

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 20th day of May, 2024 at the Town Hall Council Chambers, 80 Boston Neck Road, at 6:45 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 May 20, 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. Executive Session

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn into Executive Session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4 and 42-46-5, Subsection (2) – Litigation (Rolling Meadow Way Assoc., Inc. et al v Barton and Manton Madison, dba Tockwotton Farm WC-2023-0496).

MEETING RECONVENED AT 7:00 P.M.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To seal the minutes of the Executive Session.

4. Salute to Flag

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

I. PUBLIC HEARING

5. Class C Alcoholic Beverage License (new)

Motion by Councilor Page, second 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 Page, seconded by Councilor McCoy and unanimously

VOTED: To approve the application for a Class C Alcoholic Beverage License, expiring on December 1, 2024, by Buttercup the Flower Truck, LLC, 4 Brown Street, subject to taxes and water paid to date; receipt of Alcohol Server Training Certifications; receipt of a certificate from the Rhode Island Department of Health; receipt of a Rhode Island Retail Sales Tax Permit; receipt of a Certificate of Good Standing; and compliance with the recommendations of the Building Official, the Fire Marshall, and the Planning Department.

The Council took Item Numbers 29 and 30 next.

29. Coastal Resources Management Council Application Number 2024-04-073

President Mancini stated that we have a number of people who have signed up to speak on these agenda items. However, before we take commentary, he suggested that the Council discuss these applications. We have received and read the application and the recommendations from the Harbor Management Commission and the Conservation Commission.

Councilor Mandel stated that we have received a tremendous amount of information from the stakeholders and the concerned neighbors on this issue in addition to the two recommendations from the committees who have unanimously recommended that this request be denied. He further stated that he did go look at these properties over the weekend and he completely understands why the recommendation is to deny this application and why the neighbors are concerned. To him this seems to be a clear case, and even more clear when we have commissions making recommendations to the Council. Unless we know something they don't, he is very reluctant to overturn their recommendations.

Councilor Anderson stated that she agrees with Councilor Mandel that we need to listen to these commissions as they have the expertise in these matters.

Councilor Page stated that she feels the same way as the denials by both commissions were unanimous.

Councilor McCoy stated that he believes that the Council should oppose this application.

President Mancini stated that he agrees with Councilor Mandel that we defer with the commissions unless there is something out of the ordinary. He also visited the property as well as spoke with a member of the Conservation Commission whose primary concern was safety.

President Mancini stated that we have a consensus of the Council that a substantive objection be filed, and asked if anyone who signed up to speak would like to do so.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: That a substantive objection be filed to Coastal Resources Management Council Application Number 2024-04-073 to allow Donna Rossetti, Trustee to construct and maintain a residential pier, 369 Earle Drive, Plat 89, Lot 109, for the following reasons and concerns:

- Safety and navigational issues related to boaters and recreational users of the area. The proposed dock is in close proximity to a highly utilized swimming area. Boats approaching the dock near this swimming area is a safety concern to the Harbor Master.
- The application requires a variance to the required setback to the town's mooring field. The dock is proposed 28' to the mooring field boundary. This would increase boat traffic through the mooring field to access the dock and bring the boater in closer proximity to the beach.

30. Coastal Resources Management Council Application Number 2024-04-075

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: That a substantive objection be filed to Coastal Resources Management Council Application Number 2024-04-075 to allow Donna Rossetti, Trustee to construct and maintain a residential pier, 353 Earle Drive, Plat 89, Lots 101 and 110, for the following reasons and concerns:

- Safety and navigational issues related to boaters, riparian homeowners, and recreational users of the area. The proposed dock is in close proximity to a narrow channel highly utilized by recreational boaters and swimmers accessing Duck Cove. The proposed dock may obstruct users of the channel entering and exiting the pond and limit access and use of the navigation channel. The Harbor Master has a safety concern for boats and recreational users of this channel and Duck Cove pond.
- Environmental concerns related to the impact the dock may have on the existing marine habitat. There is existing marsh over which the dock is being proposed.

The Council took Item Number 6 next.

6. Public Comment

Joseph Teixeira, 200 Delano Drive, stated that Meg Reilly, Mr. Mollis, Mr. Mancini, and himself were all in the Providence Journal today regarding the North Kingstown School Bonds. He stated that he has a couple of recommendations. He is asking the Town Council to take another look at the bond and take a look at the maintenance issue of the school over the last 10 years. He is worried that if you get a new school and don't do the maintenance, we will be in the same position 20 years from now. He suggested maybe going with a smaller bond for maintenance and then every year budget a fund for maintenance purposes only. One that can't be tapped for any other reason except for the upkeep of the buildings.

Curtis Fisher, 104 Phillips Street, stated that he agrees with Mr. Teixeira's comments and please look at the amount of the bond. He also asked that the Council remove Agenda Item Numbers 8, 9, 10 & 11 just so he can get more information on these items.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To approve Consent Agenda Item Numbers 7 through 24 as presented with the exception of Agenda Item Numbers 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, and 16.

7. Receipt of Donations

VOTED: To accept with gratitude the following donations in the amount of \$40.00:

For: Beechwood Senior Center	
To be used for the Mealsite	
From: Anonymous	\$25.00
For: Beechwood Senior Center	
From: Anonymous	\$15.00

8. Mutal Aid Agreement

Motion by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor McCoy and unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the Town Manager to execute a Mutual Aid Agreement between the Department of the Navy Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Operations and Public Safety, 1510 Gilbert Street, Norfolk, VA 23511 and the Town of North Kingstown, Fire Department for firefighting assistance.

9. Resolution to appropriate proceeds

A motion was made by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2024 the Town Manager signed and acknowledged the sale of an Avigation Easement, Plat 2364/Parcel 1 (AP 191/Lot 9) to the RI Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Town of North Kingstown received \$268,000.00 for the sale of Rhode Island Airport Corp (RIAC) Avigation Easement located at Plat 2364/Parcel 1 (AP 191/Lot 9); and

WHEREAS, the recording and restriction of these funds for potential and projected specific purpose of capital/real estate improvements will benefit the community in numerous ways.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Town Council appropriates the funds of \$268,000.00 to a Town Reserve Fund to be held for future Capital /Real Estate acquisitions or improvements.

10. Approval of an Amendment to a Contract

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously

VOTED: To approve an amendment to a contract for the Planning Department with Beta Group, Inc., 701 George Washington Highway, Lincoln, RI 02865, for expansion of the scope of services for construction oversight of the Wickford Waterfront Project, in the amount of \$374,500.00.

Funding for this project is from FY2024 Grant Match Budget, FY2025 Grant Match Budget, ARPA, Municipal Resilience Program Grant, RIDEM Climate Resiliency Grant, and Commerce RI Main Street Rhode Island Streetscape Improvement Fund.

11. Award of Bid

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously

VOTED: To award the bid for the Planning Department for the Wickford Waterfront Improvements Project to New England Building & Bridge Co., Inc., 388 Veazie Street, Providence, RI 02904, in the amount of \$2,582,282.50.

Funding for this project is from FY2024 Grant Match Budget, FY2025 Grant Match Budget, ARPA, Municipal Resilience Program Grant, RIDEM Climate Resiliency Grant, and Commerce RI Main Street Rhode Island Streetscape Improvement Fund.

12. Award of Bid

VOTED: To award a three (3) year contract for the Department of Public Works for the Cleaning of Public Restrooms at Wilson Park, Ryan Park, Signal Rock, and the Town Beach to SJ Services, 235 Newbury Street, Danvers, MA 01923, in the amount of \$25,700.00; and it was

FURTHER VOTED: To award a three (3) year contract for the Department of Public Works for the cleaning of the Wickford Restrooms, Community Center, Golf Course Clubhouse Restrooms and Hallways, and Public Works Facilities to M&B Cleaning Service, LLC, 59 Hancock Street, #2, Pawtucket, RI 02860, in the amount of \$21,880.00; and it was

FURTHER VOTED: To award a three (3) year contract for the Department of Public Works for tile floor waxing and carpet cleaning service for various locations for a minimum of once per year to SJ Services, 235 Newbury Street, Danvers, MA 01923, in an amount not to exceed \$18,480.00.

Funding is from FY2025 approved Budget as follows:

- DPW/Facilities Outside Cleaning – Acct. #00110070-530610 - \$39,370.00
- Recreation Department Cleaning Services – Acct. #00116010-531610 - \$5,580.00
- Golf Course Contract Services – Acct. #43321010-531206 - \$2,900.00
- DPW/Facilities Outside Cleaning Acct. #00110070-530610 – for tile and carpet cleaning – various amounts

13. Approval of Extension of a Contract

VOTED: To approve the extension of contract for the Department of Public Works for the Annual Fuel Contract (#2 Fuel Oil, Unleaded & Diesel Fuel) to Peterson Oil Service, Inc., 75 Crescent Street, Worcester, MA 01605, for the period July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025 as follows:

\$.17 per gallon for Unleaded Fuel
\$.15 per gallon for Diesel (all types)
\$.33 per gallon for No. 2 Heating Oil

Funding will be from approved FY2025 Budget, Town Utilities/Gasoline Accounts - Multiple Departments.

14. Award of Bid

VOTED: To award the bid for the Water Department for the purchase of one (1) 2024 Dodge Ram 2500 Regular Cab Truck from Paul Bailey's Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram, 425 Ten Rod Road, North Kingstown, RI 02852, in the amount of \$65,374.00.

Funding for this purchase is as follows:

Insurance Settlement - \$19,275.00
Water Department Fund Balance - \$46,099.00

15. Award of Bid

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To award the bid for the Water Department for a Fire Hydrant Replacement Project to Key Corporation, 170 Fiore Industrial Drive, Wakefield, RI 02879, in the amount of \$85,000.00. Funding is from FY2024 Budget - Hydrants Account 44040091 540514.

16. Exhibition License (11-20 vendors)

Motion by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor Page and was

VOTED: To approve the application for an Exhibition License with 11-20 vendors by Wickford Village Association, 70 Brown Street, to hold a Wickford Maker's Mart at Updike Park and various businesses in Wickford Village, on Saturday, July 13 and Sunday, July 14, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., subject to taxes and water paid to date; receipt of a Show Promoter's Permit; receipt of a list of vendors at the Town Clerk's Office by July 8, 2024 (which shall include their name, address, phone number, Tax ID Number, type of merchandise, and date of birth); and compliance with the recommendations of the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Building Official, and the Planning Department.

President Mancini recused as his wife is on the board of the Wickford Village Association.

17. Laundry License (renewal)

VOTED: To approve to July 1, 2025 the application for renewal of a Laundry License by North Kingstown Laundry Inc., 7421 Post Road, subject to taxes and water paid to date.

18. Peddler License (renewal)

VOTED: To approve to *February 1, 2025 the application for a Peddler License by Keystone Novelties Distributors, LLC, 531 N 4th Street, Denver, PA 17517, to temporarily sell sparklers and novelty devices under a tent at 6653 Post Road, subject to taxes and water paid to date and receipt of the following:

1. RI Retail Sales Tax Permit
2. Rhode Island Department of Health Certificate (if necessary)
3. Litter Tax Permit (if necessary)
4. Letter of consent from the property owner where vending (if stationary)
5. Motor Vehicle Registration (if necessary)

*Clerk's note: Corrected by the Town Clerk as the license year is February 1 through January 31.

19. Peddler License (new)

VOTED: To approve to *February 1, 2025 the application for a Peddler License by Keystone Novelties Distributors, LLC, 531 N 4th Street, Denver, PA 17517, to temporarily sell sparklers and novelty devices under a tent at 5941 Post Road, subject to taxes and water paid to date and receipt of the following:

1. RI Retail Sales Tax Permit
2. Rhode Island Department of Health Certificate (if necessary)
3. Litter Tax Permit (if necessary)
4. Letter of consent from the property owner where vending (if stationary)
5. Motor Vehicle Registration (if necessary)

*Clerk's note: Corrected by the Town Clerk as the license year is February 1 through January 31.

20. Holiday Sales License (new)

VOTED: To approve to July 1, 2024 the application for a Holiday Sales License by Village Ice Cream Co. LLC, 4 Brown Street, subject to taxes and water paid to date, receipt of a RI Retail Sales Tax Permit, and approval from the Building Official and the Fire Marshall.

21. Victualling License (new)

VOTED: To approve to December 1, 2024 the application for a Victualling License by Village Ice Cream Co. LLC, 4 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.

22. Victualling License (new)

VOTED: To approve to December 1, 2024 the application for a Victualling License by Tampella Restaurant Enterprise, LLC, dba Caffè Milano, 4001 Quaker Lane, subject to taxes and water paid to date; receipt of a certificate from the RI Department of Health; 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.

23. Third Bond Reduction

VOTED: To approve the request by Reynolds Farm Residential Development, LLC, for a third bond reduction on Reynolds Farm, Phase 2D, from \$769,814.63 to \$269,566.04, in the amount of \$500,248.59.

24. First Reading – Amendment to Chapter 9, Article XVII, Section 9-401

VOTED: That this shall constitute the First Reading of an Ordinance in Amendment of Section 9-401 of the Code of Ordinances, Town of North Kingstown, entitled, "Restrictions on Municipal Mobile Food Establishment Permit" and Section 9-403, entitled, "Number of Permits Granted", and that this be advertised and referred to the Regular Town Council Meeting of June 10, 2024 for Second Reading and Consideration of Adoption.

III. REPORTS

25. Report by the Town Manager

Town Manager Mollis gave the following report:

Projects

- Revolution Wind continues with their Offshore Wind Farm Project at their Onshore Substation in Quonset Business Park. During our last bi-weekly meeting, they advised us that they've completed their King Pile driving, are almost complete with their wall sheet piles, and still have a couple of months of Pipe Pile driving. They've installed a temporary sound wall and have installed the forms for the building foundation. They are working on Saturdays, within the restrictions the town has set, and have no Sunday work planned at this point. They have received complaints and outreach from the surrounding neighborhoods regarding the noise, address each complaint individually, and keep the town up to date.

I want to stress for any residents who have concerns to please call Revolution Wind at 401-251-2207 or email them at info@revolution-wind.com as Revolution Wind updates us on every call or concern they receive.

- The Wilson and McGinn Courts Restoration Project continues to move towards a beginning of June opening despite challenges with weather and supply issues with paint. We are hoping to have Wilson Park's existing courts completed by the first of June, followed by the new Pickleball Courts 6 days later with finishing touches of benches, bleachers and landscaping immediately following. McGinn Park is on a similar track with the exception of the Skatepark which is scheduled for a reinstall on June 26th.

We will be installing sound slats and plantings at the new Pickleball Courts at Wilson for noise mitigation and overall appearance. We are also discussing signage to display hours of play and have discussed additional sound mitigation steps if necessary.

Speaking of Wilson Park, we made some improvements to the Splashpad in order to address existing water, safety and landscaping issues and, weather permitting, are planning to open the Splashpad for the season this week.

Water Department

- Our Water Department will be rolling out a Rain Barrel Program which we will be promoting on our social media and website platforms. The Water Department will offer a \$75 discount off rain barrels sold at Wickford Lumber for North Kingstown residents with a limit of one rain barrel per property. This program has numerous benefits including decreased costs of water on the consumer as 1 rain barrel can save roughly 1300 gallons of water during a summer season; aids in decreasing stormwater pollution on local bodies of water; and decreases water demand during the higher water usage period of the summer. My thanks to the Water Department leadership, the Conservation Commission and our Town Solicitor in their assistance and getting this program up and running.

Rhode Island Department of Transportation

- We, finally, had our follow-up meeting with RIDOT regarding their Route 4 proposal and the findings from our Public Meeting. We met with their team on May 4th. We reviewed all the findings from the Public Meeting with them. Some of the highlights of the meeting included RIDOT confirming that yes, our concerns about the jughandles causing backups are accurate but it will be an improvement to the backups currently taking place. They stated that yes there should be enough space to accommodate the acceleration lanes. They addressed our concerns on adequate availability for bicyclists stating that bicyclists should not be using Route 4 as it's a highway with highway speeds. They also confirmed that turn lanes will be accommodated. They understood our many public safety concerns, as well as the concerns from the public, will review the benefits of merge lanes and a thorough review of the current timing of the lights and will circle back with their consultant and put together alternatives for a follow up meeting with us. We will be sure to stay in contact with them regarding the follow up meeting and I will keep the Council and public up to date.
- I received a response from RIDOT's Chief of Real Estate Acquisition to my letter outlining the path regarding the Avigation Easement in Quonset Business Park and our request for them to reconsider their compensation offer in comparison to what we felt was fair. They explained that they had an internal meeting to review our request and determined that no additional compensation would be provided over the settlement they gave us. The proceeds of this settlement were appropriated earlier this evening within item #9. The only remaining course of action if we wanted to pursue additional compensation would be to file a court action and I discussed this with our Solicitor and staff and we all agree that the legal costs, time requirements and relationship impacts of such a court action would not be worth the insignificant financial benefits of the difference between what they provided to us and what we felt would have been a fair settlement.
- We had a meeting with RIDOT and their contractor regarding the upcoming mini roundabout in Wickford last week. The project will also include new curb ramps, new crosswalks and a mini roundabout that can be traveled over by large vehicles. They are attempting to coordinate the project around our requests on behalf of the business community and are anticipating a hopeful start date in the Spring of 2025. In order to complete the project within 8 weeks of the start date and minimize the disruption to the village, they will be working during the night. They are anticipating the sidewalk project to begin at a similar time and as a result are attempting to coordinate the sidewalk project to begin on Post Road in order to minimize the overall disruption to the village. We will continue working with them in order to assist in coordination.

School Department

- I'm happy to report that we now have Read Only Access to the School Department Financial Ledger. My thanks to Superintendent Duva, School Finance Director Leslie-Ann Powell, and our Finance Director & Finance Team for their work in getting this accomplished as I know this was a priority of the Town Council.

Grants

- Congressman Magaziner called me last week to tell me he has placed North Kingstown's two Federal Earmark Applications forward as part of his request. The Congressman received over 70 applications, was limited to moving forward 15 of the 70 and he included both of North Kingstown's applications as part of his submission. The two applications were for the restoration of the Town Meeting House and the expansion of the Food Pantry. He will be monitoring the progress of both applications and will keep in touch with my office. I expressed our sincere thanks for his support.

- In addition to the two applications within the House of Representatives, we also submitted our Security Cameral Federal Earmark Application with Senator's Whitehouse and Reed. If successful, this will fund security cameras at our town parks, Allen Harbor Marina, Municipal Parking Lot, Golf Course, Town Beach, Wilson Park Dock and other areas and will be part of our efforts in providing wi-fi access to those visiting these areas as well. We will keep you up to date on the progress of this application as well.
- And we received a Protect our Building's Grant from the R.I. Interlocal Trust to cover 100% of the cost of equipment under our participation in the Trust's Sensor Solutions Program. This Program is an effective tool in identifying and preventing damage from water leaks, water intrusion, freezing pipes, temperature & humidity changes, etc. through early detection. It provides 24/7 monitoring of vulnerable areas within our buildings and will be overseen by our Public Works Department.

Miscellaneous

- Beach passes are on sale and can be purchased at our Town Clerk's Office at our Municipal Office Building, our Recreation Department at our Town Hall, and we are attempting to coordinate a mail-in option. We will also be announcing extended hours for those who can't make it during the workday.
- We are participating in the Governor and First Lady McKee's Litter Free RI initiative this week. We are coordinating it as part of our 350th anniversary commemoration. We are anticipating receiving the final items for our Community Clean-up this week and will welcome community groups, students, residents, and other North Kingstown based organizations to obtain these supplies to execute a community cleanup within town. Once the cleanup is complete our Department of Public Works will pick up and dispose of items properly and our efforts will be included within the State's online Trashboard, hosted by RIDEM. More information and directions to organizations will follow this week on our Social Media Platforms.
- Our annual Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade will take place this Monday. The Commemoration will begin at 9am with the placing of wreaths at the Civil War Memorial and Veterans Memorial Park at and across from Town Hall. This will be followed by our Annual Parade which kicks off at 10am and proceeds through Wickford Village before ending at Elm Grove Cemetery for an 11am Closing Ceremony. We thank everyone involved for organizing this annual commemorative and hope to see everyone out to celebrate.
- Finally, I want to congratulate Haley Wicker on her successful completion of the RI League of Cities and Towns Municipal Leadership Academy. Haley represented North Kingstown well, was a great representative of the talent we have here within our administrative team and successfully completed this prestigious program. Well done and congratulations.

*Councilor Mandel stated that in regard to the Route 4 jug handle issue, the concern that the bicyclist had was they wanted to be able to cross Route 4 as they can now at the traffic light intersections and with the jug handle scenario, they would have ride on Route 4 to the jug handles to cross, and he asked if RIDOT understood or acknowledged that issue. Mr. Mollis stated that to the defense to RIDOT he thinks that he/we provided bad information to them in our conversations with them and he will follow up with them tomorrow. President Mancini stated that he had the same question and concerns. (amended by the Clerk prior to approval)

The Council thanked Mr. Mollis for his very thorough report.

26. Wickford Advisory Committee Report

Pierce Nixon, Member of the Wickford Advisory Committee gave the following summary of the Wickford Collaboration Meeting held on November 9, 2023:

Background

On Thursday, November 9, the Wickford Advisory Committee hosted a Collaborative Meeting of non-profit community organizations based or operating in Wickford. The purpose of the meeting was to reveal overlap in common purpose across organizations to identify opportunities to collaborate on shared goals. The meeting discussion – summarized below – identified several needs for which WAC and the Town Council can provide needed support.

Attendees included WAC members, Nicole LaFontaine (Director of Planning and Development, Town of North Kingstown), Ben Mandel (Economic Development Principal Planner, Town of North Kingstown), and representatives of the following organizations:

- The Ecoland Art Project
- The Economic Development Advisory Board
- First Baptist Church of Wickford
- The Land Conservancy of North Kingstown
- The North Kingstown Arts Council
- The Plum Beach Garden Club
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- VFW Post 152
- The Wickford Art Association
- The Wickford Village Merchants Association
- The Wickford Yacht Club

The WAC is submitting this report to provide the Council with a summary of the event's discussion, as well as to help the Council evaluate feasibility and potential impact of proposed solutions in order to prioritize resources to support Wickford-related initiatives.

Executive Summary

Community groups active in Wickford described similar goals and challenges.

Common goals include:

- Improving the appearance of the village with gardens and natural features. NK Land Conservancy and ECOLAND promote environmental awareness.
- Increasing access to permanent and temporary merchants (e.g., art festival vendors).
- Providing community support services, such as addressing food insecurity and veteran outreach.
- Hosting community events.

Common challenges include:

- Identifying available meeting space for community groups to use.
- Limited access to utilities – especially water.
- The long-term location of the Wickford Art Festival remains an unresolved area of concern for many groups.

Potential Solutions include:

- Town Council
 - ✓ Request Town Planning Department review zoning and occupancy requirements that prevent using existing space – such as St. Paul's – from hosting relevant events.
 - ✓ Clarify town policies toward municipal water access.
 - ✓ Expand Town and WAC engagement directly with Wickford residents and families, rather than with only organizations operating in Wickford.
- Community Groups
 - ✓ Consider whether water-dependent activities could be re-designed to reduce the need for water consumption, such as prioritizing native plants in community gardens.
 - ✓ Facilitate collaboration between VFW Post 152, St. Paul's, and the Wickford Merchants Association to amplify philanthropic activities and outreach.

Forum Content

The WAC welcomed 15 people representing 13 community organizations. WAC Chair Mike Donohue welcomed participants and reaffirmed the purpose of the discussion.

Attendees spoke in turn describing their organization's objectives and examples of activities and programming they conduct within Wickford. Some attendees described challenges to successful operations within Wickford. Where possible, participants recognized activities from other organizations that may provide opportunities to collaborate or share resources.

WAC members concluded the forum by summarizing common themes. There were no additional Public Comments or questions. WAC members review the Forum discussion at the following WAC Monthly Meeting and identifies priorities to recommend to the Council.

Mr. Nixon thanked the Council on behalf of the Wickford Advisory Committee for the opportunity to present their report.

The Council thanked the Wickford Advisory Committee for their hard work and dedication to the community.

Mr. Mollis stated that Nicole LaFontaine will be working with the committee on their recommendations.

Clerk's note: A copy of the full report is filed with the back-up material for this meeting.

27. Update, Discussion and Proposed Action regarding the Public Safety Complex Project

Mr. Mollis stated that he would like to thank both chiefs and the committee for their work over the past six months in trying to put together a revised concept for the public safety complex, which has been challenging as their goal was to come up with something different, address concerns of residents as well as look at costs. Since the bond was denied, the costs have risen, and it has been a challenge for them. He further stated that he has been pretty hard on the chiefs and the committee regarding the potential costs of this project. The goal tonight is for them to update the Council on what has taken place and get the Council's approval to begin the process of a first reading of an uncodified ordinance for a bond on June 24th with a public hearing on July 15th with a rendering, cost and fiscal impact of this project.

Chief Kettelle stated that when we started this project three years ago, there was a different police chief and command staff and they looked at this project from a different view. We started this project three years ago with the belief of a consolidated public safety complex to replace the existing complex we have today. Throughout the project for the past three years, there was concern recorded regarding space for parking, expansion down the road. When the voters spoke in November, we certainly listened and tried to figure out where we failed. We were given directions by the Manager to take a fresh look at the project with an eye on obtaining cost savings. Since then, we now have a new police chief, as well as a new command staff who are looking at this project differently. He further stated that he and Police Chief Urban have spent a considerable amount of time looking at this project and where we are at today. We are proposing a two project, two locations proposal. The rationale is based on the space limitations at the current location, the fact that we have wetlands on the south side and north side that are prohibiting us from maximizing use of the parcel that we sit on today. We have explored a parcel of land in the industrial park for a police station, emergency communications center, and fire department administration. We have had discussions with QDC regarding this parcel and we are confident that we can work together for the common good. So, the proposal we are briefing the Council on tonight consists of a couple of factors. If we were to stay with our current location and do the consolidated police/fire complex as originally planned, we are going to have to seek an alternate location for the police department for a minimum of 18 to 24 months. For us to temporarily relocate the police department has become a yeoman's task with a significant cost factor which we can't put a dollar figure on as we have no idea where they would go and what is available.

Chief Kettelle further stated that the two-site concept allows us to build a new police station which will be modern with 2026 technology. We often talk about buildings, the bricks and mortar and we don't spend any time discussing the technology which is key for their accreditation and security issues. The construction of the new police station and fire station is much more than the bricks and mortar.

We are moving forward in coming to the Council on June 24th with a proposal and that will include a police station facility of approximately 33,000 square feet to be located in the industrial park area, close to the highways which will benefit police response throughout the town. Our emergency dispatch center and fire department administration will also be at this site. Once that building is complete, then we will demolish the current public safety facility and build a new fire station which will house the current vehicles housed there today. The goal we have been working towards is to have a spare rescue and spare engine at the station.

Chief Kettelle stated that he looks forward to providing a rendering and more details on July 15th when the Council will be voting on the ordinance for the bond.

The Council thanked the Chiefs for the update and stated that they look forward to learning more about the project and seeing the conceptional drawings.

28. Boards, Committees, and Commissions Assessments – Next Steps/Report from Town Administration

Director of Planning and Development Nicole LaFontaine gave a brief overview of the following report:

North Kingstown staff continues to move forward with the assessment of town boards and commissions. We suggest three areas of focus:

1. Relationship between boards/commissions and Town Council
2. Board Attendance actions
3. Updates to Town of North Kingstown Boards, Commissions and Committees Handbook

Relationship between boards/commissions and Town Council

The ongoing assessment shows there is a communication disconnect between the Town Council and the town's various boards and commissions. There is no one reason for this nor a responsible party. Staff suggests the following boards be subject to annual reporting, in writing or in person at the discretion of the board:

- Arts Council
- Conservation Commission
- Harbor Management Commission
- Economic Development Advisory Board
- Wickford Advisory Committee
- Parades Committee
- Scholarship Committee
- Information Technology Advisory Committee

The report would be provided by the board to the Town Council on a staggered basis and should include a summary of work efforts undertaken. The board can use this opportunity to gain feedback or direction if it so wishes. The boards should not expect the Town Council to craft or direct the work efforts and instead should use this opportunity as a communication and outreach occasion.

Please note that the following boards have existing reporting requirements and are not subject to this proposal:

- Audit Committee
- Asset Management Commission
- Leisure Services Advisory Committee
- Charter Review Commission
- Compensation Commission
- Personnel Board
- Library Board

Further, the following boards can be considered quasi-judicial and cannot be subject to reporting requirements:

- Planning Commission
- Zoning Board of Review
- Historic District Commission
- Sewer Appeals Board
- Building Code Board of Appeals
- Wickford Village Design Guidelines Overlay
- Board of Canvassers

Board Attendance actions

Attendance is crucial for the function of town boards and commissions. Without a quorum a board cannot meet. Many times agenda items are continued without progress because key members associated with the decision making are not available to attend.

Staff suggests reinstating attendance reporting and making changes to the current handbook that better defines the difference between an excused and unexcused absence. We believe unacceptable attendance or unexcused absence should include absence from more than fifty percent of the regular and special meetings held during a six-month period.

Updates to Town of North Kingstown Boards, Commissions and Committees Handbook

Staff plans to update the current handbook, last updated in January 2008, to reflect current state law regarding open meetings, modify the attendance policy, ensure the language is consistent with today's practices, and potentially add in reporting requirements (if directed to do so tonight).

In answer to President Mancini's question if staff is looking for a motion or vote on this, Ms. LaFontaine stated that staff is looking for guidance and consensus on how to move forward with these recommendations.

Councilor Mandel thanked Ms. LaFontaine, Ms. Alyward, and Mr. Mollis for this report as it contains a lot of good information. He endorses the recommendations regarding attendance, as the information would be useful when the Council is considering reappointments. He further stated he agrees that the handbook does need to be updated. However, the basis for his concern, having been on the Council for 18 months, feeling like with few exceptions, there has been very little communication between these boards and commissions and the Council. He understands that the staff supports all the boards, and it is a lot of work for the administration, it is much appreciated, but it still leaves the Council feeling left out of the communication loop. He can only assume that some of the boards and commissions feel the same way. The report we received tonight from the Wickford Advisory Committee was superb, it was thorough, actionable and gave us ideas on how to help them and the community and this should be a model in moving forward. Whether a report is in writing or results in committee members appearing in front of the Council sharing their thoughts, we could be very flexible and should be voluntary by each board and commission. We should invite them to come meet with the Council annually and stagger them throughout the year. He thinks this would be a productive use of everyone's time and feels that it should be more than just the committees in the proposal. He thinks there is an opportunity for even those the Council has no authority over such as the Zoning Board and the Planning Commission because they may see things that they would like to provide feedback to the Council so that we could be in touch with our legislators to lobby for further action. Zoning is seeing on a regular basis that there is a need for auxiliary dwellings in a different fashion and we could pass that along to our senators and representatives. He further stated he would not require the regulatory/statutory committees provide an annual report, but he would like to offer them the opportunity to foster communication. He strongly feels that by giving these boards and commissions the opportunity will promote better communication, provide transparency not only to the Council but the community on a whole.

President Mancini stated that Councilor Mandel made some interesting points. He asked if the Planning Commission and Zoning Board have a policy, ordinance or recommendation on how they proceed. Mr. Mollis stated that they would go through the planning. He further stated that there are two different types of committees, advisory and regulatory. The regulatory has a specific job in accordance with the law; however, they could find that there could be improvements which they would provide to staff who would pass that along to him as Manager and he would pass it along to the Council.

President Mancini stated that zoning/planning amendments are project specific. Ms. LaFontaine stated it could be project specific or recommended by the Planning Department. She further stated that if the board or committee had a recommendation for a legislative change, they would go through the Planning Department, and we would do the reporting to the Council through the Manager. Mr. Mollis stated that even tonight's report by the Wickford Advisory Committee went through staff for revisions and approval before coming to the Council because they are the professionals.

President Mancini stated that he thinks he is hearing that the Planning Commission and Zoning Board have done this through the staff on a case-by-case project level. Mr. Mollis asked that as a Council do you want to hear recommendations from staff who are qualified and do this daily or do you want to hear from a volunteer organization, who may not have any planning qualifications. Mr. Mollis stated that he defers to his staff who he considers professionals and experts. He further stated that staff does a great job working with these committees and guides them.

Councilor McCoy stated that all of the boards and committees have at least one representative that is staff, Mr. Mollis stated that is correct. Councilor McCoy stated that each has scheduled meetings, agendas, and minutes and all are available to everyone on the Council. He further stated that if there is a board or committee who feels they have something they would like to share with Council, they would go through the respective department associated with the committee. Ms. LaFontaine stated that is correct. Councilor McCoy stated that if there is something he reads in these minutes and he has a question, he would submit that question to the Manager who would consult with the staff member.

Town Solicitor Callaghan stated that there are a couple of ways the Planning Commission reports to the Council; one is through the comprehensive plan which is revised every 10 years, and a five-year update is due this year. There is a statute that addresses how the Planning Commission is required to report to the appointing authority annually which includes work in the preceding year, recommending programs, plans and actions for future development. He thinks what Councilor Mandel is looking for is always in place and is there for the Council to act upon when it comes before them. Ms. LaFontaine stated that is one of the revised laws this year.

Councilor McCoy stated that from his perspective the chain of command is in place, the process for getting the information is in place. He thinks where we could do a better job is to formally, publicly recognize the efforts of the people who are appointed to these boards and committees. Especially those who are long serving members who all volunteer their time.

Councilor Anderson stated that she thinks the spirit we are discussing is collaboration and openness but balancing the structures as they exist ensuring that execution of staff time is considered and factored in. She does think Nicole has accomplished this in the spirit of what Councilor Mandel is proposing.

Councilor Mandel stated that he feels this is a very good first step but can't help but think that as the Manager appoints staff and the staff reports to the Manager, we the Council appoint Commission members and it is useful for us to hear from those members. To him that is still the disconnect. Mr. Mollis stated that the Council also appoints the Manager, and his job is to make sure that the Council is informed, whereas the committee members are volunteers and their willingness to serve could be based on desire to serve and not based on their expertise. Councilor Mandel stated that he appreciates that, and he just feels that all the boards and committees should have the opportunity to report to the Council if they so choose.

Councilor Page stated that she is fine with how we have been doing this.

Ms. LaFontaine stated that she thinks it's important for the Council to know if a board or commission is struggling with their charge, it is an important conversation to have.

Councilor Anderson asked if we are creating a mechanism by which the Manager and/or staff would report to the Council on the issues discussed tonight. Ms. LaFontaine stated that isn't part of the proposal, but it is something we can discuss. She further stated that requiring annual reports is not a bad thing.

Councilor McCoy stated that we have a process and mechanism in place. At every meeting the Town Manager provides a report, he has people who work for him who come to meetings to also provide information. We are fortunate to have one of the most experienced Town Managers we could possibly have. For him he also has the capability to look at the minutes of all these boards and committees and if he has a question, he will use the chain of command to get his answers.

Councilor Anderson stated that she agrees that the Manager does keep the Council apprised of things during his reports. However, perhaps having these boards and committees provide reports at a higher level of content may be beneficial and she would defer to the Manager and Staff to make a recommendation on how to accomplish this.

President Mancini stated that based on the report provided it is a good outline and he thinks Councilor Mandel would like to see more. He feels the consensus of the Council is that the report is a good line to start with and we can revisit this as we move on.

President Mancini thanked Ms. LaFontaine, Ms. Alyward, and the Manager for their report.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Item Number 31 was taken next.

31. Compensation Commission Report and Recommendation

Tracey McCue, Chair of the Compensation Commission stated that the Commission met on April 17, 2024 and reviewed past compensation of the Town Council and School Committee as follows:

Prior to 1988	Council President/School Committee Chair:	\$1,800/yr
	Council and School Committee Members:	\$1,200/yr
1988	Council President/School Committee Chair:	\$3,600/yr
	Council and School Committee Members:	\$2,400/yr
2018	Council President/School Committee Chair:	\$5,800/yr
	Council and School Committee Members:	\$3,800/yr

The Commission also reviewed compensation, ability to purchase health benefits and reimbursable expenses of the following municipalities:

Town	Town Council	School Committee	Health Benefits	Retirement	Expenses
East Greenwich	President: \$2,100 Member: \$1,800	Chair: \$2,100 Member: \$1,800	See (1)	No	No
Jamestown	President: \$3,000 Member: \$2,700	Chair: \$1,500 Member: \$1,200	No	No	No
Middletown	President: \$4,000 Member: \$2,500	Chair: \$1,400 Member: \$1,200	No	No	No
Narragansett	All Members \$2,100	All Members \$1200	See (2)	No	No
North Kingstown	President: \$5,800 Members: \$3,800	Chair: \$5,800 Members: \$3,800	See (3)	No	See (2)
South Kingstown	President: \$3,000 Members: \$2,000	Chair: \$3,000 Vice: \$2,500 Members: \$2,000	No	No	No
Johnston	President: \$6,910 Members: \$6,450	Chair: \$8,000 Members: \$6,000	No	No	No
Lincoln	President: \$3,000 Members: \$2,000	Breakdown not available \$13,750	---	---	---

1. Council Members are eligible for either a buyback of \$1,400/year OR if they take insurance the town covers \$225 per month (\$2,700 per year) and members are responsible for the rest of the cost.
2. Both Town Council and School Committee are entitled to membership in a town group health coverage plan, including Delta Dental, and to a town group life insurance policy in the amount of \$10,000 – of which cost of all is by the members.
3. Both the Town Council and School Committee have the option to participate in their respective group benefit plans at their own expense. Any reimbursement/vouchers of \$100.00 or more must be approved by the Town Council or School Committee prior to reimbursement.

Based upon discussion and this review, by a unanimous vote of the Commission, we recommend the following:

1. Maintain the present stipends levels for both the Town Council and the School Committee as follows:

Town Council President and School Committee Chair	\$5,800.00/per year
Town Council and School Committee Members	\$3,800.00/per year

2. Continue to allow the Town Council and School Committee members the option to participate in their respective group benefit plans at their own expense.
3. Any reimbursements/vouchers of \$100.00 or more be approved by the Town Council or School Committee body prior to issuing reimbursement.
4. That the next review of the Compensation Commission shall be completed no later than January of 2028 to ensure that any proposed increase be included into the budget.

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To receive and file the Compensation Commission's Report and Recommendation.

32. Authorization for the Town Manager to work with the North Kingstown Food Pantry on their effort to expand upon leased Town property

Motion by Councilor Mandel, seconded by Councilor Anderson and unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the Town Manager to work with the North Kingstown Food Pantry on their effort to expand upon leased property located at 445 School Street.

Councilor Page recused from voting on this item.

33. Request for Class B-Limited Alcoholic Beverage License Limits Increase

Motion by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously

VOTED: To receive and file the request by Rhody Slice, 7415 Post Road, to increase the Class B-Limited Alcoholic Beverage License Limits from 11 to 12; and it was

FURTHER VOTED: To instruct the Town Clerk to advertise the available Class B-Limited Alcoholic Beverage License.

34. Request for a Class B-Full Alcoholic Beverage License Limits Increase

Motion by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously

VOTED: To receive and file the request by Tampella Restaurant Enterprise LLC, dba Caffè Milano, 4001 Quaker Lane, to increase the Class B-Full Alcoholic Beverage License Limits from 28 to 29; and it was

FURTHER VOTED: To advertise an available Class B-Full Alcoholic Beverage License.

35. Arts Council – Appointments

Motion by Councilor Page, seconded by Councilor McCoy and unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Emily Bushman, 130 Mulberry Drive, Apt. #205, to the Arts Council to March 1, 2025, to fill the unexpired term of William Matson.

The Council directed the Clerk to advertise the remaining two (2) vacancies to the Arts Council.

36. Building Code Board of Appeals - Appointment

The Council directed the Clerk to advertise the vacancy of one (1) Second Alternate to the Building Code Board of Appeals as there were no applicants.

37. Economic Development Advisory Board - Appointments

The Council directed the Clerk to advertise the vacancy of one (1) First Alternate and one (1) Second Alternate to the Economic Development Advisory Board as there were no applicants.

Councilor Mandel stated that we are struggling to get applicants for alternate positions and asked if we really need to have them. Ms. Alyward stated she believes that it is required for the Building Code Board of Appeals. We have had vacancies for alternates on the Economic Development Advisory Board for a long time and thinks it would be reasonable to amend the ordinance eliminating these alternates. President Mancini stated that we have quite a few committees that have had vacancies for some time and suggested that staff review these committees. Ms. Alyward stated that staff did present a report a while ago to the Council with some recommendations and suggested that we come back to the Council at a future meeting.

38. Library Board of Trustees - Appointment

President Mancini stated that we have several very qualified applicants and suggested that the Council discuss this prior to making a motion.

Councilor Page stated that she received a recommendation from the Chair of the Board stating she would like to recommend Stacey Weinstein. The Chair also mentioned that her term is up in October, and she will not be reapplying for reappointment and agreed that there were several great applicants.

President Mancini stated that he supports the appointment of Stacey Weinstein who is a former Council Member and has served the community well. He stated that he also received calls from two members of the board supporting her.

Councilor McCoy stated that he spends a lot of time at the library and feels very strongly that the library is an important asset in our community. He further stated that he supports the appointment of Stacey Weinstein.

Councilor Mandel stated that there are exceptional and excellent candidates for this position and he would support Mike Donohue, who has done heroic work for the Town.

Councilor Anderson agreed that Mike Donohue is an excellent choice.

Mike Donohue stated that he would like to withdraw his application at this time.

Motion by Councilor McCoy, seconded by Councilor Page and unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Stacey Weinstein, 737 Old Baptist Road, to the Library Board of Trustees to October 1, 2024 to fill the unexpired term of Lori Vernon.

39. Veterans Day & Memorial Day Parades Committee – Appointments

The Council directed the Clerk to advertise the vacancy of two (2) members to the Veterans Day & Memorial Day Parades Committee as there were no applicants.

40. Zoning Board of Review – Appointment

Motion by Councilor McCoy, seconded by Councilor Mandel and unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Joseph Donohoe, 65 Mulberry Drive, Unit 305, Second Alternate to the Zoning Board of Review to July 1, 2027.

41. Correspondence

The following is a summary of the email correspondence received by the NKTC since its last regular meeting:

05/01/2024 – Maureen Mulvaney – Re: Thank you for your testimony

05/02/2024 – Peg Parker – Recent vote on school bond

05/03/2024 – Dianne Izzo – Short-term rentals, revisited

05/04/2024 – Maureen Mulvaney – The towns outsmarting AirBnB to make more homes available to residents

05/10/2024 (2x) – Sue Alexander – Mooring for 353/369 Earle Drive

05/11/2024 – Ed Renehan – Public Safety Bond

05/12/2024 – Heather Houle – 353/369 Earle Drive

05/13/2024 – Jennifer Mowbray – Proposed docks at 369 and 363 Earle Drive

05/13/2024 – Gregg Mastoras & Lara Metcalf – Proposed docks at 369 and 363 Earle Drive

05/14/2024 – Sue Alexander – Earle Drive Proposed Docks

05/14/2024 – TANK Organization – Flock Cameras

05/14/2024 – Lori Duffy – Teen Mental Health Summit

05/16/2024 – Janne Roehm – Lone Tree Point neighborhood proposed docks

05/16/2024 (2x) – Donna Hutchinson – Re: positive thoughts and pickleball courts

05/16/2024 - Barbara Perdito – Docks being considered on Earle Drive

05/16/2024 – Mike Donohue – Application for a position on the North Kingstown Free Library Board of Trustees

05/17/2024 – Paula Work – Dock at 353 and 369 Earle Drive

05/17/2024 – Phil Garrepy – Fwd: Lone Tree Point dock issue

05/17/2024 – Kathleen Guarino - Middletown commended for their excellent transgender, gender non-conforming, and transitioning student policy

05/18/2024 – Barbara Perito – Two docks on Earle Drive

Note: Information cut-off time and date was 2:00 p.m., Monday, May 20, 2024.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Jeannette Alyward
Town Clerk