

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hicks Municipal Center  
**Council Chambers**  
Tolland, CT 06084

***Meeting is In-Person for those who wish to attend and will also be offered through Zoom for those who wish to attend remotely***

### **VISION STATEMENT**

*To represent education at its best, preparing each student for an ever-changing society, and becoming a full community of learning where excellence is achieved through each individual's success.*

### **BOE GOALS**

- Ensure the completion and implementation of the Portrait of a Graduate Report.
- Foster a culture and climate that supports high levels of learning and engagement, promotes mental and physical wellbeing, and leads to individual student success.
- Assess our district needs and advocate for resources to meet them, while pursuing non-traditional sources of revenue, ensuring a quality education for all students.
- Nurture and support an inclusive community where every person, regardless of their identity, is acknowledged and respected. This will ensure that Tolland students have the necessary resources to thrive at school, in the community, and in our diverse world.

REGULAR MEETING

7:00 PM

AGENDA  
April 27, 2022

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86358441213?pwd=dUJpbnVDV3BoZW1MT1ZlZ1F1K21lXZz09>  
Meeting ID: 863 5844 1213  
Passcode: 5FgfFH

Dial by your location  
+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)  
Meeting ID: 863 5844 1213  
Passcode: 582724

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86358441213?pwd=dUJpbnVDV3BoZW1MT1ZlZ1F1K21lXZz09>

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- B. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
- C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
- D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 13, 2022

- E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)  
*The members of the Tolland Board of Education welcome members of the public to share their thoughts and ideas at this time. When appropriate to do so, members of the Board and the administration may respond to comments during "Points of Information". However, in consideration of those in attendance and in an effort to proceed in a timely manner, follow-up discussion may need to take place outside of the meeting setting.*
- F. CORRESPONDENCE
- G. POINTS OF INFORMATION
- H. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Emily Pereira and Nathalie Mitchell
- I. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
  - I.1 Science Presentation – Mark Ruede (no enclosure)
  - I.2 White House Infrastructure Grant (no enclosure)
  - I.3 Updated-BOE Goal Setting Sessions-Nick Caruso-CABE
- J. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS
- K. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT
- L. BOARD ACTION
- M. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)  
*Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.*
- N. EXECUTIVE SESSION-FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION
- O. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Tolland Town Council – April 12, 2022

- P. FUTURE
- Q. NEW BUSINESS
- R. ADJOURNMENT

## TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Hybrid Meeting  
Council Chambers  
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING – April 13, 2022

Members Present: Sophia Shaikh, Vice Chair; Jacob Marie, Secretary; Christine Griffin, Tony Holt, Jayden Regisford

Members Absent: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Jennifer Gallichant, Dana Philbin, Christina Plourd

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools; Robert DaBica, Fire Marshal

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Shaikh called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

B.1 Celebrations – Aarnia Avinash Dongare – Poster Contest Winner

Dr. Willett explained that a few weeks ago Aarnia attended a Board meeting to celebrate her winning the Fire Prevention Poster Contest for Tolland. Dr. Willett received a call last week that not only was she the winner in Tolland, but she was also selected as the winner for Tolland County and the State of Connecticut.

Aarnia introduced her mom, dad, and big brother who are all very proud of her.

Fire Marshal DaBica presented Aarnia with a framed picture of her poster - the winner of the 2022 Connecticut Fire Prevention Poster Contest. Her original drawing will be on display in the State Capitol for 1 year and will be on the cover of next year's Fire Prevention Calendar which will be distributed to every school in the state.

Fire Marshal DaBica explained the Fire Prevention Poster Contest program. Fire marshals formulate a plan to get the program in schools in October, Fire Prevention Month, to ensure everyone is fire safe. This includes being prepared with smoke detectors, "stop drop and roll", and practicing fire safety every day. He presented another framed picture of Aarnia's poster to Dr. Willett for display in the school.

Fire Marshal DaBica and the Board congratulated Aarnia.

Ms. Shaikh thanked Aarnia for coming and that this is very exciting. Her work is inspiring.

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

*Mr. Holt motioned to approve the agenda as written.*

*Mr. Marie seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- March 23, 2022

*Mr. Holt motioned to approve the minutes of the March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting with the correction.*

*Ms. Griffin seconded the motion.*

*Correction: Ms. Griffin was not in attendance.*

*In favor: Shaikh, Griffin, Holt, Regisford*

*Opposed: none*

*Abstentions: Marie*

*Motion passed.*

#### E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Renie Besaw, 230 Grant Hill Road, commented that there has been some lack of clarity on the enrollment numbers for the upcoming budget. Dr. Willett sent her the chart from the budget book that shows a total enrollment decline of 55 students. Others have stated that Dr. Willett has said that enrollment is increasing. Ms. Besaw believes that he means that the incoming class has more students than in the past, but she would like a yes/no answer on this. She explained that it seems that the budget is based a reduction of 55 students for the upcoming year and asked for a yes/no answer because it has been a point of contention.

Kate Howard-Bender, 103 Goose Lane, thanked everyone for their continued work to ensure the needs of the students and the community are met. She explained that to say an entire budget is based on 55 students is reductive and insulting to the work of the Board. She thanked the Board for supporting the community and doing the right thing by the kids and all of Tolland.

#### F. CORRESPONDENCE

[2 months presented]

- E-mail (sent in February but not received immediately due to a software error) regarding a FOIA request
- E-mails (multiple sent by the same author in February but not received immediately due to a software error) regarding budget documents
- E-mail asking for the date of the last day of school
- E-mail regarding educational decisions for a particular student
- E-mail regarding clean school bus funding and switching to an all-electric

#### G. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- Ms. Griffin responded to the comments. The question was not that they should reduce the budget because enrollment went down. It was a clarification on the narrative that enrollment is increasing. In the past, Dr. Willett has explained that compared to the lean classes (grades 2, 3, 4, & 5), enrollment is increasing, and she believe this is what is being referred to. That said, enrollment overall is expected to decrease for the next couple of years. No one is saying that because of this that the budget is not appropriate.
- Dr. Willett explained that enrollment information may be found on the BOE website under Budget>Budget Documents>Enrollment Report. Current enrollment is listed as 2,260 but is really 2,262. The projection for this year was 2,241 and often the enrollment is greater than the projections. He noted that over time, when reviewing for the next 5 years, enrollment is about 2,160 or so. Projections indicate there will be modest decreases over the next couple of years and then enrollment will increase

overall. He added that projections are typically lower than actuals. The decrease for next year will be in the range of 20 students, but the numbers presented are based on projections. He noted that the projections over the next 10 years show enrollment increasing overall. Further, over the next 5 years, while a decrease is projected, it is not substantial, and enrollment should not go below 2,100. The district will never reach an enrollment of 3,000 students but the number will increase. Thus, there will be a decrease, a plateau, and then an increase. Thus, when planning the budget, this needs to be considered. The increase will first be seen in Pre-K-5 and will flow upward.

- Mr. Holt commented that budget season is year-long. While the presentation and referendum are upcoming, they have the opportunity now to start preparing for next year's budget and dig into the data. This includes information about maintenance and facility upkeep. He is looking forward to examining the metrics and bus contracts as well so they are prepared when entering next year's negotiations. He encouraged people to pose questions and looks forward to examining student achievement and how it relates to the dollars being spent.
- Mr. Marie commented that in regard to the Superintendent's evaluation, he would like to go back to the document and add some dates lengthening the time available for Board members to provide feedback. He would also like to have an executive session, or part of an executive session, where the Board can meet without Dr. Willett being present. He noted that this is not anti-Dr. Willett, but when hiring staff the Board has time to talk amongst themselves and he would like this added to the process. Ms. Shaikh asked how Mr. Marie proposed effectuating this idea. Mr. Marie responded that the Board agrees with the Superintendent's method for evaluation and members may want to discuss some specifics. Dr. Willett noted that much of this has already been negotiated between himself and the Chairs. Whether the Board goes into executive session and invites him or not is up to the Board. The other items have been negotiated. The dates noted have been negotiated but if the Board feels more time is needed to review the documents, he can try to provide them sooner albeit there is a lot of information to generate and there is a timeline. Dr. Willett reviewed the process which includes his presentation of information and Board members submitting their thoughts on a form which is then available for the Chairs. Dr. Willett does not see this form. Ms. Griffin commented that the Board gets 5 days to complete the form and Dr. Willett and the Chair have 3 weeks in the process. She asked if some of that time could be given to the Board. She added that she would like to be able to see what every Board member submits on the form as it would be helpful in coming to a consensus on the evaluation. She would like time during the May 25<sup>th</sup> executive session for the Board to have discussions without Dr. Willett being present. Ms. Shaikh noted that she will discuss these ideas with Ms. Lundgren. Mr. Holt asked for clarification on the process once the forms are submitted to leadership and the presentation is complete. Dr. Willett explained that the chairs write the evaluation. After that, he negotiates with the chairs, and the contract changes, if any, are presented. The board votes on the contract changes.

#### H. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Nathalie Mitchell and Emily Pereira

- Wellness Week is underway
- Spring Break – next week
- Spirit Week – the following week

- 12 Chamber Choir students sang at Carnegie Hall

Mr. Regisford noted that DECA will go to the international competition soon and wished them luck.

## I. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

### I.1 Monthly Financial Report

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment I.1.

The March 2022 financial report shows a current available balance of \$83,465 or .20% of the BOE's current budget.

Dr. Willett highlighted line items including the following:

- Salaries (110) – underbudget, transfer of associate educator salaries should balance
- Substitutes (120)
- Overtime (130) – under budget; cannot be encumbered
- Stipends (150) – over budget; pay to play funds will continue to be collected
- Health/Benefits (190, 200, 210) – collectively under budget
- FICA/MED/Soc Sec (220) – fewer retirements
- Retirement/Reimbursement/Unemployment (240, 250, 260) – under budget
- Benefits/WorkComp (270, 310) – under budget
- Professional Ed Services (320) – over budget; special education
- Legal/Audit/Tech (340, 350) – under budget; will be incurred as year goes on
- Maint/Cleaning/Repair (420, 430) – continued spending as year progresses
- Transportation (510) – over budget; special education routes
- Sped Ed Tuition (560) – over budget; expenses will continue to be incurred
- Energy (620) - USIF; funds transferred at the beginning of the year
- Textbooks (640) – expenses are being incurred
- Inst Supp/Equip (600, 610, 690, 730) - collectively under budget; will continue to be incurred

Dr. Willett explained that while many wonderful things have occurred this year, the district is experiencing increased special education and special education transportation costs. Where there are positive balances, they are not high. He anticipates the district coming in very close to the line this year given recent conversations. The next excess cost payment will bring the district back up but will not be as much as the first payment.

Ms. Griffin asked if Dr. Willett knew what the second excess cost payment would be. Dr. Willett estimated it will be approximately \$200K. In terms of the overall payment, only about 78% is received, rather than 100%. About 75% is issued in February and the remaining 25% in May. Ms. Griffin asked if Dr. Willett anticipates a spending freeze. Dr. Willett responded that he does. Ms. Griffin asked if they would need to dip into the ERF. Dr. Willett responded that they may have to do so.

Mr. Holt asked Dr. Willett why some of the costs, particularly in special education, are coming in earlier. Dr. Willett explained that additions to special education programs

and outplacements are being experienced earlier in the year and they are getting students coming from other districts and programs that need services as well.

I.2 BOE Goal Setting Sessions – Nick Caruso - CABE  
Dr. Willett reviewed attachment I.2.

Time will be dedicated at 3 Board meetings to goal setting. Mr. Caruso, from CABE, will be in attendance to assist.

Dr. Willett presented the General Goals Overview, the Board's current goals, traditional district goals, Portrait of a Graduate, and teacher goals. The CT Flexibilities Evaluation Plan, as well as other items can be found online.

Mr. Holt asked how the timing of setting the Board's goals aligns with the goal setting of the district. Dr. Willett explained that the Board will do its goals and then the administrators go into a retreat to work on their goals and other administrative work. Mr. Holt explained that he is interested in seeing the continuum. Dr. Willett explained that teacher goals are also determined by the state and evaluation plans. They are very granular whereas Board goals are traditionally broad. Mr. Holt explained that he would expect that the Board's goals would have influence. Dr. Willett responded that they do and highlighted Portrait of a Graduate. Mr. Holt commented that he is intrigued to see how the umbrella goals that are set evolve and how they relate and trickle down to the district. A brief discussion took place and Dr. Willett highlighted the scope of this year including what was presented previously to the Board. Mr. Holt noted that he is interested in seeing the entire process.

Ms. Griffin asked that they revisit Portrait of a Graduate before the first goal setting meeting. Dr. Willett noted that this will be included in the artifacts. A presentation can be done as well. A brief discussion took place. It was noted that the meeting dates in attachment I.2 are inaccurate. Ms. Griffin noted that she would like to see the Board goals be attainable and measurable. Dr. Willett explained that the Board sets the direction, and the goals of staff generally have the specific data targets and presented examples. He noted that the state is moving toward what is in the Flexibilities document and plans to rewrite the framework for 2024. Dr. Willett highlighted the available rolling data which can be found on the Superintendent's Page > Data Portal or in the Superintendent's Bulletin.

Mr. Marie agreed with Ms. Griffin that when creating goals, it would be useful to have some hard points to shoot for. He added that Flexibilities will be discussed at the next Curriculum Committee meeting.

Ms. Shaikh encouraged Ms. Griffin and Mr. Marie to share their ideas with Mr. Caruso.

I.3 Budget Line Update – CRF and ERF Request  
Dr. Willett reviewed attachment I.3.

The CRF request was completed, and the transfer has been done. The ERF was on last night's Council agenda, and Dr. Willett believes this will move forward. It is a great partnership between the town and the Board.

I.4 Capital Budget Discussion  
Dr. Willett provided background information.

Dr. Willett noted that the capital requests made over time can be seen on the Superintendent's Page> Capital Improvement Plan. This includes this year here, and in the agendas and minutes. Details about projects are available as well. Dr. Willett explained that once the capital improvement plan is transferred to the town, the town manager reviews and makes recommendations on it, and ultimately the Council makes the decisions.

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment I.4 and presented a proposed timeline. He explained that the new shift is the Board taking an advocacy role.

Mr. Marie commented that once the Board votes, it is important that the adopted plan gets to the Council. He is unsure if the previous plan was presented to the Council and if the Councilors knew what was requested. Mr. Marie asked Ms. Griffin if she believes what has been presented is a reasonable timeline. Ms. Griffin responded that she does and reviewed the rationale. She added that the December/January check in is important to her. The Board submitted the plan to Ms. Hancock who submitted it to the Council in December. Ms. Griffin explained that from what she read, she does not think what the Board submitted was presented to the Council. She believes the Council received the plan after Ms. Hancock's review. Ms. Griffin found it odd that it was submitted to the Council on December 7<sup>th</sup>, but the Council did not discuss it until the public hearing in February and she noted that there is a disconnect. Further, while Ms. Hancock presented the proposed capital plan to the Council, it was not presented to the Board. Ms. Griffin would like the Board to receive a copy of the revisions and believes the timeline presented will be a better one to follow.

J. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

- Curriculum – next meeting April 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM
- Tolland Mental Health and Substance Use Advisory Task Force – met with The Village; youth center recommendation will be presented to the Council at its next meeting; next meeting April 18<sup>th</sup>
- Finance & Facilities – will meet next week
- Policy – met today; discussed: policies 5040, 5041, 1080, and the policy on cameras and videos on buses; policy recommendation coming from CAFE regarding academic freedom; next meeting in 2 weeks
- Negotiations – in process of setting dates
- Communications – met on March 28<sup>th</sup>; discussed unfunded mandates; PTO updates

K. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ms. Shaikh noted that she is excited for the break next week and the warm weather. She hopes everyone has a lovely holiday this weekend.

L. BOARD ACTION - none



M. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none

N. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- Tolland Town Council – Budget Meeting Minutes – March 17, 2022
  - Tolland Town Council – Budget Meeting Minutes – March 21, 2022
  - Tolland Town Council – Budget Meeting Minutes – March 24, 2022
  - Tolland Town Council – Budget Meeting Minutes – March 29, 2022
  - Tolland Town Council/Planning & Zoning Commission/Economic Development Commission – March 31, 2022
- 
- Dr. Willett will confirm and keep the Council updated on the goal setting meeting dates.
  - Mr. Holt commented that the Future agenda item was used in the past to track ideas and provide a visual reference. He would like to know if there would be an opportunity to return to doing so both for the Board and the public. He added that like with the capital improvement plan process, it would behoove the Board to periodically look back at its goals for focus.
  - Mr. Marie commented that they could also articulate the goals and what they look like in terms of meeting items.

O. FUTURE - none

P. NEW BUSINESS - none

Q. ADJOURNMENT

*Ms. Griffin motioned to adjourn at 8:45 PM.*

*Mr. Marie seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Pascuzzi  
Clerk

## Agenda Item #1.3

### SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

**ITEM:** BOE Goal Setting Sessions-Nick Caruso-CABE

**ITEM SUBMITTED BY:** Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

**For BOE meeting:** April 27, 2022

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

June 8, and July 27, 2022, have been established as Board of Education goal review / setting meetings. We also have the option for a special meeting of the following dates: 5/18, 6/1, 6/15, and 7/6. Please see the document provided in December of 2021, and April 13, 2022 as a review of the current Board of Education and district goals as well as Portrait of a Graduate work started during a previous Board of Education:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1E7Bc4tx9HutVF2ss7D1tuFELC3Xy3JEK/view?usp=sharing>

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**

N/A

**BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:**

N / A

**BOE ACTION DESIRED:**

Review

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1E7Bc4tx9HutVF2ss7D1tuFELC3Xy3JEK/view?usp=sharing>

## MINUTES

### TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL HYBRID MEETING April 12, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.

**Members Present:** Steve Jones, Chair; Sami Khan, Lou Luba, Katie Murray, Tammy Nuccio, Colleen Yudichak

**Members Absent:** John Reagan, Vice Chair

**Also Present:** Lisa Hancock, Interim Town Manager; Bev Bellody, Director, Human Services; Barbara Pettijohn, Director, Library Services (Zoom)

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited
3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Observed
4. **PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:** none
5. **PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*) (2-minute limit) - none
6. **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:** none
- 7a. **REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL:**
  - Birch Grove Building Committee – Ms. Murray noted that there will not be any additional change orders. The last change orders will be completed during spring break.
- 7b. **REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS**
  - Mental Health and Substance Use Advisory Task Force – Ms. Yudichak provided an update of the April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Commission on People with Disabilities – next meeting April 13<sup>th</sup>
  - Planning & Zoning Commission – Mr. Luba provided an update of the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Veterans Recognition Commission – Mr. Luba provided an update.
  - Permanent Celebration Committee – Ms. Nuccio provided an update.
  - Tolland Water Commission – Mr. Jones provided an update.
  - Economic Development Commission – Mr. Khan provided an update of the April 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Agriculture Commission – Ms. Murray provided an update of the April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.
8. **NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):**
  - 8.1 Consideration of a resolution approving the fine-free Library proposal.  
Ms. Hancock reviewed the background information on this item.  
Ms. Hancock explained that fines & fees have started to dwindle and are estimated to be \$3-4K if collected for next year. Sometimes fines & fees deter patrons from returning to the library due to embarrassment and the accumulation of fees. Many libraries are going to a fine-free model for items other than things such as hot spots and electronic reading devices. In February 2022, ninety-four CT libraries went fine-free. The proposal is to eliminate overdue fees and implement such a model.

Ms. Pettijohn explained that there is no evidence that collecting fines brings materials back more quickly and libraries that have gone fine-free find that materials come back quicker. This is because lower income patrons may have a shame due to the fines and not want to engage staff in the conversation. Staff does not want to have the conversations either. That said, they will hold people responsible for returning items. The library wants items back that are in the lost category and if the patron has lost the item, they will be charged. Digital materials do not have fines and the library has effective systems to remind patrons about overdue items and for automatic renewal. Fines do not work and create situations that are not helpful for the library or patrons.

Ms. Nuccio asked how it would work without fees. Ms. Pettijohn explained that different items have different loan periods. Once an item is in lost status, staff will either e-mail or call to request that an item be returned or that funds be provided to cover the item's cost. Fines would still be in place for late items such as hot spots, museum passes, games, electronic reading devices etc. Ms. Hancock confirmed that the dollar amount has been taken out of the budget and is noted in the Financial Summary. If the Council does not pass the resolution, the funds will be collected.

Mr. Jones asked what percentage of items would not fall under a fine-free policy. Ms. Pettijohn responded that the items include 2 hot spots, 3-4 Kindles, 6 Nooks, and over 100 games.

*Mr. Luba motioned*

***BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby approves the fine-free Library policy which will eliminate fines and fees for overdue items. This resolution eliminates the fees that were authorized in July, 2008. Fine-free does not mean responsibility-free as the cost of items long overdue and considered to be lost will be charged to the patron.

*Ms. Murray seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

- 8.2 Consideration of a resolution approving a transfer of \$398,155 from the BOE's audited unexpended balance as of June 30, 2021 to the Education Reserve Fund.

Ms. Hancock provided background information on this item.

The BOE has requested that \$398,155 from its audited FY 20/21 balance be transferred to the Education Reserve Fund pursuant to the provisions in Ordinance No. 86, Chapter 8.

Ms. Yudichak asked if these funds would be used for Technology. Ms. Hancock responded that this is the BOE's intention and the fund allows for this use.

*Mr. Luba motioned,*

***BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby approves the transfer of \$398,155 from the BOE's audited balance as of June 30, 2021 pursuant to the request for these funds by the Board of Education.

*Ms. Murray seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

- 8.3 Consideration of a resolution approving the application for Community Project Funding grants. [Mr. Jones recused himself from Resolution #2 as laid out in the Council's materials. While he will be seated for discussion, he will not participate in the discussion on this item.]

Ms. Hancock provided background information on this item.

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, Congressman Courtney announced the return of "Community Project Funding" which provides an opportunity for towns to secure federal funding for small initiatives within the Second District. Selected projects will be submitted to the Appropriations Committee for consideration. Ms. Hancock noted that Tolland is eligible to apply, reviewed the criteria, and noted that community support is needed. The town is looking for items that ideally do not have a matching grant requirement and would cover the entire project. Applications are due Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at 5PM. Given the short notice, staff came up with some ideas and began drafting applications for possible submission if approved by the Council. Ms. Hancock noted that any information prepared, even if an application is not submitted, will be useful in the future when other grant opportunities arise.

Ms. Hancock explained that items identified by staff were consistent with the Council's goals including promoting sound infrastructure and ADA accessibility. She reviewed 4 recommendations for possible application. First, staff has been meeting with the Historical Society regarding the Jail Museum and discussing the substantial repairs needed to make it safe and ADA accessible. Preliminary costs are \$300K. Second, an upgraded Parks & Facilities garage (\$825K) is needed to enhance the safety of staff and to accommodate equipment and supplies. This has already been approved as part of the CIP. Ms. Hancock noted that the next 2 recommendations are not ready to move forward. The first of these is the Water Line Project to the Vineyard area and it is unlikely that this would comply with, or qualify for, the grant. Although the town is trying to secure funding, the cost is close to \$15M and it is not considered a small project. The other recommendation is for ADA compliant sidewalks (\$1.2M) for the Historic Tolland Green. This falls within the realm of \$1.5-2M and would be a non-matching grant. This item is on track for further Council discussion in June and the town has contracted with a landscape architect who will meet with the Commission on People with Disabilities and the Historic District Commission, but it is unknown at this time what will come from the analysis. Ms. Hancock noted that it would not be appropriate for her to apply for a grant, for the town to be awarded the grant, and then for the Council decide not to move forward. She noted that her intent in selecting these items was to address some of the town's needs

Mr. Luba confirmed with Ms. Hancock that the town is not limited to a single request. He asked if the Miracle Field would qualify. Ms. Hancock responded that she considered it but did not select this item because decisions have not yet been made and there are many moving pieces involved. Another item considered was the turf field at THS but given the timeframe the 4 items noted were selected. Mr. Luba supported addressing the Jail Museum, the Parks & Facilities garage, and the sidewalks. He asked that the Council consider including the turf field and the Miracle Field although the full granularity for the latter has not yet been determined.

Ms. Nuccio agreed with adding the turf field. She added that regarding the Miracle Field, if the town could get funds for the project, the money from the Miracle League could be put in a trust to cover the replacement of the next field. She supports applications for the Jail Museum, the Parks & Facilities garage, and the sidewalks. Ms. Hancock responded that staff can try to pull together the application for the turf field but is unsure if it would be funded for a non-matching grant. If a matching portion is required, she has some concerns because the project will not be officially approved for debt financing until next year. Ms. Nuccio noted that it is in the capital plan. Ms. Hancock confirmed that it is, but it is not yet appropriated and may require a bonding resolution

and could become a referendum-type debt. If it is a non-matching grant, staff may be able to prepare the application in time. In regard to the Miracle Field, information from the completed study will be provided to the Council on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Murray asked if the Community Project Funding has been available to the town in the past. Ms. Hancock believed that it has been. Ms. Bellody noted that she has not seen it in a couple of years. Ms. Murray confirmed that a historical list of projects is not available. She asked about other projects and how the ones presented were selected. Ms. Hancock responded that she considered those projects that are moving along and are in the capital program along with those that they could get information including detailed costs given the time constraints for the application. She also considered the Council's goals. Ms. Murray asked if specific information and cost estimates are available for the sidewalks. Ms. Hancock responded that there are preliminary cost estimates. Ms. Murray explained that she has some concerns about including the sidewalks. She was not a member of the Council the last time this item was presented; however, she understands there were disagreements about the best way to move forward. Further, she is concerned about intentionally or unintentionally picking a side. She noted that she does not have enough information including how various entities feel about it and is uncomfortable being asked to approve something with so many unknowns. Application may set an expectation that action will be taken, and action has not been requested of the Council. She added that she would like to support those requesting more accessibility on the Green which is consistent with the Council's goals but is aware that the historic green is important to people in town and any changes need to be made with deliberation and be respectful of its historic nature. Ms. Murray commented that the Council received an e-mail from Ms. Hancock regarding outreach to community members for letters of support and if the e-mail would be included in the minutes. Ms. Hancock explained that the e-mail was related to the application for the grant. A number of items of support are needed. Ms. Murray commented that the request for the letters of support is directly related to what the Council is being asked to approve. Members of the community were approached to express their support for the application, which has not yet been approved by the Council, for a grant. Ms. Hancock explained that her office contacted 1 person regarding the historic district so they would have something on file for the application as well as Kathy Bach regarding the Jail Museum. Ms. Hancock noted that she also reached out to 2 others - 1 person regarding the water project (no response) and the Council, as well as 2 political offices (no responses). Ms. Murray explained that she did not read the e-mail as a request of the Council for a letter and apologized. While she understands the tight spot and timeline, she has concerns about activating community support for something before it is presented to the Council. Ms. Murray asked if the town has the capacity to apply for the grants. Ms. Hancock explained the applications have been completed although supplemental documentation may be needed at a later time. Ms. Murray asked if the staff has the time and resources to administer the grants if awarded. Ms. Hancock responded that they do other than what would be needed for the water project. She noted that the sidewalk project could be a bit involved. If awarded, the grant would have various federal requirements including the prevailing wage process and would need oversight. The Parks & Facilities upgrade would be a large project and multiple staff members would need to be involved. The Jail Museum would not be difficult to administer. Ms. Murray asked about the application for the sidewalks and what they are applying for. Ms. Hancock responded that the application is to provide for ADA accessibility which is in the Council's goals.

Ms. Yudichak commented that she likes including the Miracle Field, but she believes the organization is supposed to continue fundraising for the replacement field. She expressed concern that the town would now be maintaining the field if money from the grant is put into a trust fund. Ms. Hancock clarified that money from the grant cannot go into a trust fund. The grant funds would be used to assist building the field and any additional money raised by the organization would be

put into a trust. Ms. Hancock expressed concern that if the study comes back recommending a location for the Miracle Field other than at Birch Grove, the organization may decide not to build in the recommended location. Mr. Luba explained that they were looking at Birch Grove due to the cost savings from the infrastructure that is already present and understands that another location, if economically feasible, would be examined. Ms. Hancock explained that her concern is if the grant is awarded but the Miracle Field falls through what would happen.

Ms. Yudichak commented that the Council does not know how the Commission on People with Disabilities, or the Historic District Commission feels about the sidewalks. If the grant is awarded, she asked if they could speak with the stakeholders at that time. Ms. Hancock explained that the application is written to address ADA accessibility. If the stakeholders decide not to go with ADA accessibility and rather address leveling or replacing the stones, this would need to be researched. Ms. Bellody noted that when using federal funds there are more constraints. She added that projects need to be addressed in FY23 and decisions regarding the sidewalks have not yet been made. Mr. Luba explained that they would have about 18 months to move forward. Ms. Hancock noted that if approved for FY22/23, they would need to move forward and have it appropriated as it is a 1 year grant. Mr. Luba noted they will be discussing the Miracle Field in May and the sidewalks in June. Ms. Yudichak asked if there is a funding cap. Ms. Hancock responded that the range is \$300K-\$4M per project. Ms. Bellody noted that applications have to go before the Appropriations Committee. When the town applied for funding years ago, it requested \$700K and was granted \$190K. Ms. Hancock clarified that when applying for non-matching grants they are either approved or they are not. Ms. Yudichak asked if it is better to apply for fewer grants. Ms. Hancock explained that they cannot apply for too many as management could become overwhelming. She hoped by submitting a few, 1 or 2 may be awarded. Ms. Yudichak noted that she supports the Parks & Facilities Garage upgrade as well as the turf field and the Jail Museum. She has some concern about the sidewalk application and the Miracle Field given its unknowns. Ms. Hancock noted that she is unsure if either the Miracle Field or the turf field would have non-matching grants so the Council would need to be ready to appropriate funds if necessary, i.e., if \$200K is awarded and a balance of \$650K (or the difference) is needed to complete the project. Ms. Yudichak asked if a letter from the Council expressing support would help. Ms. Hancock explained that the Council's vote this evening will indicate support. She noted that she is unsure if she can complete the applications and get letters of support by tomorrow. Other grants, including this one, may be available in the future. In terms of the turf field, quotes are available, and Ms. Nuccio noted that she can get a letter of support.

Mr. Jones asked about the grants. Ms. Hancock explained that if the town applies for the Jail Museum and the Parks & Facilities Garage Upgrade, only one of them may go before the Appropriations Committee and there are additional items that need to be considered as well. Mr. Jones supports submitting applications for the Jail Museum and the Parks & Facilities Garage Upgrade as well as the ADA compliant sidewalks and adding the turf field at THS. He supports the Miracle Field but has some concerns regarding the location not yet having been determined.

Mr. Luba commented that while there is a short timeframe and understands the concerns, there is no harm in asking. He understands the additional staff work that would be required as well. He does not believe adding the turf field would be an issue as there is general consensus and information available. Regarding the Miracle Field and the sidewalks, he understands the concerns but believes they should be put forward. It would give the Council impetus to do its due diligence and move forward to get the projects going. He supports putting all of the project requests forward. They do not know if the funding source will be available next year.

Ms. Nuccio explained that they have heard from the sports' organizations that they were put out by not having the Birch Grove fields. Rather than a request for the Miracle Field, they should apply for recreational field development or remediation of recreational field development. She cited various parcels of land where the cost to make the land usable is prohibitive. Ms. Hancock explained that her concern that they do not have enough information for such an application. Ms. Nuccio expressed support for the turf field application. She added that she is in support of the sidewalks as well. They have looked at options, something needs to be done, and it is part of the Council's goals. A commitment has been made to the town to examine and address this. The \$1.2M would be utilized, be beneficial to the town, and come off the town's long-term debt and planning. She supports the Jail Museum and the Parks & Facilities Garage Upgrade as well as the ADA compliant sidewalks and adding the turf field at THS

Ms. Yudichak asked who is responsible for maintaining the sidewalks. Ms. Nuccio explained that it depends. So many feet are the property owners' responsibility while others are those of the town. It is also a state road. Ms. Hancock explained that the town only owns the sidewalk in front of Town Hall which is not historic.

*Mr. Luba motioned,*

***BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Tolland Town Council hereby authorizes the Interim Town Manager, Lisa A. Hancock, or her designee, to make application for FY 2023 Community Project Funding through Congressman Courtney's office for the Parks Facility Garage Improvements, Old Jail and High School Athletic Turf Field.

*Ms. Nuccio seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: Ms. Murray confirmed that Ms. Hancock would first find out if the turf field is eligible for non-matching funds and asked what would happen if matching funds are required. Ms. Hancock explained that if only matching funds are available, she would not submit application without a commitment on behalf of the Council to fund the differential. Ms. Murray asked if the resolution should be modified to include the turf field if it does not require matching funds. Mr. Jones explained that the assumption is that the items included in the resolution are for non-matching funds. Ms. Hancock noted that there are grants in the program that allow for the application for matching funds. She cannot confirm if the grant for the turf field is a non-matching grant at this time but can research it. If it is a matching grant that comes through, while there is a capital plan commitment for the future, the Council would need to put an appropriation in place if the grant is approved. Ms. Nuccio confirmed that it is in next year's capital plan. Ms. Hancock explained that when the Council moves forward with the bond authorization next year, it would be approved. Mr. Luba recommended only including Parks Facility Garage Improvements and the Old Jail in this resolution and having a second resolution for the turf field for matching and non-matching funding. The third resolution would be for the Historic District sidewalks for non-matching funds. The fourth resolution would be for the Miracle Field for non-matching funds.*

*The motion was withdrawn.*

*Mr. Luba motioned:*

***BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Tolland Town Council hereby authorizes the Interim Town Manager, Lisa A. Hancock, or her designee, to make application for FY 2023 Community Project Funding through Congressman Courtney's office for the Parks Facility Garage Improvements and the Old Jail.



*Ms. Nuccio seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Luba motioned,

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Tolland Town Council hereby authorizes the Interim Town Manager, Lisa A. Hancock, or her designee, to make application for FY 2023 Community Project Funding through Congressman Courtney's office for the Tolland High School Artificial Turf Field for non-matching as well as matching funds that would be supplemented by the FY2023 Capital Improvement Plan.

*Ms. Yudichak seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

Ms. Nuccio motioned,

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Tolland Town Council hereby authorizes the Interim Town Manager, Lisa A. Hancock, or her designee, to make application for FY 2023 Community Project Funding through Congressman Courtney's office for the ADA Compliant Sidewalks for Historic Tolland Green for non-matching funds.

Mr. Luba seconded the motion.

*Discussion: none*

*Vote:*

*Aye: Jones, Khan, Luba, Nuccio, Yudichak*

*Nay: none*

*Abstentions: Murray*

*Motion passed.*

Mr. Luba motioned,

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Tolland Town Council hereby authorizes the Interim Town Manager, Lisa A. Hancock, or her designee, to make application for FY 2023 Community Project Funding through Congressman Courtney's office for the Miracle Field for non-matching funds.

*Ms. Nuccio seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: Ms. Yudichak expressed concern that the study has not yet been completed.*

*Mr. Luba explained that he understands the concerns that there is not a finalized plan or granularity, but this is an opportunity. They do not know when the funds will be available again and a study is being done that the Council will discuss on May 5<sup>th</sup>. If on May 5<sup>th</sup> an agreement is not in place, they can withdraw the application if possible. This resolution gives the Council the opportunity to move forward and apply for funding that may not be available in the future. Ms. Nuccio commented that she is committed to finding a way to make the Miracle Field happen so if this provides funding and allows the town to create a sinking fund to help the town and the Miracle League replace future fields, she can make it work. Ms. Murray asked if the town has the staff capacity to add the Miracle Field grant proposal. Ms. Hancock responded that she does have some concerns including if the grant has to be matched and noted that a lot is up in the air with this project. She noted that, in her opinion, she totally supports the project but if the project is eligible, and approved as a matching grant, then the town has to work with the Miracle League, and they are not*

*present to represent themselves and say that they will turn over the funds they have raised to the town. While it would be a win for them, a commitment is not in place. Mr. Luba explained that his proposal is that the resolution would be for non-matching funds. Ms. Hancock explained that if all grants are awarded, they would need to ensure staff is in place to support the projects and that the Miracle Field League would be behind the project. Ms. Bellody noted that they will need to see if this is an eligible item and noted that only a portion of the grant may be awarded, and this would need to be addressed. Ms. Murray confirmed that with the addition of the turf field that appropriate staff time and capacity is available to include the Miracle Field in the grant application. Ms. Hancock responded that there will be a lot to pull together but they will attempt to do so. Moving forward, her concern is project management and if they do not have the staff to make it happen, they will need to find a way to make it happen. Ms. Murray asked if the Council can prioritize the application for the turf field over the Miracle Field if there is limited time over the next 2 days. Mr. Jones responded that if this resolution passes, Ms. Hancock would likely focus more on the turf field than the Miracle Field. Ms. Murray noted that this would be her request.*

*A roll call vote was taken:*

*Aye: Yudichak, Luba, Nuccio, Murray*

*Nay: Jones*

*Abstentions: Khan*

*Motion passed.*

Mr. Jones noted that the application for the turf field would be prioritized over the application for the Miracle Field. Ms. Hancock noted that she will need letters of support for both fields. A brief discussion took place. Mr. Jones noted that individuals Councilors could submit letters of support.

- 8.4 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions  
8.4.a. Appointment to the Tolland Water Commission

*Mr. Luba motioned to approve the appointment of Robert Paisley to the Tolland Water Commission.*

*Ms. Yudichak seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

9. **OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):** none

10. **REPORT OF THE INTERIM TOWN MANAGER**

- Tolland Green Policy Update – They are looking to pull information from the last time this was discussed and consolidating it into a single policy including parking on the Green for the Farmers' Market. This will be brought before the Council.
- Budget Referendum (May 3<sup>rd</sup>) – If the referendum fails, a quick turnaround time is needed. Ms. Hancock noted that she can tentatively put it on the May 5<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting agenda if acceptable to the Council. If the referendum passes, it will not be necessary. She suggested that the Council prepare just in case the referendum fails.
- Quarterly Financial Report – included
- Rotary Club & Chair of the Conservation Commission – Ms. Hancock worked with them over the weekend. She was contacted by the Rotary requesting that they be allowed to donate a tree to

the town. A beautiful linden tree was donated, planted, and dedicated to the Rotary Club at Sage Meadow. Ms. Hancock thanked the Rotary for all of their service.

- Veterans Commission – Ms. Hancock’s office worked with the Commission to print & fold flyers and helped it purchase some needed items.
- Council Chambers Wall Art (back wall) – Ms. Hancock spoke with Dr. Willett who expressed concern about the staff time needed to frame and swap out artwork. He recommended having the BOE purchase a monitor so student artwork could be displayed digitally. A brief discussion took place where the Council presented various options.

**11. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- 11.1 March 16, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes
- 11.2 March 16, 2022 Budget Meeting Minutes
- 11.3 March 17, 2022 Budget Meeting Minutes
- 11.4 March 21, 2022 Budget Meeting Minutes
- 11.5 March 22, 2022 Hybrid Meeting Minutes
- 11.6 March 24, 2022 Public Hearing Minutes
- 11.7 March 29, 2022 Hybrid Budget Meeting
- 11.8 March 31, 2022 Hybrid Joint Meeting Minutes

*Ms. Murray motioned to accept the minutes as laid out in 11.1 - 11.3 and 11.5 - 11.8 as-is and 11.4 as amended.*

*Ms. Nuccio seconded the motion.*

*Edit: (11.4), March 21<sup>st</sup>, item 2.b., 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, should be deleted and replaced with the following, “Ms. Yudichak asked Dr. Willett how the reduction from the requested 3.13% increase to the proposed 2.99% increase would impact their budget.”*

*All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

**12. CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL**

- E-mail regarding the town manager search
- E-mail regarding fossil-free buildings
- E-mails (3) regarding the budget
- E-mail regarding road repair
- E-mail regarding a sign on the Green
- E-mail regarding a proclamation
- E-mail regarding a contaminated well

**13. CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT**

- Budget Presentation: April 18<sup>th</sup>
- Referendum: May 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Mr. Jones thanked the Rotary Club and the Conservation Commission for the dedication of the linden tree at Sage Meadow. The Conservation Commission’s Earth Day Sweep will be held on Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Town Manager Search: The Council held an executive session, reviewed all 17 candidates, and pared it down to 12 candidates for the next phase. As the process continues more information will be provided and community meetings with meet-and-greets will be scheduled.

- Mr. Jones congratulated Ms. Dongare who won the Tolland County statewide poster contest for Fire Safety. Public Safety staff will be at the BOE tomorrow to commemorate and celebrate the win. TIS won a matching grant from the contest as well.

14. **COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS**

- Ms. Murray asked about the vacancy notice for the Public Safety Officer position and if this is a new position. Ms. Hancock noted that it is due to the resignation of a staff member and not for a new position. Ms. Murray asked about the Council's plan for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund review. The Council made some specific requests at the joint meeting so it could consider the fund. A brief discussion took place and a July/August timeframe was noted.

15. **PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION** (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*) (3 minute limit) - none

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

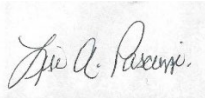
*Ms. Murray motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 PM:*

*Ms. Yudichak seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,



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Lisa Pascuzzi  
Town Council Clerk

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Town Council Chair