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BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

There was a regular meeting of the Bloomfield Town Council held on Monday July 13, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in a hybrid meeting style. The in-person meeting location was Bloomfield Town Hall Council Chambers, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT, and the virtual location was via Zoom.

Councilors' Present: ***In-Person:*** Mayor Harrington; Councilor(s) Oliver, Merritt, DeBeatham-Brown, also ***via Zoom:*** Deputy Mayor Lloyd, Councilor Cooper

Councilors' Absent Councilors' Waterhouse & Goodwin

Also present were: ***In-Person***—Latonia Tabb, Clerk of Council; Jon Colman, Director of Building & Land Use; Darrell Hill, Director of Finance; Warren Plummer, Director of IT; ***via Zoom:*** Annatouchur Kingland, Senior Administrative Assistant, Vera Smith-Winfree, President, Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce, Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Announcements and Presentations

A. Presentations:

Mayor Harrington read and presented a proclamation to the family of Aaron Jermaine Kennedy

Nicholas Gabuzda presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the overview of Bloomfield's recent Sustainable CT Certification

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.

1. **Donna Hubbs, 16 Brooke St.,** a local business owner, and Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce board member, expressed concern about allocating undesignated funds before the Town's audits are complete. She recommended that any available funds be placed in the Town's reserves and suggested that the Council establish a formal, equitable process for funding community organizations.

2. Essie Labrot, 12 Chateau Margaux, congratulated the Town on achieving its sustainability certification and encouraged continued progress toward the next certification level. She also urged the Council to conduct thorough due diligence before allocating public funds for the

proposed farmers market, including reviewing legal, financial, operational, and liability considerations, and evaluating whether existing agencies or organizations would be better suited to administer the program.

3. Pat Davis, 4 Lisa Lane, expressed concern that resident comments made during the public comment period are not adequately considered or addressed by the Council. She urged the Council to prioritize fiscal accountability, completion of the Town's audits, transparency, and the responsible use of taxpayer funds, while encouraging residents to remain engaged in local government and leadership.

4. Erin Barringer, 28 Kennmore Rd., reiterated her opposition to using unassigned fund balance to support expenditures outside the adopted FY2027 budget without additional justification and urged the Council to vote against the proposed appropriations. She also requested greater transparency regarding the Town's undefined budget category and encouraged Council members to publicly share responses to questions raised during subcommittee meetings.

5. Laura Pallandre, 6 Nutmeg Lane, explained that she believed the proposed funding would come from a state grant rather than the Town and stated that any funds received would be used to expand access to locally grown food for residents in need. She noted that the farmers market has strengthened its eligibility and distribution procedures to improve grant competitiveness and emphasized the importance of increasing access to fresh, locally produced food for the community.

6. Rickford Kirton, 7 Hickory Lane, expressed concern with the process of appropriating unassigned fund balance to selected organizations outside the regular budget process. He recommended that, if the Town wishes to provide funding to community organizations, it establishes a formal application and review process with clear accountability and transparency and urged the Council to reject the proposed appropriations.

7. (online) Gail Riley, 8 Maple Ave., opposed the proposed transfer of funds for BATV, stating that the need for relocation should have been anticipated and addressed during the annual budget process rather than through a mid-year appropriation. She urged the Council to reject the proposed funding request.

8. (online) Vera Smith-Winfree, 14 Barnhill Rd., Executive Director of the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce, highlighted the Chamber's contributions to the community through business support, community events, and student scholarships. While expressing appreciation for the proposed funding, she stated that providing the Chamber with space in a Town-owned building would be a more sustainable and cost-effective way to support its services and community presence.

Report from Council Subcommittees

A. Governance, Policy & Economic Development- Mayor Harrington

Mayor Harrington reported that the Rockwell Park Improvement Project remains in the permitting phase, with Town Plan and Zoning Commission review scheduled for July 23 and anticipated contractor selection in September, resulting in a one-month timeline shift. He also provided an update on the Plan of Conservation and Development, noting it is nearing completion with anticipated review by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and presentation to the Council later this summer.

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

Deputy Mayor Lloyd provided an update on the FY2025 audit, noting that the Finance Department continues to work with the Board of Education to complete reconciliations for submission to the Town's auditing firm. She also reported on the May 2026 financial report, fourth quarter budget transfers, and noted that discussion regarding Town Attorney expenses was tabled for a future meeting.

C. Public Health, Safety & Environment- Councilor Cooper

Councilor Cooper reported on the Public Health and Safety Committee meeting, highlighting updates on recycling efforts, emergency response training, ambulance services, fire department activities, and environmental sustainability initiatives. He also noted upcoming discussions regarding potential policies related to data centers and requested a future update on the Maple Avenue project.

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

Councilor Oliver reported that the Education Subcommittee did not meet the previous month due to his work obligations. He noted that Makerspace will provide a presentation at the upcoming meeting.

E. Committee on Committees- Councilor Goodwin

In the absence of Councilor Goodwin, Councilor DeBeatham-Brown reported out on behalf of the subcommittee. Councilor DeBeatham-Brown reported that the Committee on Committees met the previous week and conducted interviews with approximately 20 applicants for various boards and commissions. She noted that additional interviews are scheduled to accommodate applicants who were unable to attend and that the committee is working to fill vacancies as soon as possible.

Council Business

Consent Agenda:

A. Consider and Take Action Regarding Tax Refunds

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown and voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda.

Old Business

2026-73: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Appropriation of Unassigned Fund Balance to the FY2027 Budget for Bloomfield Access Television (BATV)

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Lloyd, seconded by Councilor Merritt and voted unanimously to open discussion.

Councilors discussed the proposed appropriation of unassigned fund balance to support BATV, the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce, and the Farmers Market. Concerns were raised regarding the timing, process, and need for additional transparency before allocating public funds outside of the adopted budget.

Councilors DeBeatham-Brown and Mahon expressed opposition to the BATV appropriation, stating that the relocation need should have been anticipated and addressed during the budget process. They emphasized the importance of establishing clear policies for funding requests and noted that, following difficult budget deliberations, the Town should remain mindful of resident concerns regarding the use of public funds.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd supported the appropriation and clarified that BATV's need to relocate was not known when earlier discussions regarding the Board of Education's transition occurred. She explained that the relocation needed developed after the Board determined it required the space and that BATV was working through cost estimates during the budget process. She emphasized that supporting BATV, the Farmers Market, and the Chamber represents investments in community services and should not be characterized as "pet projects."

Director Hill provided clarification on the financial process, explaining that the proposed appropriations align with the Town Charter and fund balance policy. He noted that unspent Council contingency funds from FY2026 returned to fund balance and that appropriating those funds through Council action is a more appropriate practice than previous fourth-quarter transfer methods.

Councilor Cooper stated that, based on the information provided by Director Hill, he believed the appropriation was in the Town's best interest. He highlighted BATV's role in providing residents access to community events, public meetings, and local programming, noting that funding decisions reflect the Town's priorities and commitment to its residents.

It was moved by Councilor Cooper, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lloyd to call the question.

It was moved by Councilor Cooper, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lloyd and voted unanimously to table this item regarding the Appropriation of Unassigned Fund Balance to the FY2027 Budget for Bloomfield Access Television (BATV)

2026-74: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Appropriation of Unassigned Fund Balance to the FY2027 Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Lloyd, seconded by Councilor Cooper and voted unanimously to open the floor for discussion.

There was an ensuing detailed discussion amongst Town Council Members.

It was moved by Councilor Cooper, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lloyd to recess for 10 min. at 8:45pm.

It was moved by Mayor Harrington to postpone the meeting at 8:51pm.

It was moved by Councilor Cooper to call the question.

It was moved by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown, seconded by Councilor Cooper to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Harrington addressed the urgency to approve the Connecticut State Library Historical Preservation Grant.

2027:01: Consider and Take Action on the Connecticut State Library Historical Preservation Grant

The Councilors had brief discussion to move this agenda item.

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown and voted unanimously to move to accept the FY2027 Connecticut State Library Historic Documents Preservation Program Target Grant of $6,000 and authorized the Town Manager to execute the grant contract on behalf of the Town of Bloomfield, allowing the Town Clerk's Office to proceed with the records management project as approved by the Connecticut State Library.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown, seconded by Councilor Merritt and voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:56 p.m.