MINUTES
TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
March 3, 2025
7:00 PM - Town Hall - Council Chambers
https://youtube.com/live/Hxu2MgwQQQA

1. **PRAYER - Mike Ludwick**

   A prayer was made by Councilor Ludwick.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

   The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. **ROLL CALL**

   Present: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire

   Absent: None

   Also Present were Town Manager, Christopher Bromson; Assistant Town Manager, Steve Bielenda; Assistant Town Attorney, Mark Cerrato; Public Works Director, Donald Nunes; and Town Clerk, Sheila Bailey.

4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT**

   The fire evacuation was announced.

5. **MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS**

   - Special Meeting - February 18, 2025

   MOTION #7154 by: Cynthia Mangini seconded: Bob Hendrickson to accept the minutes. Upon a **SHOW OF HANDS** vote, the Chair declared **MOTION #7154** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: Robert Cressotti.

   - Regular Meeting - February 18, 2025

   MOTION #7155 by: Cynthia Mangini seconded: John Santanella to accept the minutes. Upon a **SHOW OF HANDS** vote, the Chair declared **MOTION #7155** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: Robert Cressotti.

6. **SPECIAL GUESTS (Maximum 15 Minutes)**

- Municipal Redevelopment Authority (MRDA) - David Kooris, Executive Director

Community and Economic Development Director Aaron Marcavitch introduced David Kooris, Executive Director of the Municipal Redevelopment Authority (MRDA). Mr. Marcavitch was tasked with finding funding for municipal projects like the train station. The state established the Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority as a way for the state to provide avenues for funding for municipalities whose zoning regulations are align with the State of Connecticut's vision for public transit. Its main goal is to stimulate economic growth and promote transit development while focusing on developing housing around transit hubs and creating vibrant downtown areas.

David Kooris explained that as a quasi-public entity, they are governed by a board and the legislative branch and are allocated funding to help municipalities through transit and economic growth. They are currently funded with $60 million, which is slated to increase to $90 million over the next year. He explained that this program is entirely opt-in and voluntary and would be at no cost to the town. The application is a four-step process. First, following a public hearing, the local legislative body would need to vote to join the MRDA. The MRDA would then determine whether the projected plan would be feasible using the town's zoning regulations and provide recommendations to these regulations as needed. Mr. Kooris stressed that the MRDA could not override current zoning regulations. If the town decides against the recommendations, they can step away from the relationship and withdraw at any time. Technical support is available from the MRDA if the town does decide to use the MRDA recommendations. If both sides agree to enter into an agreement, an MOU would be drafted which would be reviewed by the Town Attorney. Once the agreement is executed, the level of support can vary, and GAP financing can be applied for. The MRDA will do whatever it takes to ensure permitting is as easy as possible.

Mr. Kooris explained that MRDA funds are not contingent upon an affordable housing requirement, so housing could be whatever fits the parameters of the needs of Enfield, whether it is fair market or affordable. Statutorily, they are limited to a half-mile radius from the proposed transit area or within the downtown, which may give way to mixed-use or walk-ability. He said that the half-mile radius would have to be around the proposed area regardless of whether the river would be an encumbrance. It also would not carry over to other municipalities which may be within the half-mile radius.

Mr. Kooris stated that MRDA and CRCOG are two separate entities, but they do work together from time to time. Within the area of demolition and redevelopment, they may have the opportunity to work alongside developers. Those developers would need to work within the scope of the town's zoning regulations. Since the train station is already planned, Mr. Kooris said that if approved at the public hearing, they could entertain funding applications around June or July, which is aggressive in his opinion.

Town Manager Bromson reiterated that this would be one of the few "no strings attached" opportunities for Enfield to get between $35-50 million for the train station. Mr. Bromson explained that over the summer, town planners from across the country came to Enfield to share their ideas for redeveloping the downtown area. These planners will be giving a presentation of their findings at the next council meeting. Town Planner Laurie Whitten is currently in the process of re-writing Enfield's zoning regulations. He believed this was the perfect opportunity for Enfield and encouraged an affirmative vote to hold a public hearing.

7. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION AND PETITIONS

Wendy Osada, 8 Windmill Road

Ms. Osada, of the Enfield Greater Together Community Fund, said the goal of the group is to identify the needs of the community and oversee their grant-making process. They awarded over $30,000 in grants during the 2024 grant year to Enfield non-profit organizations. Ms. Osada is asking for residents' help in ensuring their mission can continue. The next grant cycle is about to begin, and the maximum award is $5,000. In order to be eligible, the grant must be used to benefit the town, and the organization must have non-profit status, exempt under 501(c)(3), or the applying organization can use a fiscal sponsor who is. Currently, the committee is seeking new members who will seek to identify groups eligible for their grants. The group meets the second Thursday of each month and is open to residents 14 years or older who do not currently hold a town-elected position. Anyone interested in serving on the committee or applying for a grant can search online for "Enfield Greater Together Fund" or reach out to Ms. Osada personally for more information.

George Young, 8 Holly Lane

Mr. Young thanked the Assessor's office for explaining the new tax and assessment schedule even though his car taxes will go up. Mr. Young had expected to see a resolution regarding the Senior Volunteer Tax Credit program on this evening's agenda and asked if he could expect it for the next one. He also asked why there were excess salaries and health insurance funds as part of the transfer amount for item 13.D, and whether they were over budgeted or unable to hire someone. He questioned whether the transfer amount for Item 13.F was the first of two transfers a $1.6 million project and if they should expect another transfer of the remainder from unused funds. That amount is the maximum allowed before having to go to referendum by the current Charter. He wondered why the project was not going to a referendum, since the tanks would need to be removed by November 2026. He inquired about the Alden Avenue gym project and if it would be moving forward. He asked for transparency from the Council and the DPW. He had previously recommended to the Charter Revision Commission that they decrease the maximum they could spend on a capital improvement project during the course of one year, using net valuation versus gross valuation. He didn't believe they looked into reducing the maximum they could spend without a referendum.

Jessica Soule, 10 Brook Road

Ms. Soule spoke as a special education educator within Enfield. Ms. Soule shared that paraprofessionals and behavior techs that work with special education students are the backbone of the program. They provide one-on-one support, behavioral support, and foster communication. Oftentimes, paraprofessionals cultivate relationships with students that complement their learning style, gaining insight and data for student IEPs. They also encourage independence while maintaining dignity through everyday activities.

Ms. Soule stated that the paraprofessionals in Enfield are severely underpaid compared to those in surrounding towns, which will lead to under-staffing. With a high turnover, the students may experience anxiety and difficulties acclimating to new support staff. Behavior techs provide much-needed classroom support following a detailed plan proven to provide results. They collect data to show what is working and determine ways to improve the program. They also identify interventions, reward good behaviors, and track progress towards IEP goals. One of their more important functions is to prevent and manage crises using specialized training to calm and defuse situations. She said it was important to invest in special education programs as it is more of a moral decision rather than a financial one. Special education students deserve the same opportunities for success as their peers. She asked the Council to consider the needs of future students, including their children and grandchildren, and how their budget decisions could affect them down the road.

Michael Rinaldi, 12 Martin Terrace

Mr. Rinaldi believed that of the three options presented for the Martin Terrace sidewalks, the first made the most sense because of the time and energy that had already gone into the engineering and design. He believed the other two options would not be as efficient as the original plan. Putting the sidewalk on the opposite side would force the alignment of the road to go straighter, which would not slow down traffic like a curved road would. The placement of the sidewalks for the first option would allow for the plows to push snow up onto the pad as the road curves. The third option would narrow an already narrow road, add sidewalks on both sides, and leave a three-foot snow shelf on each side which would not achieve the intended goal. The sidewalks and three-foot snow shelf would be impassable and dangerous if another storm the size of the last one was to happen. He explained that during the last storm, the snow was pushed upwards of seven feet onto his property. He believed that a design that included two sidewalks, road realignment, relocated utility poles and extra building materials would in fact impact the budget. He offered alternatives for slowing traffic on the street, including speed bumps or tables, or possible crosswalks to connect the sidewalks. None of these options were mentioned in the three possible design offerings. They also lacked signage. He advocated for option one and said it could still use some improvement and safety changes with minimal impact.

Marjorie Gandossy, 31 Frew Terrace
Ms. Gandossy thanked the current Council for all the work they do for the town. Ms. Gandossy asked why a government meeting starts with a prayer. She didn't believe that followed the separation of church and state. She said that Enfield is a diverse town, and an effort should be made to support those differences. She believed that although the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee didn't work, perhaps another group would. She referenced a newspaper article from earlier in the week and stated that she did not believe that Black Lives Matter flags were anti-police. She believed the flags should serve as an awareness of the black lives that have been taken. The flags are a representation of people, just like flags for members of the LGBTQ+ community. It was her hope that recognition of these issues in smaller governments would work their way up to higher levels of government.

Christina Dowdy, 74 Steele Road
Ms. Dowdy, a parent and long-time resident, believed that as elected officials of Enfield, the Council's responsibility was to secure the future success and well-being of the town. To ensure the success of Enfield, she said it was the solemn responsibility of the Council to fully fund the education budget. Residents are looking to the Council for solutions and proposals that would allow them to rebuild and repair the damage from the budget deficit. She is proud of the students who passionately fight for their right to a great education. She said an educated society benefits everyone. She recounted her many memories as an Enfield student and the impact those opportunities had on her. She said that every taxpayer deserves to see a fully funded education budget that includes the necessary staff and support to provide a safe and efficient educational environment. The budget from last year has impacted students' performance and mental health, and teachers and staff are doing what they can to help. She said it was unfair that the classroom size had increased by as much as five to ten students over last year. Many of the teachers have also taken on additional roles without an increase in pay.

Melanie Kulpeksa, 200 N. Maple Street
Ms. Kulpeksa read some of the accomplishments of Enfield students, as noted by the Superintendent, including making marked gains in English language arts, science, and math. Scoring above-state average in science and math in NGSS Science and SAT math testing. She noted 76% of students in the class of 2024 went on to further their education, with 22% attending highly competitive institutions. She believed those statistics could be

severely impacted if Enfield fails to fund what is necessary to present qualified candidates for higher education, workforce, and the military. Schools must be funded so they will not fall behind. Ms. Kulpeksa said that years ago she asked her father how he felt about funding education even though he had no family members in the school system at that time. He replied that he was happy to pay, because "those kids would grow up and run this country." "They are the future, and we need to give them a good foundation". She, as a Republican, understands the need to spend money carefully but knows that the students are the future of CT and the US. She believes the students and schools will suffer if they are not properly funded, causing people to leave, property values to plummet, and businesses to withdraw from coming here. She urged the Council to fully fund the proposed budget when the time comes.

Greg Schoorens, 19 Sam Street
Mr. Schoorens agreed that more money needs to be spent investing in the paraprofessionals, because they are extremely valuable and deserve support. Mr. Schoorens stated that he was tired of seeing Enfield in the news because of comments he deemed ignorant made by Council members. He directed his frustration at the Mayor, saying that he did not appear to support minorities or DEI. He said that unqualified minorities were not stealing jobs away from qualified white people. All staff and employees must meet the same requirements, and there is a lack of diverse teachers in Enfield. He believed the comments would deter minorities from applying in Enfield because it would appear that they were not welcome. He said that Black Lives Matter flags are not anti-police and felt that it was the other way around. Councilor Santanella asked for a point of order and asked that speakers refrain from personalities. Mayor Nelson acknowledged the point of order but welcomed Mr. Schoorens to continue addressing him and his previous comments.

Mr. Schoorens said it would be nice if Enfield was in the news for positive reasons. He said Council members need to be cognizant of the fact that they need to serve all Enfield residents in their official capacities, and of not denouncing things that are meant to help. He was offended that the BOE had been called an embarrassment, since he is an Enfield teacher, resident, and taxpayer. He said friendlier language would encourage families to move to Enfield and he hoped that there would be no negative comments made during Women's History Month.

8. COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Councilor Santanella said that earlier in the week the Culture and Arts Commission hosted an event called "Art Squash" at Thompson Hall. Mr. Santanella said that the name of the event was interesting, and it showed multiple artistic interpretations of squash. He encouraged artistic residents to reach out to the Culture and Arts Commission if they are interested in participating. Area restaurants donated food, and there was a presentation given. He also commented that he was committed to providing the students of Enfield with a great education and opportunity, and he would never bet against them.

Councilor Cekala thanked the speakers who came forward this evening. Ms. Cekala said she would continue to find ways to fully fund the BOE's requested budget at a minimum. She would even look into funding them over what they ask. She was hopeful of getting consensus from the Council to give the BOE what they asked for in their budget presentation.

Councilor Cressotti was intrigued by the squash presentation at Thompson Hall and looked forward to seeing the many interpretations. He attended a presentation honoring Black History Month put on by the Ujima Society, which sought to educate and inspire African American culture in the area. Professor Femi Bogleassegai spoke about her views on racism, and Enfield's Poet Laureate Nzima Hutchins was also in attendance. The Ujima Society will be hosting "Healing Through the Arts" on March 15th as part of their "Let's Talk" event, and he encouraged residents to attend. He congratulated the Enfield Stars and other athletes at the Special Olympics Winter Games in the Eversource snowshoeing and cross-country skiing events. Councilors were invited to the Stowe Early Learning Center to read to children for their Read Across America event. He was impressed with tonight's speakers and appreciated the opinions and views they stated. He agreed that the education system should always have a vote to make it whole. He hoped the Senior Tax Credit resolution would be available for the next Council meeting. On Friday, March 14th, at 8am, the Black Crow Coffee Shop will be open in Thompsonville.

Councilor Mangini highlighted the accomplishments of Eleanor Roosevelt, Rosa Parks, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg in honor of Women's History Month. Ms. Mangini attended the Ujima event and found it to be very enlightening. She also attended the Read Across America event and had the opportunity to read *Green Eggs and Ham* alongside Mayor Nelson. She reiterated the sentiments of her caucus regarding the school budget, and said the funding is not enough. She said that the BOE needs to be straightforward with the amount they ask for and not scale back.

Councilor Rousseau's daughter is a student of Mr. Schoorens. He said that he heard Mr. Schoorens is a wonderful science teacher but spends much of his time in the classroom sharing personal beliefs and social and political activism. Mr. Rousseau did not believe that what was happening in the classroom was appropriate and made students uncomfortable. He said students are worried about retaliation and are unsure their concerns will be taken seriously by administration. He asked if Mr. Schooerns could stick to the science curriculum.

Councilor Unghire said that prayer before government meetings is done on a national scale and is not unusual. Ms. Unghire said they have freedom of religion, not from religion.

Councilor Hendrickson thanked Mayor Nelson and DPW Director Donald Nunes for getting back to him about the Powder Hollow and Enfield High fields. Mr. Hendrickson said the projects are going well. The Simon Road project was completed and only finishing touches needed to be made. He said that the Senior Volunteer Tax Credit program should be discussed because he gets a lot of questions about it.

Councilor Ludwick asked if it was possible to get more information on the Circuit Breaker Program and the upcoming deadline. He believed applications are through the Community Development office. He also believed that the BAA deadline was also fast approaching and asked for confirmation.

Deputy Mayor Pyznar said that prayer is a form of unity and brings everyone together as a Council. Ms. Pyznar supports starting the meetings with prayer. She asked if it was possible to put the Enfield Greater Together link on the town's website to make it easier for interested volunteers or those looking for grant opportunities.

Councilor Mangini had the privilege of working within the Enfield school district and said it would be unfair for anyone who does not or has not worked with students in the classroom to judge the work of teachers. She said they play many parts in the classroom, and it was not up to the Council to criticize what is being done in the classroom.

Mayor Nelson said he would also like to have a link put on the town's website for Enfield Greater Together so it can gain more exposure and help the community. He was under the impression that liaisons were working with the Commission on Aging to make recommended adjustments to the Senior Volunteer Tax Credit Program before the Council could consider implementing it. As it stands, they have not received the recommendations. He said the $800,000 for the oil tanks had been moved to the Alden Avenue project, which did not pan out. Subsequently, the funds were re-allocated to the pump station, but the bid came in double what it was originally. The oil tank project needs to be completed per a DEEP mandate as the tanks expire in 2026, which is why they are moving the funds back over to the oil tanks. The project is slated to take a few years to complete. Funds are allocated every year, so the town does not need to bond or borrow to complete projects. He believed next year at budget time they would see the remainder of the funds allocated to the oil tanks. Mr. Nelson further believed the $100,000 from salaries came from vacant positions within DPW. Currently, there are two open Deputy Director of DPW positions.

Mr. Nelson stated that it was important to him to start the meetings with prayer and there was no obligation for anyone to participate. Council members are not forced to say a prayer or observe a moment of silence if they do not want to. He addressed Mr. Schoorens and said that it was inappropriate to indoctrinate children in his classroom. He said that students are supposed to be safe in a public place and to learn the curriculum approved by the BOE. It was his opinion that the state should use the Public Safety Academy as a military school. He said the amount of money the BOE uses to discipline students could be used to help fund the school. Any student who causes a disruption or risk to other students and faculty members would automatically get removed and placed in the military school. If a parent was in disagreement with the arrangement, then they would be responsible for finding alternative schooling. He enjoyed reading Dr. Seuss for Read Across America and had the opportunity to read in his three-year-old grandson's classroom. He said that ECDC is one of the best programs that Enfield has to offer residents.

9. TOWN MANAGER REPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Town Manager Bromson said a resolution would be presented to the council with the recommendations from the Commission on Aging regarding the remaining funds from the Senior Repair program and how the funds should be spent.

10. TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT

None.

11. REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

Councilor Nasuta said that last Friday there was a Zoom call between the State of Connecticut and Enfield to discuss roof reimbursement eligibility. He thanked Representative Hall for setting up the meeting. They were told they could move forward with the roof projects, and it would not affect the modernization projects as long as roof installation work did not impede on the modernization projects. After the call, there was a long discussion, and it was decided that they would move forward on Parkman, Stowe, and Crandall. They also decided to put bid packages together, as well as reimbursement submissions. It was determined they could put bids out as long as they were simultaneously submitting the reimbursement funding paperwork.

Councilor Rousseau said they had their second meeting with the PK-5 Modernization Committee, and he was pleased that member Randy Daigle was in the audience and would be speaking later in the meeting. Last Wednesday they had the opportunity to tour Hazardville Memorial Elementary, and it was agreed that the school needed some updating. They followed up with their meeting at Eli Whitney. They discussed the timeline and said it would be highly unlikely to complete the work needed in time for a November referendum. He believed that a special referendum on the PK-5 Modernization would not be until 2026.

One of the first steps was to vote on Item H which he believed would get approved. The next step would be to hire an architect through an RFQ (request for qualifications). Those that are qualified would send in a quality-based selection, and if chosen, would only be qualified for the design phase. Further bids will go out for future phases. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, March 12th, and they will discuss allowing public input at future meetings. They will start the meeting with a tour of Stowe Early Learning Center and end at the Enfield Street School. Currently, the meetings are every two weeks but may move to weekly as needed.

Councilor Unghire said they had the first America250 Committee meeting where they discussed the celebration of America's 250th anniversary. Ms. Unghire said there were a lot of ideas on how to hold the perfect celebration in 2026 with a special focus in July. She looked forward to the next meeting and would keep residents up to date on the progress.

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. **Resolution to Hold a Public Hearing Regarding the Municipal Redevelopment Authority**

MOTION by: John Santanella, seconded: Michael Ludwick to take this item from the table. Upon a **SHOW OF HANDS** vote, the Chair declared the **MOTION** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None.

RESOLUTION #7156 by: Cynthia Mangini, seconded: John Santanella.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Enfield Town Council does hereby schedule a public hearing regarding joining the Municipal Redevelopment Authority Program to be held on March 17, 2025, at 6:55 pm. in the Council Chambers, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield CT in order to receive public comment.

Upon a **ROLL CALL** vote, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #7156** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None.

13. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Agenda

MOTION #7157 by: Cynthia Mangini, seconded: John Santanella to accept the Consent Agenda. Upon a **SHOW OF HANDS** vote, the Chair declared **MOTION #7157** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None. ***The full resolution is included below.***

1. **Request for Transfer of Funds for Public Safety-Distracted Driving Grant - $24,803**

BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made:

FROM: Distracted Driving Enforcement Program

DDHVE Grant Revenue	25006130-461211	*$24,803*

TO: Distracted Driving Enforcement Program

Overtime	25006130-514000	*$23,520*
Medicare	25006130-522100	$341
Workers Compensation	25006130-526000	$941
Unemployment	25006130-525000	$1

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of 2/24/2025, by John A. Wilcox, Director of Finance.

B. Appointment(s)–Town Council Appointed - **NONE**

C. **Resolution to Change the Road Alignment and Sidewalk Alignment on Martin Terrace**

Mayor Nelson read the three offered solutions to the Martin Terrace redesign and realignment.

- Option #1 would be to keep the design presented. The design would keep sidewalks on the easterly side and shift the road to the west to create a five-foot snow shelf.
- Option #2 would keep the sidewalks on the westerly side, add a five-foot snow shelf, shift the road to the east and remove the easterly sidewalks.
- Option #3 would narrow the road to fifteen-feet, install four-foot sidewalks on both sides of the road, and create a three-foot snow shelf on each side.

He stated there would be no budget impact.

RESOLUTION #7158 by: Michael Ludwick, seconded: Cynthia Mangini.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Enfield Town Council approves Option ____, as set forth above.

Councilor Ludwick thanked DPW Director Donald Nunes for taking the time to create other options. Mr. Nunes stated he had the opportunity to speak to residents on Martin Terrace about their concerns regarding the bus stop. He also had the opportunity to speak to the bus company which said that whether the students stood at the corner of each bus stop or in the middle of the road, the bus would block the entire entrance to the street. He provided a presentation showing the three options. Councilor Ludwick thanked Mr. Nunes' staff for taking the time to hand-deliver notices to residents on the street. He said it showed that local government cares about the needs of residents.

Councilor Hendrickson asked Mr. Nunes what the budget impact would be on the three options. Mr. Nunes said that the funds would be shifted to the different areas of the project as needed, which would limit the impact on the budget. He said that if they decided on option three, no parking signage would need to be installed because the road would be narrowed. The first two options would still allow for on-road parking. Mayor Nelson said his ultimate solution would be to turn Martin Terrace into a dead-end road or add a cul-de-sac, which would help limit traffic. He understood that was not an option. He could not fathom removing on-street parking to add sidewalks on both sides. He felt the bus stop concerns were valid and was relieved to hear the bus blocked the entire road, allowing children to remain in their driveways until the bus arrived. He believed option one made the most sense. He asked if it was possible to make an amendment to option one to allow Martin Terrace to become a "test street" and implement the use of speed bumps.

Councilor Cressotti said that during the original discussions, on-street parking was not a consideration. Mr. Cressotti was unsure how often on-street parking was used with the current set-up. He said that the parking situation is his biggest consideration when choosing an option.

AMENDMENT #1 by: Michael Ludwick, seconded: John Santanella to add Option #1 - *Keep the design presented with the sidewalks on the easterly side and shift the road to the west to create a five (5) foot snow shelf* to the resolution.

Upon a **ROLL CALL** vote, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #7158** adopted **AS AMENDED**. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None.

Consensus was made to refer discussion regarding the addition of speedbumps to the DPW and Public Safety sub-committees for further discussion.

D. **Resolution to Transfer Funds for the WPCF Fuel Tank Replacement Project - $150,000**

RESOLUTION #7159 by: Cynthia Mangini, seconded: Lori Unghire.

BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made:

FROM: WATER POLLUTION CONTROL

Salaries	21003350	511000	$ 75,000
Health/Medical Insurance	21003350	521000	$ 75,000

TO: WATER POLLUTION CONTROL

Transfers to Capital	21003350	593010	$150,000

FROM: WPC - CAPITAL REVENUE

WPC Transfers In	30840000	488012	$150,000

TO: WPC - CAPITAL NON-RECURRING

Other Equipment	30808182	573900	$150,000

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of February 27, 2025, by John A. Wilcox, Director of Finance

Upon a **ROLL CALL** vote, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #7159** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None.

E. **Resolution to Transfer Funds for Replacement of the Playground Safety Surfacing at the Central Library - $217,000**

RESOLUTION #7160 by: Cynthia Mangini, seconded: Michael Ludwick.

BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made:

FROM: CAPITAL NON-RECURRING - B&G STORAGE BUILDING

Construction Services	31008206	545000	$217,000

TO: ***CAPITAL NON-RECURRING - TOWN PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS***

Construction Services	31008814 545000	$217,000

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of February 27, 2025, by John A. Wilcox, Director of Finance.

Mr. Nunes said that during the Facilities Consolidation Plan four years ago, they discussed moving B&G from Prospect Street to the Annex. The plans went out to bid two times. The first time was for the design build, and the second was a regular build. Since Covid, the cost of steel has skyrocketed. To complete the project, they would need three times the amount of what the budget was originally. The plan would realistically need 17,000 sq ft. of space to cover the equipment that is being housed outside. For this reason, the project did not make fiscal sense to continue. The current plan is to leave the equipment where it is, but Mr. Nunes does not know for how long that would be feasible. The quotes were made in 2021 and 2023.

Councilor Cekala said she was in favor of resurfacing the playground surfaces. She was concerned about abandoning a project that would require more money to finish and moving it to another project. Councilor Ludwick stated that originally, they were going to sell the Prospect Street property, which never happened. Subsequently, they were going to move B&G to the Annex, which also didn't happen. Mr. Ludwick said that there have been many moving parts which have prevented the Facilities Consolidation Plan from coming to fruition.

Mayor Nelson said that the project was never originally funded or built, so he did not believe it had anything to do with the current Council. The money was just moved during the last budget to help fund the BOE, and all CIP projects were halted. He said that this was the best option to finish the project with little impact, and he would like to see it completed by moving the borrowed money back where it belonged.

Upon a **ROLL CALL** vote, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #7160** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None.

F. **Resolution to Transfer Funds for the DPW Fuel Station - $838,000**

RESOLUTION #7161 by: Cynthia Mangini, seconded: Michael Ludwick.

BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made:

FROM: ***CAPITAL NON-RECURRING FUND - ALDEN AVENUE GYM***

Buildings	31008203 572000	$582,910.24

FROM: CAPITAL NON-RECURRING FUND - B&G STORAGE BUILDING

Construction Services	31008206 545000	$255,089.76

TO: CAPITAL NON-RECURRING FUND - FUEL TANK REPLACEMENT

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES	31008219 545000	$838,000.00

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of February 28, 2025, by John A. Wilcox, Director of Finance

Mayor Nelson said that this was another project where the funds were moved during budget time. The tanks are set to expire in 2026 and are required to be replaced. The project will be funded by a multi-year funding stream. Mr. Nunes explained that the buried tanks are being replaced by above-ground tanks. Councilor Ludwick asked if it was possible to have a two-month fuel reserve in the event of a shut-off or some other incident. Options would be made available during the budget discussions.

Upon a **ROLL CALL** vote, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #7161** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None.

G. **Request for Transfer of Funds to the Town Attorney Legal Account - $85,000**

RESOLUTION #7162 by: Michael Ludwick, seconded: Robert Cressotti.

RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made.

FROM: GENERAL FUND

Appropriated Balance	Fund 10040000-499000	$85,000.00

TO: TOWN ATTORNEY

Legal	10130000-533200	$85,000.00

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of February 27, 2025, by John A. Wilcox, Director of Finance

Mayor Nelson explained that the transfer was being made to pay for the legal fees incurred for fighting against the solar project. He said that Enfield had a great fight, but it is difficult to go against the CT Siting Council. The other part of the transfer was union negotiations.

Upon a **ROLL CALL** vote, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #7162** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None.

H. **Resolution to Transfer Funds for Architectural and Engineering Costs for the PK-5 Elementary Schools and Eagle Academy Therapeutic Day School Pre-Referendum Committee - $102,961**

RESOLUTION #7163 by: Cynthia Mangini, seconded: Gina Cekala.

BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made:

FROM: GENERAL FUND - REVENUES

Appropriated Fund Balance	10040000	499000	$102,961

TO: GENERAL FUND - NON-DEPARTMENTAL CHARGES - TRANSFERS OUT AND CONTINGENCIES

Transfer to Capital	1080092	593010	$102,961

FROM: CAPITAL NON-RECURRING FUND - REVENUES

General Fund Transfers In	31042025	480001	$102,961

TO: CAPITAL NON-RECURRING FUND - FACILITY FEASIBILITY/DEMOGRAPHIC

Other Professional Fees	31008337	533900	$100,000
Salaries - Part Time	31008337	512000	$ 2,750
Social Security	31008337	522000	$ 171
Medicare	31008337	522100	$ 40

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of February 28, 2025, by John A. Wilcox, Director of Finance

Mayor Nelson said there were concerns during the original discussion in Leadership regarding the dollar amount. Discussions were also had with Randy Daigle and John Wilcox.

Mr. Daigle, Chair of the PK-5 Referendum Committee, said that they gathered all their reports and data from the last several years and determined there were insufficient funds to hire an architectural engineering firm for the pre-referendum services. Mr. Daigle gave a presentation justifying his request to increase the budget to $202,961. His presentation outlined what would be included for pre-referendum services within the $202,961. He explained that the classrooms would need to be designed based on the needs of the individual programs and classes. Evaluations of the schools, classrooms, and bus routes would be taken into consideration during the planning and design phases. Since Covid, services like bus loops have changed, decreasing the number of students who take the bus and increasing the number of passenger vehicles during drop off.

Mr. Daigle discussed the possibility of needing to build a new school while others need to be updated, and what programs the state offered to help cut costs. He also explained new requirements for building if they had to knock down and rebuild a school, including size, testing, and acreage. During the design phase, it would have to be done schematically in order to meet program requirements. He said that Ed Spec is a requirement, and it is the guiding standard that is used in educational programs and facilities. He provided the Ed Spec requirements for both elementary and early education, a prototype developed by the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). The guidelines put forth for Ed Spec must be followed and accounted for to ensure consistency. The cost analysis must be accurate, otherwise, the town would be responsible for paying for any discrepancy that was not originally given to the state.

In order to make the deal enticing to an engineering firm, it was suggested that they offer them the formal contract for the second phase. The state requires one architect per school; one architect cannot design and contract for all schools. This would mean each school would need to go to bid. The same firm could win all the bids, but they would need to be capable of completing the work within the timeframe. A target referendum date of June 1, 2026, was offered, so a selected firm would have the time to meet all their requirements. Aside from Ed Specs, they also have Phase 1 Environmental tests which need to be completed. The schools need to be tested for PCBs, asbestos, and other contaminants. Any findings must be remediated before the other work can start.

A report from the engineering firm who did JFK Middle School provided their report and the findings were not good. Mr. Daigle suggested that the firm they decide to go with should also review the report and do their own research. He was told during a meeting with the state that any of the fees associated with the pre-referendum were reimbursable. For example, if they spent $200,000, it would be reimbursable by up to 71%, as well as money previously spent towards this project. He reached out to several firms to let them know the town would be going out to bid for this project in the hope that they would have six to eight firms to choose from. When deciding to renovate these schools to new, they must meet a twenty-year lifecycle, meaning future work need not be done for another twenty years. Some items would be covered by warranty.

It was determined that during the time of construction, the students should not be in the buildings, so their learning would not be disrupted. The solution would be to place them in the new school during that time. Since the new school would be partly reimbursable, they would need to determine what type of model to follow to keep in line with Ed Spec. It could not be remodeled afterward and be eligible for additional reimbursement if the needs change. The new school would have to be all-purpose until the last school was completed, and then it could be renovated as its final purpose. He said they could not hire an architect if they didn't plan to start the schools for another three years. This process of hiring an architect would occur several times depending on which school was next in line. He believed they could not delay the process any longer, that the schools were in desperate need of updating and lacked proper ventilation. Once approved, a PAC (Political Action Committee) must be created to promote and educate the town's taxpayers. Council members or other elected officials cannot be on the committee, but Pre-Referendum members can attend the meetings as non-voting participants. The PAC can obtain donations, funds, and answer questions from the public.

Mayor Nelson offered an alternative solution by moving students to opposite sides of the schools during renovations to eliminate the need to build a new school completely. The process would be repeated for all schools. He also suggested the idea of using one floor of the Public Safety Academy for a year or two as swing space. Mr. Daigle said all options are on the table until the right solution is chosen to meet all program requirements. He didn't believe they could have students in the schools while construction was going on, and they would need to decide where they could be placed. Unfortunately, Fermi is not an option because it is months away from losing its accreditation and does not have proper ADA compliance. Mr. Daigle believed he could bring down the $200 million proposal and get it closer to $170 million, because he was able to cut $32 million from the cost of JFK Middle School and still come in under budget.

Councilor Cressotti agreed they need the extra $100,000 to get this project up and running.

AMENDMENT #1 by: Robert Cressotti, seconded: Gina Cekala to add an additional $100,000 to the resolution and appropriate a total of $202,961.
Upon a **SHOW OF HANDS** vote, the Chair declared the **AMENDMENT #1** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None. Cynthia Mangini had stepped out of the room.

Upon a **ROLL CALL** vote, the Chair declared **RESOLUTION #7163** adopted **AS AMENDED**. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, John Santanella, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None. Cynthia Mangini had stepped out of the room. Finance Director John Wilcox clarified the account transfers. ***The amended resolution is as follows.***

BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with Chapter VI, Section 8(f) of the Town Charter, the following transfer is hereby made:

FROM: GENERAL FUND - REVENUES

Appropriated Fund Balance	10040000 499000	**$202,961**

TO: GENERAL FUND - NON-DEPARTMENTAL CHARGES - TRANSFERS OUT AND CONTINGENCIES

Transfer to Capital	1080092 593010	**$202,961**

FROM: CAPITAL NON-RECURRING FUND - REVENUES

General Fund Transfers In	31042025 480001	**$202,961**

TO: CAPITAL NON-RECURRING FUND - FACILITY FEASIBILITY/DEMOGRAPHIC

Other Professional Fees	31008337 533900	**$200,000**
Salaries - Part Time	31008337 512000	$ 2,750
Social Security	31008337 522000	$ 171
Medicare	31008337 522100	$ 40

I hereby certify that the above-stated funds are available as of February 28, 2025, by John A. Wilcox, Director of Finance

14. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- Fire District Tax Collection

Mayor Nelson was given consensus to give the MOU to the Fire Departments for review and Assistant Town Attorney Cerrato reminded the Council the MOU is only a draft. Councilor Ludwick reminded the council that one of the key points in discussion with the fire departments is that they requested a contract with the town and not just an MOU.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE SAID MEETING

None.

16. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS/APPLIES ONLY IF PRIOR TO 11:00 p.m.

Marjorie Gandossy, 31 Frew Terrace
Ms. Gandossy believed there needed to be a separation of church and state, as our Founding Fathers intended. Ms. Gandossy thanked Councilor Rousseau for standing up but believed it would have been better if the Superintendent addressed the teacher.

Patricia Wright, 66 Oakwood Street
Ms. Wright was excited that the Council showed enthusiasm for working with Mr. Daigle on improving the schools. Ms. Wright respectfully asked the Council to review the last BOE meeting and look at the Superintendent's presentation. She asked them to put money into the people who fill the buildings and work to improve the schools. She said that the state is the reason for the lack of special education funding and not the students. She pleaded with the Council to ensure Enfield gets the money from the state that is owed to them. She believed they would have a larger attendance for the Public Hearing if they moved it to another date and not on St. Patrick's Day.

17. COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Unghire responded to Ms. Gandossy by stating that the separation of church and state does not exist in the Constitution, but in a letter that Thomas Jefferson wrote. In the letter, he stated that the government cannot tell you what faith to be or what church to attend. Councilor Ludwick referenced his pocket Constitution and said that in the First Amendment it said that Congress could not make laws establishing religion. He said that by praying they were not establishing a religion, and it fell under freedom of speech. During the opening prayer, Councilors may say whatever they choose to in whichever way they prefer.

Councilor Rousseau said that they are already seven months into the school year, and issues with the teacher have been happening since September. He didn't believe that it should be left to him to say something, but those in charge had failed. Mr. Rousseau said he would be a voice for students who were afraid to speak out. Many Council members said that it was a personnel issue, and it shouldn't be discussed at the dais. Mayor Nelson said that the discussions were political issues that students should not be a part of.

18. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by: Cynthia Mangini, seconded: Robert Cressotti to adjourn.
Upon a **SHOW OF HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared the **MOTION** adopted unanimously, and the meeting stood adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila M. Bailey, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council

Lindsay Petrucci, Assistant Town Clerk
Secretary of the Council