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

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE, BUDGET, AUDIT AND BONDING SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a special meeting of the above reference subcommittee held on Tuesday, January 20, 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.

In-Person Attendance: Deputy Mayor Cindi Lloyd, Mayor Anthony Harrington, Councilors: Todd Cooper, Joseph Merritt, Elizabeth Waterhouse ***via Zoom:*** None

Absent: None

Others present: ***In-Person****:* Alvin D. Schwapp, Jr., Town Manager; Latonia Tabb, Clerk of Council; Warren Plummer, Director of Information Technology and Innovation; Darrell Hill, Director of Finance; Donna Stewart, Deputy Director of Finance ***via Zoom:*** Andrew Crumbie, Town Attorney, Crumbie Law Group, LLC. (6:06 p.m.); Councilors: Suzette DeBeatham-Brown; Michael Oliver.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd exercised a point of personal privilege to formally recognize and thank former Chair and Councilor Kenneth McCleary for his service and dedication to the Town of Bloomfield, including his leadership as Chair of the Finance Committee. She noted that, as this was the first meeting of 2026 without Mr. McCleary, it was important to acknowledge and express appreciation for his contributions on behalf of herself and the community.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion and Status Update regarding the FY2024 and FY2025 Audits

Mr. Darrell Hill, Chief Financial Officer, reported that significant progress has been made since the October meeting, including the development and submission of a fully auditable trial balance to CLA on December 30, 2025, and the commencement of on-site audit fieldwork. He stated that the Town continues to target completion of the FY 2024 audit by the end of February, with the possibility of extending into early March due to the dynamic nature of the work and recent staff and auditor transitions, noting a seamless change in CLA's principal auditor. Mr. Hill further advised that planning for the FY 2025 audit remains

unchanged with a target completion by the end of June, and that CLA is anticipated to present the FY 2024 audit to the Finance Committee at the March meeting.

Mr. Alvin D. Schwapp, Jr., Town Manager, addressed the Council and residents, stating that he met directly with the auditors currently on site to clearly communicate his expectations regarding responsiveness and timeliness. He advised that auditors were instructed to report any lack of staff responsiveness directly to his office so issues could be addressed immediately, emphasizing that both staff and CLA understand the urgency of completing the audits. Mr. Schwapp affirmed his commitment to supporting the consultants through the completion of the FY 2024 audit and continuing into FY 2025, with every effort being made to complete the FY 2025 audit by the end of June. He concluded by noting that completing the audits will allow the Council and staff to refocus on policy, operations, and improving the overall quality of life for Bloomfield residents, businesses, and visitors.

Councilor Cooper expressed concern with targeting audit completion dates too close to deadlines and urged staff to aim for an earlier completion to allow contingency for unforeseen delays. She stated discomfort with a June timeframe, emphasized the need to "try harder," and advocated for setting expectations that reflect an effort to complete the work before that point.

Mayor Harrington stated that he is feeling more confident about the Town's current position, noting that CLA is on site and actively conducting additional audit work. While expressing disappointment that completion may extend into March, he indicated reassurance that progress is being made. The mayor then raised a separate inquiry regarding Economic Development Trust disbursements, asking for confirmation that no disbursements have been made from that account to date. Chief Financial Officer Darrell Hill confirmed that no disbursements have been made from the Economic Development Trust. He explained that while the Council authorized the transfer of $4 million from the unassigned fund balance into the Trust, the establishing ordinance requires Council approval for any expenditures. As no such expenditure approvals have been granted, no funds have been disbursed.

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown asked for clarification regarding the continued use of consultants, and the Town Manager confirmed that consultants will remain on through the FY 2025 audit, with future need for FY 2026 to be determined based on staffing and audit timeliness. She then inquired about the current unassigned fund balance. Chief Financial Officer Darrell Hill responded that figures beyond FY 2023 are unaudited, noting an estimated increase of approximately $1.9 million for FY 2024 and $2.6 million for FY 2025 due to revenues exceeding projections and no use of appropriated fund balance. Upon further clarification, Mr. Hill stated that the current unassigned fund balance is

approximately $16–17 million, within the Town's 15–20% target range and acknowledged that final audited figures will be confirmed upon completion of the FY 2024 audit.

B. Discussion of the addition of a Senior Accountant in the Department of Finance

It was moved by Councilor Cooper and seconded by Mayor Harrington and Councilor Waterhouse and voted unanimously to table this discussion as it relates to more information related to the ask.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of October 2025 Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Darrell Hill, Chief Financial Officer, reported that as of the end of October 2025, revenues totaled 61.2% of the adopted budget, with tax collections and investment income slightly below the prior year, while real estate conveyance tax and building demolition revenues were higher due to improved and timelier data entry in MUNIS. Expenditures reflected 26.2% actuals, with encumbrances bringing total committed spending to just over 72% of the fiscal year budget, providing improved visibility into projected year-end balances. Mr. Hill noted that early projections indicate the Town remains in balance, with departmental variances expected to be managed through internal offsets as the fiscal year progresses. There was a robust discussion on where the funding would come from, with the overall feeling that the funds should not be taken from council contingency.

B. Discussion of November 2025 Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Darrell Hill, Chief Financial Officer, reported that revenues increased slightly from October to November, with total revenues at 62.3% of budget and tax collections at 63.1%, while interest income rose to just over $443,000 but remained below the prior year. He highlighted strong performance in building demolition permits, which reached approximately $1.2 million (about 92.5% of budget), and real estate conveyance taxes exceeding budget, both contributing positively to the Town's financial position. Expenditures totaled just over 30% actuals and approximately 75% when including encumbrances, with variances being managed to maintain a balanced budget.

C. Discussion of December 2025 Monthly Financial Report

Chief Financial Officer Darrell Hill reported that as of the end of December, total revenues reached 70.6% of the adopted budget, an increase of approximately six percentage points over the same period last year, with tax collections at 72%, about seven points higher than the prior year. Interest income was just under $500,000, representing 83% of budget, while building demolition permits and real estate conveyance taxes continued to perform strongly, with conveyance taxes reaching approximately $800,000, or 133% of budget.

Expenditures totaled just over 38% in actuals and 75.6% when including encumbrances, reflecting continued fiscal stability.

Mr. Hill explained that departmental balancing reflects offsets within Boards and Commissions and Town Administration, including the Registrar of Voters and Elections, with fixed charges used to maintain a net zero position. He noted projected overages in the Town Attorney and Finance Administration lines, primarily due to consultant and temporary staffing costs, and a minor variance in the Health District to be covered through fixed charges. Overall, he emphasized that internal adjustments are being made to keep the budget in balance.

Councilor Cooper sought clarification on budget increases related to the Registrar of Voters and the Town Attorney. Mr. Hill explained that referendum-related costs impacted the prior fiscal year and that Registrar of Voters expenses, like Town Attorney costs, must be funded as required, even when unanticipated. He attributed the Town Attorney's budget overages primarily to unbudgeted legal work associated with the budget referendum and a significant increase in FOIA requests, with referendum-related legal costs exceeding $100,000.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd requested clarification on why FY 2026 expenditures as of December showed 38.1% in actuals and 75.6% when including encumbrances, noting the increase from the prior year. Mr. Hill explained that the higher percentage reflects purchase order encumbrances for anticipated expenses through June 30, which provide a more complete picture of projected spending and may later be adjusted or released during year-end close. He noted that this approach improves transparency and demonstrates that, at the midpoint of the fiscal year, the Town remains within its adopted budget.

Councilor Cooper asked for an update on the implementation of the ClearGov budget software. Chief Financial Officer Darrell Hill reported that the system architecture is being finalized and is on track to be fully built out by the end of February for use in producing the FY 2027 budget book, alongside ongoing audit and budget preparation efforts. He added that ClearGov's recent merger with a competitor strengthens the platform's capacity and responsiveness, supporting greater transparency in the budget process.

D. <u>Discussion of shared IT services with Board of Education</u>

Deputy Mayor Lloyd stated that the agenda item was requested following a presentation by Superintendent Dr. Youngberg regarding IT shared services with the Board of Education. She sought clarification on when the shared services arrangement began, what services are included, how the position is being utilized and compensated, and how the related financials are structured.

Town Manager Schwapp explained that the IT shared services initiative originated prior to his tenure, based on prior Council and Board direction to pursue shared services in IT, HR, and finance. He stated that the arrangement began last summer when Board of Education IT vacancies created an opportunity for the Town's IT Director to provide leadership and support, resulting in improved systems and practices. Mr. Schwapp advised that discussions are underway to formalize the arrangement, including developing a job description and evaluating cost-sharing and compensation, with updates to be provided to the Council and Board once finalized.

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown asked whether the shared IT position would include a formal cost-sharing arrangement with the Board of Education. Town Manager Schwapp confirmed that a binding agreement, including legal review, will be established to clarify expectations and responsibilities before the arrangement is finalized.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd noted that the Board of Education's IT department appears larger than the Town's and suggested considering the Town's staffing needs when formalizing the shared services MOU. Town Manager Schwapp responded that while the Board's IT team may have more technical staff, their leadership structure differs from the Town's, and he emphasized working with Dr. Youngberg to strategically build the shared position, align best practices, and ensure both sides are adequately supported without leaving either organization behind technologically.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd praised Mr. Warren Plummer, IT Director, for his service and ability to manage both jobs considering the task at hand.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. **Erin Barringer, 28 Kenmore Road,** commented on improvements in the timely entry of expenditures into Munis and emphasized the importance of having clear standard operating procedures to guide staff. She inquired about the approval process for negative line items, noting that certain departments, including Finance Administration and the Town Attorney, are projecting over budget amounts even excluding referendum-related expenses. Ms. Barringer also expressed enthusiasm for the ClearGov system and its integration with Munis to enhance budget management and reporting.
2. **Rickford Kirton, 7 Hickory Lane (online and question read by clerk of council due to audio not working),** asked whether, based on the Town's unaudited FY 2026 unassigned fund balance of $16,918,767 (approximately 14.9% of the adopted $113,619,271 budget), the Town is currently below its 15–20% fund balance policy,

and requested clarification from the Finance Director on how this calculation was made without a completed FY 2024 audit.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mayor Harrington, seconded by Council Merritt to approve the minutes of October 20, 2025, meeting.

VOTE: **AYE:** C. Lloyd, A. Harrington, J. Merritt, E. Waterhouse

NAY: None

ABSTAINED: T. Cooper

Motion passes: 4-0-1

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor Merritt and seconded by Mayor Harrington and voted unanimously to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.