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BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

EDUCATION, WORKFORCE, YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting of the above reference subcommittee held on Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in a hybrid meeting format via Zoom webinar virtual platform. The in-person location was Council Chambers, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Councilors' Present: *In-Person*: Deputy Mayor Cindi Lloyd, Councilors' Michael Oliver- Chair, Elizabeth Waterhouse; ***via Zoom:*** none

Councilors' Absent: Shamar Mahon & Darrell Goodwin

Zoom Attendees: Alvin D. Schwapp Jr., Town Manager

Others present: *In-Person*: Latonia Tabb, Clerk of Council; Warren Plummer, Director of Information Technology; Camilla Hillian, Director Social and Youth Services; Luz Cora-Small, Assistant Director Senior Services

Absent: Dave Melesko, Director Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services

Guest(s): Mark Colbert, COO and David Weinholtz, Development Officer, MakerspaceCT

Councilor Oliver called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Presentation by MarkerspaceCT- Workforce Development Programs and Partnership**

Councilor Oliver welcomed Mr. Mark Colbert, Chief Operating Officer, presented two proposed workforce development programs introducing 17- and 18-year-old students to careers in the skilled trades. He outlined a 10-week commercial construction program and a 30-hour continuing trades program covering construction fundamentals, safety, and introductory electrical, plumbing, and HVAC concepts. Mr. Colbert explained that the programs are designed to provide hands-on experience, OSHA 10 certification, and exposure to career pathways in the trades, while complementing—not replacing—formal trade school or apprenticeship training. He noted the proposed cohort sizes, estimated program costs, and flexible scheduling to accommodate students' school commitments before concluding his presentation and inviting questions.

Councilors expressed support for the proposed skilled trades program and discussed program costs, scheduling, transportation, and implementation. Questions were raised regarding program hours, flexibility for students with existing OSHA 10 certification, and a potential fall launch. The Committee also discussed coordinating transportation, accommodating students' school schedules, and ensuring the program is accessible to eligible Bloomfield youth.

Mr. Alvin D. Schwapp Jr., Town Manager, noted that, unlike previous work-study programs administered through the school district, the proposed trades program is a Town initiative. He emphasized that any consideration of scheduling the program during the school day would require coordination and collaboration with the Board of Education and the school district.

There was further discussion regarding the program dynamics and interest from other municipalities for this program due to the interest in Bloomfield.

REPORT FROM TOWN STAFF

SENIOR SERVICES

Mrs. Luz Cora-Small, Assistant Director of Senior Services, provided an update on recent and upcoming Senior Center activities and reported that the Center hosted AARP volunteers who provided more than 460 tax preparation appointments for seniors. She also highlighted grant-funded Tai Chi for Better Balance classes, a pre-Mother's Day luncheon, a pre-Father's Day breakfast, the sixth annual pre-Juneteenth celebration, and the American 250th birthday celebration.

Mrs. Cora-Small also reviewed upcoming activities, including a trip to the Hartford Jazz Festival, the annual statewide senior outing at Holiday Hill, and transportation to the Big E in September. During discussion, she noted that transportation to the Big E typically utilizes two buses serving up to 48 participants, with multiple return times offered to accommodate attendees' schedules.

SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES

Mrs. Camilla Hillian, Director of Social and Youth Services, provided updates on several departmental programs and initiatives. She reported continued processing of renters' rebate applications and distribution of Farmers' Market Nutrition Program cards to eligible seniors. She also announced a partnership with Community Renewal Team (CRT) to assist Bloomfield residents affected by new SNAP and Medicaid work requirements and noted that revisions to the Town's Uniform Relocation Plan are underway.

Mrs. Hillian further reported on the successful implementation of youth counseling services through a partnership with Reset and Restart and provided an update on the Summer Youth Employment Program, which is serving 36 Bloomfield youth through career readiness training and paid work experiences funded by Capital Workforce Partners. She concluded by requesting a Town Council representative to serve on the Youth Adult Council.

During discussion, Mrs. Hillian clarified that eligibility for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is determined using total household income from all sources.

PARKS, RECREATION, & LEISURE SERVICES

Mrs. Sharron Tai-Williams, Deputy Town Manager, reported in the absence of Mr. Dave Melesko, Director Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services, and provided updates on recent departmental activities, including the aquatic program, which recorded 98 daily admissions, 160 swim lesson participants, and 936 membership scans between June and July 13. She also highlighted the

successful Dive-In Movie and Ice Cream Social, which welcomed approximately 200 participants, with the next event scheduled for August 8.

Deputy Town Manager Tai-Williams reported that 215 children participated in three sessions of the summer camp program, with an additional 18 youth enrolled in the basketball skills camp. She noted that the summer concert series has averaged 300 to 350 attendees per event and announced the upcoming West Indian Celebration scheduled for July 30, featuring food vendors, children's activities, and community fundraising opportunities.

During discussion, Councilors commended the addition of food and ice cream vendors to the summer concert series and inquired about the status of repairs to the Town pool. Deputy Town Manager Tai-Williams confirmed that the repairs were completed, with the pool being unavailable for only one to two days.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Wendy Williams, 48 Gabb Road, expressed support for the addition of food and ice cream vendors at the summer concerts, noting that they enhance community engagement and provide opportunities for residents to connect.

Ms. Williams also shared her support for expanding awareness of skilled trades opportunities and suggested organizing a community Trades Day event in the fall to introduce middle school students to various career pathways. She emphasized the importance of engaging youth earlier to explore trade opportunities and offered to collaborate with Councilor Oliver and other interested community members to help create a continuum of trades education and exposure throughout the Town.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Lloyd, seconded by Councilor Waterhouse and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 p.m.