



TOWN OF BROOKLYN

P.O. Box 356 - Route 6 and 169
BROOKLYN, CONNECTICUT 06234

OFFICE OF SELECTMEN
(860) 779-3411 Option 2

TOWN CLERK
(860) 779-3411 Option 4

TAX COLLECTOR
(860) 779-3411 Option 5

ASSESSOR
(860) 779-3411 Option 6

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 29, 2022
4:00pm via Zoom &
Clifford B. Green Memorial Center**

Present: Austin Tanner, Lou Brodeur, Joe Voccio and Melissa Bradley; Recording Secretary
Also Present: Sandy Brodeur, Jenn Nemeth and Ben Davidson

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2022 DEC -6 AM 11:30
RECORDED VOL. PAGE
Katherine Brodeur
TOWN CLERK BROOKLYN, CT

- 1. Call to Order:** A. Tanner called the meeting to order at 4:01pm.
- 2. Approve Minutes 11/10/22:** L. Brodeur made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/10/2022 as presented. J. Voccio seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.
- 3. Public Comment:** Jenn Nemeth, owner of the Ice Box reads the following statement into the record:

I want to open tonight with some positive updates, and to say thank this board for your part in them.

Yesterday, to our relief, we learned that the complaint against our liquor permit has been withdrawn.

For those who are unaware a complaint was filed against us by William Wheaton Sr. who is the President of Brooklyn Fire District. We knew Mr. Wheaton had gathered a group of likeminded individuals to oppose our permit which we now know included the EBFD Chief Brian Pepin, but we are very pleased to say they have withdrawn their opposition as of yesterday and we thank all involved for helping them to make the right decision.

Issuing a public thank you to the new members of the EBFD who are trying to reason with the Brooklyn Fire District to end the lawsuit. Patrick Gauthier's resignation from the Fire Commission and retirement from the EBFD is a huge step in the process. Seeing the prime "bad actor" – to use the EBFD's own Attorney's words - removal is a positive direction for the town.

In addition, we want to recognize the Town Highway Department for removing the illegal “No Parking Fire Lane” signs that had been posted on South Main Street since May of 2021. Thank you to all those involved in the decision to remove them. It was a show of good faith and checked off one of the action items that I had intended to address with you here tonight.

The action items that are still open and we would like to see this board discuss during executive session this evening are as follows:

1. Assistance obtaining public meeting minutes from the Brooklyn Fire District. We have requested these minutes and mortgage documents through FOIA but have yet to receive a response other than:

“It is the position of Brooklyn Fire District, Inc. that it is not a public agency or agency as defined by FOIA, required to produce the documents which you requested...”

I’ve referenced all applicable statutes in previous statements. They are a public agency, and all that documentation is public information they are just dragging their feet to delay the lawsuit and because they know there is unfavorable information contained within.

2. Discuss the validity of the “fire lane” markings on the shared easement leading to 15 South Main Street. In separate discussions with Fire Marshal Doug Kramer, and First Selectman Tanner. We are requesting something in writing be produced regarding the fire lane. We have been unable to locate anything to date.
3. Continued research over the “mortgage” for 15 South Main Street and or the Brooklyn Fire District. Again, I’ve spoken at length about this and requested documentations. It seems like a very simple thing to be found. The Brooklyn Fire District claims they paid their mortgage off this year. That should be in the 2022 town records. We would like to see those documents.

I do want to reiterate our position that the lawsuit brought against us by the Brooklyn Fire District (and EBFDD) is nothing more than a deflect and distract campaign on their behalf to hide their own misgivings. Delaying the end to this case is only buying them more time and costing the town more money.

They are public agents who are acting unbecoming and utilizing taxpayer funds and resources to cover up money mismanagement, and until you can prove to me otherwise, I will continue to express that point at all public meetings until I see results taken from these remaining action items.

In conclusion. The action items completed to date are very much appreciated. Additional steps to end the lawsuit will be as well. I do want to remind everyone though that the case "being done" is not the end. We have suffered a tremendous economic and emotional toll over the past few years that cannot be undone with retirements, resignations, sign removal, and covering up lines and painting alone.

I have attached the liquor permit complaint here for the board to see. It was not a public document. We had to request it through FOIA. I feel like it is important for the Board to see since eight of the twelve "complainants" are members of the EBFDF.

I am asking that this statement, and two pages of attachments be entered into the public record.

Thank you again for your time and I hope you have a productive meeting during executive session tonight.

All supporting documents attached.

Ben Davidson is interested in purchasing a piece of land on Tripp Hollow Road that the Town owns and is land locked. There are 7.5 acres that abut his land. The land is mostly wetlands and believed not to be buildable.

A. Tanner states the Town would need to put a request out to see if anyone else was interested in purchasing the land.

4. Appointments/Resignations

BOFC Resignation: L. Brodeur made a motion to accept the resignation of Patrick Gauthier from the Board of Fire Commissioners. J. Voccio seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

BOFC Appointments: Mortlake Representative, letter with three names submitted. Term 12/02/2023: L. Brodeur made a motion to appoint Leo Berube as the Mortlake representative on the Board of Fire Commissioners from the list of three names given by Mortlake with a term expiring 12/02/2023. J. Voccio seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

East Brooklyn, letter with three names submitted to fill vacancy. Term 09/11/2023: Mike Podzaline, chairman of the Board of Fire Commissions submits the following letter:

I understand that at the Board of Selectman's meeting scheduled for tomorrow evening, November 29th, 2022, it is on the agenda to appoint a member of the East Brooklyn Fire Department to the Board of Fire Commissioners to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Patrick Gauthier.

This resignation occurred due to a recognizable conflict of interest created by the ongoing lawsuit between the Brooklyn Fire District and East Brooklyn Fire Department(plaintiffs) vs. the Town of Brooklyn(defendant), With that, the current Board of Fire Commissioners feels that ANY member of the East Brooklyn Fire Department appointed to the Board of Fire Commissioners would also create an ethical conflict of interest situation.

Town ordinance states that the East Brooklyn Fire Department is entitled to a representative on the Board of Fire Commissioners. Suppose the Board of Selectman intends to uphold the town's ordinance in appointing an East Brooklyn Fire Department representative to the Board of Fire Commissioners. In that case, it will behoove that individual to abstain from any commission votes related to financial impacts or uses of town-granted funds. As the lawsuit stands, that individual would be a plaintiff and a defendant in a case in which their impartialness can be questioned as a member of an organization that stands to gain from any judgment in its favor.

To conclude, we, the board, are entrusted to the public. Therefore, the Board of Fire Commissioners will adhere to the standards set forth within the towns Ethics Board mission statement.

J. Voccio is in favor of moving forward with the nomination. If there were a conflict that arose, the member would be expected to recuse him/herself. There are many matters discussed and acted upon, and East Brooklyn should not be denied the representation. A. Tanner agrees. J. Voccio made a motion to appoint David Costa as the East Brooklyn representative on the Board of Fire Commissioners from the three names given. A. Tanner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Housing Authority Appointment: L. Brodeur made a motion to appoint Anna Whalon Ramos to the Housing authority as a regular member with a term expiring 4/1/2023. J. Voccio seconded the motion. A. Tanner states she is a Brooklyn resident and has experience in housing and works at Access Agency. Motion carried 3-0.

A. Tanner received a letter from Bill Greene who is interested in filling the vacancy on the Board of Fire Commissioners. He was asked to fill out the questionnaire and will be presented at a future meeting.

5. **Financial Reports:** ZREC revenue seems lower than expected. These are quarterly payments and may be slightly behind.

6. **Discussion/Action on Pension Review Recommendations:** Art Meizner presented the pension fund review to the board of finance and had the following recommendations:

H&H recommends several enhancements to the fund line up in the Town of Brooklyn Retirement Plan. These recommendations reflect a thorough analysis of the existing plan menu and improved coordination of fund research and expertise at H&H.

Highlights of our recommendation:

- Streamline and simplify the plan's investment selections. Eliminate funds where added complexity is not met with added value in terms of performance or risk control

- Focus on cost-effective funds with strong management teams, solid peer-ranked performance, and depth of research and manager access by the H&H investment team
- Maintain a fully diverse but more straight-forward fund menu. Expected outcomes include streamlined committee presentations, improved operational efficiency, and simplified decision-making
- Our recommendations incorporate
 - A reduction in the number of funds from 33 to 25
 - An elimination of funds that have lower-tier Morningstar ratings (no 2 star funds)
 - A use of systematic strategies in asset classes where such methodologies add value, and more style purity for international equity funds
 - Elimination of certain funds with meaningful management turnover

L. Brodeur made a motion to accept and approve the pension recommendations presented and approved by the board of finance. J. Voccio seconded the motion. J. Voccio recognizes we utilize the black rock strategic funds which is a very controversial figure. Their corporate mentality may not align with the Town's. J. Voccio is in favor of bringing this to Art's attention, but not to hold up the approval of the current recommendation. Motion carried 3-0.

Portfolio Consolidation & Mapping

CURRENT PORTFOLIO		REVISED PORTFOLIO	
Name	Weight (%)	Morningstar Category	Weight Change
Parametric Commodity Strategy I	2.0	US Fund Commodities Broad Basket	
Invesco Corporate Bond R6	4.0	US Fund Corporate Bond	
Vanguard Emerging Mkts Stock Idx Adm	3.0	US Fund Diversified Emerging Mkts	
MFS Intl Diversification R6	3.0	US Fund Foreign Large Blend	
Schwab International Index	3.0	US Fund Foreign Large Blend	
American Funds Europacific Growth R3	3.0	US Fund Foreign Large Growth	
Dodge & Cox Global Bond I	2.0	US Fund Global Bond	
BlackRock High Yield Bond Inv A	1.0	US Fund High Yield Bond	1.0
PGIM-High-Yield-R6	3.0	US Fund High-Yield-Bond	-1.0
Fidelity® Inflation-Prot Bd Index	4.0	US Fund Inflation-Protected Bond	
Western-Asset-Core-Bond-FI	3.0	US Fund Intermediate-Core-Bond	-3.0
American Funds Bond Fund of Amer R6	4.0	US Fund Intermediate Core Bond	3.0
Fidelity® Total Bond Fund	3.0	US Fund Intermediate Core-Plus Bond	1.0
Metropolitan-West-Total-Return-Bd-I	2.0	US Fund Intermediate Core-Plus-Bond	-2.0
Dodge & Cox Income I	3.0	US Fund Intermediate Core-Plus Bond	1.0
Vanguard Dividend Growth Inv	4.0	US Fund Large Blend	
Vanguard Large Cap Index Admiral	12.0	US Fund Large Blend	
Vanguard Growth Index Admiral	4.0	US Fund Large Growth	4.0
F-Rewe-Price-Growth-Stock-Adv	4.0	US Fund Large Growth	-4.0
JPMorgan Equity Income R5	4.0	US Fund Large Value	
Schwab Fundamental US Large Company Idx	4.0	US Fund Large Value	
Vanguard Mid Cap Index Admiral	4.0	US Fund Mid-Cap Blend	
MFS Mid Cap Growth R6	2.0	US Fund Mid-Cap Growth	
JHancock Disciplined Value Mid Cap I	2.0	US Fund Mid-Cap Value	
Schwab Government Money	1.0	US Fund Money Market - Taxable	
Pioneer-Strategic-Income-Y	2.0	US Fund Multisector-Bond	-2.0
PIMCO Income I2	2.0	US Fund Multisector Bond	4.0
Neuberger-Berman Strategic Income R6	2.0	US Fund Multisector-Bond	-2.0
BlackRock Strategic Income Opps Instl	2.0	US Fund Nontraditional Bond	4.0
Western-Asset-Total-Return-Uneons-I	2.0	US Fund Nontraditional-Bond	-2.0
PIMCO-Mortgage-Opportunities-and-Belinst	2.0	US Fund Nontraditional-Bond	-2.0
Schwab Small Cap Index	4.0	US Fund Small Blend	
Russell Inv US Small Cap Equity S	2.0	US Fund Small Blend	

33 Funds

25 Funds



- 7. Discussion/Action on FY 2021-22 Transfers:** Balance transfers were presented and approved by the Board of Finance. J. Voccio made a motion to approve the presented balance transfers in the amount of \$213,666.26. L. Brodeur seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

J. Voccio made a motion to add the discussion of the capital projects report to the agenda. L. Brodeur seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

FY20:

TH site design – close

TH plan of C&D – A. Tanner will check with Jana if completed

PR snowblower attachment – close

GB mold remedy – close

CC boundary planting – This will remain open to ensure the plants take growth in the Spring

FY21:

Special Ed software – close

EBFD service truck – close

BMS & BES software – A. Tanner will discuss with Patti Buell & Gabe Bryant

FY22:

TS Scale – close

TH Repaint – close

PR Prince Hill fencing – close

School Boilers – ongoing

HD over rail attach & HD mover w/attach – A. Tanner will discuss with Tom Rukstela

HD dump truck – close

FD fire truck – ongoing

- 8. Discussion/Action on 2023 Meeting Dates:** L. Brodeur made a motion to approve the 2023 meeting dates on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30pm and the last Thursday of each month at 4:00pm at the Clifford B. Green Memorial Center. J. Voccio seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.
- 9. Discussion on Senior Center Lease:** A. Tanner would like to clean up the lease to clearly reflect what the Town is responsible for and what the Senior Center is responsible for. This will be presented at a later meeting.
- 10. Discussion on Generator Project:** The drawing from the engineers is being reviewed by John Berard.
- 11. Discussion on Salary Study:** This is still ongoing. Letters have been sent to surrounding Towns for comparison of salaries.

12. Discussion on CIF Grant: The application submitted last year was denied. The budget did not match the asking funds. A. Tanner states he is in favor of cleaning this up and resubmitting it. Other things that would qualify is the waterline. We can submit two applications. The due date is the beginning of January.

13. Discussion on Solar Sites: The Housing Authority was approached by the gentleman who purchased the buildings on Tiffany Street and Front Street and is interested in installing small solar farms on Town property, where he would lease the land. They are requesting a map of all property available to determine if any are feasible.

14. Single Family Dwellings: No discussion.

15. Calls For Service: No discussion.

16. Approve Bills: L. Brodeur made a motion to approve bill voucher #1246 dated 11/29/22 in the amount of \$406,858.93. J. Voccio seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. L. Brodeur made a motion to approve bill voucher #1245 dated 11/23/22 in the amount of \$861.98. J. Voccio seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0. L. Brodeur made a motion to approve bill voucher #1249 dated 12/1/2022 in the amount of \$191.76. J. Voccio seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

17. Other Business: There was a sewer back-up in front of Wal Mart that affected Hanks Restaurant. The manhole covers were paved over and had to be located. The issue was resolved. The manholes will be properly recovered.

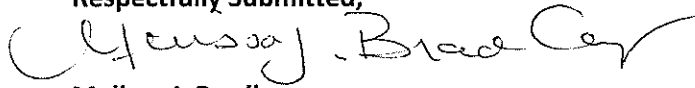
A. Tanner was approached about installing charging stations, one at the Town Hall, one at the school and one at the CBGMC. Eversource pays for 100% of the installation and 50% of the cost of the unit. There are three suppliers; The Loop – charges 10% of use, no use = no charge; Juice Bar – charges \$20 a port per month and the credit card percent fee; Charge It – charges \$28 a port per month and the credit card percent fee. Total cost would be \$15,000 with the Town portion only \$3,000. A. Tanner would like to speak with some people who currently use this to learn more about it.

18. Public Comment: Jenn Nemeth states they do not oppose an EBFD member having a seat at the Board of Fire Commissioners, but they agree with Mike Podzalne that they should not have a voting right while the lawsuit is going on.

19. Executive Session to discuss ongoing litigation involving the East Brooklyn Fire District, Town of Brooklyn, and The Ice Box: L. Brodeur made a motion to go into executive session to discuss the ongoing litigation involving the East Brooklyn Fire District, Town of Brooklyn and the Ice Box at 5:20pm. A. Tanner seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Executive session ended at 5:54pm.

20. Adjourn: L. Brodeur made a motion to adjourn the meeting. J. Voccio seconded the motion.
Meeting adjourned at 5:54pm.

Respectfully Submitted;

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa J. Bradley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Melissa J. Bradley
Recording Secretary