

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES-WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2025

The council met on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, and called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall, Council Chambers, Council Chairman Calouro presiding:

PRESENT: Council Chairman, Nathan Calouro
Vice-Chairwoman, Mary Parella
Councilman, Antonio "Tony" Teixeira
Councilman, Timothy Sweeney
Councilman, Aaron Ley

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator, Steven Contente
Assistant Town Solicitor, Amy Goins, Esq
Town Sergeant, Archie Martins

Motion RE: Consent Agenda - To Approve the Consent Agenda

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda withholding Item KK1 for further consideration.

Prior to the vote being taken, Clerk Cordeiro noted a late recommendation received from DPW for consent agenda item, KK1 that would require council discussion.

*It is hereby noted for the record that discussion and action on the agenda item took place at the conclusion of the public agenda, and that the minutes for this discussion and action appear in item K1.

A. Submission of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

- A1.** Town Council Meeting Minutes - September 10, 2025
- A2.** Town Council Meeting Executive Session Minutes (sealed, council only) - September 10, 2025

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 10, 2025 and the Executive Session Minutes of September 10, 2025 as prepared and presented.

B. Public Hearings

C. Ordinances

- C1.** Ordinance No. 2025-11 Chapter 16 Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Article V Stopping, Standing and Parking, Sec. 16-143 Parking prohibited at all times (to include Siegel Street in the residential parking zone) **(2nd Reading)**

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to consider this action to constitute the Second Reading for the adoption of Ordinance #2025-11. Advertise in the local newspaper

- C2.** Ordinance No. 2025-12 Chapter 16 Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Article V Stopping, Standing and Parking, Sec. 16-143 Parking prohibited at all times (to include no parking box in front of ~~208~~ 150-180 Frankin Street) **(1st Reading)**

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to consider this action to constitute the first reading of Ordinance #2025-12. Advertise in the local newspaper.

- C3.** Ordinance No. 2025-13 - Chapter 16 - Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Article V - Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 16-143. Parking is prohibited at all times
Sec. 16-143. - Parking prohibited at all times (to add a no parking box on Franklin Street, south side, 26 feet from the east corner of the driveway in front of 208 Franklin Street eastward to utility pole #29) **(1st Reading)**

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to consider this action to constitute the first reading of Ordinance #2025-13.
Advertise in the local newspaper

D. Licensing Board - New Petitions

- D1.** Barbara Palumbo, Bristol Prevention Coalition - re One Day Dancing and Entertainment License for Be Well Bash to be held

on October 4th, from 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM at the Quinta Gamelin Community Center

- a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police
- b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Fire Chief
- c. recommendation - Town Administrator and Director of Parks and Recreation

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to grant this license per the recommendations received and conditions, if any, as delineated, and also subject to conformance to all laws and ordinances and payment of all fees, taxes, and levies

(Move agenda Item)

Sweeney/Ley- Voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to consider agenda item I1 at this time.

It is noted for the record that the motion for agenda item I1 occurred during discussion under agenda item D1, and the actions related to agenda item I1 are reflected therein

Prior to the vote being taken, Barbara Palumbo of the Bristol Prevention Coalition addressed the Council regarding an upcoming community event at the Quinta-Gamelin Center. She explained that the event would include a variety of entertainment and wellness activities such as dancing with a DJ, a Zumba demonstration, massage therapy, food demonstrations, mocktails, face painting, and games including Duck Hunt. The purpose of the event is to promote community engagement, wellness, and prevention awareness.

E. Licensing Board - Renewals

F. Petitions - Other

- F1.** Stephen and Michelle Mascena, 381 High Street re a consideration to draft and adopt a Resolution regarding the General Homestead Law, allowing mixed-use/combination properties to be eligible for an exemption on the portion of the residential property

- a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Tax Assessor

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to refer to the Town Administrator, Tax Assessor, and Town Solicitor to research potential town-wide

impacts and liabilities of extending the exemption and to determine how many properties might be affected.

Prior to the vote being taken, petitioners Stephen and Micelle Mascena owners of a mixed-use property at 381 High Street (residential) and 379 High Street (commercial - Bristol Picture Frame), requested the Council's consideration for drafting and adopting a resolution regarding the general homestead law to allow mixed-use combination properties to be eligible for a homestead exemption on the residential portion.

The Mescenas' explained that, although their property is primarily their residence, the presence of a commercial business on the same lot has prevented them from receiving the homestead exemption, based on the way state legislation is written. Tax communications are addressed to the commercial side, further complicating matters. They were advised by the tax assessor that obtaining the exemption would require the town to propose a resolution to the Rhode Island General Assembly.

It was noted that such mixed-use resolutions have been passed in other communities, although the situation is not common in Bristol.

Town Council members recognized this as a broader issue with possible implications for other similar property owners, not just the Mescenas'. They agreed their tax assessor followed proper policy but felt the current law's spirit should potentially allow for owner-occupied, mixed-use properties to receive the exemption for the residence.

It was noted that the process of additional tax classifications is new, and while the Council made an effort to review various impacts and circumstances, not all potential effects could be fully anticipated. Council Members acknowledged that this issue was important and appreciated that it had been brought to their attention. The matter was raised for consideration and identified for further review to determine whether and how owner-occupied mixed-use properties could be included under the homestead exemption.

The Council emphasized the need to research potential town-wide impacts and liabilities of extending the exemption and to determine how many properties might be affected.

It was noted that legislature would not be back until January, so any potential changes would be for the following year at the earliest. The implications could affect the next budget cycle, ideally addressed by March.

The next steps agreed upon included: referring the issue to the solicitor, tax assessor, and Town Administrator to analyze liability,

costs, and town impact; if appropriate, draft proposed legislation for state representatives and senators to submit to the General Assembly.

Council members largely expressed agreement with the Mescenas' position and showed willingness to move the matter forward, emphasizing fairness for owner-occupied mixed-use properties in comparison with other residential units.

F2. Michaela Frattarelli, 2 Hilltop Street, requesting to convert Hilltop Street, an unimproved paper road, to a paved road

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Fire Chief

b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Principal Planner/Zoning Officer

c. *"received at meeting" late item- recommendation Town Administrator and DPW*

Ley/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to receive and file

Prior to the vote being taken, Town Clerk Cordeiro noted a late recommendation received from the Director of DPW- labeled as received at meeting. applicant Michaela Frattarelli appeared before the council requesting the town's support in converting Hilltop Street-currently an unimproved "paper road"-to a more maintainable condition.

Michaela Fratelli addressed the Council regarding maintenance concerns for Hilltop Street. She reported that since 2008 her family has maintained the roadway, including plowing, grading, and applying shell material. She noted that increasing costs and physical limitations have made continued maintenance difficult. Recurrent washouts following rainfall and winter plowing issues that obstruct driveway access were identified as ongoing problems.

Ms. Fratelli stated that her preference would be for the entire roadway to be paved; however, she expressed willingness to focus initially on paving up to the crest, which represents the most deteriorated section.

The Director of Public Works, Chris Perella, provided an assessment of the site and outlined several considerations. He stated that any improvement project would require coordinated planning due to budget limitations and prioritization of roads serving a larger number of residents. He identified multiple challenges, including ledge rock conditions, the absence of a drainage system, and the likelihood of permitting requirements from DEM or CRMC. He further noted that partial paving may not be practical without a broader plan addressing all

unimproved roads in the area. Director Perella noted that the concerns raised constituted a valid complaint.

Community Development Director Williamson commented that the drainage concerns affecting Hilltop Street also impact other roads in the neighborhood. She emphasized that a comprehensive drainage plan and phased approach may be necessary to prevent shifting impacts between adjacent streets.

Alternative measures were discussed, including the potential for gravel placement as a temporary stabilization measure. Director Perella stated that the Department of Public Works could provide material and perform limited maintenance to mitigate the most severe conditions while long-term planning continues.

Ms. Fratelli acknowledged the process requirements and expressed willingness to cooperate in developing a long-term solution.

Town Administrator Contente clarified that, while there is a formal list, priorities can change based on emergencies, weather events, or issues that emerge unexpectedly (such as severe washouts or resident reports). This means a street can move up in priority if critical needs arise. He provided an example: While working on Aaron Avenue (a high-priority and expensive road), another road—Sandra—was in worse shape than its formal rating suggested, so they included Sandra Drive in the project for efficiency and cost savings.

Town Administrator Contente explained that the overall rationale is that, when contractors are working in a neighborhood, it is more economical to address nearby problematic streets as well, rather than strictly following the rating order. This flexibility allows the town to maximize limited funds and respond to urgent situations. He described the town's system of rating roads for repair, explained its purpose in guiding capital improvement priorities, emphasized flexibility in response to current conditions and emergencies, and confirmed that both Tower and Hilltop Streets are being considered under this system for future work.

Following discussion, the Council and Town Administrator agreed to:

- Direct the Department of Public Works to coordinate with the resident on short-term stabilization and improvement of the most affected sections of Hilltop Street.
- Maintain Hilltop Street as a priority for consideration in conjunction with future road projects in the area, including Tower Street, to allow for coordinated work where feasible.

- Continue to include Hilltop Street in future capital planning and review its condition as part of the Town's ongoing roadway rating and prioritization process.

G. Appointments

G1. Board of Canvassers - Appointment to fill one unexpired Republican alternate term, set to expire March 2026

a. recommendation - Thomas M. Carroll, Chairman, Republican Town Committee re Nomination of Lynette Lacerda, 365 Metacom Avenue

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to appoint Lynette Lacerda to the Board of Canvassers with a term set to expire in March 2026

G2. Bristol 250th Commission - Appointment to fill one unexpired term set to expire November 2027

a. Sarah Griffin, 11 Liberty Street - interested in being elevated to full membership

b. recommendation - 250th Commission Chair, Alayne White re recommendation of Sarah Griffin

Parella/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to appoint Sarah Griffin to the Bristol 250th Commission with a term set to expire in November 2027

G3. Fourth of July Committee 2-year terms set to expire October 2027

a. Proposed Membership 2025-2027 of Fourth of July Committee Members

b. recommendation - Fourth of July Chairwoman, Camille Teixeira

Sweeney/Ley- voted unanimously in favor of the slate of candidates for the ensuing term based on the recommendation of the Chair.

Prior to the vote being taken, Councilman Texeira reused himself and left the room.

G4. Nat Squatrito, Chair of the Fourth of July Policy Sub Committee – Review and Approval of Proposed Revisions to Fourth of July Committee Policies/Bylaws

Sweeney/Teixeira- voted unanimously to approve the Fourth of July Policies/bylaw revisions as presented.

Prior to the vote being taken **Nat Squatrito**, appeared before the Council to present the Fourth of July Committee's proposed revisions to its policies and bylaws for review and approval.

Mr. Squatrito stated that the majority of the proposed amendments consisted of clarifications, updates, and organizational adjustments intended to modernize and streamline committee operations. He explained that the committee conducted a thorough comparison of the existing bylaws and the proposed revisions, with many changes addressing terminology, consistency, and procedural clarity.

Key areas of amendment included:

- Committee Naming Consistency: Standardized terminology throughout the document, including consistent use of "nominating subcommittee."
- Meeting Frequency: Revised requirements to allow meetings to be scheduled as needed rather than at fixed intervals.
- Member and Subcommittee Duties: Clarified responsibilities of committee members and subcommittee chairpersons.
- Nominations and Vacancies: Refined language and procedures governing nominations and filling of vacancies.
- Archival Committee: Incorporated recommendations from the State Archival Commission.
- Event References: Removed references to events no longer held, such as the card party.
- Membership Committee Procedures: Added confidentiality provisions for meetings discussing member attendance and participation.
- Music and Entertainment Committee: Updated language to allow flexibility in event locations, with sites to be voted on annually.

- Subcommittee Updates: Revised titles and responsibilities within the Parade Collection, Special Events, and Ways and Means subcommittees.
- Policy Amendment Procedures: Defined the process for future policy changes to ensure transparency and consistency.
- Executive Session and Voting Rights: Clarified provisions regarding executive sessions and defined voting eligibility for subcommittee meetings.
- Incorporation of Prior Amendments: Included previously approved but unfinalized changes from May 9, 2024.

Council members reviewed the proposed amendments and noted that most revisions were administrative or procedural in nature.

H. Old Business

H1. Town Administrator Contente re Discussion and Consideration for MOU for Building Department Shared Services with Town of Warren (*continued from Sept. 10, 2025*)

a. Draft MOU

Sweeney/Teixeira- voted unanimously to adopt the MOU as presented and authorize the Town Administrator to sign on behalf of the Town.

Prior to the vote being taken, Town Administrator Contente explained that the MOU was designed to address staff shortages and training needs within both towns' building departments. The agreement would establish a reciprocal arrangement for sharing key personnel: - Bristol would be permitted to utilize building official services from Warren. - In return, Warren could utilize Bristol's residential inspector and code compliance officer. The agreement was intended to last for six months with a review after this period, to determine whether continuation or modifications were needed.

Twon Administrator Contente emphasized the benefits to both municipalities:

- There is a statewide shortage of certified building officials, with the certification process taking approximately three years.
- Shared services would provide Bristol access to an experienced, certified building official to help train and mentor its own staff, supporting Bristol's succession planning and upskilling objectives.

- Warren, likewise, would benefit from additional inspection support and code enforcement resources.
- The arrangement was described as fair, meeting critical needs in both communities given limited staffing and recruitment challenges.

Council members sought clarification regarding the terms and approval process for the agreement. It was confirmed that the MOU required approval by both municipalities, and members inquired about the status of Warren's council action. It was noted that the Warren Town Council had already approved of the MOU. They remarked on the fairness of the arrangement and expressed strong support, noting that it addressed immediate staffing needs while simultaneously helping both towns strengthen long-term capacity within their building departments

H2. Blithewold Museum, Arboretum & Gardens, 101 Ferry Road - Request for Council Consideration and Support of a Resolution Seeking Exemption of its Building and Tangible Personal Property from Local Property Taxation (continued from June 18th)

a. (Draft) Resolution

Teixeira/Sweeney-Voted unanimously to support the Resolution for Blithewold Museum, Arboretum & Gardens in Support of a Resolution Seeking Exemption of its Building and Tangible Personal Property from Local Property Taxation and direct the Clerk to transmit a copy of this resolution to the members of the Town of Bristol State Legislative Delegation

Prior to the vote, it was noted that consideration of the tax exemption request had previously occurred at the June 18, 2025 Council meeting, during which the Council directed the Town Solicitor to prepare a draft resolution based on the proposed legislation submitted by Representative Susan Donovan, which was being presented for council consideration.

I. Other New Business Requiring Town Council Action

I1. Barbara Palumbo on behalf of the Bristol Prevention Coalition re Proclamation for Red Ribbon Week October 23-31, 2025.

a. (draft) Resolution

Sweeney/Teixeira-Voted unanimously to adopt the Red Ribbon Week Resolution as presented.

Prior to the vote being taken, Red Ribbon Week was presented by the Bristol Prevention Coalition, with Barbara Palumbo outlining it as part of October's Prevention Month. The week (October 23-31) focuses on drug prevention and community awareness. Activities include the Be Well Bash, Great Pumpkin Project, Drug Take Back Day, Trunk or Treat, WEAR RED Day, car ribbon displays, and broad encouragement for community participation.

It is noted for the record that under agenda item I1, Councilman Sweeney motioned to combine agenda items D1 and I1. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ley and unanimously approved. Discussions related to this combined item took place under agenda item D1. However, any actions taken on these items are individually listed under their respective agenda headings as reflected herein

CF. Citizens Public Forum

PERSONS WISHING TO SPEAK DURING THE CITIZENS PUBLIC FORUM MUST NOTIFY THE COUNCIL CLERK PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING

J. Bills & Expenditures

J1. Bid No. 1072 - Maintenance of the Highview Avenue Drainage Basin

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to refer this matter to the Town Administrator to act in the best interest of the Town.

Prior to the vote being taken, Clerk Cordeiro presented the following bid tabulations for the bids received, as outlined below:

- Lucena Bros. Inc., in the amount of \$276,502.50
- True North Civil LLC., in the amount of \$162,960.00
- RICON in the amount of \$210,810.00

J2. Bid No. 1073 - Fall 2025 Tree Sourcing and Delivery

Teixeira/Sweeney - Voted unanimously to refer this matter to the Town Administrator and Community Development Department to act in the best interest of the Town.

Prior to the vote being taken, Clerk Cordeiro presented the following bid tabulations for the bids received, as outlined below:

- Chestnut Ridge Nursery in the amount of \$18,500.00
- Schichtel's Nursery, Inc., in the amount of \$17 059.00
- Siteone Landscape Supply, in the amount of \$29,550.00

J3. Town Administrator Contente re approval of an expenditure of up to \$16,000 from the Finance Department Salary Line to pay a financing and accounting recruiting firm in Rhode Island to fill the position of Deputy Town Treasurer

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to receive and file to consider at a later time.

Prior to the vote being taken, the Town Administrator noted that the item before the Council was being requested for continuation to a later date. He explained that additional time was needed to allow for further advertising of the open finance position, citing ongoing difficulty in attracting qualified candidates with strong accounting experience.

K. Special Reports

L. Town Solicitor

M. Executive Sessions

M1. Town Administrator Contente requests an Executive Session pursuant to RIGL § 42-46-5(a)(5), Discussion or consideration related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property, wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public.

Sweeney/Teixeria - Voted unanimously to convene in Executive Session pursuant to RIGL Section 42-46-5 (a) (5) concerning the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property, wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public at 7:50PM.

Teixeira/Sweeney - Voted unanimously to resume open session and seal the minutes of the Executive Session at 8:41 PM.

Solicitor Goins announced that a motion was made and voted on in Executive Session to authorize the Town Administrator to develop an RFP, for long term and best use of the Byfield School building.

Consent Agenda Items:

(CA) AA. Submission of Minutes - Boards and Commissions

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

- (CA) AA1. Bristol Housing Authority Meeting Minutes - August 14, 2025
- (CA) AA2. Bristol Housing Authority Meeting Minutes - September 11, 2025
- (CA) AA3. Bristol Fire Department Board of Engineers Meeting Minutes - September 2, 2025
- (CA) AA4. Bristol Harbor Commission Meeting Minutes- September 8, 2025
- (CA) AA5. Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - June 12, 2025
- (CA) AA6. Bristol 250th Commission Meeting Minutes - August 19, 2025
- (CA) AA7. Bristol 250th Commission Draft Meeting Minutes - September 16, 2025

(CA) BB. Budget Adjustments

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to approve these adjustments"

- (CA) BB1. Tax Assessor Leadem - Recommended Abatements & Additions for September 2025

(CA) CC. Financial Reports

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

(CA) DD. Proclamations, Resolutions & Citations

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to adopt these Proclamations, Resolutions and Citations as prepared and presented"

(CA) DD1. Resolution 2025-9-10-H1 The Town Council of the Town of Bristol Adopting Safe Streets and Road for all Safety Action Plan (signed)

(CA) DD2. Citation - Jacob Salinger - Eagle Scout Award

(CA) EE. Utility Petitions

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to approve these petitions"

(CA) FF. City & Town Resolutions Not Previously Considered

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

(CA) FF1. Town of Westerly - Resolution preserving the name, significance and observance of the Victory Day Holiday

(CA) GG. Distributions/Communications

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

(CA) GG1. Award Letter No. 1070 Burnside Street Streetscape Project

(CA) HH. Distributions/Notice of Meetings
(Office copy only)

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to receive and place these items on file"

(CA) HH1. BCWA - Properties Committee Meeting - September 11, 2025

(CA) HH2. The North and East Burial Grounds Commission Meeting - September 10, 2025

(CA) HH3. Housing Authority Meeting Agenda - September 11, 2025

(CA) HH4. Bristol Fourth of July Committee Special General Committee Meeting - September 18, 2025

(CA) HH5. Bristol Fourth of July General Committee Meeting - September 18, 2025

(CA) HH6. Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees Meeting - September 18, 2025

(CA) HH7. Bristol 250th Commission Meeting Agenda - September 16, 2025

- (CA) HH8. Zoning Board of Review Meeting Agenda - October 6, 2025
- (CA) HH9. Historic District Commission Meeting Agenda - September 29, 2025
- (CA) HH10. BCWA Board of Directors Meeting - September 25, 2025
- (CA) HH11. Bristol Fourth of July Committee Sub Committee Meeting
Macaroni Supper Meeting- September 25, 2025
- (CA) HH12. Bristol Harbor Commission Meeting- October 6, 2025
- (CA) HH13. Comprehensive Community Plan Meetings - September 30, 2025
& October 20, 2025

(CA) II. Claims (Referrals)

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to refer these items to the Insurance Committee and at its discretion to the Interlocal Trust"

- (CA) II1. Peter Casemira, 1203 Anthony Road, Portsmouth - claim for damages
- (CA) II2. Joao Correia, 35 Vernon Street, Warren - claim for damage

(CA) JJ. Miscellaneous Items Requiring Council Approval

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to approve these items"

- (CA) KK. Curb cut petitions as approved by the director of public works

Approval of consent agenda = "motion to grant these curb cuts per the recommendation of, and conditions specified by, the Director of Public Works"

- (CA) KK1. Dylan Levesque, 75 Charles Street - request for curb cut in front of residence

a. "received at meeting" late item- recommendation Town Administrator and DPW

Prior to the vote being taken, the Council Chairman noted that the request, submitted by Dylan Levesque, sought permission to add a curb cut (driveway access) at his residence. Town Clerk Cordeiro explained that a late agenda item, marked as Received at Meeting, had been added to include the recommendation from the Department of Public Works

(DPW). It was noted that curb cut requests are typically handled through the consent agenda unless the recommendation is for denial, in which case the matter was pulled from the consent agenda to allow for discussion and to provide the petitioner with an opportunity to participate. In this instance, the petitioner was not present; however, the Clerk confirmed that proper notification had been provided and that Mr. Levesque had previously confirmed his intention to attend the meeting

DPW Director Chris Perella summarized the department's recommendation for denial, explaining that the property already has a two-car driveway and that the request sought to add two additional spaces. The layout of the site, including an existing cement walkway and stairway, limits the available curb length to approximately 12.5 feet, which does not meet the minimum requirement of 18 feet for two additional parking spaces. Approval of the request would likely result in vehicles obstructing the sidewalk, creating potential safety and liability issues for the Town, particularly during snow events. Director Perella noted that the petitioner had previously been informed of these concerns and had temporarily withdrawn the request but later resubmitted it without further consultation with the department.

Council members expressed agreement with the DPW's reasoning, citing safety, liability, and compliance considerations.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Councilman Teixeira, seconded by Councilman Sweeney and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this meeting to be adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Melissa Cordeiro, Town Clerk
Council Clerk