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

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

There was a special meeting of the above reference held on Monday February 9, 2026, at 7:00 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: Mayor Anthony Harrington; Deputy Mayor Cindi Lloyd; Todd Cooper; Darrell Goodwin; Joseph Merritt; Suzette DeBeatham-Brown; Elizabeth Waterhouse; Michael Oliver; ***via Zoom;*** Shamar Mahon.

Councilors absent: None

Others present*: In-person:* Latonia Tabb, Clerk of Council; India Rodgers, Director of Operations & Communications; Sharron Howe, Deputy Town Manager; Warren Plummer, Director of IT; Annatouchur Kingland, Senior Administrative Andrew Crumbie, Town Attorney, Crumbie Law Group, LLC. ***via Zoom:*** Alvin D. Schwapp Jr., Town Manager

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance

ANNOUNCEMENTS and PRESENTATIONS

A. Presentation: Proclamation America 250

Mayor Anthony C. Harrington presented a proclamation recognizing the upcoming 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026, and highlighting Bloomfield's historical contributions to the nation and state. The proclamation acknowledged the work of the America 250 Commission and Connecticut's semiquincentennial, with executive order 22-02, efforts to promote inclusive civic, cultural, and educational commemorations. It formally declared the Town of Bloomfield's commitment to participate in and support activities leading up to the anniversary.

Mayor Harrington welcomed attendees and viewers to the special Town Council meeting, noting that all agenda items were properly posted in accordance with state law. He outlined the Council's role in setting policy, approving budgets and appointments, and receiving reports, while emphasizing that management responsibilities rest with the Town Manager. He also reviewed meeting procedures, including public comment protocols, decorum expectations, and the need to maintain order to ensure accurate recording of proceedings.

Councilor Goodwin requested to place on the record that the Town Council had received a small gift from a resident, consisting of items from her farm. He noted that, under Connecticut law, council members may only accept gifts valued under $25 and stated his understanding that the items received (farm eggs and garlic cloves) complied with this requirement.

Citizens' Statements and Petitions

Statements by members of the public may be oral or written and shall start with the speaker's name and address and shall continue for no longer than three (3) minutes, unless permitted by the Mayor or councilor presiding.

The Clerk of Council opened the floor for citizens' statements and petitions. Residents expressed concerns about various town issues during the council meeting.

1. **Bill Adamson, 400 Seabury Drive,** expressed presenting a petition signed by over 70 Seabury residents requesting the Town accelerate pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements to improve connectivity to the Town Center. He asked the Town to pursue funding, close existing infrastructure gaps, and advance implementation of the complete streets master plan, emphasizing safety, accessibility, and community health benefits.

2. **Robert Dickinson, 400 Seabury Drive Apt. 4160,** stated that he has stopped riding on roads due to safety concerns and believes many residents avoid walking or bicycling because of the lack of sidewalks and bike paths. He cited a Connecticut Department of Transportation survey indicating that 80% of residents feel unsafe walking or biking on state roads and urged the Town to expand pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure on busy roadways.
3. **Robert Berman, 8 Hiraman Lane,** commented on the Town's Public Works Department for its effective response to a recent snowstorm, noting that Bloomfield's roads, intersections, and pedestrian crossing areas were cleared more thoroughly than those in surrounding communities. He also raised concerns regarding the absence of a charter revision referendum on the ballot and questioned the timeliness and accuracy of certain financial reporting, specifically citing state grant funds he stated had not yet appeared in the Town's records.

4. **Laura Pallandre, 6 Nutmeg Lane,** thanked the Town for its support in helping relaunch the Bloomfield Farmers Market, noting its growth and positive impact on community connection. She highlighted that grant funding has enabled the market to provide weekly food subsidies to residents while supporting local farms and improving access to fresh, locally sourced food. She also emphasized the market's role in strengthening local food security and encouraging healthy eating.

5. **Peter Russell, 6 Loeffler Road,** spoke in support of the Bloomfield Farmers Market, noting its importance in providing fresh, nutritious food and fostering community connections. He encouraged the Town to consider providing financial support, stating that municipal funding would help sustain the market and attract additional private resources. He also expressed appreciation for the Town Council's public service and community participation efforts.

6. **Catherine Harger, 26 Guernsey Road,** spoke about the personal importance of the Bloomfield Farmers Market to her family, noting that it has helped them connect with neighbors and discover new foods. She expressed support for the market's continuation and encouraged ongoing support from the Town Council.

7. Brenda Watson, 13 Warbler Circle, expressed support for efforts to improve road safety, referencing recent regional discussions on traffic calming and pedestrian protection. She also urged continued financial support for local farmers and the farmers market to promote access to fresh, local food and long-term sustainability. Additionally, she encouraged the Town Council to advance strategies that expand clean and renewable energy use in residential and commercial buildings.

8. Diana Martinez, 693 Bloomfield Ave., (online) spoke in support of the Bloomfield Farmers' Market and encouraged the Town Council to consider providing ongoing infrastructure and funding support similar to other municipalities. She noted that reductions in SNAP eligibility are increasing food access challenges for families, seniors, and children, and emphasized that the market serves as an important community resource while also supporting local agriculture.

9. Erin Barringer, 28 Kenmore Road, (online) raised questions regarding the process for filling a vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals, including whether proper public notice was provided and whether party affiliation requirements outlined in the Town Charter were followed. She also expressed concern about proceeding with a nomination while broader standard operating procedures for boards and commissions remain under review. Additionally, she urged transparency in executive sessions and requested that any council members with potential conflicts of interest recuse themselves when appropriate.

REPORT FROM COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES

A. Governance, Policy & Economic Development- Mayor Anthony C. Harrington

Mayor Harrington reported that the draft Boards and Commissions SOP has been open for public input, with over a dozen responses received, and noted that the item will be revisited at the February 23rd Town Council meeting. He also provided an update on business development, highlighting increased economic activity compared to the previous year and ongoing projects, with multiple developers engaging in the planning department.

B. Finance, Budget, Audit & Bonding- Deputy Mayor Cindi A. Lloyd

Deputy Mayor Lloyd reported that the 2024 audit has been submitted to CLA and is nearing completion, with results to be reviewed by the Council and then submitted to the state. She noted that budget guidelines for 2026-27 have been issued to departments, the grand list has been finalized, and monthly reports for October through December have been submitted. She also provided an update on the ongoing 2025 audit and budget preparation, with further details to be presented at the February 16th Finance Subcommittee meeting.

C. Public Health, Safety & Environment- Councilor Todd E. Cooper

Councilor Cooper provided an update from the January 14th Public Health and Safety meeting, reporting that Bloomfield Police Department crime is down 32% from 2024, with ongoing enforcement on several roadways and current staffing levels noted. He also highlighted that both Blue Hills and Center Fire Districts completed the year with active calls and up-to-date training, and that the Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance has a new uniformed officer overseeing operations with efforts underway to increase volunteer numbers. Additionally, he noted that the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District continues to provide vaccinations, including for H1N1 and pediatric requirements, and offers services such as radon testing for residents.

D. Education, Workforce, Youth Development & Community Services- Councilor Michael J. Oliver

Councilor Oliver reported that 330 Park served as a location for discussions about heating centers during recent cold days and noted that residents can donate personal items at this site.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA

A. **Approval of Minutes**
    - January 28, 2026
B. **Consider and Take Action Regarding Tax Refunds**
C. **Consider and Take Action Regarding the Appointment of a Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Regular Member Vacancy**
    - **Shelby Maybin (D), 5 Pheasant Lane - ZBA Regular Member Vacancy**

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Lloyd, seconded by Councilor Cooper, and voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

2026-32: Consider and Take Action Regarding Proposed Revisions of Oversized Vehicle Traffic Ordinance, Sections 19-65 through 19-73 of the Bloomfield Code of Ordinances

Town Councilors and Mr. Alvin D. Schwapp, Jr., Town Manager, discussed the review process for street recommendations related to traffic calming, noting that decisions are based on multiple factors, including road conditions, public input, and police reports. Councilors DeBeatham-Brown, Mahon, and Goodwin emphasized the need for a formal appeals process or additional recourse for residents who disagree with preliminary recommendations, suggesting it occur before final Town Council approval. Deputy Mayor Lloyd and Mr. Schwapp, Jr. noted that residents already have opportunities to provide input and communicate with staff, and that policy standardization efforts are underway to clarify and improve these procedures.

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Lloyd, seconded by Councilor Goodwin, to adopt the revised Oversized Vehicle Traffic Sections 19-65 through 19-73 of the Bloomfield Code of Ordinances.

VOTE: **AYE:** T. Cooper, M. Oliver, J. Merritt, E. Waterhouse, D. Goodwin, C. Lloyd, A. Harrington

NAY: S. Mahon

ABSTAIN: S. DeBeatham-Brown

Motion passes 7-1-1

REPORT FROM TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Alvin D. Schwapp Jr., Town Manager, reported that the Finance team is completing follow-up work with auditors, with the final audit expected to be submitted to the state by the end of the month. He noted that fiscal year 2027 budget development is underway, departments have submitted budgets, and the 2025 grand list was filed ahead of schedule to support budget planning. Additionally, he highlighted recent community engagement through library programs, progress in managing FOIA requests with legal support, an upcoming collaborative meeting with State Representative Bobby Gibson, and a centennial celebration by the Center and Blue Hills Fire Districts requiring unbudgeted town support.

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

Mayor Harrington reported on several recent town activities, including the graduation of nine employees from the 12-week Emerging Leadership Development Program across multiple departments. He highlighted a January 29th community vigil at Bloomfield First Congregational Church addressing state-sponsored violence, affirming the town's commitment to inclusivity, protection of residents' rights, and educational outreach regarding immigration enforcement. Additionally, the Mayor noted participation in business promotion events, first-time homebuyer programs, and the Bloomfield Junior Warhawks' 5-year Anniversary Banquet celebrating local youth achievements.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Todd Cooper commended the Bloomfield West Hartford Health District for its ongoing public health initiatives, including vaccinations and radon testing, and encouraged residents to utilize these resources. He also recognized the Bloomfield Junior Warhawks' recent celebration of youth achievements and praised the town's warming centers, urging residents to check on neighbors in extreme cold. Finally, he thanked the public for their participation in the Council's decision-making process and invited residents to the upcoming Public Safety meeting on February 11th.

Councilor Suzette DeBeatham-Brown highlighted the importance of community during Black History Month, quoting the African proverb: *"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go*

far, go together." She reflected on the recent vigil led by Pastor Sean and emphasized that building community requires collective effort, accountability, and open dialogue. She thanked residents for attending in person or online, noting the importance of receiving information firsthand, and encouraged everyone to *"go far together."*

Councilor Shamar Mahon emphasized the importance of resident engagement and thoughtful communication in local governance. He encouraged colleagues to view questions from residents as opportunities for dialogue rather than contention, highlighting that providing clear answers strengthens community trust. He also expressed support for further iterations of the traffic calming proposal to allow for increased resident input, reinforcing Bloomfield's commitment to an engaged and responsive democracy.

Councilor Michael Oliver expressed appreciation for the Department of Public Works for their excellent work and acknowledged the dedication of staff. He also recognized the Bloomfield Junior Warhawks, noting the impressive participation of young children at their recent celebration. Additionally, he highlighted the upcoming Education Workforce Development meeting, scheduled for February 10th at 6:00 p.m., which will include a robotics program, and encouraged community attendance in person or via Zoom.

Councilor Joseph Merritt reflected on his long tenure with the Town Council, noting he has been involved since the town's 200th celebration. He highlighted his work as Chair of the Trails Committee, emphasizing ongoing efforts to advance the East Coast Greenway through Bloomfield, including federally funded sidewalks and bike paths to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety. Councilor Merritt also addressed financial staffing challenges, noting delays in audits due to understaffing and urging the Town Council to approve hiring an accountant to resolve the issue.

Councilor Elizabeth Waterhouse expressed appreciation for residents attending the meeting and acknowledged efforts on the SOPs, supporting the addition of an appeals process. She also highlighted the Bloomfield Farmers Market, noting it operates Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at 3.30 Park and welcomes all, including those participating in a barter system to work on the farm for food. Councilor Waterhouse encouraged residents to visit the market and stay safe and warm.

Councilor Darrell Goodwin condemned a racist and dehumanizing image of former President Barack Obama and former First Lady Michelle Obama that circulated on social media, emphasizing that such behavior is contrary to Bloomfield's values of dignity, respect, and accountability. He encouraged both local leaders and residents to actively speak against harmful actions by national leaders and highlighted the importance of using collective voice against injustice. Councilor Goodwin also expressed appreciation for the Bloomfield Farmers Market, noting it as a welcoming space that engages the community, including his grandmother, and encouraged continued support for its growth.

Deputy Mayor Cindi Lloyd thanked her colleagues for their remarks and highlighted the importance of continuing support for the Bloomfield Farmers Market as a resource to address

food insecurity. She reaffirmed the town's commitment to being welcoming and inclusive, praised the interim senior accountant for supporting completion of the 2025 audit, and acknowledged the outstanding contributions of Coach Ty Outlaw, noting his leadership in achieving multiple championships with the Bloomfield Warhawks.

Mayor Anthony Harrington commended Coach Ty Outlaw for 16 years of dedicated service to Bloomfield, emphasizing the value of sports in teaching young people responsibility and skill development. He expressed hope of finding a successor who can continue this positive impact and thanked attendees for their participation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was moved by Mayor Harrington, second by Deputy Mayor Lloyd and voted unanimously to move into Executive Session at 8:42 p.m. Item – Pending Claims and Litigation. It was moved by Councilor Cooper, seconded by Councilor Waterhouse and voted unanimously to end executive session at 9:18 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor Cooper, seconded by Councilor Suzette DeBeatham-Brown, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 p.m.