Minutes not yet approved.
Approval and any edits to be made in succeeding minutes.

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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, November 10, 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*: Councilors' Michael Oliver- Chair, Darrell Goodwin; ***via Zoom:*** Deputy Mayor Cindi Lloyd; Councilor Shamar Mahon

Councilors' Absent: Elizabeth Waterhouse

Zoom Attendees: None

Others present: *In-Person*: Latonia Tabb, Clerk of Council; Warren Plummer, Director of Information Technology; Melissa Mitchell, Director, Social & Youth Services; Luz Cora-Small, Assistant Director, Senior Services; ***via Zoom:*** Matthew Mace, Director Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services.

Councilor Oliver called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

REPORT FROM TOWN STAFF

SENIOR SERVICES

Mrs. Luz Cora-Small, Assistant Director of Senior Services, provided an update on recent and upcoming Senior Services programs and activities. She reported a concert at Buchner Park on December 17 and the Senior Holiday Luncheon, in partnership with the Bloomfield Fire Department, on December 21, which will serve 100 residents ages 55 and older. She reported that the technology assistance program continues through grant funding and that the monthly food distribution served 377 recipients in October and 167 participants on November 10. The Senior Services minibus provided transportation to 2,378 passengers in October.

SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES

Mrs. Melissa Mitchell, Director of Social and Youth Services, provided updates on energy assistance, holiday programs, staffing, and youth services. She reported that CRT continues to experience delays in processing Connecticut Energy Assistance Program applications due to staffing shortages, resulting in increased calls from residents seeking assistance with heating oil and propane. The department continues to assist residents with applications while awaiting updates from CRT. Director Mitchell also reported that 71 families, representing 127 children,

had registered for the Adopt-A-Family program, and additional donors were needed. Medicare Open Enrollment runs through December 7, and residents may contact the department for assistance. Holiday food distribution was scheduled for November 21 at 330 Park Avenue, in conjunction with a Lions Club food and diaper drive. She also noted a vacant Senior Social Worker position, with interviews anticipated in the coming weeks, and thanked staff for providing cross-coverage and support during the transition.

Councilor Oliver welcomed Director Mitchell to Bloomfield and commended her advocacy on behalf of residents experiencing delays in energy assistance. Councilor Mahon welcomed her and asked whether income eligibility guidelines account for inflation and household expenses. Director Mitchell explained that eligibility is based on household size and income, generally capped at 60% of the state median income, and noted that residents may still struggle to afford heating costs despite meeting income thresholds. Councilor Goodwin requested Bloomfield-specific application numbers for energy assistance, which Director Mitchell agreed to provide when available, noting that the information could help Council advocate on behalf of affected residents.

Director Mitchell also presented the Youth Services report on behalf of Angelica Thompson, Division Manager, noting that the annual Trunk or Treat event held October 16 attracted more than 200 participants. Fall youth programming focuses on mental health and wellness, including nutrition, exercise, and self-care sessions in partnership with Program 1728. Ongoing programs include Life Skills Group, Project 330, Leadership, Mini Sunbeams, RISE, and the Tribe Men's Group. Councilor Goodwin also asked how residents could support the Adopt-A-Family program, and Director Mitchell explained that donors may sponsor children by purchasing items from their wish lists or providing gift cards.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd and Council members expressed appreciation for the department's work, staff dedication, and continued efforts to support Bloomfield residents.

PARKS, RECREATION, & LEISURE SERVICES

Mr. Matt Mace, Assistant Director of Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services, provided the October departmental update. He reported that a native plant community garden was completed at the LaSalette property through a partnership with Bloomfield Pollinator Pathways, the BBC, and Leisure Services, with donated materials, labor, and expertise resulting in no cost to the Town. Invasive plant removal at Farmington River Park is nearing completion and will be grant-funded upon submission of the required report.

Assistant Director Mace reported mixed results with fall programming, noting an approximately 23% year-over-year decline in program sales following fee increases, with some programs experiencing increases of 40% or more, and others doubling or tripling in cost. While membership revenue increased, participation declined. Popular programs included youth cooking workshops, the Lyman Orchards trip, and pumpkin carving, which nearly doubled participation from the prior year. Trunk or Treat attracted more than 200 participants, although attendance was lower than the previous year. The department is also planning the 2027 Food Truck Festival, working to revitalize after-school programming, and preparing for a condensed Holiday Parade

and Tree Lighting scheduled for December 5 at 6:00 p.m. The municipal pool has been winterized, and a new payment processor now allows additional payment options, including Apple Pay, Google Pay, and contactless transactions. Assistant Director Mace also noted the department's preparations for Shred Day.

Councilor Oliver asked about the extent of the program fee increases and their impact on participation. Assistant Director Mace reported an approximately 23% decline in program sales year over year, noting that some of the largest fee increases resulted in greater declines in participation. Councilor Oliver also asked how Bloomfield's program fees compare with neighboring towns. Assistant Director Mace stated that a comparative review would be needed, noting that Bloomfield's fees had historically been low and that increases were implemented in response to budgetary pressures and the need to generate additional revenue.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd expressed concern that increased program fees could price residents out of participating in Town programs. She cited summer camp rates in neighboring communities, including Simsbury and Windsor, noting that Bloomfield's rates exceeded those of some surrounding towns despite differences in household income and affordability. She emphasized the importance of balancing revenue projections and fiscal responsibility with residents' needs, particularly families who rely on summer camp for childcare while working. She encouraged continued discussion during the upcoming budget process and stressed the importance of coordination among Town departments and the Board of Education to avoid competing programs and better serve residents.

Councilor Oliver thanked department staff for their work and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration among departments and Town entities to support residents effectively.

Assistant Director Mace acknowledged the concerns regarding program fees, stating that increases were implemented too quickly and that the department is working toward bringing fees back to a more reasonable level.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kamari Cross, 94 East Harold St., introduced himself as a recent University of Connecticut graduate and expressed interest in becoming involved in Town initiatives, particularly youth development. He shared his desire to learn about opportunities to serve the community, contribute to positive change, and help make things easier for future generations. He expressed interest in attending meetings, listening, and finding ways to get involved in Bloomfield.

Councilor Oliver thanked the Mr. Cross for attending and expressing interest in community involvement. He encouraged Mr. Cross to connect with Council members after the meeting to explore opportunities for involvement and support.

Councilor Goodwin thanked him for his interest in becoming more actively involved in the community and offered to discuss opportunities to serve on Town boards and committees, including completing an interest form to be considered for future vacancies.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Councilor Goodwin, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lloyd and voted to approve the meeting minutes from September 8 & October 13, 2026

VOTE: AYE: D. Goodwin, C. Lloyd, M. Oliver

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: S. Mahon

Motion pass 3-0-1

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor Mahon, seconded by Councilor Goodwin and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m.