288 thousand

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01/12/2024

Town Pension Plans

- Plans are administered through the State of Rhode Island
 - MERS General Employee Plan funded at 80.67%
 - MERS Fire Plan funded at 80.33%
 - MERS Police Plan funded at 79.96%
 - Teachers Retirement Plan funded at 62.10%
- The Town has made all required contributions to these plans as prescribed by the State dating back to 2014 (introduction of GASB 68).
- Total State Plan Net Pension Liability reported in the 2023 financial statements totals \$80.0 million

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01/12/2024

Other Post-Employment Benefits

- Town plan funded at 17.2% with a total net OPEB liability of \$13.2 million
 - Context – plan was funded at June 30, 2022 at 11.0%, up 6.2% from prior fiscal year due to net investment activity and actuarial assumptions
 - Plan was funded at 4.3% in 2018

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01/12/2024

Recommendations / Other

- Continue to develop month end and year end checklists to ensure all balance sheet items are reconciled to source documentation – specifically as it relates to Sewer Assessment receivables
- Continue cybersecurity training on an annual basis – recommending performing vulnerability testing proactively.

Uniform Guidance

- In accordance with Uniform Guidance we are required to select a certain percentage of Federal dollars for compliance testing. Process is still underway – likely programs will include:
 - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
 - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER)

Questions?





Thank You!

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ACCOUNTANTS • ADVISORS

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President Mancini thanked Mr. Connors for the thorough presentation.

Councilor Mandel stated that it appears from this report that the Town is in excellent financial shape and asked Mr. Connors if that is an accurate statement, Mr. Connors replied yes.

Councilor Mandel asked why the Water Department's revenues have increased quite a bit. Mr. Connors stated that it is because of an increase in the rates.

Councilor Mandel stated that the report is impressive and timely.

Councilor McCoy stated that the unfavorable results in Information Systems was as a result of the cyber-attack, Mr. Connors stated that is correct. Councilor McCoy asked if the unfavorable results in Finance was because of personnel changes. Mr. Connors said yes, as well as some severage that was paid out. Councilor McCoy asked why the Fire Department had an unfavorable result. Mr. Connors stated that he believes it was because of overtime.

President Mancini stated that he thought the Sewer Department was running in a deficit; however, from the audit it appears it is not. Mr. Mollis stated that from an annual structural basis, the Sewer Department is running at an operating deficit; however, from an audit procedure, it is assessed based on the assets, so the overall net balance is favorable. Mr. Connors stated that is a correct assessment. Mr. Mollis stated that the revenues were greater than the expenses for FY2023, but he is still concerned. Mr. Connors stated that there is still \$1.3 million that was advanced from the General Fund. In answer to President Mancini's question if Mr. Mollis expects to make an adjustment in the assessment charges, Mr. Mollis replied no, but it is something we will be assessing over the next several years. The upcoming budget will most likely project a deficit, but because we anticipate having additional users coming online, we hope that as new assessments come on that will offset that number. This is something we will be assessing on a regular basis.

President Mancini thanked Mr. Connors for his presentation.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously




VOTED: To receive and file the Annual Audit Report for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2023.

6. Presentation of Wickford Village Parking Study Final Report

John Shevlin and Annelise Boylan from PARE Corporation gave the following presentation on the recently completed Wickford Village Parking Study Final Report:

**WICKFORD VILLAGE
PARKING STUDY
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**
FEBRUARY 26, 2024

PREPARED BY
PARE CORPORATION
FOR THE
TOWN OF NORTH KINGSTOWN, RI



Introduction




John P. Shevlin, P.E.
jshevlin@parecorp.com
401-334-4100



Annelise C. Boylan, EIT
aboylan@parecorp.com
401-334-4100



Overview



- Purpose
- Project Goals
- Project Approach
- Existing Conditions
- Parking Conditions Analysis
- Public Comments
- Future Conditions
- **Recommendations**



Purpose & Project Goals

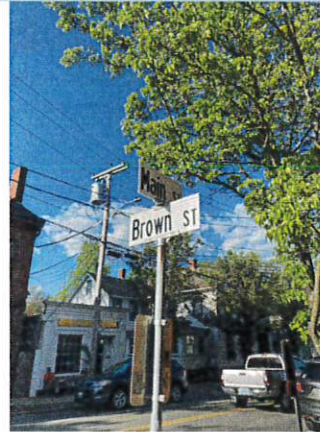


Purpose

- To perform an evaluation of parking within Wickford Village.
- To understand the current parking conditions as a foundation for the future planning, design and operations of parking facilities for the Town of North Kingstown.

Project Goals

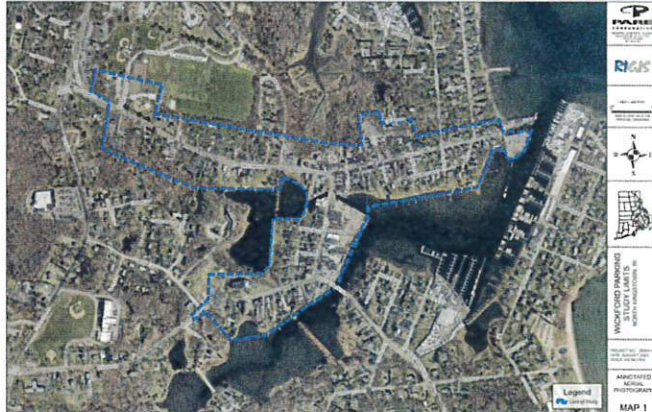
- To assesses the current and future parking needs within the Village
- To select recommendation strategies that are:
 - Safe
 - Convenient
 - Consider future demands
 - Encourage community reinvestment
 - Create a vibrant environment
 - Preserve the character
 - Provide parking strategies



Study Area



- Main Street from Brown Street to North Kingstown Town Wharf
- West Main Street between Roosevelt Avenue and Brown Street
- Brown Street between Phillips Street and Main Street
- Phillips Street between Boone Street and the Clarence L. Hussey Bridge
- Elam Street
- Franklin Street
- Spink Street
- Gold Street
- Wall Street
- Fountain Street
- Bay Street
- Washington Street
- The North Kingstown Town Wharf parking lot
- The Wilson Park parking lot
- The Brown Street municipal lot

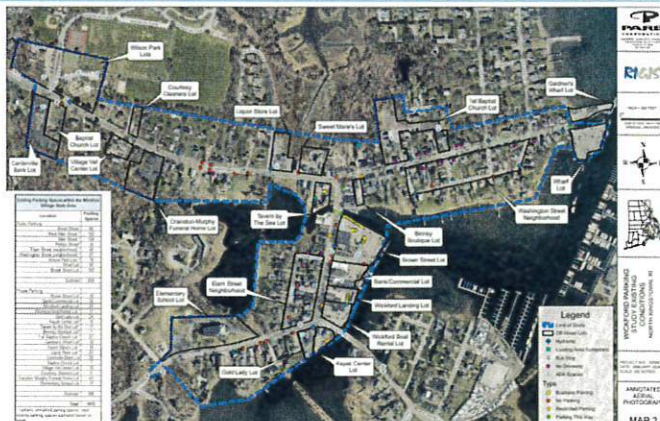


Existing Conditions



An assessment of existing conditions identified:

- Available commercial parking spaces.
- ADA parking spaces.
- Residents lacking driveways.
- Hydrants
- Bus stops
- Loading areas/dumpsters
- Signage related to parking.
 - No parking
 - Restricted parking
 - "Parking" arrows
 - Business Parking



Existing Conditions



The assessment also reviewed:

- Zoning to establish parking needs.
- The existing transportation network.
 - Roadways
 - Bikes
 - Transit
 - Pedestrians
- Vehicular crash data for Brown Street

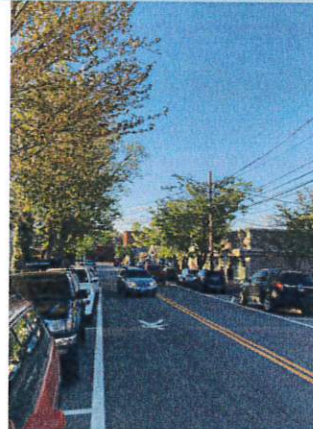


Parking Conditions Analysis



Spring Data

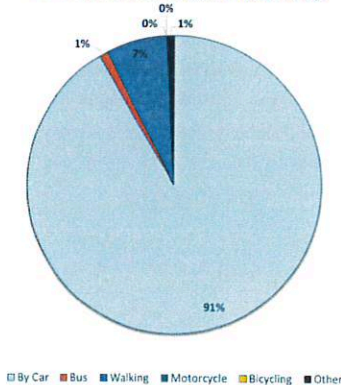
- Spring survey data (March-May)
 - 104 responses from patrons of the Village
- Spring interview data
 - Weekday interviews Thursday (May 4th) – 48 patrons
 - Weekend interviews Saturday (May 6th) – 93 patrons
- Spring parking turnover data collection was captured during the peak times of day
 - Data was collected on Thursday (May 4th)
 - Afternoon - 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 - Late-afternoon - 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
 - Data was collected on Saturday (May 6th)
 - Afternoon - 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 - Evening - 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.



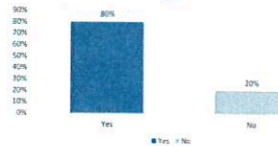
Spring Parking Conditions Analysis Survey Data



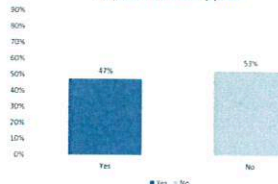
How did you come to Wickford Village today?



Do you know about the three (3) town owned parking lots in Wickford? The three (3) lots include: the Brown Street lot, the Wilson Park lot, and the Town Wharf lot?




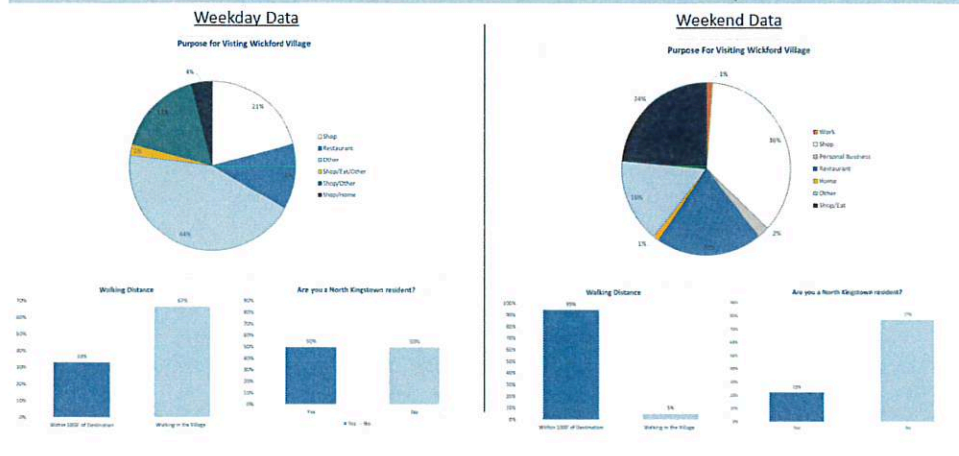
Do you use these three (3) lots?



Spring Parking Conditions Analysis


Interview Data



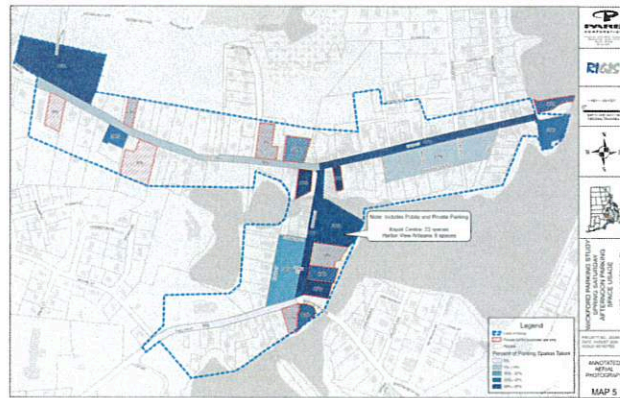


Spring Parking Conditions Analysis


Parking Turnover Data



The highest demand was observed during Saturday Afternoon

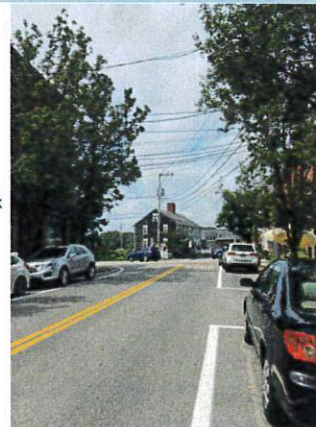


Parking Conditions Analysis




Summer Data

- Summer survey data (June- Sept.)
 - 147 responses from patrons of the Village
- Summer interview data
 - Weekday interviews Thursday (July 20th) – 75 patrons
 - Weekend interviews Saturday (July 22nd) – 61 patrons
- Summer parking turnover data collection was captured during the peak times of day
 - Data was collected on Thursday (July 20th)
 - Afternoon - 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 - Late-afternoon - 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
 - Data was collected on Saturday (July 15th)
 - Afternoon - 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 - Evening - 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

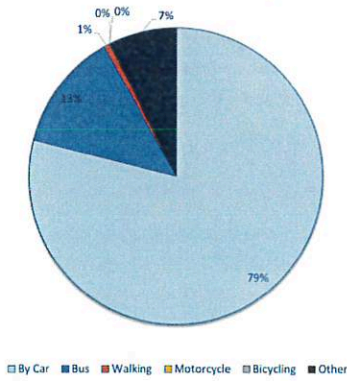


Summer Parking Conditions Analysis

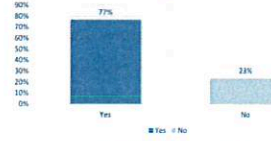
Survey Data



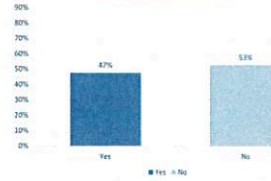
How did you come to Wickford Village today?



Do you know about the three (3) town owned parking lots in Wickford? The three (3) lots include: the Brown Street lot, the Wilson Park lot, and the Town Wharf lot?




Do you use these three (3) lots?



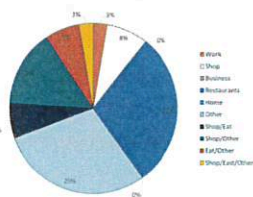
Summer Parking Conditions Analysis

Interview Data

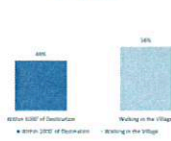


Weekday Data

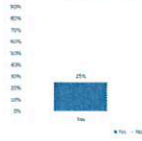
Purpose for Visiting Wickford Village



Walking Distance

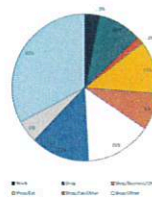


Are you a North Kingstown resident?

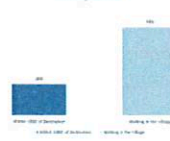


Weekend Data

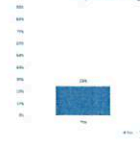
Purpose for Visiting Wickford Village



Walking Distance




Are you a North Kingstown resident?



Summer Parking Conditions Analysis

Parking Turnover Data



The highest demand was observed during Saturday Afternoon



Public Comments



Pare collected public comments during the following phases:

- Spring Surveys
 - Surveys within Village businesses
 - Online survey option
- Summer Surveys
 - Surveys within Village businesses
 - Online survey option
- Public engagement meeting,
 - Online feedback forms
 - Select resident mailers
 - Guided feedback and in-person discussions.

The community feedback varied as topics included **pedestrian safety, emergency access, signage, parking convenience** and future improvements that could be implemented.

Future Conditions



- By 2025, there will be a loss of **14 parking spaces** due to future roadway and parking lot improvements.
 - This will reduce the available parking inventory to 1,001 parking spaces.
- Based on the **9 available buildings**, two parking projections scenarios were completed.
 - **Scenario 1:** resulted in 209 future parking spaces are needed based on historic land use or identified land use for future demand.
 - **Scenario 2:** resulted in 621 future parking spaces are needed based on highest parking demand land use for future demand.




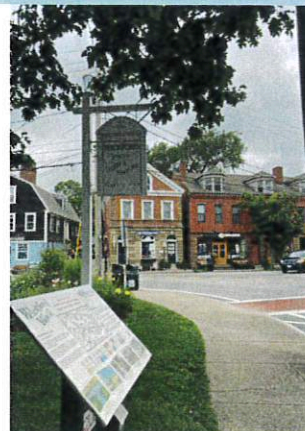
Recommendations



There is a perception by some of parking inadequacies in Wickford Village; however, investigations revealed that the shortage of parking is only associated with **particular times of day** and **specific situations**.

High demands can be managed by implementing the following recommended **parking management** and **physical parking strategies**:

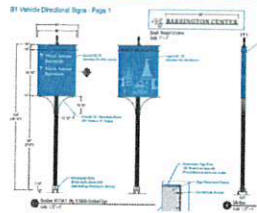
- 
Parking management solutions
 - Improved management will provide more benefits than additional parking inventory, since parking inventory is currently available.
 - Better access to the existing parking inventory will be cost effective and compatible with Wickford Village's parking goals.
- 
Additional parking inventory may be required under certain scenarios, dependent on future land use.
- 
Improvements to visitor signage and public awareness for resources such as parking, walking, and biking options
- 
Implement recommendations with special care to preserve the historic character of Wickford Village.



Recommendations Short-term parking management strategies

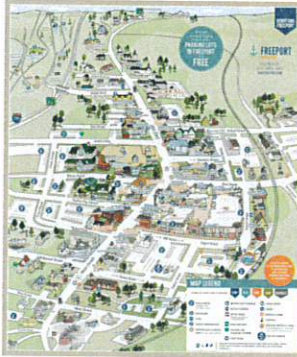


Wayfinding signage



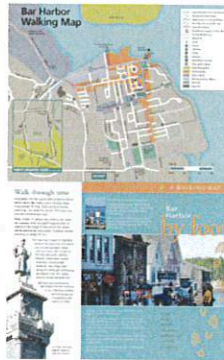
Source: Barrington, Rhode Island wayfinding signage
(https://www.barringtonri.gov/2016/06/06/wayfinding-signage/)

Parking public awareness campaign



Source: Freeport Maine Map (https://www.visitmaine.com/)

Walkway network campaign

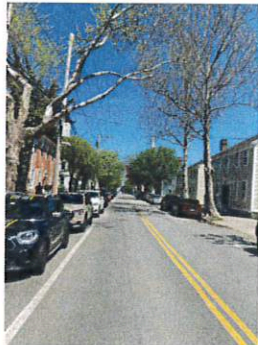


Source: Bar Harbor Maine Walking Map
(http://www.visitmaine.com/content/assets/01_46/016/016007_08_000_001)

Recommendations Short-term physical parking strategies



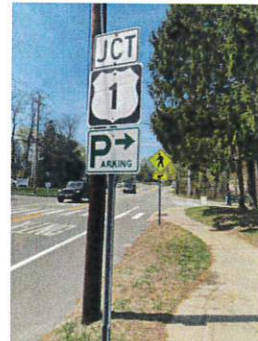
Loading areas for Main Street and Brown Street



Pavement marking updates for Main Street and Wharf lot



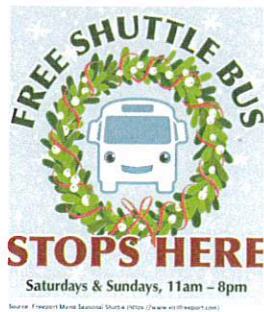
Sidewalk improvements on West Main Street to Wilson Park



Recommendations Long-term parking management strategies



Seasonal shuttle service



Source: Freeport Maine Seasonal Shuttle (https://www.visitmaine.com/)

Zoning code updates for parking regulations



Multi-modal options for bicycle or ferry services



Recommendations

Long-term physical parking strategies



Bike lane from Wilson Park to Brown Street



Future parking expansions on Boone Street and at the Library



Sidewalk and bus shelter improvements for Phillips Street



Next Steps



- The Town should work with local committees to develop a plan for future improvements for Wickford Village's parking as outlined in the recommendations table.
- Use the **strategy implementation guidance worksheet** on selected recommendations.
 - Identify action
 - Identify strategy leader
 - Create timeline
 - Breakdown strategy tasks

WICKFORD VILLAGE PARKING STUDY Strategy Implementation Worksheet

VISION:
How do you see the strategy the Town wishes to implement that creates a desirable future?

STRATEGY LEADER:
Which member of your organization will manage the implementation of this strategy?

DETAILED TIMELINE:
When will you start working on specific activities to implement the strategy?

IMPLEMENTATION TASKS:
The following information needs to be completed and shared with the public about the strategy implementation.

Description	Start Date	Priority	Timeline	Resource

RESOURCES/STAFFING:
What resources are needed to fund your plan (including the major needed address)?



Nicole LaFontaine, Director of Planning and Development thanked PARE Corporation for their efforts in putting together this report which is easy to understand and utilize. Some of the easy first step things we want to continue to work on that can be quickly achievable are wayfinding signs, evaluate an enforcement strategy for what we have in place, and timing of the installation of sidewalks on West Main Street and restriping.

President Mancini stated that it seems like this report has provided some good data and a good number of responses to the survey. He asked what PARE has done in other areas and he feels this data is a good benchmark in comparison. Mr. Shevlin stated that the data and feedback was more than what we have seen in other communities.

Councilor Anderson stated that as she reviews the recommendations and listens to the presentation, by implementing some of the recommendations we may be able to attract more businesses as well as take into account the resident feedback. She appreciates the report which gives the Council some tools to work with.

Councilor Mandel thanked PARE for their report. He further stated that the large takeaway from the report is that we have more parking spots than what is required, and we are in good shape. He asked that if by restriping parking lots/spots, would we be able to gain more spaces. Ms. Boylan stated yes.

Councilor Page asked how they surveyed people who do not live here. Ms. Boylan stated that many filled out the paper surveys, and during the study we were on site and interviewed people. Councilor Page stated that she found the report to be very informative and helpful.

In answer to President Mancini's question if using a parking app like other communities' use would be helpful, Ms. Boylan stated yes, however there would be a cost to that.

President Mancini asked if the Town Hall Parking Lot and the Library lot were included in the study areas. Ms. Boylan stated no they were not.

Mr. Mollis stated that the Planning Department will be reviewing the report and coming back to the Council with recommendations.

President Mancini thanked Mr. Shevlin and Ms. Boylan for their very informative presentation.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To receive and file the Wickford Village Parking Study Final Report prepared by PARE Corporation.

The Council took Item Number 4 next.

4. Public Comment

Mary Ann Hackett, 83 West Main Street, stated that the Wickford Village Parking Study stated that there are 102 parking spaces on West Main Street. She doesn't see how that can be. She stated that you can park on the South side of the road by her house but not on the North side. The North side is much wider, and cars fit in there beautifully. She hopes they will repaint the lines on the road by her house and the three houses up from her. She also stated that the HistWick commission had a Wickford in Bloom Garden Tour last summer and they had over 1,000 people on a weekend in June. There were no complaints at all about parking in Wickford.

Mike Donohue, 141 West Main Street, read the following statement:

"Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this evening regarding the recently completed Wickford Village Parking Study.

It is important to start by recognizing that the original request in 2019 for the parking study was made by HistWick on behalf of a resident of Main Street, one of the fourteen homes in the village who do not have off street parking on their property. These are homes built in the mid to late 18th century, long before parking was ever considered part of a town planning process. The concentration of historic homes in our village is one of the major draws for visitors coming to Wickford. Their needs should have been considered in this study.

The report states that there are 629 'public' parking spaces and 396 private parking spaces in the study area which includes Brown Street, all of Main, most of West Main, part of Phillips Street and many of the surrounding smaller streets. A total of 1015 'marked and unmarked' spaces, the 'unmarked spaces estimated based on available length'. It notes that current Zoning Ordinances call for a minimum parking space requirement of 936 parking spaces for current businesses, and states that soon we will lose fourteen of those spaces for roadway and parking lot improvements. It further says that there are nine vacant or soon to be developed businesses and that there will be further demand for between 209 and 621 future parking spaces depending on how those businesses will be developed.

At least five of those businesses are already in use or will be starting operations in the next few months, The Cheese Shop, Dollar Tree, The Oyster Bar and the two new restaurants on West Main. And Wickford on the Water's second floor expansion is approved and is never mentioned in the report. A minimum requirement of fifty-five parking spaces is the report's conclusion without considering the additional needs for Wickford on the Water, almost all depending on public parking. These are not projections, they are fact. All in the center of the village.

The parking surveys are interesting. "The shortage of parking is associated with particular times of the day and specific situations." I get it. But both seasonal surveys say that on Saturday afternoons 95% of Brown Street spaces were taken in the spring and 88% in the summer.

The existing businesses should note that, in the spring survey, 27% of those who responded said that in the past they had left Wickford Village because they could not find a parking space and 26% said that the parking they had was not convenient. In the summer study, the response was 43% not finding a space and 36% expressing inconvenience. If that is their current experience, it discourages future visits, especially as the demand for business district parking increases.

The answers, according to the study, lie in better (more) utilization of both public and private parking, more parking on West Main all the way to Wilson Park, more parking on Main, all the way to the Town Wharf. Main Street is very narrow at the turn and the bottle neck proceeding east will only extend further as more non-residential traffic is pushed down the street. The Wharf lot is used by commercial fisherman, are they aware that this is one of the suggested solutions?

West Main narrows as it heads west. Thirty-two of the fifty-five parking spaces identified above as near-term requirements are in that area. Pedestrian safety becomes a concern. The study suggests adding a crosswalk at Newtown to improve pedestrian safety. Those of us who live on West Main know that while the speed limit signs clearly show that the official limit is 25 miles per hour, most cars are doing well above that speed as soon as they turn left out of Brown and accelerate to get out of the village, soon they are doing 40 miles per hour and above.

The crosswalk at the entrance to the library walk is frequently ignored by those rushing to get on their way and by those in a hurry to get into and through the village as a cut through on their way south. Without some regular enforcement of speeding and respect for pedestrians in the crosswalks, visitors and residents will continue to deal with drivers with little concern for resident life in the village.

A reminder that West Main is also a state highway, how realistic is it that RIDOT will add another crosswalk, regardless of the local issues.

The report also suggests more use of the parking available in Wilson Park. Really, on weekend days, the dates/times when parking demand is greatest deeper in the village are we really going to generate more competition for parking vs those families using the ever more popular Zeke Harris Playground or the basketball courts or every weekend soccer tournaments or the expanded number of pickleball courts serving town needs.

Other suggestions include expanded use of parking at or near the public library, shared parking lots that are owned by private businesses including the funeral home etc. All pushing commercial demand for parking into the residential areas of the community. All unlikely to generate interest from visitors coming into the village of Wickford.

Pages 57 through 59 cover 29 parking study recommendations, eight requiring RIDOT work and investment and others requiring North Kingstown spending on things like parking enforcement, hiring wayfinding consultants, providing bike lanes and bike racks to encourage alternative ways to come into the village, improving parking lots and adding amenities at the town wharf, and adding seasonal parking shuttles and perhaps ferry service from the Port of Davisville to Wickford Village. Raising the funding for any of these services will be a tough sell in a town already strapped in providing current municipal services.

The report is well written and graphically interesting, but I'm left with more rather than fewer concerns. The overwhelming focus of the report was on what affect increases in visitors to the village will have on parking availability for visitors with almost no concern for what it will mean for those of us who live here. It is noted in the report that on several of the smaller streets in the village, residents are posting their own no parking signs in front of their homes to privately reserve the spaces in front of their residences, further reducing the number of spaces previously cited for open access.

Fourteen residences that do not have access to private parking will have even less access in the future. And they became just a footnote in the analysis. I don't expect much to result from the report, I hope I am wrong."

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To approve Consent Agenda Item Numbers 7 through 18 as presented with the exception of Agenda Item Number 9.

7. Approval of Minutes

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 22, 2024 as submitted by the Office of the Town Clerk.

8. Authorization to Apply to the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission – 2024 Certified Local Government Grant

VOTED: To authorize the Planning Department to apply to the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) for a 2024 Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant for Stormwater Management at Casey Farm in coordination with Historic New England/Casey Farm.

9. Ratification of Town Manager's approval of an Emergency Purchase

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To ratify the Town Manager's approval of an Emergency Purchase for the Information Technology Department for Hyperconverged Servers, Associated Equipment, and Professional Services to Envision Technology Advisors, LLC, 999 Main Street, Suite 703, Pawtucket, RI 02860, in the amount of \$208,339.98.

Funding is from ARPA.

10. Award of Bid

VOTED: To award the bid for the Annual Paving Contract for the Department of Public Works to JR Vinagro, 2208 Plainfield Pike, Johnston, RI 02919, in the amount of \$1,952,936.45.

Funding for this Contract is from:

- FY2023 Account 30010020-531111 - Restricted Overlaying Services – \$56,443.00
- Previously approved FY2024 Account 00110020-531111, Highway Budget Line Item – Overlay – \$750,000.00
- Proposed FY2025 Account 00110020-531111, Highway Budget Line Item – Overlay – \$750,000.00
- Rhode Island Municipal Road and Bridge Program, Planned Maximum State Reimbursement – \$576,227.00 (with required Town match)

11. Annual Entertainment (renewal)

VOTED: To approve to December 1, 2024 the renewal application for an Annual Entertainment License by the Town of North Kingstown, 100 Fairway Drive, to hold various outdoor concerts on various dates, on the grounds of the North Kingstown Town Beach Campus and bandshell, subject to taxes and water paid to date and compliance with the recommendations of the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Planning Department, and the Building Official.

12. Annual Entertainment License (renewal)

VOTED: To approve to December 1, 2024 the application for an Annual Entertainment License by the Wickford Village Association, c/o Palmer Beebe, 74 Steamboat Avenue, to have music and performances, at various locations within the commercial district, on various dates and times between 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., subject to taxes and water paid to date and compliance with the recommendations of the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Planning Department, and the Building Official.

13. Exhibition License (no vendors)

VOTED: To approve the application for an Exhibition License with no vendors by the Wickford Village Association, c/o 17 Brown Street, to hold Harbor Fire (formerly Harbor Lights), on Brown Street, West Main Street, Updike Park, the Municipal Parking Lot, and the bridge over the Harbor, on May 10, June 20, July 11, August 15, September 13, and October 18, 2024, and authorization for the Town Manager to approve future rain dates, subject to taxes and water paid to date.

14. Entertainment License (new)

VOTED: To approve the application for an Entertainment License by Michael Iadevaia, 50 Autumn Drive, for the North Kingstown School Department to hold an outdoor concert featuring Elementary School students on the grounds of the North Kingstown Town Beach Campus and bandshell, on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 (rain date Thursday, June 6, 2024), from 6:00 p.m. to 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 Planning Department, and the Building Official.

15. Holiday Sales License (new)

VOTED: To approve to July 1, 2024 the application for a Holiday Sales License by Harbor View Artisans LLC, 22 Brown Street, subject to taxes and water paid to date, receipt of a copy of their RI Retail Sales Tax Permit, and approval from the Building Official and the Fire Marshall.

16. Holiday Sales License (new)

VOTED: To approve to July 1, 2024 the application for a Holiday Sales License by Dollar Tree Stores Inc., dba Dollar Tree Store #09594, 59 Brown Street, subject to taxes and water paid to date, receipt of a copy of their RI Retail Sales Tax Permit, and approval from the Building Official and the Fire Marshall.

17. Victualling License (new)

VOTED: To approve to December 1, 2024 the application for a Victualling License by Dollar Tree Stores Inc., dba Dollar Tree Store #09594, 59 Brown Street, subject to taxes and water paid to date; receipt of a certificate from the Rhode Island Department of Health; receipt of a copy of their RI Retail Sales Tax Permit; and compliance with the recommendations of the Planning Department, the Building Official, the Water Department, and the Fire Marshall.

18. Victualling, Dance, and Amusement License Renewals

VOTED: To approve to December 1, 2024 the following list of Victualling, Dance, and Amusement License Renewals, subject to taxes and water paid to date and compliance with the recommendations of the Fire Marshall, the Building Official, and the Water Department:

VASDJ LICENSE RENEWALS
February 26, 2024

NK #	NAME	DBA	BUSINESS LOCATIO	PHONE	SEATS	HOURS	LIC. HELD
145	North Kingstown Wickford Little League		Concession Stand Signal Rock Field	323-0249	N/A	9:00 am- 9:00 pm	V
114	North Kingstown Wickford Little League		Concession Stand Wilson Park	323-0249	N/A	9:00 am- 9:00 pm	V
76	Wasay Mini Mart LLC	Yorktown Market	6769 Post Rd	569-0271	N/A	6:00 AM- 12:00 PM	V

III. REPORTS

19. Report by the Town Manager

Town Manager Mollis gave the following report:

Projects

- We had our bi-weekly meeting with Revolution Wind regarding their Offshore Wind Farm Project. Work continues on the excavation for the conduit and the duct bank restoration work. Significant material is being brought in and out of the development site. They've completed their sheet piling activity and the King Pile installation will begin this week which will cause vibrations and noise. Representatives are going door to door within the surrounding neighborhoods for outreach and notification. Crews will be entering and exiting via the new access road. As the Town Council requested, there was a successful and well attended Open House last Wednesday evening here at our Town Hall. Multiple representatives of Revolution Wind, Orsted and Eversource were in attendance to present and answer questions.

In a related matter, I received a preliminary call informing me that Eversource had sold its 50% share in this Wind Farm Project to Global Infrastructure. It was announced in a Press Release on February 14th. We've been assured that the individuals we've been dealing with on a bi-weekly basis will not change and this will not affect any agreements they have with the Town of North Kingstown.

- A reminder that the Courts at Wilson Park and McGinn Park are closed and construction on the renovation of the existing courts and installation of new courts is underway. It is projected that all renovations and improvements will be completed by the target date of June 1st with the newly renovated and new facilities open for the summer season.
- Our Planning Department has been in regular contact with the R.I. Department of Transportation in regard to a follow-up meeting between my Administration and RIDOT concerning their Route 4 proposal. Representatives of RIDOT confirmed last week that they are reviewing the notes and data we sent them from our recent public meeting and will be in touch to schedule a follow up meeting shortly. I will keep the Town Council up to date.

- At the request of the School Department, I joined Superintendent Duya and School Committee Chair Earle in signing the cover letter which accompanied their Stage 1 application on February 15th. The cover letter accompanying the Stage 1 application outlined the need for building upgrades, health and safety improvements, upgrades to support the School District's education programs and noted the goal of continuing to work with our committees and the community to identify the best path forward regarding the middle school project which they hope to include in the Stage 2 application this Fall.

Recreation

- We've negotiated and I've signed the annual renewal of our Agreement with the YMCA of Greater Providence for services at our Town Beach for the period of May through September 2024. The services are highlighted by their responsibility to recruit, test, train, hire, and pay certified lifeguards at our Town Beach for the upcoming Summer Season. This cost is included in the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

As you know and as I've reported over the years, a significant portion of our beach operations is covered by the Recreation Department's budget. While expenses to operate the beach are over \$125,000 annually, the revenue from beach stickers are approximately \$50,000 annually, resulting in a loss which is covered by our operating budget.

- Registration for our 2024 Summer Camp will be held at 9am on March 11th. Registration is online only and fills up fast. The 2024 Camp will be extended one week and will run for 9 weeks this year. Due to the rapid and substantial increase in the minimum wage, the cost for Summer Camp will be going up in 2024 but is still an incredible benefit for our residents and is a primary reason why it fills up fast.

Scholarships, based on family income and family size will be available. It is important that those requesting a scholarship pre-register prior to March 11th. Please contact our Recreation Office at 268-1500 and someone will assist you in applying for the applicable scholarship.

I'd like to note that as with the Town Beach, a significant portion of the Summer Camp Program is covered by our Recreation Department's Budget. Our 2023 Summer Camp had over 300 participants at a cost of over \$206,000 while registration revenue was just over \$150,000, leaving a negative balance to be covered by the Recreation Budget of just over \$50,000.

- And final news on Recreation, our annual Easter Egg Hunt will take place on Saturday, March 23rd from 11am – 12:30pm. We will have a concession, photo op, entertainment and our egg hunt.

Public Safety

- The purchase and substantial training on the use of Body Cameras is coming to a close and we expect that all North Kingstown Patrol Officers will be utilizing Body Cameras within the next two weeks. We will continuously evaluate this new tool as it is expected funding will cease in the next 3 – 5 years and would need to become an expense within our operating budget if we continued with this tool.
- As you are most likely aware, there have been substantial discussions between the School Department and our Police Department regarding the creation of a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the use of the School Resource Officer at our High School. While our Police Department has actively participated in the drafting of an MOA, there have been items that have been requested by the School Department which we feel are unnecessary as they are included in Police Policy.

I felt it was necessary to bring this up in a public Manager's Report as it has been discussed publicly at various School Committee Meetings, residents have sent correspondence to the School Committee encouraging the continuation of the use of a School Resource Officer, and a motion was made at a recent School Committee Meeting to discontinue the use of the Resource Officer.

It should be noted that it is the position of the North Kingstown Police Department that this is a valuable and critical resource, provides safety measures, de-escalation measures, a relationship with students and is respected and supported by the High School Administration. If anything, it would be great to have more Resource Officers available for our other schools rather than less.

In addition, North Kingstown is somewhat unique in that the School Resource Officer is fully funded (\$144,000) by the Town with no required financial resources from the School Department. And while some communities do have Agreements (and others don't), we are not aware of any regional Agreements that include the type of language being requested by the North Kingstown School Committee. I will continue to keep you up to date as we continue our communications with the School Department on this important matter.

Miscellaneous

- As requested by the Town Council, we reached out to Mr. Sgouros regarding his suggestions concerning property revaluation. Our Assessor sent a detailed email explaining the limitations due to state law and proper assessment procedure. Mr. Sgouros has since responded, and we intend on reaching out to him after we complete the budget for an in-person discussion. As requested, I will keep the Town Council up to date.
- A final reminder on our upcoming Budget Schedule. I will be presenting the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget on Monday March 4th. I will also be presenting a supplemental ARPA Plan at the same meeting as this will be an important supplement to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget. This will be followed by the Council meeting with my Administration and Department Heads the evening of March 11th and all day on March 12th, followed by the adoption of a Preliminary Budget and a Public Hearing on April 3rd.

The Council thanked Mr. Mollis for his thorough report.

20. Report by the Finance Director

Finance Director Debra Bridgham gave the following report:

Attached is the January Budget report, this is the seventh month of the fiscal year.

For ease of presentation to the Council, I have highlighted major changes within budget to actual for Fiscal Year 2024:

Expense:

- Technology Increase of \$555,653 due to cyber expenses
- Police Increase of \$100,000 for overtime - budget \$300,000 y-t-d expense \$203,619
- Fire Increase of \$400,000 for overtime - budget \$675,000 y-t-d expense \$741,819
- Dispatch Increase of \$90,000 for overtime - budget \$90,000 y-t-d expense \$113,596

Revenues:

- PILOT Increase of \$60,600 due to additional pilot agreement.
- Housing Aid Increase of \$648,926 budgeted didn't include RIIB reimbursement.
- Public Service Corp Increase of \$41,388 budgeted governors proposed.
- Cyber Insurance Increase of \$30,000 for insurance reimbursement
- Net Meter Increase Revenue received from program, estimated at \$380,050.
- Interest Income Increase of \$1,033,339 over budget. Currently earning 5.40% at Centerville Bank for 3 months. We are averaging around \$130,000 a month on interest.

Based on these projections, we will have an estimated surplus of \$1,052,000, which is due to the higher than budgeted interest income. We continue to invest funds in short term-high yielding accounts. We will continue to monitor and refine projections as needed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

21. Supplemental Appropriation School Fund General Operating Budget (State Aid)

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To table the resolution for a Supplemental Appropriation to the School Fund General Budget (State Aid) for FY2023/2024 and a reduction of Town appropriation for FY2023/2024.

22. Board of Canvassers - Appointment

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Palmer Beebe, 74 Steamboat Avenue, Alternate Member to the Board of Canvassers to March 1, 2030.

23. Compensation Commission - Appointments

Motion by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To appoint the following five (5) members to the Compensation Commission for ninety (90) days from the date of appointment:

Joseph Gentile, 106 Roger Williams Drive
Michael Sammartino, 230 Briarbrook Drive, reappointed
M. Noeline Thomson, 5 Sea Grass Way
Tracey McCue, 31 Chimney Rock Road, reappointed
Scot Jones, 56 Main Street

24. Correspondence

The following is a summary of the email correspondence received by the North Kingstown Town Council since its last Regular Meeting on February 12, 2024:

02/12/2024 – Diane Louise Izzo – Subj: Two Things

02/14/2024 – John Machata – Subj: North Kingstown Free Library Path

02/20/2024 (3x) – Holly Quinn – Subj: Pickleball Courts at Wilson Park

02/23/2024 (2x) & 02/26/2024 – Donna Hutchinson – Subj: Pickleball Courts

02/25/2024 – David Andrews – School/Public Safety Building Modifications or Repairs,

02/25/2024 – Bill Seymour – Media Inquiry

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Jeannette Alyward
Town Clerk