

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES-WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024

The council met on Wednesday, January 17, 2024, and called to order at 6:00 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
town Solicitor, Michael Ursillo, Esq
Town Sergeant, Archie Martins

Public Service Interviews and Appointments

Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees (2 unexpired terms set to expire January 2027)

a. Cara Cromwell, 349 Hope Street, interest/appointment

The Council heard from Ms. Cromwell who expressed her interest in becoming a member of the Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees. Discussions ensued between members of the Council and Ms. Cromwell pertaining to Ms. Cormwell's qualifications and experiences. Ms. Cromwell also stated why she would consider herself to be a good fit for the position.

b. Anne Marie Silvia, 75 Maple Lane, interest/appointment

The Council heard from Ms. Silvia who expressed her interest in becoming a member of the Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees. Discussions ensued between members of the Council and Ms. Silvia pertaining to Ms. Silvia's qualifications and experiences. Ms. Silvia also stated why she would consider herself to be a good fit for the position.

c. Caroline W. Jacobus, 35 Church Street, interest/appointment

The Council heard from Ms. Jacobus who expressed her interest in becoming a member of the Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees. Discussions ensued between members of the Council and Ms. Jacobus pertaining to Ms. Jacobus's qualifications and experiences. Ms. Jacobus also stated why she would consider herself to be a good fit for the position.

Ley/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to appoint Cara Cromwell to the Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees with a term set to expire in January 2027.

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to appoint Anne Silvia to the Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees with a term set to expire in January 2027.

Historic District Commission (2 unexpired terms set to expire July 2025)

a. Michael O'Loughlin, 114 Constitution Street, interest/appointment

The Council heard from Mr. O'Loughlin who expressed his interest in becoming a member of the Historic District Commission. Discussions ensued between members of the Council and Mr. O'Loughlin pertaining to Mr. O'Loughlin's qualifications and experiences. Mr. O'Loughlin also stated why he would consider himself to be a good fit for the position.

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to appoint Michael O'Laughlin to the Historic District Commission with a term set to expire in July 2025.
(Councilman Sweeney recused)

Prior to the vote taken, Councilman Sweeney recused himself from the vote and left the Council table.

Motion RE: Consent Agenda - To Approve the Consent Agenda

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda withholding Item GG3 for further consideration.

It is noted for the record that discussion on item GG16 occurred at the conclusion of the public agenda, and the actions related to item GG16 are reflected, in place, as found within.

A. Submission of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

A1. Town Council Meeting - December 6, 2023

A2. Executive Session Minutes - December 6, 2023

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to approve the minutes of December 6, 2024, and the Executive Session minutes of December 6, 2024, as prepared and presented.

B. Public Hearings

C. Ordinances

C1. Ordinance #2023-19 Chapter 16, Article V Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 16-143 - Parking prohibited at all times (correction to Ordinance 2023-13 from east side to west side) (2nd reading)
(continued from November 15 - request to withdraw)

- a. copy of original petition requesting parking modification
- b. Patricia Esteves re - letter of concern
- c. updated recommendation from the Chief of Police
- d. memo Traghella re - withdrawal

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to withdraw this ordinance.

Prior to the vote being taken, it was highlighted that communication had transpired with the initial petitioner of the no-parking request. The police department's suggestion of a modified bus pick-up location was proving successful, and the petitioner was requesting to withdraw her original request at this moment.

- C2.** Ordinance #2023-24 Chapter 17, Article II Alcoholic Beverages Establishments, Section 17-82 - Number of Licenses (to decrease the number of Class BV Liquor Licenses from 32-31) **(2nd Reading) (see also E1)**

Teixeira/Sweney - Voted unanimously to consider this action to constitute the Second Reading for the adoption of Ordinance #2023-24. Advertise in the local newspaper

- C3.** Ordinance#2024-01 Chapter 11 & 18, Chapter 11 - Comprehensive Schedule of Fees. Sec 11-1 Comprehensive schedule of fees and Chapter 18-Parks and Recreation Article I - In General Sec 18-11 - Bristol Parks and Recreation special event **(1st reading)**

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to consider this action to constitute the Second Reading for the adoption of Ordinance #2024-01. Advertise in the local newspaper

Prior to the vote being taken, it was noted for the record that the council's request to modify the process by removing the requirement for changes to be made through ordinances and enabling the passage of fee amendments through resolution had been included in the presented draft ordinance.

D. Licensing Board - New Petitions

- D1.** Robert McNeil, McNeil Design Collaborative, Inc., d/b/a The Northeast Golf Company (Bristol Golf Park), 96 Broadcommon Road re - request for a Dancing and Entertainment License **(continued from November 15, 2023)**

- a. 2024 Schedule of Events
- b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police
- c. recommendation - Town Administrator and Zoning Official
- d. recommendation - Town Administrator and Fire Chief

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to grant three one-day Dancing and entertainment licenses for the dates of June 29, 2024, July 27, 2024, and October 10, 2024, 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.

Prior to the vote being taken, petitioner Robert McNeil addressed the council, providing an overview of the updates made to his Dancing & Entertainment license request. He emphasized that the license would be utilized for entertainment scheduled around three golf tournaments, predominantly featuring a trio acoustic set. The specified dates are June 29, July 27, and October 12, 2024.

- D2.** Glenda Gonzalez, Oceanside Restaurant LLC., d/b/a California Taco, 20 Gooding Avenue re - request for Victualling License
 - a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Fire Chief
 - b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police
 - c. recommendation - Town Administrator and Water Pollution Control

Sweeney/Ley- 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.

Prior to the vote being taken, Jose Cruz representing Oceanside Restaurant LLC addressed the council providing an overview of the new establishment. He highlighted that it is a family-owned and operated restaurant with 14 different locations, noting their excitement to opening a new establishment in Bristol.

D3. Barbara Palumbo for St. Elizabeth's Church, 577 Wood Street re - request for Bingo License for Friday, January 26, 2024, from 5:30PM - 9:00PM

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Fire Chief

b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

c. Rhode Island State Police Authorization to Conduct Special Bingo on Friday, January 26, 2024

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.

E. Licensing Board - Renewals

E1. Sherry Scott, Beehive Cafe, 10 Franklin St., re - relinquish class BV Liquor License (**see also C2**)

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to accept the relinquishment of the Class BV liquor License.

E2. Elisio Castro, Bristol Sports Club, 417 Wood Street, re - six-month review of Dancing and Entertainment License **(continued from 6/21/2023)**

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

Sweeney/Teixeira- 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.

E3. Jordan Sawyer, Brick Pizza Co., 500 Wood Street, Unit 211, re - six-month review of Dancing and Entertainment License **(continued from 7/12/2023)**

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

Sweeney/Teixeira - 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.

E4. Alicia Saldana, Qhali, 34 Gooding Avenue, re - Six-month review of Dancing and Entertainment License **(continued from 7/12/2023)**

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

Sweeney/Teixeira- 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.

E5. Junk and Secondhand License Renewals 2023-2024

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Department of Community Development

Sweeney/Ley-Voted unanimously to grant renewal of these licenses based upon the recommendations received and the receipt of all necessary renewal paperwork from the licensees and also subject to conformance to all laws and ordinances and payment of all fees, taxes, and levies

F. Petitions - Other

F1. Joseph B. Jorge, 27 Surf Drive re - Request for Abandonment of a Portion of Surf Drive Right of Way **(call for Public Hearing February 28, 2024)**

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Fire Chief

b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

c. recommendation - Town Administrator and Department of Community Development

d. recommendation - Town Administrator and Zoning Officer

e. recommendation - Town Administrator and Code Compliance Officer

f. recommendation - Town Administrator and Department of Public Works

g. recommendation - Town Administrator and Tax Assessor

Sweeney/Teixeira - Voted unanimously to refer to the town solicitor and Town Administrator for collaboration with the petitioner in drafting a right-of-way agreement between the town and the

petitioners. The petitioners are required to secure legal descriptions and a professional survey.

Prior to the vote being taken, petitioner Judy Jorge addressed the council. She mentioned that her husband couldn't attend due to a recent injury. Mrs. Jorge explained that they currently hold a license to maintain the section of land owned by the town, which she is requesting to be abandoned and deeded to them. She clarified that the adjacent property was presently on the market, and they were taking proactive steps to secure access through that part of the land to their property.

The council conveyed apprehension about abandoning the land and inquired why the existing license to maintain would not be satisfactory. The petitioner sought a more permanent solution, noting that the license to maintain is only valid with the original grantors and does not transfer with the land. Town solicitor Ursillo suggested a right-of-way agreement, which would enable the town to retain ownership and control of that portion of land while also granting perpetual land access to the property owners, similar to an easement.

It was noted for the record that although the solicitor's office would draft the Right-of-way agreement; the Petitioners would be responsible for securing the legal description of the land and a proper land survey much like the requirements of the abandonment. The right-of-way agreement would be presented to the council for final approval.

F2. Stephen R. Mascena, Bristol Picture Frame, 379 High Street re - request for 30-minute parking (M-F 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.) sign in front of business establishment on the west side of High Street

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Department of Public Works

Parella/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to refer this matter to the Town Solicitor so that he may draft ordinance language for Council consideration on February 7, 2024.

Prior to the vote being taken, it was noted for the record that the petition sent notice that they were unable to attend the meeting due to covid and asked for council consideration of their petition even in their absence.

It was highlighted that the petitioners had preexisting "no parking" signs at that location dating back to 1980; however, the sign was recently stolen. Since the sign was installed before the requirement of adding it to the ordinances, the council would need to incorporate it into the town ordinance before replacing the signs, ensuring that the parking restrictions can be enforced.

F3. Charles Eli Dunn, Folklore, LLC, d/b/a Folklore Provisions, 301 Hope Street - request for one additional BV Liquor License (tentative 1st reading on February 7, 2024, and call for public hearing on February 28, 2024)

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Fire Chief

b. recommendation - Town Administrator and Chief of Police

c. recommendation - Town Administrator and Department of Community Development

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to refer the matter to the Town Solicitor to draft an ordinance for one additional Class BV Limited License for council consideration on February 7, 2024; and schedule the public hearing for the February 28, 2024, council meeting.

Prior to the vote being taken, Charles "Eli" Dunn and Rachael Lopes Almeida, proprietors of Folklore Provisions, spoke before the council. They emphasized the restaurant's overarching theme, highlighting its Azorean-inspired cuisine served during breakfast and lunch. The duo clarified that their request for a liquor license was specifically to serve brunch cocktails on Sundays. While their current intention is limited to serving alcohol during Sunday brunch—offering beverages like mimosas and Bloody Marys—they mentioned the possibility of expanding to additional days in the future, though not at present.

The council agreed by consensus to adhere to past practices, deciding to take the next steps to grant a limited liquor license. A six-month review was agreed upon, during which the petitioners would have the opportunity to modify their license for a full liquor license. This interim measure would permit them to serve mimosas on Sundays until the review takes place.

G. Appointments

G1. Bristol Housing Authority (1 term set to expire January 2029 and 1 unexpired term set to expire January 2025) (position shall hold no other office)

a. Helen "Tina" Barboza, 23 Jane Lane, interest/reappointment

b. M. Candace Pansa, Executive Director, Bristol Housing Authority recommendation of Tina Barboza for reappointment

c. Donna St Angelo, 25 Duffield Road, interest/appointment (interview scheduled for January 10, 2024)

d. Kimberly Ann Teves, 32 Brooks Farm Drive, interest/appointment (interview scheduled for January 10, 2024)

Parella/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to reappoint Hellen "Tina" Barboza to the Bristol Housing Authority with a term set to expire in January 2029; and appoint Donna St. Angelo to the Bristol Housing Authority with a term set to expire January 2025

G2. Tree Warden (term to expire January 2025)

a. Steven Saracino, 219A Queens River Drive, interest/reappointment.

b. George Voutes, 17 Shore Road, interest/appointment

c. Town Administrator recommendation

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to reappoint Steven Saracino to the

position of Tree Warden with a term set to expire in January 2025

G3. Capital Project Commission (1 vacant term set to expire May 2027)

a. Alan Spen, 133 Ferry Road, interest/appointment

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to elevate Myra Page to the position of full member on the Capital Project Commission

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to appoint Alan Spen as the alternate member to the Capital Project Commission with both terms set to expire May 2027.

G4. Juvenile Hearing Board (2 full term members and 1 alternate member term set to expire December 2026)

a. Matthew P. Cabral, 5 Polk Court, interest/reappointment (full member)

b. N. Diane Davis, 25 Butterworth Avenue, interest/reappointment (full member)

c. Henry Cabral, 54 Sefton Drive, interest/reappointment (alternate member)

d. JoAnne M. Waite, 55 Mulberry Road, interest/appointment

e. Victoria Ramos, 47 Wapping Drive, interest/appointment

f. Scott Aksamit , 27 Cole Street, interest/appointment

g. Mark Rhynard, 23 Rosedale Drive, interest/appointment

Teixeira/Sweeney-- Voted unanimously to reappoint Matthew P. Cabral, N. Diane Davis, and Henry Cabral to the Juvenile Hearing Board with a term(s) set to expire in December 2026

G5. Harbor Master (term set to expire January 2027)

a. Gregg Marsili, 9 Etelvina Court,
Interest/reappointment

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to reappoint Greg Marsili to the position of Harbor Master with a term set to expire in January 2027

G6. Assistant Harbormaster (term(s) to Expire January 2025)

a. recommendation - Harbor Master

Teixeira/Parella- voted unanimously in favor of the slate of candidates for the ensuing term based on the recommendation of the Harbor Master

G7. Auxiliary Harbormaster (term (s) to expire January 2025)

a. recommendation - Harbormaster

Teixeira/Sweeney- voted unanimously in favor of the slate of candidates for the ensuing term based on the recommendation of the Harbor Master

G8. CRMC Representative (term to expire January 2025)

a. John Troiano III, 707 Hope Street,
interest/reappointment

Teixeira/Ley- Voted unanimously to reappoint John Troiano, III as the CRMC Representative with a term set to expire in January 2025

G9. Special Constables, Private Investigators, Matrons & Retiree Officers (term(s) to expire January 2025)

a. recommendation for appointment - Chief of Police

Sweeney/Teixeira- voted unanimously in favor of the slate of candidates for the ensuing term based on the recommendation of the Police Chief

G10. Special Constables - Fire Police (term(s) to expire January 2025)

a. recommendation for appointment - Fire Chief

Teixeira/Parella- voted unanimously in favor of the slate of candidates for the ensuing term based on the recommendation of the Fire Chief

G11. Board of Tenant's Affairs (2 terms to expire January 2026)

a. Linda Heroux, 1014 Hope Street Apt AA3, interest/reappointment

b. Richard Hunter, 1014 Hope Street, Apt E6, interest/reappointment

c. Donna M. Falcoa, 1014 Hope Street, Apt S-5, interest/appointment

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to reappoint Linda Heroux and Richard Hunter to the Board of Tenant's Affairs with a term set to expire in January 2026

G12. North & East Burial Grounds Commission (1 term set to expire January 2029)

a. Kathleen Moran, 87 Hope Street, interest/reappointment

b. Jennifer R. Ouelette, 4 Evangeline Court, interest/appointment

Teixeira/Sweeney - Voted unanimously to reappoint Kathleen Moran to the North & East Burial Grounds Commission with a term set to expire in January 2029

G13. Bristol County Water Authority (1 unexpired term set to expire February 2025)

a. Georgina MacDonald, 180 Ferry Road, letter of resignation

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to accept this resignation and to instruct the Clerk to send a letter of thanks for service. And advertise in the local paper.

G14. Zoning Board of Review (2 unexpired terms set to expire March 2025) (position shall hold no other office)

a. Derek Tipton, 10 Dixon Avenue, Letter of Resignation

b. Paul Blasbalg, 60 DeWolf Avenue, interest/appointment

c. George Duarte, 7 Lafayette Drive, interest/appointment

d. Kim Teves, 32 Brook Farm Drive, interest/appointment

Sweeney/Ley - Voted unanimously to accept this resignation and to instruct the Clerk to send a letter of thanks for service; and to appoint George Duarte and Kimberly Teves to the Zoning Board of Review with a term(s) set to expire in March 2025

G15. Harbor Commission Advisory Committee (1 vacant seat set to expire August 2026)

a. George S. Burman, 66 Highland Road, interest/appointment

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to appoint George S. Burman to the Harbor Commission Advisory Committee with a term set to expire in August 2026.

The council expressed gratitude for the public's interest in serving on town boards or commissions. They encouraged those who were not appointed during this session to explore other boards that might align with their interests. The council also extended thanks to all applicants for their participation.

H. Old Business

H1. Town Administrator Contente re - Consideration of Traffic Calming Policy and Police Department presentation (continued from December 6, 2023)

- a. (revised draft) traffic calming policy and extended speed summary
- b. (renderings) Pilot speed bumps on Peck Avenue
- c. Joe Balestracci letter in favor

Teixeira/Sweeney- Voted unanimously to adopt the Traffic Calming Policy as presented.

Prior to the vote being taken, Town Administrator Contente highlighted the recent policy revision as per the council's request. He detailed the alterations in the eligibility criteria for the traffic calming program, particularly focusing on the traffic study aspect. He provided insights into how the study identifies 85th percentile speeds of 5mph or higher, serving as a guide to establish safe speed limits. Additionally, he explained the rationale behind using this as a benchmark for determining eligibility criteria for speed bumps.

It was noted that additional revisions included procedures for the removal of traffic calming devices and adjustments to petition signature requirements. The signature criteria was modified from the original 70% required signatures within a 200' street radius to 60% of the signatures needed from an "area of influence". It was clarified that the determination of the area

of influence would be made on a case-by-case basis. Vice Chairwoman Parella expressed her concerns about not having a precise definition of the area of influence and disliked its subjective nature. Police Chief Lynch responded, explaining that the council had oversight, and while the police department would present a recommendation for the area of influence, the council ultimately had the authority to expand it if deemed necessary.

Discussions ensued regarding common traffic calming practices utilized by the town that included electronic speed feedback signs, traffic speed humps, and roadway narrowing(s).

Members of the council expressed their overall approval of the revision to the policy.

I. Other New Business Requiring Town Council Action

I1. Town Clerk Cordeiro re - request for amendment to local Ordinances regarding License Requirements for Second-Hand Consignment Goods, Resale Goods, Thrift Goods and Antiques.

a. copy of legislation

b. draft ordinance

Sweeney/Ley- Voted unanimously to continue the matter to the February 7, 2024, Council meeting for consideration of first reading.

Prior to the vote being taken, it was noted that the proposed changes were to reflect legislation updates that exempted license requirements for Second-Hand Consignment Goods, Resale Goods, Thrift Goods and Antiques. The amendments would align local ordinance with the legislative updates.

I2. Sharon and Warren Wollschlager, 123 Beach Road re Voter Initiative to enact a proposed ordinance prohibiting Deer Hunting on Town of Bristol Properties as follows
"all forms of deer hunting, including but not limited to bow hunting, on all property owned, leased or otherwise controlled by the Town of Bristol is here by prohibited" council to enact the proposed ordinance -
"all forms of deer hunting, including but not limited to bow hunting, on all property owned, leased or

otherwise controlled by the Town of Bristol is here by prohibited"

a. Memo Clerk Cordeiro- re BOC signature qualification

_____/_____- Voted
unanimously to

Prior to the vote being taken, Clerk Cordeiro notes a letter in opposition was received from the New England Back Country Hunters & Anglers and recorded as received at meeting.

Sharron and Warren Wollschlager, residing at 123 Beach Road address the council expressing concerns about Bristol's cooperative agreement with the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) for bowhunting. They worry about safety, particularly for residents near the hunting area, and question the new archery proficiency requirements. The couple, with backgrounds in public health, dispute the claimed correlation between reducing deer population and lowering tick-borne diseases, citing a lack of empirical data. They also express ethical concerns about bowhunting. Despite a recent DEM study, their concerns remain, leading them to collect signatures for a Voter initiative. They request Mr. Dennis Tabella, a respected director of Defenders of Animals, to address the council and share additional concerns.

Dennis Tabella, a former Bristol resident & director of Defeneders of Animals, residing at 160 Andros Road, Warwick RI expresses serious concerns about the proposed bowhunting ordinance. He highlights the population control inefficiency of hunting, citing the bounce-back factor in deer reproduction. Mr. Tabella points out that towns like Providence and East Providence, without hunting seasons, successfully manage their deer populations. He draws attention to the collision issues during mating and hunting seasons, emphasizing the danger of having hunting seasons in densely populated areas like Bristol.

Mr. Tabella discusses the cruelty of bow hunting, referencing studies from various states that question its effectiveness and humaneness. He challenges the perceived connection between hunting and Lyme disease, arguing that other animals also carry ticks. Mr. Tabella further raises ethical concerns about funding sources for the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), calling it "blood money" from hunting licenses.

Mr. Tabella requests the Town Council to delay voting on the ordinance, providing time to present studies from schools and colleges that question the effectiveness and ethics of bow hunting. He urges the council to seek input from experts in other states and towns before entering into agreements with the DEM. He advocates for exploring non-lethal methods for population control and warns against turning Bristol into another town with collision issues due to extensive deer hunting.

Warren Wollschlager suggests that the council carefully consider insights from experts in other areas before making decisions. He acknowledges the argument that a reduction in roadkill is correlated with an increase in harvesting, emphasizing the importance of scrutinizing the data. Mr. Wollschlager presents data from 2021, indicating that while the roadkill decreased from 34 to 41 (a 30% reduction), the harvest increased from 16 to 63, marking a 400% rise. He points out that when comparing the same data to the previous year, there is a 20% increase in roadkill since the implementation of the program.

At this point in the meeting, the council recesses from 7:20 pm to 7:25 pm to allow a computer reboot.

Dylan Ferrera, the white-tailed deer biologist at the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM), presented alongside colleagues including the supervising biologist overseeing the wildlife section, the outreach biologist supervisor, and members of the Law Enforcement Division.

Mr. Ferrera outlined the DEM's mission to protect, restore, and enhance the environment of Rhode Island, ensuring its appeal for residents, visitors, and families. The specific emphasis is on conserving and managing the state's freshwater and wildlife resources for equitable and sustainable use.

Mr. Ferrera highlighted the funding sources, which include both Federal and State contributions derived from hunting and fishing licenses. The importance of the Pitman-Robertson Act of 1937 was emphasized, as it serves as a self-imposed tax by hunters to generate funds for the conservation and preservation of wildlife, ensuring their existence for future generations.

Mr. Ferrera delivered a PowerPoint presentation, Highlighting the following:

- American System of Conservation funding

- Wildlife conservation and research
- White-tailed Deer Project
 - Healthy deer herd
 - Forest Health
 - Public Safety
 - Human-deer conflicts
 - Tick-borne illness
 - Deer vehicle collisions (DVC)
 - Property damage
- Managing hunter-harvest
- White-tailed Deer information ranging over
 - Geographic Range
 - Habitat
 - Diet
 - Physical characteristics
 - Reproduction
- Current Problems with Deer in Bristol
 - Above Cultural and
 - Biological Carrying Capacity
 - Tick-Borne Diseases
 - Deer-Vehicle Collisions (DVC)
 - Property Damage
 - Forest and Herd Health
- Birds Dependent on Healthy Understory
- Factors to why Deers populate locally
 - Reduced hunting pressure
 - Favorable habitat
 - Lack of predators
- Deer Management reduction Options(including effectiveness, cost, public approval, and maintenance)
 - Legal regulated hunting
 - Sharp Shooting
 - Fertility Control
 - Translocation
 - Fencing
- Existing Hunting Cooperatives
- Details of the Bristol Hunting Cooperative
- 2023-2024 Hunting Season Summary
- Summary of need of hunting locally
 - Deer are overabundant
 - Need to reduce deer populations to fall below Cultural and Biological Carrying Capacity
 - Deer-Vehicle Collisions
 - Tick-borne disease cases

- o Property damage
- o Forest and herd health
- o Doing nothing means favoring deer over many other species, local forests, and native plants
- o Human intervention is needed to restore balance
- o Best management option to reduce the deer population is through legal regulated hunting

Mr. Ferrera highlighted the significant increase in the harvest of deer, noting that it had doubled from the previous year and tripled from the five-year average. Vehicle collisions decreased by 31% compared to the previous year, with no reported injuries to the public or hunters, as required by law. The presentation compared the trends in deer harvest and vehicle collisions, emphasizing that despite consistent efforts and the same number of motorists and hunters over the years, there was an increase in hunting this year. The data showed a shift where the hunter-fall harvest exceeded deer-vehicle collisions for the first time. Mr. Ferrera emphasized the importance of managing the deer population through hunting to prevent suffering deaths from vehicle collisions and ensure that harvested deer are used for consumption by hunters and their families.

Councilman Sweeney raised a question to Dylan regarding Sharan and Warren's assertion that the deer population would self-regulate without hunting, as females would not reproduce due to overpopulation. In response, Mr. Ferrera explained that in an ideal scenario, a natural environment without human interference would allow the population to balance itself. However, in Bristol, the presence of various human factors, such as gardens and agriculture, artificially increases the resources available to deer, leading to continuous breeding and population growth. Mr. Ferrera emphasized that the landscape in Bristol, with its wild factors, contributes to the high deer-vehicle collision rates, making it an issue that needs attention. He highlighted the importance of managing the deer population to prevent it from reaching a level where collisions become uncontrollable and emphasized the need for ongoing intervention to address the situation.

Councilman Ley expressed gratitude to Dylan for the presentation and raised a question about the varying deer harvest numbers in different locations, suggesting the possibility of reconsidering hunting in areas with lower harvests. He questioned whether such a decision might lead to an influx of hunters in areas with higher deer populations. Mr. Ferrera clarified that the high harvest in certain areas is due to their size and availability

for hunters, and closing hunting in low-harvest areas could lead to an increase in the deer population there, causing potential issues. Councilman Ley acknowledged the complexity of the situation, expressing concern about unintended consequences. Mr. Ferrera explained that this is the first year for hunting on town properties, and the high harvest in some areas is expected due to their size. He cautioned against closing areas with lower deer numbers, as it indicates the effectiveness of the hunting program, emphasizing the need to maintain efforts to prevent the population from bouncing back.

Councilman Ley referenced previous discussions about the effectiveness of the deer management program, acknowledging the positive impact reflected in the increased harvest numbers. However, he suggested waiting for another year of data to make a definitive assessment. Mr. Ferrera expressed agreement with the progress, noting a significant rise from 24 to 63 in the current year, and emphasizing the success in reducing the deer population. He anticipates a potential decrease in harvest next year due to the program's effectiveness. Mr. Ferrera envisions a future balance in deer population stability if external factors, like property openings or closures, remain constant, indicating a positive trajectory for the program.

Discussions ensued regarding regulating and implementation of hunting on private property.

Councilman Ley shared a personal experience of a deer collision involving his white Honda Pilot while in route to a hockey game with his kids. He expressed the added concern and complexity of such incidents when children are present. Councilman Ley highlighted the potential dangers, including swerving into oncoming traffic, emphasizing the nerve-wracking nature of these situations. However, he acknowledged a 30% reduction in deer collisions since the previous year, expressing surprise and optimism about the positive direction. Councilman Ley suggested waiting for another year of data to confirm the sustained improvement. Mr. Ferrera agreed that vehicle collisions are a significant concern for public safety and expressed relief at the reduction in collisions despite the increased harvest, emphasizing the importance of monitoring the trend over time.

Vice Chairwoman Parella asked about the number of private properties allowing hunting in town. Mr. Ferrera explained that individuals can decide to permit hunting on their property, but specific locations are not disclosed for privacy reasons. Councilman Teixeira highlighted the sensitivity of revealing private hunting areas. Mr. Ferrera mentioned that most deer harvests in the state occur on private property, but in Bristol,

town properties contribute significantly due to limited alternatives. The increase in Bristol's harvest was attributed to deer concentration on specific town properties.

Councilman Sweeney inquired about any issues related to hunting in Bristol during the past season, emphasizing the distinction between trophy hunting and hunting for sustainability. Mr. Ferrera noted that the majority of hunters prioritize hunting for food or recreational purposes, with trophy hunting being a secondary consideration.

Chief Lynch, responding to concerns about safety and issues, explained that the police department, in collaboration with DEM, monitored the hunting activities closely. Lieutenant St. Pierre collected data on service calls, public safety issues, and concerns, finding no significant hazards after 12 weeks of reporting. Chief Lynch assured that public safety was prioritized, and any concerns raised were addressed promptly.

Lieutenant Adam Hill, from DEM's divisional law enforcement, highlighted the proactive measures taken, including increased patrols and approximately 100 checks on hunting locations. He reported a few violations, such as the lack of deer tags and archery proficiency, but corrective actions were taken. Lieutenant Hill also addressed calls for improperly disposed deer carcasses and instances of hunter harassment, emphasizing the resolution of these situations through education and communication. Overall, there were no hunting safety-related issues, and violations were comparable to statewide norms.

Councilman Sweeney inquired about the hunting process and whether there would be a balanced population where hunting might not be needed every year. Mr. Ferrera stated that hunting would likely be necessary annually to manage the deer population effectively.

Vice Chairwoman Parella raised concerns about the length of the hunting season, which spans from September to January. Mr. Ferrera explained that the extended season allows more opportunities for hunters, especially those with limited availability on weekends. Mr. Ferrera defended the season's length, emphasizing increased chances of a successful deer harvest.

Mr. Ferrera noted that shortening the season could decrease hunter success. He also addressed the issue of access points to hunting areas, acknowledging conflicts with residents but emphasizing the importance of providing access for effective deer management. Mr. Ferrera further suggested working together

to evaluate access points and parking locations, acknowledging the challenges but emphasizing the need to balance access and harvest reduction.

Councilman Teixeira acknowledged differing perspectives on the presented data and emphasized the need for current efforts due to safety concerns caused by increasing deer sightings in residential areas.

Councilman Ley underscored the value of the observed 30% reduction in the deer population, suggesting the potential benefits of collecting additional data over the next year or two to assess long-term trends. He connected the issue to public safety, particularly emphasizing the impact on automobile collisions and the potential for a safer environment in Bristol with sustained reductions.

Vice Chairwoman Parella shared a personal experience of a deer in her yard and expressed the necessity of managing the deer population for both safety and ecological reasons, advocating for continuing the program for at least another year.

Councilman Ley added that a report at the end of the hunting season would be valuable for further analysis. Acknowledging the resource constraints faced by the DEM. He expressed interest in analyzing future data, particularly focusing on private land numbers and potential growth in town-owned properties' harvest.

Councilman Teixeira expressed gratitude to the individuals who provided testimony and recognized the efforts of the DEM in contributing valuable information to the council's decision-making process. The appreciation extended to both experts and community members for their contributions to the ongoing dialogue on this critical matter.

Chairman Calouro shared his personal experience of living near Roger Williams and frequently having deer in his yard. He highlighted the beauty of these creatures and clarified that the Council is not advocating for hunting but rather for controlling the deer population. He acknowledged the two sides of the debate regarding Lyme disease and expressed personal concern, citing a family member's struggle with the illness. He emphasized that while there are other carriers of Lyme disease, deer are strong carriers based on his research.

Chairman Calouro assured that the decision was not made hastily and involved extensive research, multiple meetings, and public

awareness efforts. He mentioned that the Council delayed the decision for a year to facilitate more discussions. Despite potential disagreements, he emphasized the thoroughness of the process and the Council's faith in the presented information. Chairman Calouro expressed gratitude to those who signed the petition and participated in the discussions. He commended the respectful mannerisms in the room, recognizing the emotional attachment people may have to the subject and appreciating the civil discourse during the meeting.

13. Director Parks & Recreation Rensehausen re - Request from RWU Students for Beach entry building replacement

Teixeira/Ley- Voted unanimously to appropriate \$1500 from the Town Council Contingency account in support of this program and receive and file.

Prior to the vote being taken, Assistant Park and Recreation Director Tim Shore provides context to the project, explaining that the college students from Roger Williams are part of the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS). The students, Dominic Cavalho and Ryan Descantis, share their design for renovating a booth at the town beach and sports complex. Assistant Director Shore reveals that the project originated when the students sought a community project, and town officials proposed the aging booth as an ideal candidate. He mentions that the booth has shown signs of aging, requiring assistance from public works to reset it on blocks.

Mr. Cavalho presents the design, emphasizing features like a larger footprint, bilingual signage, and contextualizing the structure within Bristol's history. He specifically notes the curvature approach inspired by ship-making features to resemble Bristol's maritime history. The incorporation of a sail cloth and also incorporating some lateral slats, 16 of which are cut off and then 18 go up from the floor to the roof, representing 1680, connecting with the town's founding year in 1680.

Mr. Descantis adds insights about their organization's goals, mentioning that he represents the architecture program as the Vice President of AIAS and also serves as the project manager for Freedom by Design. Freedom by Design allows students to gain real-world architectural experience while serving the communities around them. Ryan discusses the collaborative design process, involving fellow students, mentors who are licensed

architects and contractors, and consultations with the Practice Direct department to address concerns and needs.

The structure is planned to start construction in early February and be completed by Memorial Day, with an estimated cost of \$5,800.

Council members appreciate the unique design and inquire about specific details, such as the opening mechanism for the cash box and the possibility of solar power. The presentation receives positive feedback, with some members noting the design's appeal after initial skepticism.

Councilman Teixeira recommends allocating \$1500 for the council contingency fund to assist with the project.

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 #1027 - Souvenir Merchandise for the 239th and 240th Fourth of July Celebration

Teixeira/Parella- Voted unanimously to refer this matter to the Town Administrator and Fourth of July Committee to act in the best interest of the Town.

Prior to the vote taken, the Clerk read the following bids:

- Graphic Ink in the amount of \$78,065.85
- Soar Promotional Products in the amount of \$7,966.83
- Makservi Craft & Paint in the amount of \$70,000

J2. BID #1028 - Screw Pump Repair - Main Lift Pumping Station (rebid)

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

Prior to the vote taken, the Clerk read the following bids:

- Hart Engineering Corporation in the amount of:
 - \$679,000.00 Completion of Screw Pump Repair
 - \$20,000.00 Renewal/Repair of existing Gear Box
 - \$50,000.00 Bypass Pump Fuel
 - **Total Bid Amount \$749,000.00**

- J3.** BID# 1029 - Stage and Sound Bristol 4th of July Concert Series 2024

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

Prior to the vote taken, the Clerk read the following bids:

- NE Showtime Productions Inc. in the amount of \$ \$85, 875.00
- Audio Solutions in the amount of \$56,200.00

- J4.** BID #1030 - Bristol Fourth of July Ball 2024 (rebid)

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

Prior to the vote taken, the Clerk read the following bids:

- Emery's Catering Service in the amount of:
 - \$42,282.59 total cost
 - \$153.75 per plate cost
- Blackstone Caterers in the amount of:
 - \$43,375.00 total cost
 - \$157.73 per plate cost
- Pranzi Catering & Events in the amount of:
 - \$38,225.00 total cost

- o \$139.00 per plate cost
- Common Pub & Grille did not conform to the bid requirements and was disqualified

K. Special Reports

- K1.** Juan Mariscal, Chairman, Bristol County Water Authority Board of Directors Tri-Town Monthly Report, December 2023

Sweeny/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to receive and place this matter on file.

L. Town Solicitor

M. Executive Sessions

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. Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes, November 14, 2023
- (CA) AA2. Bristol Housing Authority Meeting Minutes, November 9, 2023
- (CA) AA3. Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes, October 19, 2023
- (CA) AA4. Bristol Housing Authority Meeting Minutes, December 14, 2023
- (CA) AA5. Zoning Board of Review Meeting Minutes, November 6, 2023
- (CA) AA6. Zoning Board of Review Meeting Minutes, December 4, 2023
- (CA) AA7. Board of Fire Engineers Meeting Minutes, January 2, 2024

(CA) AA8. Bristol Housing Authority Minutes - December 14, 2023

(CA) BB. Budget Adjustments

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

(CA) BB1. Tax Assessor DiMeo re - Recommended Abatements & Additions - January 2024

(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 of the Town of Bristol for the Formation of the Bristol 250th Commission **(signed)**

(CA) DD2. Proclamation - Major Brian Burke, retirement after 27 years **(signed)**

(CA) DD3. Citation - Beta Engineering, 2023 Engineering Excellence Award **(signed)**

(CA) DD4. Citation - Susan Battle, retirement from Linden Place **(signed)**

(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. Resolution of the Town of Hopkinton in Support of Maintaining the Water Level of the Pawcatuck River

(CA) FF2. Resolution of the Town of Warren - To the Honorable RI General Assembly requesting an Amendment to RIGL § 44-18-18.1 to include Class A liquor licensee

sales in the Levy and Imposition of a one percent tax on the gross receipts of the licensee

(CA) FF3. Chariho Regional School District

(CA) GG. Distributions/Communications

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

(CA) GG1. Town Administrator Contente to James M. Ramos re - rejected award Bid #1022 - Screw Pump Repair - Main Lift Pumping Station

(CA) GG2. Bid #1025 tabulation - Statistical Update Revaluation

(CA) GG3. Bid #1026 tabulation - Library Strategic Planning Services

(CA) GG4. Town Administrator Contente to Brewster Thornton Group Architects LLP re - award Bid #978 (extension award)- On-Call Architectural Services

(CA) GG5. Town Administrator Contente to Catalis Tax & CAMA, Inc. re - Bid #1025 - 2024 Statistical Update Revaluation

(CA) GG6. Town Clerk Cordeiro re - Documentation of Bid rejection for Bid #1026 - Library Strategic Planning Services

(CA) GG7. Town Clerk Cordeiro - Thank you letter to Carolyn Medina for serving on the Board of Tax Assessment Review

(CA) GG8. Town Clerk Cordeiro re - Documentation of Bid Rejection for Bid #1023 - July Ball 2024

(CA) GG9. Newport and Bristol County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Subsidiary Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (fiscal year ended June 30, 2023)

(CA) GG10. Town Administrator Contente to Pranzi Catering and Events re - Rejection of Bid #1023 - 4th of July Ball 2024

(CA) GG11. Town Administrator Contente to Blackstone Caterers re - Rejection of Bid #1023 - 4th of July Ball 2024

- (CA) GG12. Town Administrator Contente to Common Pub & Grille re - Rejection of Bid #1023 - 4th of July Ball 2024
- (CA) GG13. Town Administrator Contente to Keane's Wood-Fired Catering re - Rejection of Bid #1023 - 4th of July Ball 2024
- (CA) GG14. Town Administrator Contente to Emery's Catering re - Rejection of Bid #1023 - 4th of July Ball 2024
- (CA) GG15. Warrant - Peter Withers, Plumbing Inspector
- (CA) GG16. Town Clerk Cordeiro letter to DEM office of Water Resources Freshwater Wetlands Program re - comments on Application #22-0264 Council concerns and additional information

Sweeney/Teixeira- Voted unanimously to receive and place this matter on file

Prior to the vote being taken, Councilman Sweeney expresses appreciation for the DEM report, particularly in addressing wetlands and flooding issues. He references recent flooding on Hope Street due to heavy rain and asks Diane about the cost estimates mentioned on pages 589 of the report. Director Williamson explains that the town has been addressing the Silver Creek watershed through phased approaches in the capital budget and grants. They have worked on stream clean-outs, projects like the golf course, and are currently focusing on drainage basins like High View and Varnum. Diane mentions ongoing initiatives, including stormwater improvements and a tree planting grant for climate resilience. The town also acquires open space to prevent development in the watershed. Diane emphasizes the importance of maintenance, including sending letters to property owners near wetlands or streams, reminding them not to dump debris. She assured that the report is not just for public awareness but is being actively implemented.

(CA) GG17. BCWA Notice of Public Hearing, January 23, 2024

(CA) GG18. Treasurer Hassell Update on Energy Contract

(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 Finance Committee Meeting, December 6, 2023

- (CA) HH2. BCWA Board of Directors Meeting, December 6, 2023
- (CA) HH3. Bristol Housing Authority Meeting, December 14, 2023
- (CA) HH4. Zoning Board of Review Meeting, January 2, 2024
- (CA) HH5. Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees Meeting, December 21, 2023
- (CA) HH6. Planning Board Meeting, January 11, 2024
- (CA) HH7. Historic District Commission Meeting, January 4, 2024
- (CA) HH8. Bristol Planning Board Technical Review Committee Meeting, January 9, 2024
- (CA) HH9. Bristol Planning Board Meeting Amended, January 11, 2024
- (CA) HH10. Conservation Commission Meeting, January 9, 2024
- (CA) HH11. The North and East Burial Grounds Commission Meeting, January 10, 2024
- (CA) HH12. Town of Bristol Housing Authority, January 11, 2024
- (CA) HH13. Bristol Planning Board Technical Review Committee Meeting, January 23, 2024

(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) III1. Joseph Furtado, 15 Collins Street claim for damages to vehicle

(CA) JJ. Miscellaneous Items Requiring Council Approval

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

- (CA) JJ1. Item received at meeting re - (ACEC) of RI - Tanyard Brook - 2023 Engineering Excellence Award Project of the Year to BETA Engineering (council date of 12/6/2023)

(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. Peggy Frederick, 195 High Street - request for curb cut

a. recommendation - Town Administrator and Department of Public Works

There being no further business, upon a motion by Councilman Sweeney, seconded by Councilman Teixeira and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this meeting to be adjourned at 10:01 pm.

Melissa Cordeiro, Town Clerk
Council Clerk