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

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TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
BLOOMFIELD, CT

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

There was a regular meeting of the Bloomfield Town Council held on Monday, July 27, 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, Cooper, Waterhouse, Merritt, DeBeatham-Brown, Mahon, and Goodwin ***via Zoom:*** Councilor(s) Deputy Mayor Lloyd.

Councilors absent: None

Also present were: ***In-Person***—Latonia Tabb, Clerk of Council; Warren Plummer, Director of IT; India Rodgers, Director Operations & Communications, ***via Zoom:*** Alvin D. Schwapp, Jr., Town Manager, Andrew Crumbie, Town Attorney, Darrell Hill, Director of Finance, Annatouchur Kingland, Senior Administrative Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Mayor Harrington opened the meeting with an apology to residents for the Town Councilors conduct at the prior Council meeting and accepted responsibility for maintaining decorum. He emphasized respectful, orderly, and fact-based Council discussions, including recognition by the Chair before speaking, limiting members to one opportunity to speak per motion or topic, and refraining from addressing residents during public comment.

Mayor Harrington reviewed procedures for citizen petitions, noting that requests for Council action must be submitted in writing and cannot be acted upon at the meeting at which they are presented. He also reminded Council members of the two-minute limit for Council comments, the prohibition against personal attacks and revisiting prior agenda items, and the potential consequences for repeated violations of meeting conduct rules.

Announcements and Presentations

A. Appointment of Town Council Liaison to Youth Adult Council

Mayor Harrington announced that the five-member Charter Revision Committee had reconvened under the leadership of Joseph Suggs. He also announced Councilor Michael Oliver's appointment as Town Council Liaison to the Youth Adult Council. There was no vote needed.

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. Robert Berman, 8 Hiram Lane, questioned the Town Council regarding its responsibility to establish goals and objectives for the Town Manager and conduct an annual performance evaluation. He noted that the current Town Manager was hired in March 2024 and began serving in May 2024, yet, to his knowledge, no formal goals or evaluation have been completed. Mr. Berman expressed concern that the lack of evaluation may be intentional due to potential dissatisfaction with the Town Manager's performance. He urged the Council to fulfill its oversight responsibilities and utilize previously established evaluation tools and goals as guidance.

2. Mark Sanderson, 17 Oak Lane, spoke regarding the proposed BATV funding. He stated that he researched community use of BATV by speaking with residents and reviewing local social media but could not identify anyone who had used the service. Mr. Sanderson questioned the need for continued funding given that Town meetings are now available live and on demand through YouTube. Mr. Sanderson also expressed concern that viewership data was not readily available and urged the Council to reconsider the funding, particularly given the Town's financial constraints.

3. Gail Riley, 8 Maple Ave., questioned the need and urgency of the proposed BATV funding, citing concerns about its community use, relocation from Carmen Arace Middle School, and the associated costs. She also questioned the proposed $7,500 allocation to the Chamber of Commerce, stating that the organization appeared to have requested office space rather than funding. Ms. Riley further requested accountability regarding prior Town funding provided to the Farmers' Market and emphasized the need for appropriate financial oversight.

4. Pat Davis, 4 Lisa Lane questioned whether the Council had been informed of and would be held accountable to the mayor's expectations regarding meeting decorum. She expressed frustration with ongoing Council disagreements and the lack of action on concerns repeatedly raised by residents. Mrs. Davis also questioned the need for the Charter Revision Committee and urged Council members and residents to work collaboratively toward a concrete plan for addressing the Town's ongoing issues.

5. Laura Pallandre, 6 Nutmeg Lane, manager of the Farmers' Market, clarified that the market received $30,000 in its first year, which supported coupons, a composting pilot program, and administrative costs. She stated that subsequent funding was primarily used to reimburse farmers who accepted market coupons, with minimal additional expenses. Ms. Pallandre emphasized the market's role in bringing residents together and encouraged a more constructive, community-focused approach.

6. Catherine Harger, 26 Guernsey Rd., spoke in support of the Farmers' Market, emphasizing its role in bringing residents together, fostering relationships, and encouraging collaboration. She shared that her daughter participates in the market and described it as an important community space where residents can connect, exchange ideas, and support one another. Ms. Harger urged

the Council to find a funding solution that supports both the financial needs of the Town and the community relationships the market provides.

7. Erin Barringer, 28 Kennmore Rd., expressed support for the Farmers' Market but stressed the need for appropriate checks and balances before providing Town funding. She supported assisting community organizations while emphasizing accountability. Mrs. Barringer also announced a community fundraising event to benefit Bloomfield teachers and Interval House. She raised concerns about the timeline for the Charter Commission, noting that the process could extend into 2027, and expressed disagreement with the timing of certain fourth-quarter transfers and FY 2027 funding requests. Finally, she urged the Finance Subcommittee to reschedule canceled meetings given outstanding fiscal year financial matters and the need for year-end review.

8. Wendy Wiliams, 48 Gabb Rd., supports the Farmers' Market, but questioned the proposed $30,000 in funding if it is primarily used for vouchers. She recommended expanding the market to include more local farmers and vendors, reconsidering the Saturday morning schedule, and relocating it to a more visible central location such as the Town Green or Town Hall to increase participation and community access.

9. Tanica Thompson, 147 Andover St., Hartford, CT., a farmer and vendor at the Bloomfield Farmers' Market, spoke in support of the market and the voucher program. She stated that the market provides residents with access to fresh, local produce while helping farmers generate income. Thompson noted that the voucher program could also incentivize additional farmers to participate and supported the proposed $30,000 in funding to expand vendor participation and strengthen the market.

10. (online) Rickford Kirton, Bloomfield - emphasized the need for a formal Town policy and consistent process for providing taxpayer funding to nonprofit organizations. He noted that the Town has previously provided funding to various organizations without a clear application or evaluation process and questioned how future funding requests would be handled fairly. Mr. Kirton stated that he supports the work of the Farmers' Market and other community organizations but believes funding should require documentation demonstrating how funds will be used and the effectiveness of the organization's programs. He urged the Council to establish clear policies and accountability measures before approving additional taxpayer-funded allocations.

Council Business

Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of Minutes

- Monday, July 13, 2026- Regular Meeting
- Monday, June 30, 2026- Special Meeting
- Monday, June 22, 2026- Regular Meeting

It was moved by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown, seconded by Councilor Cooper 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 Cooper and voted unanimously to open discussion.

Councilors DeBeatham-Brown and Mahon questioned why BATV's relocation costs were not included in the FY 2027 budget, noting that discussions about the move began well before the current budget was adopted. Councilor Mahon also called for a formal process and accountability measures for evaluating organizational funding requests before taxpayer funds are approved.

Councilor Merritt supported providing BATV with $20,000 toward its estimated $61,000 relocation cost, noting that most of the funding had been secured elsewhere and that BATV provides valuable community services. He supported developing a funding policy but did not want the current request delayed.

Mayor Harrington stated that BATV had secured approximately $40,000, with the Town considering additional funding. He noted that an MOU would provide financial oversight and facilitate vendor payments, while emphasizing BATV's community value and plans to expand youth podcast training.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd supported the funding, noting BATV's broader reach through Roku, its app, YouTube, and other platforms, and expressed confidence in the MOU as a financial safeguard.

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

VOTE: AYE: T. Cooper, M. Oliver, S. DeBeatham-Brown, D. Goodwin, J. Merritt, E. Waterhouse, C. Lloyd, A. Harrington

NAY: S. Mahon

ABSTAIN: NONE

Motion passes 8-1-0

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

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

NAY: S. DeBeatham-Brown, S. Mahon, D. Goodwin

ABSTAIN: None

Motion pass 6-3-0

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Town Council desires to provide funding in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget from the Unassigned Fund Balance for the relocation of Bloomfield Access Television (BATV) from its current location in Bloomfield Public Schools to the Alvin & Beatrice Wood Human Services Center located at 330 Park Avenue.

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT in accordance with Section 307 of the Town of Bloomfield Charter, the Fiscal Year 2027 Adopted Budget is amended to add $15,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT the Fiscal Year 2027 Adopted Budget for Operations & Communications is amended to increase expenditures as shown below:

Department		Amount
0121	Operations & Communications	$15,000
	(52231-Other Contractual Services)	

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

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

Councilor Mahon questioned the proposed $7,500 allocation to the Chamber of Commerce, seeking clarification on who initiated the funding, how the amount was determined, and its intended purpose. He noted that the Chamber had not directly requested the funds and emphasized the need for a clear process and accountability.

Councilor Merritt supported the funding, citing the Chamber's role in economic development and supporting local businesses. Councilor Goodwin supported establishing a consistent process for evaluating such funding requests. Councilor DeBeatham-Brown opposed the allocation, citing the lack of a formal request, reporting requirements, and accountability for taxpayer funds.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd supported the funding, emphasizing the Chamber's role in business development and potential economic benefits to the Town. Mayor Harrington stated that he initiated the funding discussion after learning of the Chamber's need for space and additional support. Finance Director Hill clarified that the $7,500 allocation would be part of the proposed FY 2027 budget amendment funded through unassigned fund balance.

There was further discussion on this item with Councilors. It was moved by Councilor Goodwin, seconded by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown and voted to call the question.

VOTE: AYE: S. DeBeatham-Brown, T. Cooper, M. Oliver, J. Merritt, C. Lloyd, A. Harrington E. Waterhouse, D. Goodwin

NAY: S. Mahon

ABSTAIN: None

Motion pass 8-1-0

It was moved by Councilor Cooper, seconded by Councilor Oliver and voted to adopt the Appropriation of Unassigned Fund Balance to the FY2027 Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce

VOTE: AYE: T. Cooper, M. Oliver, J. Merritt, C. Lloyd, A. Harrington

NAY: S. DeBeatham-Brown, S. Mahon, E. Waterhouse, D. Goodwin

ABSTAIN: None

Motion pass 5-4-0

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Town Council desires to provide additional funding in the FY2027 budget from the Unassigned Fund Balance to support the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce's engagement and support of the Town's business community.

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT in accordance with Section 307 of the Town of Bloomfield Charter, the Fiscal Year 2027 Adopted Budget is amended to add $7,500 from the Unassigned Fund Balance.

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	(52231-Other Contractual Services)	

2026-75: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Appropriation of Unassigned Fund Balance to the FY2027 Bloomfield Farmer's Market

It was moved by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Cooper and voted unanimously to table this item for discussion.

2027-02: Consider and Possible Action on Removal of Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Alternate

Mayor Harrington opened discussion noting it is reported that Ms. Vivilyn Smith verbally resigned from her ZBA position on March 26 and did not submit a written resignation as required by the Connecticut General Statutes, Chapter 97, Section 7-103.

It was moved by Councilor Cooper, seconded by Councilor Oliver and voted unanimously to move that Vivilyn Smith to be removed as an Alternate on the Zoning Board of Appeals for failing to perform responsibilities as a ZBA Alternate member.

Report from Town Manager

Mr. Alvin D. Schwapp Jr., Town Manager provided updates on leadership transitions, recruitment, FY 2028 budget development, audits, economic development, and upcoming events. Transition planning is underway to maintain continuity following staff retirements, while recruitment continues for several open positions.

Town Manager Schwapp outlined a multi-phase FY 2028 budget process that will include departmental reviews, potential 5% and 10% reductions, a staffing assessment, Council guidance, and input from a Blue-Ribbon Budget Development Team, with a proposed budget expected in December.

Finance Director Darrell Hill reported that the FY 2025 audit is underway following submission of the trial balance and supporting documentation, with completion anticipated by September or October. The Town has received a state non-compliance notice due to the audit delay and is preparing a response. FY 2026 closeout is underway, with the audit targeted for completion by March 2027.

Town Manager Schwapp also reported progress on the Town Center Development RFP, 800 Cottage Grove Road, and the economic development discussions with Cigna. He encouraged Council to provide budget guidance by September and announced his upcoming vacation, during which Deputy Town Manager Sharon Tai-Williams will oversee operations.

Council Comments

Mayor Harrington

Mayor Harrington reported that three Bloomfield High School students, Daniel Anton Bernard, Yanika Johnson, and Anastasia Harrison, received $500 scholarships from Composite Lodge No. 22. The Lodge also raised an additional $500 for school supplies, which will be managed through the Department of Human Services and provided an update on the Town's CIF grant proposal. The project is expected to generate significant additional tax revenue and more than $85 million in private investment, while CIF funding would support public improvements. The mayor encouraged continued support for the proposal.

Mayor Harrington also reported on discussions regarding a regional collaboration initiative involving tourism, homelessness, and transportation coordinators. The proposed regional effort would provide shared services among participating municipalities, with Bloomfield's potential contribution estimated at approximately $17,900.

S. DeBeatham-Brown

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown emphasized her commitment to making informed decisions, representing all residents, and ensuring taxpayer funds are used responsibly. She apologized for the previous meeting and called for the Council to put residents first through greater collaboration, communication, and community-led solutions.

Councilor DeBeatham-Browm stressed that each Councilor has an equal voice under the Town Charter and encouraged caucuses and more opportunities for Council discussion. She also expressed concern about limited Council speaking time and acknowledged the need for the Council to provide clearer guidance to the Town Manager.

D. Goodwin

Councilor Goodwin stated that performance management and accountability are being addressed and supported by establishing a clear process for feedback and commended Councilors DeBeatham-Brown and Mahon for organizing a community forum and encouraged additional forums with businesses and faith communities. Councilor Goodwin urged residents to participate in Council and committee meetings so Councilors can hear directly from the broader community and foster more meaningful dialogue beyond social media.

M. Oliver

Councilor Oliver Councilor Oliver confirmed that performance reviews are being actively considered and that he has been reviewing the materials provided, including proposals from Councilors Cooper and Goodwin.

T. Cooper

Councilor Cooper acknowledged the concerns regarding the Council's recent meeting, apologizing for any role he may have played, and emphasized the importance of proper behavior and decorum. He encouraged residents to reach out and stressed his commitment to listening to their concerns and supported establishing clear processes while addressing immediate community needs, noting that compassion and accountability can coexist. Councilor Cooper recognized that disagreements are part of the Council's work and thanked residents for continuing to hold the Council accountable.

E. Waterhouse

Councilor Waterhouse stated- no comment

J. Merritt

Councilor Merritt apologized for losing his temper and speaking out of turn at the previous meeting, emphasizing the importance of decorum and following Council procedures so the Council can effectively conduct its business. He also stressed the need to begin planning early for the FY 2028 budget, noting that the Town cannot afford another significant budget increase and that Council should identify strategies now to control spending and keep taxes down.

S. Mahon

Councilor Mahon apologized to residents for his role in the previous meeting's disruption and acknowledged that strong emotions and advocacy can sometimes interfere with productive Council proceedings. He expressed a commitment to moving forward constructively and maintaining decorum.

He also emphasized that each Councilor has one equal vote and voice and stressed the importance of receiving complete and direct answers to questions so Council members can make informed decisions and effectively represent residents.

Deputy Mayor Lloyd

Deputy Mayor Lloyd agreed that the disrespect and conflict among Council members must end, acknowledging that the Council's conduct has negatively affected the Town's reputation and public confidence. Deputy Mayor called for a genuine reset, mutual respect, and accountability among Council members, including addressing personal offenses directly emphasizing that apologies must be followed by meaningful action and collaboration, rather than empty words, and encouraged residents to continue providing feedback, criticism, and support as the Council works to improve its effectiveness.

Mayor Harrington apologized again for the previous meeting's lack of decorum and expressed confidence in the Council's ability to improve communication, collaboration, and conduct. He emphasized the Council's responsibility to serve the community both inside and outside the Council chambers and committed to sharing his meeting expectations with Council members and exploring how they could communicate with the public.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor Mahon, seconded by Councilor Waterhouse and voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:06 p.m.

RESOLUTION

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