



**MINUTES
TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
June 2, 2025
5:30 PM - Town Hall - Scitico Room**

1. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: John Santanella

Also present were Town Manager, Christopher Bromson; Interim Town Attorney, Tom Tyler; Assistant Town Attorney, Lawrence Widem; Assistant Town Attorney, Mark Cerrato; Director of Finance, John Wilcox; and Town Clerk, Sheila Bailey.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION #7235 by: Cynthia Mangini seconded: Bob Hendrickson to go into Executive Session to discuss the following item(s).

Upon a **SHOW OF HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #7235** adopted. Yes: Gina Cekala, Robert Cressotti, Bob Hendrickson, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini, Jim Nasuta, Ken Nelson Jr., Marie Pyznar, Jeff Rousseau, Lori Unghire No: None Abstain: None.

The Executive Session of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Chair Nelson at 5:31pm.

A. Pending Litigation

- CDW, Inc. v. Town of Enfield
- Hernandez v. Enfield Board of Education et al

B. Real Estate Negotiations

- 5 Taylor Road

Chair Nelson reconvened the Special Meeting at 6:02pm and stated that during the Executive Session, no votes or actions were taken by the Council.

The Town Council moved the Special Meeting to Council Chambers for the following:

3. Charter Revision Commission – Council Recommendations Discussion

Commissioners Cremona, Cresssotti, Dumond, Fiore, Ludwick, Nasuta, Nelson, Price, Sferrazza, and Zannoni were present.

Councilor Ludwick stated that he supported the referendum cutoff being adjusted to greater than 4% to give the residents more of a voice in how they are taxed. He felt that the Council should have to justify why they would need an expenditure increase of greater than 4% and the taxpayers should decide if the justification is warranted.

Council Pyznar explained that surrounding towns' referendums are failing because the increases are too high. She supported a trigger of 4% because she felt the lower the increase the greater the chance the referendum would pass.

Councilor Cekala said that she did not support changing the Charter to require budget referendums. She felt that the residents elect the Council to be their Board of Finance, and they should fulfill that responsibility. With inflation at approximately 2%, it does not leave very much of a cushion with which to meet future budgetary challenges.

Councilor Mangini thanked the Charter Revision Commission for their hard work. She stated that she did not support going to a referendum. Enfield is a large town and the budget is complicated. Ms. Mangini was concerned that the average resident would not have enough knowledge and understanding of the information presented by the Town Manager, Finance Director and Department Heads to be able to make an informed decision. She believed it would be a disservice to Enfield.

Councilor Hendrickson was in favor of changing the budget cap to 4% because he believed it made the Council work harder to find ways to reduce the budget.

Mayor Nelson stated that he believed in a referendum process because the residents should have a say if the Town Council proposed a large budget increase. Mr. Nelson explained that this year's budget was a good example of why a cap is good for the town. The budget as proposed would have resulted in a \$700 increase in taxes for the average homeowner. The Council did the work and got the increase down to \$200 which included one of the largest increases ever given to the BOE's budget.

Councilor Cressotti stated that he did not support a referendum. However, when the Charter Revision Commission stated deliberating on a percentage for a referendum trigger, they began at 8%. They continued to negotiate until the majority agreed to a 5% cap. He believed 4% would be too restrictive. He was also concerned about the cost of holding a referendum and possibly multiple referenda. Charter Revision Commission member Annemarie Nasuta clarified that the Charter revisions do not include multiple referenda. A referendum would be triggered if the proposed expenditure budget was greater than the cap. If the referendum failed, the budget would be set at the cap, and the Council would have seven days to meet and made additional cuts to the budget. Mr. Cressotti reiterated that the Commission worked hard to agree to a percentage and that agreement should be honored.

Mr. Ludwick asked for clarification as to whether the Commission could reject the referendum process altogether if they did not support the 4% cap. Town Clerk Bailey responded that the Commission filed their recommendation and if they did not support the greater than 4% cap, it would revert to the greater than 5% cap. Mr. Ludwick explained that you could argue that the

public was uninformed when voting at elections as well. The referendum process offers an opportunity to inform the public. Mr. Nelson clarified that 4% results in an estimated increase of \$700 for the average Enfield homeowner. and 5% results in a \$900 tax increase.

Commissioner Zachary Zannoni explained that he was concerned with the conversation surrounding the percentage increases in taxes and the correlation between that and the referendum trigger. He wanted to clarify that what they are proposing is a spending cap. During the largest tax increase Enfield experienced within the last ten years, the town's actual spending decreased by -0.25%. Mr. Zannoni stated that what is being proposed isn't a 4% cap on the mil rate, but a 4% cap in spending. The town could experience an 8% growth in the grand list where the town could potentially decrease taxes, but the town's hands would still be tied at a 4% spending cap. He supported the original 5% cap because the majority of the Commissioners agreed on that figure, regardless of party affiliation, and that is important.

Commissioner Tom Cremona asked if the Commission deliberates and sends it back to the Council, whether it ends up as a referendum question. Town Clerk Bailey explained that once the final report is filed with the Council, the Council can vote to send all the recommendations to referendum, some of the recommendations, or reject the Commission's recommendations in full. In the case of a rejection, the public could petition to force the recommendations to go to a referendum vote.

Mr. Cremona expressed his disappointment that there was still so much division among the Councilors. He felt that the Charter Review Commission fairly represented both parties and came to a unified conclusion. When the referendum cap was first presented and discussed by the Commission, it was about avoiding the risk of a future Council passing a budget with huge increases. There was uniform agreement that should there be some major issue that required a large increase, the residents should have a say. Many Commissioners were concerned about the referendum process, partially due to the size of Enfield compared to some of the towns around us. Mr. Cremona supported a larger percentage because he has trust in the elected Town Council. He did not support lowering the percentage.

Commissioner Philip Dumond reviewed how various towns conduct their budget process. East Windsor votes up to three referendums. If the third referendum fails, they automatically receive a 2% increase over the previous year's budget. Wilton includes non-binding advisory questions on their ballot to help determine if the voters are rejecting the budget because it is too high or too low. They also require a minimum 15% voter turnout. Bloomfield requires a minimum turnout and recently held a referendum. The majority of voters rejected the budget. However, the budget was approved because they did not meet the minimum turnout.

Mr. Dumond congratulated the Council on the work they did on this year's budget. He stated that the key to passing a budget referendum is educating the public.

4. Outside Agencies Funds

Mayor Nelson stated that they invited Director of Social Services Cynthia Guerreri to come to the meeting to clarify why, when the Council cut the budget in half, all of the outside agencies' budgets were cut in full but \$100K remained in the budget. He asked where those funds went.

Director Guerreri explained the process of how these grants are awarded. An eligible nonprofit must be a 501C in good standing to apply. On average, over the last fifteen years, the Council has awarded \$120,910 to outside agencies per year. Applicants are required to align their request to the Department of Social Services' mission. The services the nonprofits provide

help to extend the reach of the Social Services Department and are subject to the following procedures:

- A notice of RFP is posted
- Online applications are completed
- Applications are screened to make sure they are a nonprofit in good standing
- Social Services creates a summary sheet for each nonprofit's intended use which is shared with the Social Services Subcommittee
- The subcommittee meets and scores each application through a scoring rubric to determine which applications they will recommend to the Council
- The Town Council awards allocations
- Award recipients are notified
- Nonprofits are required to file status reports twice a year

Mr. Nelson stated that there was \$198,000 in the account. The Town Council removed \$98,000 leaving \$100,000 in the account. Where have those funds gone? Ms. Guerreri explained that the Community Initiative Division also encompasses a \$50,000 CARA grant, Enfield Together Coalition of \$40,000, in addition to funds for the Commission on Aging. The Social Services Subcommittee determined the \$98,500 budget for Outside Agencies for FY2026. It was her understanding that they brought that information back to the full Council.

Councilor Hendrickson stated that it is not clear in the budget that some of the expenses are grant revenue and not taxpayer revenue. He also noted that some of the nonprofits use these funds to pay for staff. He asked that the Council hold a special meeting so that the nonprofits may come before the Council and explain what they do as well as how they utilize these funds. Ms. Guerreri explained that they used to come before the Council and the feedback she received is that it was too time-consuming, so she created the procedures listed above to streamline the process.

Councilor Mangini asked why the awarded funds are paid in two installments. Mr. Wilcox responded that they review the nonprofits' reports to ensure that they are utilizing the funds as they stated in their applications.

Councilor Ludwick asked why the Outside Agencies were not funded by the CARA grant. Ms. Guerreri responded that the CARA funds have specific parameters for their use. Mr. Nelson asked who made the decision to keep Enfield Together wholly funded while cutting all the Outside Agencies funds. Ms. Guerreri stated that the Enfield Together Coalition is funded by several different avenues including \$40,000 from the general fund, as well as some of the funds from the CARA grant, Amplify, Youth Services Bureau grant, Local Prevention grant, Enhancement grant all supported the work of the coalition.

Councilor Cressotti appreciated the established procedures, and the rubric Ms. Guerreri created and felt it helped to streamline the process. Councilor Rousseau stated that he believed that having the nonprofits come before the Council is an opportunity for them to share their mission and let the public know what they do for the Enfield Community.

A copy of the handouts are appended to these minutes.

5. Adjournment

MOTION by: Cynthia Mangini, seconded: Marie Pyznar to adjourn.

Upon a **SHOW OF HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared the **MOTION** adopted unanimously, and the meeting stood adjourned at 7:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

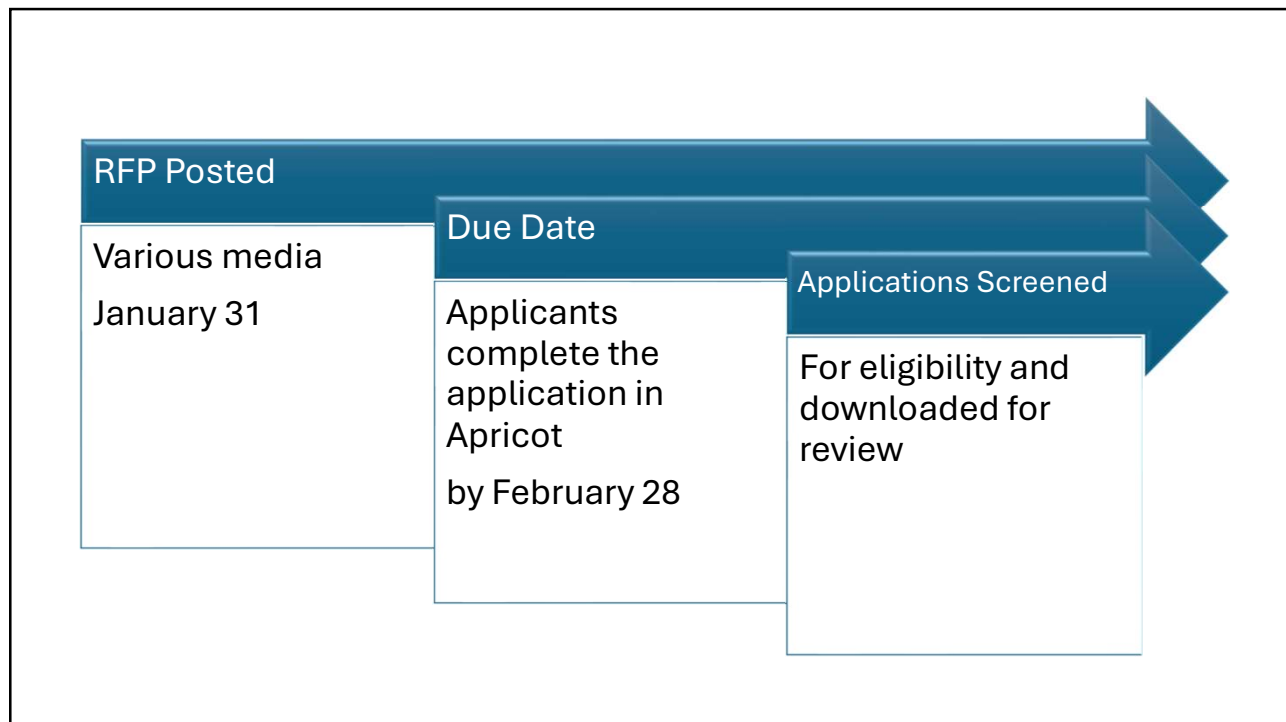
Sheila M. Bailey, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES COMMUNITY INITIATIVES DIVISION	OUTSIDE AGENCY GRANTS <i>Annual Process</i> Special Meeting Town Council June 2, 2025
---	--

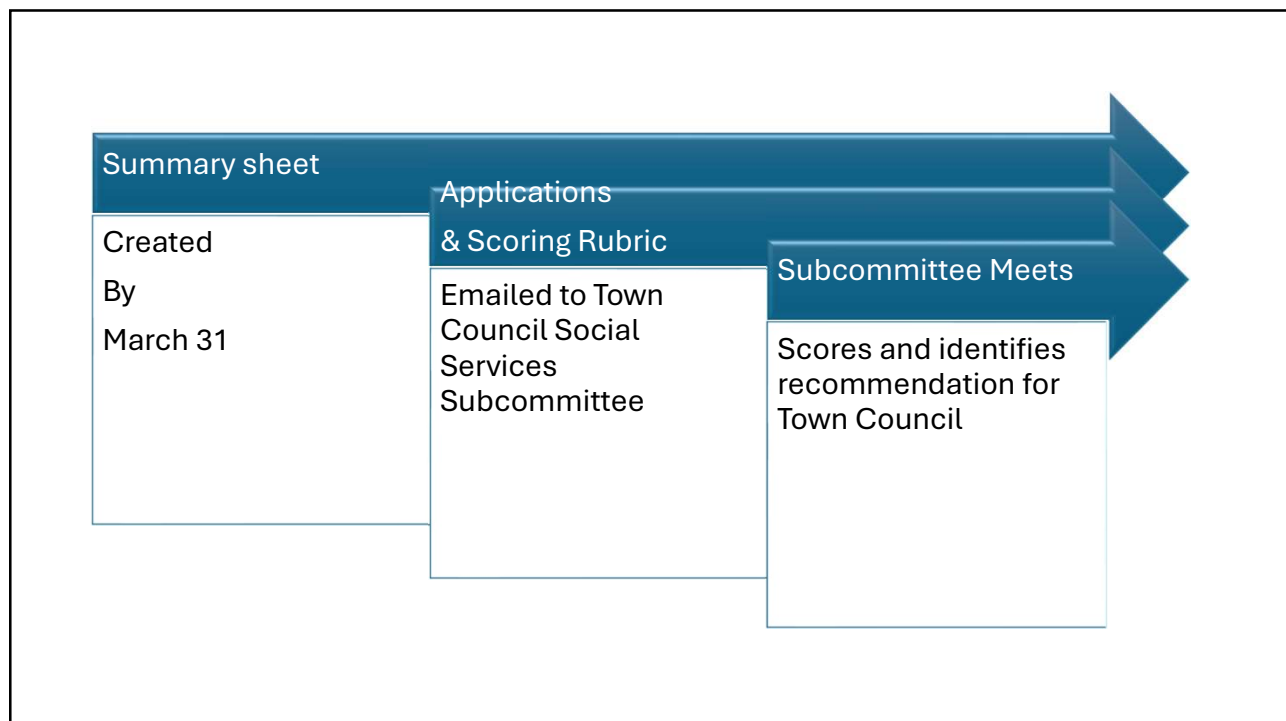
1

KEY POINTS	 The Town has awarded grants to eligible community non-profits for at least 2 decades  \$120,910 - Average annual amount awarded between 2011-2025  This partnership allows for maximization of tax dollars in support of the work of the Department, meeting needs outside of our scope  Applicants are required to align their request to the Department's mission to ensure for this
-------------------	---

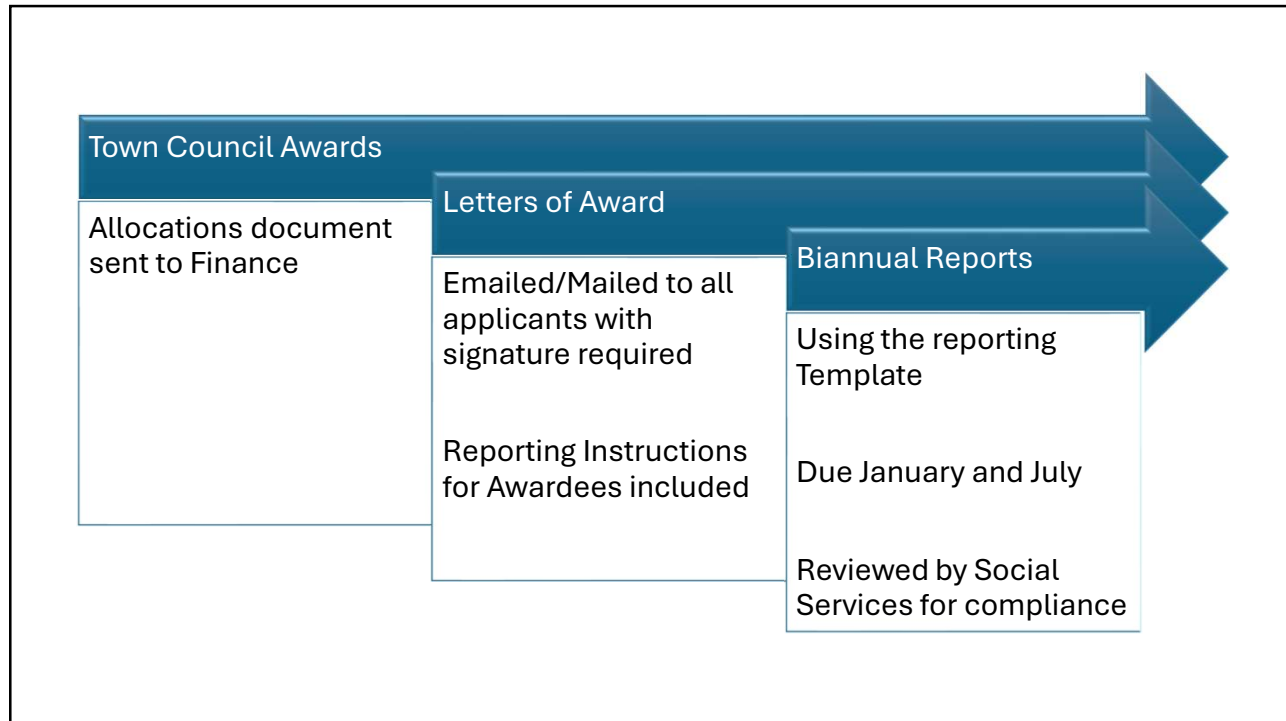
2



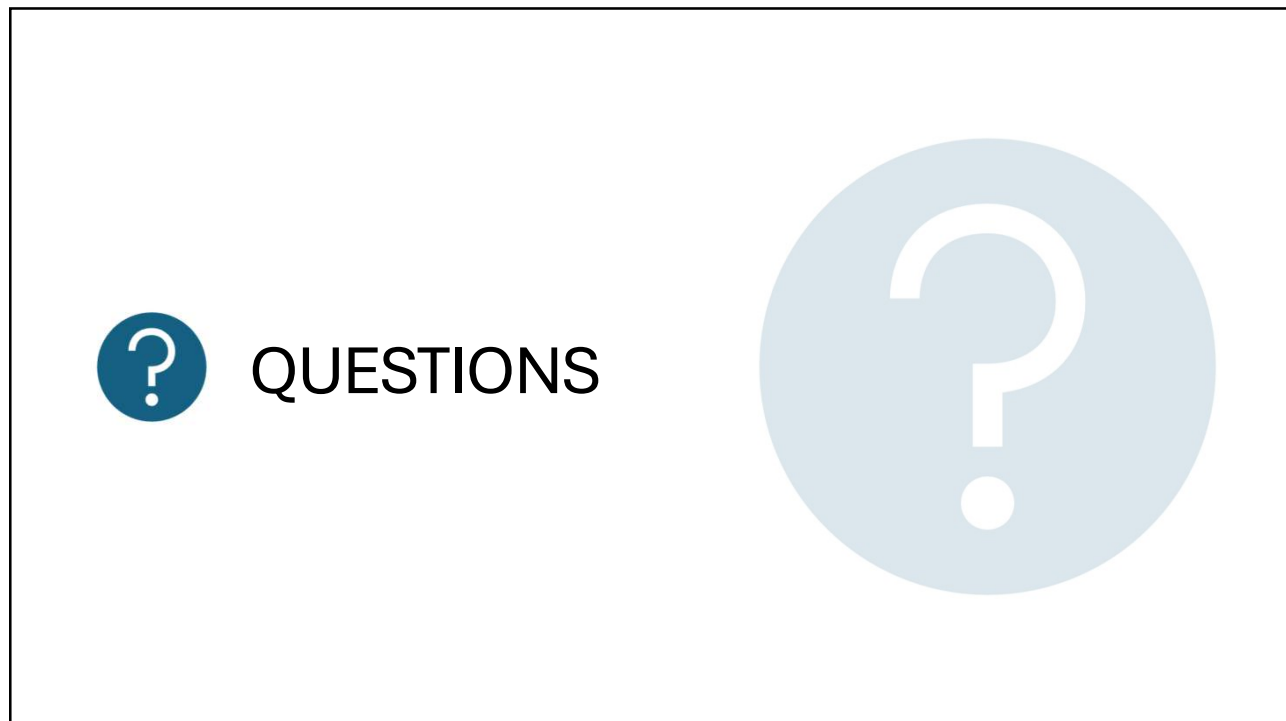
3



4



5



6

Town of Enfield
Social Services - Community Initiatives
FY26 - Proposed Budget

	Grant Funded	Town Funded			
		Commission on Aging	Mental Health and Wellness Coalition	Boards and Commissions	Total
	CARA Grant				
532200 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT			7,000		7,000
533900 OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	28,000		25,500		53,500
554000 ADVERTISING	1,200				1,200
555000 PRINTING & REPRODUCTION	2,400				2,400
558000 TRAVEL	12,500		1,000		13,500
561100 INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLIES			4,000		4,000
561200 OFFICE SUPPLIES	320				320
561900 OTHER SUPPLIES/MATERIALS	4,500				4,500
563000 FOOD/FOOD RELATED	1,080		2,500		3,580
589000 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURES		10,000			10,000
589200 NETWORK AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE				17,000	17,000
589201 AMPLIFY INC				3,000	3,000
589202 ED RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN				13,000	13,000
589203 ENFIELD FOOD SHELF				17,000	17,000
589204 KITE				12,000	12,000
589207 ENFIELD PEOPLE FOR PEOPLE				13,000	13,000
589209 ENFIELD HOMEFRONT TEAM				8,500	8,500
589210 LOAVES AND FISHES				15,000	15,000
TOTAL	50,000	10,000	40,000	98,500	198,500