



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 Finance  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, November 16, 2022  
7:00pm via Zoom &  
Clifford B. Green Memorial Center**

**Present:** Sandy Brodeur, Ken Dykstra, David Lee, Aaron Soucy, Drew Dionne and  
Melissa Bradley; Recording Secretary  
**Absent:** Heather Allen

**Also Present:** Lou Brodeur, Shelley Cates, Austin Tanner, Jenn Nemeth,  
Art Meizner and Rodger Metzger from Hooker & Holcombe

1. **Determination of a quorum and Call to Order:** S. Brodeur called the meeting to order at  
7:00pm.

2. **Public Comment:** Jenn Nemeth reads a statement into the record:

Good evening,

My name is Jennifer Nemeth and most of you present this evening are already aware that my  
husband and I are being sued, along with others, including the Town of Brooklyn by the East  
Brooklyn Fire Department and the Brooklyn Fire District.

After years of waiting for action that was promised from public officials, we have now taken  
matters into our own hands and I have been regularly attending town meetings as a plea for help  
from the boards and committees but also by way of the meeting minutes going to the public.  
Yes, our plea is primarily about wrapping up this insane lawsuit but in addition I am raising issues  
we have found as a result of our lawsuit discovery.

Tonight I again want to raise the issue of mismanage funds on behalf of the EBFD and the  
Brooklyn Fire District. I submit supporting documents to that effect as well.

Issue # 1:

Facebook post from EBFD Fire Chief Brian Pepin in which is states in part:

This Fire Department was placed on this lawsuit illegally. Department laws were not followed,  
and an attorney was hired to represent the department by past leadership with no vote by the  
membership...”

RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
2022 NOV 23 AM 11:04  
RECORDED VOL. PAGE  
Katherine Bishop  
TOWN CLERK BROOKLYN, CT

It seems to me like this is an issue the Town should want to both rectify immediately and investigate who is financially responsible for the actions this illegal lawsuit has caused.

Issue # 2

I am attaching emails from town officials regarding questions we have raised regarding the “mortgage” at 15 South Main Street. As a result of the discovery process in defending ourselves in the lawsuit we have reason to believe there is a major issue regarding the mortgage for the District. We have been asking for the public records since February and have received no results. The most recent comment this week from the First Selectman is that the mortgage issue is “fuzzy”.

According to the Brooklyn Fire District’s Annual Meeting Minutes from May 2, 2022: “[n] the past year we have had some changes going on, we paid off the mortgage and we appointed a new Chief...”

**From the Town Clerk:** “Unless it’s under a different name, there is not record of a mortgage or release under Brooklyn Fire District recorded on the land records.”

**From the Finance Office:** “I can say, we do not have any documentation in our current records for either obtaining the mortgage or paying off the mortgage...”

I ask this commission to not accept “fuzzy” as an answer anymore. The public deserves to know how that mortgage was obtained, who received the mortgage interest all these years, and receive the documents regarding the “pay off”.

When I sent an FOIA request to the Brooklyn Fire District I was informed by their attorney “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 have been working to prove otherwise to their agency and I request this Board help me do the same for the sake of the town.

I thank you in advance for your time and attention to these matters. I ask that this statement be entered into the public records, including seven pages of attachments. I will send hard copies of all this to the recording secretary for her records.

Attachments filed with the minutes.

3. **Action on minutes of October 19, 2022, meeting:** A. Soucy made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/19/22 as presented. K. Dykstra seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.  
D. Dionne made a motion to move item 5a to next on the agenda. K. Dykstra seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

5a. Art Meizner and Rodger Metzger from Hooker and Holcombe discuss the Pension plan for the Town employees. The following changes were recommended:

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

D. Dionne made a motion to accept the changes to the pension portfolio recommended by Hooker and Holcombe and move them to the Board of Selectmen for approval. D. Lee seconded the motion. Revised portfolio on the next page. Motion carried 5-0.

# Portfolio Consolidation & Mapping

## CURRENT PORTFOLIO

Name	Weight (%)
Parametric Commodity Strategy I	2.0
Invesco Corporate Bond R6	4.0
Vanguard Emerging Mkts Stock Idx Adm	3.0
MFS Intl Diversification R6	3.0
Schwab International Index	3.0
American Funds Europacific Growth R3	3.0
Dodge & Cox Global Bond I	2.0
BlackRock High Yield Bond Inv A	1.0
<del>PGIM High Yield R6</del>	<del>1.0</del>
Fidelity® Inflation-Prot Bd Index	4.0
<del>Western Asset Core Bond Ff</del>	<del>3.0</del>
American Funds Bond Fund of Amer R6	4.0
Fidelity® Total Bond Fund	3.0
<del>Metropolitan West Total Return Bd I</del>	<del>2.0</del>
Dodge & Cox Income I	3.0
Vanguard Dividend Growth Inv	4.0
Vanguard Large Cap Index Admiral	12.0
Vanguard Growth Index Admiral	4.0
<del>T. Rowe Price Growth Stock Adv</del>	<del>4.0</del>
JPMorgan Equity Income R5	4.0
Schwab Fundamental US Large Company Idx	4.0
Vanguard Mid Cap Index Admiral	4.0
MFS Mid Cap Growth R6	2.0
JHancock Disciplined Value Mid Cap I	2.0
Schwab Government Money	1.0
<del>Pioneer Strategic Income Y</del>	<del>2.0</del>
PIMCO Income I2	2.0
<del>Neuberger-Berman Strategic Income R6</del>	<del>2.0</del>
BlackRock Strategic Income Opps Instl	2.0
<del>Western Asset Total Return Uncens I</del>	<del>2.0</del>
<del>PIMCO Mortgage Opportunities and Belmat</del>	<del>2.0</del>
Schwab Small Cap Index	4.0
Russell Inv US Small Cap Equity S	2.0

33 Funds

## REVISED PORTFOLIO

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

25 Funds



#### 4. Old Business

- a. **Action on Audit recommendation to bring WPCA in-house?:** A meeting with Mr. Kiley is scheduled for next Tuesday.
- b. **Monthly Capital report status?:** S. Cates gave the board a report of all capital projects from FY 20 to current. The report shows what is ongoing and what is completed. The BOS will review the report and report back.
- c. **Status of request for statements showing Recreation fund activity for donations/scholarships:** S. Cates gives the board an expenditure and revenue report of the activity in the accounts.
- d. **Problems with entering, approving, and finalizing purchase orders in a time basis – status:** This is a work in progress. The departments are working hard to follow the procedures.
- e. **Update of ARPA projects – Ken/Dave:** A Town forum is scheduled for Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup>. The requests will be discussed and the process on how the committee reached a decision to fund them or deny them.
- f. **Other Old Business:** D. Lee inquires on a report to show what money is collected for the fire district and what is disbursed. S. Cates will provide this for the next meeting.

#### 5. New Business

- a. **Arthur Meizner of Hooker and Halcomb will present our third quarter review of the Retirement Plan for Employees of the Town of Brooklyn.** Discussion held earlier in the meeting.
- b. **Confusion about financial reports being requested by Board of Finance or Fire Commissioners:** S. Brodeur states the Board of Selectmen is presented with budget requests and supporting documents. S. Brodeur suggests the Board of Finance participate in those meetings. D. Lee states the intent was to receive a report from the requesting entity from the close of the prior year to confirm how the money was spent. The Board of Selectmen agreed to ask for this with the upcoming budget requests. D. Dionne suggests looking at last year requests so the board can get an idea of what is presented.
- c. **Status of 21-22 audit:** The auditors are scheduled for the first week of December. The board was provided with a transfer request for FY 2021-22. The report shows underfunded accounts and overfunded accounts. At year end, these must balance. D. Dionne made a motion to transfer \$213,666.26 from the surplus accounts listed to the shortfall accounts listed. A. Soucy seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

- d. **Review of 22-23 financials:** No discussion
  - e. **Discuss/Set 2023 meeting dates:** Extra meetings will be needed in March, April and May. M. Bradley will look for available dates and report for next meeting.
  - f. **Other new business:** An invoice was received for the ongoing salary survey for \$850, total cost of \$1,700. A. Tanner requests this be funded from the funds reserved for a possible wage increase. D. Dionne made a motion to transfer funds from contingency in the amount of \$1700 to pay for the salary survey. A. Soucy seconded the motion. The invoice for \$850 will be paid now. Motion carried 5-0.
- 6. Selectmen's Report:** The school is returning \$44,654.62.  
The generator for the Senior Center is moving forward. The engineers' drawings were received and sent to J. Berard for review.  
The new scale is installed at the transfer station and working well.  
The community investment grant submitted for Tatnic road does not meet the specifications of the grant. We have the option of resubmitting the sidewalk grant or submitting something else. A. Tanner is in favor of the sidewalks. It is due January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023.  
There is a town meeting scheduled for Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup> @ 7pm.
- 7. Liaison Reports:** Housing Authority – Meet today. The group that bought the buildings on Tiffany and Front Street have been renovating them and gave the committee an update. The first-floor units will be ready for occupancy in the next few weeks. They are interested in putting in some small solar panels if there is some available land to lease from the Town.  
Fire Commissioners – The board is working on an ordinance for tax abatements. It will be presented to the Board of Selectmen next month. A proposal from the Fire Chiefs requesting paid staff was submitted and being discussed.  
Recreation – The new director has started and is doing well. The toy drive is scheduled in December. Feargrounds grossed around \$24,000. They are planning to fix up South Street Park with ARPA funds, if approved.  
Board of Education – The new boilers are in; they are waiting on one control piece that is on backorder. The phone systems are not in yet, they are waiting on new servers. The school is having a difficult time finding substitute teachers because their rate is low. They are looking at increasing the rate. S. Cates reports they did raise them at the last meeting.
- 8. Public comment:** None
- 9. Adjournment:** D. Dionne made a motion to adjourn the meeting. A. Soucy seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully Submitted;

  
Melissa J. Bradley, Recording Secretary