



**TOWN COUNCIL  
WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT  
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 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, Chair  
Michele McHugh, Vice Chair  
Dan Cocchiola  
Ken Demirs  
Robert Desena  
Carina Noyd  
Robert Retallick  
Mary Ann Rosa  
Rachael Ryan

ABSENT:

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, 17 Mallory Road  
Attached

Katherine Camara, 31 Cottage Place spoke about following the code of ethics on the swearing in of members. She talked about meeting minutes to be more complete. Ms. Camara asked about payments to the attorneys at the WSA Bipartisan meeting.

5. Minutes.

a. December 16, 2025 – Regular Meeting

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Robert Desena: I move to approve the Regular Meeting minutes dated December 15, 2025 as presented.

Aye: 5 Ramsay, McHugh, Desena, Noyd, Ryan

Nay: 0

Abstain: 4 Cocchiola, Demirs, Retallick, Rosa

Motion passes

b. October 20, 2025 – Special Meeting

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Rachael Ryan: I move to approve the Special Meeting minutes dated October 20, 2025 as presented.

Aye: 7 Ramsay, McHugh, Cocchiola, Desena, Noyd, Retallick, Ryan

Nay: 0

Abstain: 2 Demirs, Rosa

Motion passes

6. Chairman's Report

a. Correspondence

1. Resignation letter from Jeffrey Desmarais as a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission effective, December 31, 2025.

7. Staff Reports.

a. Town Manager

Mark Raimo reported:

1. January 20<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting will be addressing the topic of speed cameras.
2. WSA will have an attorney and accountant in to give an overview of our options moving forward.
3. On communications project they built the communication console, Norcom is building and they tested it and everything is fine. The Chief will give a better update on the 20<sup>th</sup>.
4. We have also installed two communications towers, one up on Judd Farm Road and one down at Black Road which will eventually increase our

first responders' ability to communication not only with dispatch but with themselves.

5. The budget season is well underway with the second round this week and next week.
6. We are going to post the WSA Superintendent's position. We did hire a new Planning & Zoning Administrator, Spencer Musselman out of the Litchfield area, we anticipate a start date of January 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Musselman will jump right into work because our Plan of Conservation & Development is due in 2027, it will take a couple of years to complete it.
7. I will be working with Jerry Lukowski and the WSA team on the budget. The next WSA meeting a lot of information will be coming out to evaluate how we move forward the next few months.
8. Negotiations with the Police Union, Communications and Highway are still negotiating. The Police Union I believe we are going to have a mitigator this week. We will be doing it the same way as Highway we just can't come to an agreement so we are going to have someone come in.
9. The town has reviewed and signed off on the school safety plan and that will be submitted to the state.

b. Finance Director

Maria Guerrero reported:

1. Our fiscal year end audit is on its way towards Sinnamon Associates on Wednesday. We have been collecting information that we have been working on and to wrap up the field work. A completion date of January 31<sup>st</sup> is anticipated.
2. The Town Manager and I have started the second round of meetings with Department Heads to review their 26/27 budget. Expect to receive a semi-annual report by department scheduled for our next meeting January 20<sup>th</sup>.
3. Our next software finance is scheduled for this Thursday here in the chambers which is good timing because it will be right after the audit and with budgets underway it is a good way to give some feedback as it relates to the calendar year end as well.

8. Subcommittees.

Michele McHugh reported:

The Water & Sewer Bipartisan Committee completed our second round of interviews last week. We met before this meeting and have agreed to interview other members of the WSA, as well as former Town Manager Bob Scannell if we can get in touch with them. We will modify the questions slightly to address these new individuals we plan on

interviewing and we will also try to establish a timeline for when the final report will be due. It will not be due February 2<sup>nd</sup> we need more time to get all the facts.

Jonathan Ramsay reported:

I will send over to the Town Manager's office a new listing of sub-committee members liaisons so we have that in place.

9. New Business.

- a. Consider an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$500 to be placed in the Police Department Law Enforcement Equipment Line Item 010.50572.020.0000.9010. Funds donated by Pilicy and Ryan.

Motion: Michele McHugh seconded by Robert Desena: I move to approve the appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$500 to be placed in the Police Department Law Enforcement Equipment Line Item 010.50572.020.0000.9010. Funds donated by Pilicy and Ryan.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

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

## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, taxpayers have made applications for 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 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

Jonathan Ramsay, Chair  
Watertown Town Council

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

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

10. Adjournment.

Motion: Ken Demirs seconded by Michele McHugh: I move to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

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Jonathan Ramsay, Chair  
Watertown Town Council

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Susan King, Clerk



# WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM

Date of Meeting: 1/5/20

(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 Z. Stefski  
(please print)

Address:

17 Mallory Rd

Signature:

1.417.05.06795

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.

1/5/26

I do not speak for or represent the Watertown Fire District, but I want to address the testimony given by Town Attorney Paul Jessell.

Attorney Jessell stated that he would not have done anything differently and still does not believe the Town should have lost the lawsuit, despite the fact that Watertown has now lost three times in court. That position alone should concern every resident. When repeated losses produce no reflection or course correction, we must ask what, if anything, has been learned. Continuing litigation without reassessment raises serious concerns about judgment, stewardship of taxpayer dollars, and whether the Town had the appropriate legal guidance for an issue of this magnitude.

What is equally troubling is that nearly every witness in positions of authority and significant compensation offered the same response: they would not change a thing. That lack of accountability should alarm this community. Leadership requires the ability to reassess decisions, especially when those decisions result in repeated losses and long-term financial consequences. The Town Council must ask itself whether the right people are in the right positions.

We were told the Town's only options were to raise rates or get Waterbury back to the negotiating table. The record shows otherwise. Waterbury was willing to negotiate and reduce the judgment if the Town and the Water & Sewer Authority agreed to Waterbury's new rates. Watertown refused outright to pay those rates. That refusal eliminated any meaningful path to settlement. And yet, residents of both the WSA and the Fire District are paying Waterbury residential rates regardless.

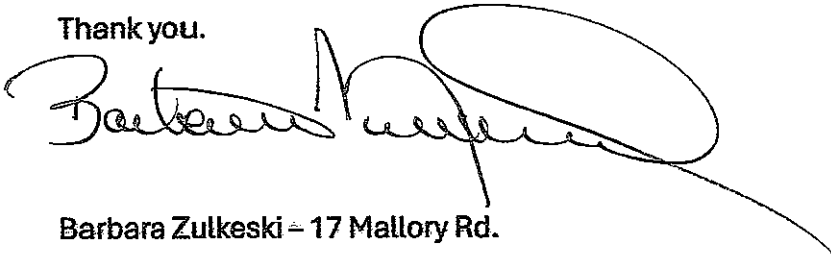
I also need to correct the record regarding Attorney Jessell's statement to the Fire District. It was not the Fire District that "drew a line in the sand." That line was drawn by 2,200 Fire District residents who refused to absorb millions tied to a General Obligation Bond they had no control over and no benefit from. This was not a Fire District debt bond. Those decisions were made by the Town Council, Town Manager, and Town Attorney, yet Fire District residents are now being portrayed as unreasonable. Asking them to absorb this cost would force them to pay twice, while WSA ratepayers who benefited from the bond bear none of that burden. If the Town chooses to act against these residents, that decision will not be forgotten by voters.

The Bi-Partisan Committee raised the concept of tolling, a standard stand-by agreement used to pause litigation while claims are evaluated. That option was never pursued. According to Attorney Jessell, he "never thought of it." Given the stakes, that failure raises serious concerns about diligence and judgment.

Finally, while the judge ruled Waterbury's rates to be fair and reasonable, we were told Waterbury "Threw numbers" at the Town during settlement discussions. Those numbers have never been made public. Where are they? At the same time, the Fire District presented clear figures showing Waterbury's billing practices are flawed. Instead of challenging those bills directly, the Town deflected responsibility. As it stands, Watertown residents are effectively being billed twice due to inflow and infiltration.

So, I ask the commission directly: after three court losses, refusal to negotiate, failure to consider tolling, and a lack of transparency, do we truly have the right people in the right positions? And if not, when will this commission ensure the Town Council holds leadership accountable to the residents who pay these bills?

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barbara Zulkeski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Barbara Zulkeski - 17 Mallory Rd.



## WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORM

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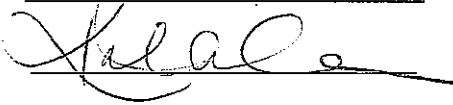
(Please complete this form and submit it to the clerk of the Town Council if you wish to speak at this meeting)

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Name: Katherine Camara  
(please print)

Address: 31 Cottage Place  
Oakville, CT 06779

Signature: 

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Bill	Name	Address	City/State/Zip	Prop Loc/Vehicle Info.	Reason	Tax	Int.	Fees	Refund
2021-03-0053882	COLLINS AMANDA M	135 KELSEY ST	WATERBURY, CT 06706	2017/KMHCT5AE5HU311029	Sec. 12-12	276.23	33.15	5.00	314.38
2022-03-0053983	COLLINS AMANDA M	135 KELSEY ST	WATERBURY, CT 06706	2017/KMHCT5AE5HU311029	Sec. 12-12	289.87	56.52	5.00	351.39
2023-03-0064716	NISSAN INFINITI LLC	P O BOX 22059	NASHVILLE, TN 37202	2022/5N1AZ2BSINC111078	Sec. 12-12	396.44	-	-	396.44
2023-03-0064787	NISSAN INFINITI LLC	P O BOX 22059	NASHVILLE, TN 37202	2022/3N1AB8DV8NY285419	Sec. 12-12	122.42	-	-	122.42
2024-01-0001354	CAVALIERE MARK	175 TARBELL AVE	OAKVILLE, CT 06779-1623	175 TARBELL AVE	Sec. 12-12	5.51	-	-	5.51
2024-03-0069933	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	525 FELLOWSHIP RD STE 330	MT LAUREL, NJ 08054-3415	2022/2T2HZMDA6NC325294	Sec. 12-12	67.80	-	-	67.80
TOTAL						1,158.27	89.67	10.00	1,257.94