



**TOWN COUNCIL
WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2026
REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

**WATERTOWN TOWN HALL
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
61 ECHO LAKE RD.
WATERTOWN, CT 06795**

1. Call Meeting to Order.
Chairman Jonathan Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.
Chairman Jonathan Ramsay led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Roll Call.
PRESENT: Jonathan Ramsay, Chairman
Michele McHugh, Vice Chair
Dan Cocchiola (arrived 7:51)
Ken Demirs
Robert Desena
Robert Retallick
Mary Ann Rosa
Rachael Ryan

ABSENT: Carina Noyd

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Raimo, Town Manager
Maria Guerrero, Finance Director

4. Public Participation.

The Town Council invites the public to speak under public participation. Please complete and provide a *Watertown Town Council Public Participation* Form if you wish to speak at the meeting. Copies are available on the Town's website or at the meeting. There is a time limit of three minutes per speaker.

Barbara Zulkeski, Mallory Road
attached

Jeff Desmarais stated the vote not to approve the democratic party nomination of Thomas Claire by the majority party is an infringement of the rights of the political minority. As the DTC Chair it is my job and responsibility to protect the rights of the minority. I hope we can turn the page on this and work towards a better future for our town and its residents.

Catherine Dinsmore, Reynolds St asked to seat Tom Claire on the WSA. Ms. Dinsmore talked about the acknowledgement of emails sent from her to the Town Council regarding cost suggestions for notifying the public of the budget hearing and the referendum having few acknowledgements sent back.

Richard Rozanski, Reynolds St. talked about Tom Claire's abilities and qualities to be on the WSA committee and asked that he be placed on the committee. Mr. Rozanski stated the Town Council will vote on the transfer of \$30,000 from the Special Fund into the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund and asked for an explanation of what the nature of the Special Fund is?

Denise Russ, Porter Street spoke about the appointment of Thomas Claire voted down by the Republican majority and did not understand why?

Jack McHugh, Echo Lake Road talked about Michele McHugh's history and qualities and state she is here to support the Town of Watertown and wanted the best people on the Water and Sewer board.

Katherine Camara, Cottage Place spoke about the Special Fund for \$30,000 saying there is no line-item number and asked what it is, how much is in there and how it is growing? Ms. Camara asked the position of the Treasurer be reinstated and to not combine with any other position. Ms. Camara stated Tom Claire is here tonight and that you can interview him.

Frankie Popilowski, Oakville did not speak during public participation.

5. Minutes.

a. April 13, 2026 – Special Meeting

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Ken Demirs: I move to approve the Special Meeting minutes dated April 13, 2026 as presented.

Discussed: none

Motion passed unanimously

b. April 20, 2026 – Regular Meeting

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Ken Demirs: I move to approve the Regular Meeting minutes dated April 20, 2026 as presented.

Discussed: none

Motion passed unanimously

c. April 28, 2026 – Special Meeting – tabled until the next meeting

6. Chairman's Report

a. Correspondence

1. Resignation letter from Edward Wilk as a member of the Water and Sewer Authority, effective April 30, 2026.

7. Staff Reports.

a. Town Manager

Mark Raimo reported:

1. On May 20th New Gen Strategies and Solutions LLC. is expected to present the most recent rate study. This presentation will initiate discussions on the impact of WSA rates as well as begin evaluating the financial implications of the bond to bond conversation. I intended to just have this for the WSA committee, but it would be beneficial if the council were to attend that meeting to understand the rates and process, it will be May 20th at 7:00 p.m.
2. We did interview for the Assistant Superintendent, the interviews were completed on April 27th and although each candidate brought strengths to interview, we are reevaluating the position and the impact of the interviews. Noone had the full credentials to take over the position. We have to look at that organization as a whole for some discussion.
3. WSA, Harris Beach & Murtha, Atty. Jessell has spoken with them. They are wrapping the research to the \$10,000 price line that the Town Council set and we anticipate how that is going into effect on the May 20th if council were to sit as a group and we could present that as well. I have to talk that through with the attorneys, some information will be in public and some will be in Executive Session.
4. The Police Deputy Chief's position has been posted and we have posted it internally with the several members of our department being qualified for the position. That was a choice that the Chief and I made. For best

practice I would like to keep that in house and reward the members who currently work for us.

5. In your packet I included a document a council member asking a question about Taft School. I thought it would be for policy content for the council to understand the relationship between the Town and Taft School. We looked at calls of service, the way that we assess property values with the school in that document. We have a long history with Taft and I think this document captures that relationship in a very positive way. A lot of times we do not understand when something comes off our tax roll how that is affecting the town. You'll see in the document the assessment and what Taft has done on their own is very close in dollars.
6. The state legislature is currently advancing funding adjustments that would increase Watertown's ECS grant by approximately 1.5 million dollars. That is intended to be an annual contribution back to the Town of Watertown, not a one-time increase.
7. They have also given us a \$278 thousand dollars for a one-time supplemental grant for the Mohegan revenue. We will fall back to our \$11,000 contribution that we get ever year.
8. They also increased our pilot monies for Black Rock; they restored that and increased it by an additional \$52,000. I have been assured that Representative Polletta will continue those negotiations to get us the reimbursement that should be coming to us. They did put a large building in Black Rock and we should be compensated for it. I would like to acknowledge Representative Polletta for his efforts in securing the ECS funding in advocating for the increased pilot. Watertown was in the top 20 of municipalities that received this increased funding for ECS specifically.
9. As the council considers this additional revenue it is important to note that the legislative intent for this revenue is to provide relief for taxpayers. As we are going into a budget vote on our referendum on May 19th, it puts us in an awkward position because, do we hold the referendum off, do we have the referendum and market how we are going to handle those monies. Those are the discussions that the Town Council needs to have. As a first thought I went to the Tax Collector and we talked about billing and how we could push the billing out. One idea initially was we bill out at our old mil rate and then we can add a supplemental bill down once we decided on what the new mil rate would be. Additionally in discussions today we came to the conclusion that the mil rate is not set. This information is secured between now and the time council actually sets the mil rate. We can take that additional revenue whatever that piece is that needs to be used and we could reduce the mil rate moving forward which would save us on extra billing and processing

of that. But that is a discussion that we will have to have in the near future.

10. Union Communication, we are at an impasse and I think it's in the best interest of both the union and the town to go to a mediator. We are going to set that up for a sometime at the end of May, the beginning of June to see if we come to a better conclusion and move that forward.

The Police Union, has rejected a negotiated agreement twice and arbitration is an estimated cost to the town of \$15,000 to \$20,000, it's quite a bit of money. When we go through the negotiation process, we sometimes try to understand the impact of that cost can be used to offset any negotiations. I think we are too far in disagreement at this point to use those dollars. The union leadership union reached out to our labor attorney they suggested that myself as a Town Manager sit with the union to air out some grievances they may or may not have, at least share what their thought process on that. I do have a family member on the Police Department but I do not partake in the police negotiations. But I think given the opportunity I may be able to move the needle through that process of just hearing them out and then I would report back to the labor attorney what their concerns were. At the same point, I can share all the obstacles that the Town has that has been shared equally across all the unions of our stance on contract negotiations and then I would step back out of the contract discussions. If there is no objection from the council, I would be happy to do that, in hopes of coming to some agreement and then we can move forward from there.

Comments from commission:

Chairman Jonathan Ramsay stated he had no objection.

Vice Chair Michele McHugh stated I think it is a wise move, Mark. I think if we can save the Town some money and aggravation dealing with the union, I think it is a great idea.

Robert Retallick asked is your son on that board, that you would talk to?

Mark Raimo answered my son is the Vice President of the union. I would not go in there and discuss this with my son. This is to go in and discuss with the membership to understand their grievance because this is a 50/50 split. If I didn't have experience in the Police Department, I wouldn't even suggest this because it is a lot of stress for me to go in there and go

through this. I would be going back to the labor attorney and I would step away.

Robert Desena stated not by choice but I do have a family member who is a member of the Police Department and this family member has made me aware there is an impasse, they want to get on with it. They want to resolve whatever problems they may have. You have my blessing to do that to resolve the impasse.

Mary Ann Rosa stated it comes down to trust and I trust you. I trust you to go in and hear what they have to say, bring it back to the attorney and then step away and let the process proceed.

Mark Raimo stated I would absolutely be able to do that.

Rachael Ryan stated I am not familiar with this process; would it be possible for you to bring somebody with you? Would the labor attorney be there as well or maybe as a neutral party, just to rid of any possible potential looks of conflict of interest.

Mark Raimo answered I have no problem in bringing the labor attorney as well to the process. It will relieve me of any issues moving forward. At one point a council member actually performed this with the Police Department back in I think 2016. They were at an impasse and the Chairman actually went and negotiated with the union with is not typical. That would be no problem for me.

Continuation of report:

11. I am dealing with several personnel issues throughout the town and I am giving you the heads up. If you would like more information, I am obviously not going to share that publicly. I can give you a high-level view of what's happening with those issues.
12. We have hired an HR person. We made the offer; they have accepted it. They still need to go through the hiring process. I won't announce the name just yet.

To answer some of the questions from the public regarding the Water and Sewer Special Fund, Enterprise Fund. These are terms that we have talked about several times that I have given explanations several times. Not that I expect community members to attend every meeting, this is not something

that is being hidden. It is obvious information when you are dealing with an enterprise fund. The Special fund is just the total funds that stand and hold a lot of our accounts. It is not an account that is off the books as was stated on the record, that is a completely false narrative. These are on the books. It is a pooled cash account and the money sits in the special account. What I am asking to do, because back in October, we talked about that. The WSA did not put enough money in the operational budgets for sewer and water. We put aside a little over 2 million to support the operational budget. All we are doing is moving the money from the cash to the operating line items. This specifically is going in the sewer because we are \$30,000 short to make our May payments. This is a normal course of business. Because WSA did not have an April meeting and I was unable to put a special meeting together. I brought this to the council for your approval as the authority above WSA. I cleared this with the Chairman that this would be the process and next month we will be coming to WSA and the council to approve the additional up to one million so that could finish out the year on the operational shortage that was created when the budget was made, understanding what the rates were at that time. This is not hidden and talked about completely, it is on the record if somebody wants to do the research for it, there is nothing being hidden here. To continue to have people make that statement is unfair to the town and the local government. It's no better than yelling fire in a crowded room. It is not truthful and just because you don't understand something doesn't mean that something is improper.

Council questions:

Rachael Ryan asked when you said you were interviewing for the Water and Sewer Superintendent; did you say that no one came through who was qualified to be the Superintendent? Essentially you were looking at people to be an Assistant Superintendent.

Mark Raimo answered we had discussed that position and we had no qualified candidates to fill the Superintendent's position. We changed in the discussion that we would support an Assistant Superintendent if they came up with qualifications that they could move in that position. Then they would be supported through myself on the administrative side and Jerry on the operational side. During the interviews, as I said, they were very strong candidates, but to meet that position under the scrutiny that it's in, it may not be in our best interest to hire somebody at this time. Through our discussions after the interview, we will look at the position, understand what best practice is for WSA and then we can move forward with either a reorganization or maybe we stick with the organization as is stated. That would be up to WSA to make those decisions.

Rachael Ryan asked you are saying then that some of these people that interviewed may be qualified to be the Assistant Superintendent or not even that?

Mark Raimo answered we have not made any notifications and I am trying to be as direct without being direct because have not made a decision yet. At some point they may be considered but they would have to be trained, we are not sure yet.

Rachael Ryan asked on the Deputy Chief position, I think it is great that we have several who are qualified and I would totally support appointing from within and then as you said moving others up. Given your experience, is that normal for Police Departments to do it that way or do they generally bring in outside people just to compare?

Mark Raimo answered I think you have to review your rank and file and understand who's qualified and ready to sit in that position. Three and a half years ago, there was some disagreement on whether anybody was really qualified to sit in that position. We went to the outside and we attracted an excellent person who has supported the town for three and a half years. She has brought the level up of everybody in that department. But those individuals that are in positions that are ready to move up have worked very hard and I think we should for morale purposes, we should stay inside, the Chief and I are in full agreement on that.

b. Finance Director

Maria Guerrero reported:

1. Finance is working on strengthening our budget controls and reporting practices. To support a more proactive and timelier budget to actual reporting which has been discussed, finance aims to minimize last minute year-end adjustments by identifying and addressing variances throughout the year and presenting updates to the council as needed. As of April 30th, 2025 looking year to year the greatest budget variances were typically in the final quarter with both over and under budgeted line items. Delaying adjustments until July or August, which has typically happened, limits finances visibility into current year requirements and can slow our audit preparation. To improve this process, I am recommending presenting any budget transfers over \$4,999.99 to council on a bi-weekly basis moving forward at the meetings. This will provide greater transparency into variances and allow for timely explanations and enable approvals to occur incrementally rather than a large lump sum year-end adjustment

8. Subcommittees.
9. New Business.

- a. Consider appointments to boards and commissions.

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Ken Demirs: I move to appoint Adam Simonsen, 58 Winding Brook Farm Rd., Watertown as a member of the Water and Sewer Authority. This appointment is to fill the remaining term of Edward Wilk who resigned, for a term to expire January 31, 2027.

Vice Chair Michele McHugh stated my no vote two weeks ago was about choosing the person with the most experience to the Water and Sewer Authority. Over the last several days, one of the Republican appointees has step down so that we could make an appointment or a nomination for someone who has 25 plus year of experience on water and sewer. To us, it didn't matter if the person was a Republican, a Democrat or an Independent. It was about what was the best thing for the town. I am thrilled that Mr. Adam Simonsen, a registered Democrat, has volunteered to fill the position vacated by a Republican. He will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to both the town and to the WSA.

Motion passed unanimously

Motion: Rachael Ryan seconded by Mary Ann Rosa: I move to appoint Thomas Claire, Two Town Line Rd., Watertown as a member of the Water and Sewer Authority. This appointment is to fill the remaining term of Mario Mancini who resigned, for a term to expire January 31, 2028.

Vice Chair Michele McHugh stated my vote two weeks ago was not against this candidate. It was in terms of appointing someone who had more experience. Regarding boycotting boards and commissions, it is irresponsible and detrimental to the town. The Republicans have found an alternative solution, allowing both gentlemen to be seated. I would like to thank both Adam Simonsen and Thomas Claire for their willingness to volunteer for this extremely important commission.

Mary Ann Rosa stated I wasn't here when the first vote was taken, but I do know from talking to my Republican colleagues that they did not intend to cast any bad comments or light on Mr. Claire's qualifications. Very obviously in today's world, it is hard to find people to volunteer. Particularly on a board that is having a lot of problems and one where there is a lot of pressure. Certainly, there is gratitude that he was willing to put his name forward and was willing to put it forward again tonight. It may be hard to believe, folks, but it really wasn't a political vote. It was a vote for exactly what we said, we thought we had a really great candidate with so much experience to bring it at a time when we needed it.

But we are past that now. Both of the candidates are being seated. We need to move forward, stop throwing slings and arrows at each other and hopefully the issue never comes up again. It can even in our own party. If our town committee gave us a name that we as council people didn't feel was the best one, the same thing would happen. It's not political, we did make a decision which we thought would help the town. But thank both men for moving forward and let the rest of us do the same.

Chairman Jonathan Ramsay stated that my vote two weeks ago against Tom's nomination has nothing to do with Tom. Actually, I don't think I have ever spoke to Tom before. I hear he is well educated, very nice guy and smart guy. I am sure he will serve on the Water and Sewer commission very well over the coming years. With that said I am still not going to vote in favor of Tom. Nothing to do with Tom, but it has to do with how the Chairman of the Democratic Town Committee called me, harassed me, yelling and screaming, swearing at me, trying to convince me to change my vote two weeks ago. For that sole reason, and even borderline threatening me, saying or else, I still cannot vote in favor of Tom because of how Jeff treated me on the phone a few weeks ago.

Aye: 6 McHugh, Demirs, Desena, Retallick, Rosa, Ryan

Nay: 0

Abstain: 1 Ramsay

Motion passes

- b. Consider a resolution authorizing the appropriation of \$30,000 from the Special Fund into Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Water and Sewer authority requests that the Town Council authorize the appropriation of \$30,000 from the Special Fund into the Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds;

WHEREAS, The funds within the Special Fund are directly allocated for Water and Sewer Authority purposes and are intended to support these enterprise operations: and

WHEREAS, the appropriation would specifically be to:

- Fund 015 (Sewer Operations) 015.50344.074.0000.9015 - *Sewage Disposal* in the amount of \$30,000

WHEREAS, the approval of an appropriation of funds would be to maintain the financial stability of the enterprise funds, support ongoing service delivery and

ensure timely payment of all obligations associated with the Water and Sewer Authority systems.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by vote of the Watertown Town Council, the requested approval of the appropriation of funds.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 4th day of May, 2026.

Jonathan Ramsay, Chairman
Watertown Town Council

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Ken Demirs: I move to approve the resolution authorizing the appropriation of \$30,000 from the Special Fund into Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds.

Mark Raimo if you could just note that there is a resolution that identifies the line item that was attached.

Motion passed unanimously

- c. Consider authorizing an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$9,990.64 to the Police Department State Asset Forfeiture Program Fund 229.40236.460.0000.0000. Funds received for Watertown Police Department from the State of Connecticut Asset Forfeiture Program.

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Robert Desena: I move to authorizing an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$9,990.64 to the Police Department State Asset Forfeiture Program Fund 229.40236.460.0000.0000. Funds received for Watertown Police Department from the State of Connecticut Asset Forfeiture Program.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

- d. Consider approval of a job description for the position of Finance and Payroll Specialist.

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Ken Demirs: I move to approve the job description for the position of Finance and Payroll Specialist.

Council questions:

Rachael Ryan asked how is this different than the current structure?

Maria Guerrero answered the revised job description for accounts receivable and payable role. It is an updated job description. It has been created for the accounts receivable and payroll position. To better align with the changing needs of the Finance Department and the growing complexity of the work and position. The role now includes additional duties beyond day-to-day financial tasks with a stronger focus on cross training and maintain smooth operations for both accounts receivable and payable. This position will also serve as a key backup for both payroll and assisting the Treasurer, supporting continuity and forward planning. The revised description outlines the expanded skills, abilities, and technical knowledge required to support these duties. Compensation has been set to reflect the scope of the position with a range of \$64,000 to \$82,000. I would like to note that the union has reviewed this and has no objection to the description. These changes ensure the Finance Department remains aligned with best practices, adapts to evolving requirements and maintains strong internal controls and audit results. Broadening cross training and responsibilities will improve efficiency and strengthen preparedness for future needs. Overall, these updates are intended to support long-term stability, accountability, and high-quality financial management for both the organization and the community.

Rachael Ryan stated I am glad we have an HR Director coming on and I know that this person will be working conjunctive with the HR Director. It does say collaboration with the Human Resources department and asked if that wording is accurate or okay to have in there because do, we technically have an HR Department or not really because it is just one position?

Mark Raimo answered there is a couple of things that is going on with the HR in the HR job description that council did approve. There is an oversight of payroll, we are going to be moving payroll to be directly underneath HR. This position is to duplicate and cross train individuals on the Finance Department. I know everybody wants a Treasurer position, but it's a little outdated the title. I know it's in state statute. I have had discussion with members of CLA. I have had discussions with our auditor, and I have had discussions with many other towns. A past council member actually suggested that we go after a controller. Controllers make upwards of \$150 to \$200 thousand dollars on the minimum side, we can't afford to do that. We are trying to strengthen our positions. We have taken in consideration the position that was there and where we need to move and it's in the best interest of the town as we bring in new individuals at a younger generation which jump from organization to organization that we have cross-trained individuals so that we don't suffer the consequences of what we are going through right now, I fully support this position. It's been well thought out and there are going to be some changes and we are improving. Again, some residents you are yelling fire in this crowded room and it is unfair to staff to have to listen to that because at no meeting was any of these individuals that made statements tonight were in the meeting with me when I discussed this with so many other people. It is an important position, I fully support it and we are going to be making more changes, we are aligning for what you actually approved.

Rachael Ryan stated I was just looking semantically in terms of the Human Resources Department.

Mark Raimo added it's specifically for cross training and that is why I believe it says backup role, basically for backup.

Rachael Ryan asked what does that mean backup role because that is going to be a big part, it's a payroll job, right?

Mark Raimo answered it is not a payroll job; it is a backup role. They are going to understand payroll and they will jump in if our payroll person when we replace that position is unavailable or on vacation. They will be able to be cross trained to step into that job.

Rachael Ryan asked so there is going to be a separate person hired to payroll?

Mark Raimo answered at some point; we have not gotten there yet. We have a company that is doing that for us at the moment.

Motion passed unanimously

- e. Consider a resolution authorizing an appropriation in the amount of \$78.19 from the General Fund for tax refunds.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, taxpayers have made applications for property tax refunds in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, Refunds of Excess Payment; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector certified the refunds in accordance with the of Refund Statutes; and

WHEREAS, to refund taxpayers monies must be appropriated into budget line item to expend the funds.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council appropriates \$78.19 to line item from the General Fund for tax refunds.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 4th day of May, 2026.

Jonathan Ramsay, Chairman
Watertown Town Council

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve a resolution authorizing an appropriation in the amount of \$78.19 from the General Fund for tax refunds.

Motion passed unanimously

- f. Consider a resolution authorizing the payment of tax refunds.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, taxpayers have made application for the property tax refunds in accordance with C.G.S. Sections *Refunds of Excess Payment*:

WHEREAS, per State Statute, the Tax Collector shall, after examination of such application, refer the same, with recommendations thereon, to the Town Council, and shall certify to the amount of refund, if any, to which the applicant is entitled.

WHEREAS, upon receipt of such application and certification, the Town Council shall draw an order upon the Finance Department, in favor of such applicant for the amount of refund so certified.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Town Council authorizes a request that the Finance Department shall issue the payments for the certified refunds.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 4th day of May, 2026.

Jonathan Ramsay, Chairman
Watertown Town Council

See attached

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve the resolution authorizing the payment of tax funds.

Motion passed unanimously

Dan Cocchiola stated I want to thank my colleagues for making this resolution possible this evening. Mary Ann, Jonathan and Michele, I especially appreciate us being able to bring this together tonight. Two weeks ago, when we were sitting here one of the things that I was hoping and I know Rob, you and I had this conversation was the best of both worlds and somehow or another we landed there and I appreciate getting there. Thank you. Before we adjourn in respect to

the upcoming referendum, I do want us to put it on the agenda for next Town Council meeting, a discussion about the State ECS funding mechanism and how that may impact us because I want to have a broad conversation about how we should be looking at that in respect to our upcoming referendum that is just a couple days later and I am going to ask that we put that on our Town Manager's report.

10. Adjournment.

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Ken Demirs: to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Ramsay, Chair
Watertown Town Council

Approved: _____
Susan King, Clerk

**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM**

Date of Meeting: 5/14/26

(Please complete this form and submit it to the clerk of the Town Council if you wish to speak at this meeting)

Please Note: Three Minute Time Limit

1. I agree to a three-minute time limit;
2. I agree not to raise my voice;
3. I agree not to use lewd, obscene, profane, slanderous or libelous language or speak or act in a manner that would tend to incite a breach of the peace;
4. I agree not to speak about Town personnel matters. Personnel matters include comments about the job performance of named Town employees, other than elected officials;
5. After three minutes I agree to leave the microphone and yield the floor.
6. I agree that if I cause a disruption and am asked to leave, I will leave the Chambers.

Name: Barbara Zurek
(please print)

Address: 17 Main St Rd

06795
Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Written materials may be submitted to the Clerk of the Town Council. Personnel matters should be directed to the relevant Department Head and/or Supervisor or in the case of a Department Head to the Town Manager except for the Town Manager which should be directed to the Chair of the Town Council.

5/4/26

My comments tonight are centered on transparency, accountability, and the real impact this budget has on residents.

Residents are being asked to support this budget without a complete financial picture, particularly when it comes to **bond obligations**. No budget should move forward without clearly showing what residents will be paying, not just today, but in the years ahead.

We've heard that "**currently**" only Water and Sewer users are responsible for those costs. However, this is a **General Obligation Bond**, which means the responsibility ultimately sits with the entire town. That distinction is critical, especially for residents on well and septic who have been told they won't be affected.

If that is truly the intent, then it should be **put in writing**, so future Town Councils cannot shift that burden onto property taxpayers. Residents deserve clarity, not uncertainty.

I also want to raise concerns about affordability. Many long-time residents, especially seniors on fixed incomes, are feeling increased financial pressure. Income thresholds for relief don't reflect today's cost of living, and even small increases in taxes or fees can have a meaningful impact. These are residents who have supported this town for decades and should not feel like they are being priced out.

I've lived here for 22 years, and while these concerns around transparency are not new, they are becoming more visible because the financial impact is now being felt directly by residents.

I do want to be clear, I will be voting **yes** for the **Board of Education budget**. It has been effectively flat since 2023, and the superintendent took the time to review it line by line and reduce it to essential needs. That reflects responsible leadership.

However, I will be voting **no** on the **town budget** and that decision is based on one primary reason: **the lack of transparency and a complete financial picture**, particularly as it relates to bond obligations and long-term costs to residents.

Before asking residents to approve a budget, they deserve to know exactly what they are committing to, not just today, but in the years ahead.

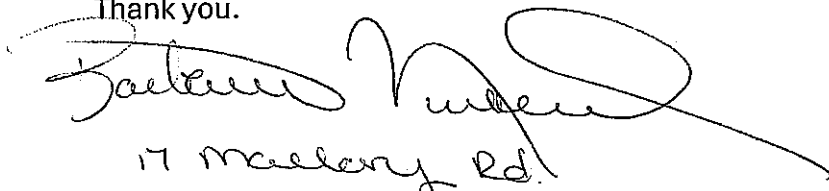
At the same time, I urge caution when considering reductions to core services like public works and the police department, which residents rely on every day.

So, my questions remain:

- What is the **total projected annual cost** to taxpayers for all outstanding bonds, including Water and Sewer, and why is that not clearly summarized in this budget?
- What steps are being taken to address employee turnover, and what data is being tracked to understand why employees are leaving?
- Before approving raises and stipends, what analysis was done to evaluate the financial impact on residents, and can that be shared publicly?
- What is the total being spent on consultants this fiscal year, including committed costs, and where in the budget is that clearly shown?
- And where is the full cost of the Water and Sewer Authority Assistant Superintendent reflected in this budget?

I would also encourage residents to take the time to review the information carefully, ask questions, and make an informed decision when they vote. For me, based on the lack of a complete financial picture, that means voting **no** on the town budget.

Thank you.


17 Mallery Rd.
Wthn. Ct. 06795

**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM**

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3. I agree not to use lewd, obscene, profane, slanderous or libelous language or speak or act in a manner that would tend to incite a breach of the peace;
4. I agree not to speak about Town personnel matters. Personnel matters include comments about the job performance of named Town employees, other than elected officials;
5. After three minutes I agree to leave the microphone and yield the floor;
6. I agree that if I cause a disruption and am asked to leave, I will leave the Chambers.

Name: Jeff Desmarais
(please print)

Address: 279 Neil Dr
Watertown, Ct. 06795

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Written materials may be submitted to the Clerk of the Town Council. Personnel matters should be directed to the relevant Department Head and/or Supervisor or in the case of a Department Head to the Town Manager except for the Town Manager which should be directed to the Chair of the Town Council.

**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM**

Date of Meeting: May 7, 2026

(Please complete this form and submit it to the clerk of the Town Council if you wish to speak at this meeting)

Please Note: Three Minute Time Limit

1. I agree to a three-minute time limit;
2. I agree not to raise my voice;
3. I agree not to use lewd, obscene, profane, slanderous or libelous language or speak or act in a manner that would tend to incite a breach of the peace;
4. I agree not to speak about Town personnel matters. Personnel matters include comments about the job performance of named Town employees, other than elected officials;
5. After three minutes I agree to leave the microphone and yield the floor;
6. I agree that if I cause a disruption and am asked to leave, I will leave the Chambers.

Name: Catherine R. Dinsmore
(please print)

Address: 35 Reynolds St

WTH

Signature: 

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**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM**

Date of Meeting: 5/4/2026

(Please complete this form and submit it to the clerk of the Town Council if you wish to speak at this meeting)

Please Note: Three Minute Time Limit

1. I agree to a three-minute time limit;
2. I agree not to raise my voice;
3. I agree not to use lewd, obscene, profane, slanderous or libelous language or speak or act in a manner that would tend to incite a breach of the peace;
4. I agree not to speak about Town personnel matters. Personnel matters include comments about the job performance of named Town employees, other than elected officials;
5. After three minutes I agree to leave the microphone and yield the floor;
6. I agree that if I cause a disruption and am asked to leave, I will leave the Chambers.

Name: RICHARD ROZAWSKI
(please print)

Address: 35 REYNOLDS ST.

WATERTOWN, CT
Signature: Richard R. Rozawski

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**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM**

Date of Meeting: 5/4/26

(Please complete this form and submit it to the clerk of the Town Council if you wish to speak at this meeting)

Please Note: Three Minute Time Limit

1. I agree to a three-minute time limit;
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5. After three minutes I agree to leave the microphone and yield the floor;
6. I agree that if I cause a disruption and am asked to leave, I will leave the Chambers.

Name: Denise Ross
(please print)

Address: 135 Porter St
Watertown CT

Signature: Denise Ross

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**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM**

Date of Meeting: 05/04/26

(Please complete this form and submit it to the clerk of the Town Council if you wish to speak at this meeting)

Please Note: Three Minute Time Limit

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5. After three minutes I agree to leave the microphone and yield the floor;
6. I agree that if I cause a disruption and am asked to leave, I will leave the Chambers.

Name: Jack McHugh
(please print)

Address: 777 Echo Lake Rd

Watertown
Signature: 

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WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM

Date of Meeting: 5/4/26

(Please complete this form and submit it to the clerk of the Town Council if you wish to speak at this meeting)

Please Note: Three Minute Time Limit

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3. I agree not to use lewd, obscene, profane, slanderous or libelous language or speak or act in a manner that would tend to incite a breach of the peace;
4. I agree not to speak about Town personnel matters. Personnel matters include comments about the job performance of named Town employees, other than elected officials;
5. After three minutes I agree to leave the microphone and yield the floor;
6. I agree that if I cause a disruption and am asked to leave, I will leave the Chambers.

Name: Katherine Camara
(please print)

Address: 31 Cottage Place
Oakville, CT 06779

Signature: 

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** signed under protest!*

**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM**

Date of Meeting: 6/4/26

(Please complete this form and submit it to the clerk of the Town Council if you wish to speak at this meeting)

Please Note: Three Minute Time Limit

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5. After three minutes I agree to leave the microphone and yield the floor;
6. I agree that if I cause a disruption and am asked to leave, I will leave the Chambers.

Name:

Frankie Papinoski
(please print)

Address:

240 Me. St. D. R.
Watertown, MA

Signature:

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Town Council

May 4, 2026

Regular Meeting Line item 9f

Name	Address	City/State/Zip	Prop Loc/Vehicle Info.	Reason	Tax	Int	Fee	Refund
TESLA LEASE TRUST	3000 HANOVER ST	PALO ALTO, CA 94304	2022/5YJ3E1EBXNF313676	Sec. 12-129 Refund of Excess Payments -	71.19	-	-	71.19
TIGANELLA NANCY & JAMES	380 WATERFALL CIR	LITTLE RIVER, CT 29566-7420	2015/WD3PF1CC0FP130279	Sec. 12-129 Refund of Excess payments -	7.00	-	-	7.00
					78.19	-	-	78.19