

**BROOKLYN, CT**

<b>LOCATION:</b>	Geographical Center of Windham County
<b>AREA:</b>	29 Square Miles
<b>MILES OF ROAD:</b>	60
<b>INCORPORATED:</b>	1786
<b>GOVERNMENT:</b>	Town Meeting Board of Selectmen Board of Finance
<b>POPULATION:</b>	8,451

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# HISTORY OF BROOKLYN

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Brooklyn was once part of the lands claimed by the Mohegan Chief, Uncas. The land, deeded in 1680 to Captain James Fitch, was sold to the first local settlers in 1703. It was settled as part of the Town of Canterbury and Pomfret with the Northeastern third having separate existence as the manorial estate of Mortlake.

Mortlake had been purchased in 1686 as a refuge for Puritans who were forced out of England with the Stuart restoration. It was not part of any town and hence neither collected taxes nor provided services to the tenants residing within its bounds.

The civil disobedience of the inhabitants of Mortlake, along with the difficulty of other residents in attending church or town meeting in Canterbury or Pomfret, led to several attempts to settle a minister, form a church, and set up a separate society. Petitions were sent to General Assembly and by 1734, permission was granted to form a society and build a church. Mortlake was finally included in the new society in 1752 and the community grew and prospered.

By 1770, the Meeting House needed replacement and the large white church, still standing on the green, was built. One of the owners of Mortlake, Godfrey Malbone, so opposed this construction that he undertook to build and support the first Episcopal Church in the area as an alternative to paying a substantial portion of the cost of the new Meeting House.

Brooklyn was a center of revolutionary activity both before and during the War of Independence. Israel Putnam, married to the widow of the first local minister, owner of the Gen. Wolfe Tavern, and veteran of the French and Indian War, who had served in Roger's Rangers and under both General Wolfe and Lord Amherst, was a key figure in the early stage of the

# HISTORY OF BROOKLYN

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revolution. Putnam was in overall command at the battle of Bunker Hill and was unanimously chosen as the first Major General in the Continental Army.

The Town of Brooklyn was incorporated in 1786 and in 1819 became the county seat. The large homes, the jail, the courthouse, now used as the town hall, all reflect this period of prominence which continued through part of the nineteenth century. The Agricultural Association was formed about 1820 and continues to attract visitors with the annual fair.

Eastern Connecticut was very much involved in the Civil War and the Town of Brooklyn was no exception. A glance at the local monument will show that local men served in most of the famous battles. Local mills provided clothing and the records of churches and organizations list substantial contributions in manpower. Although Brooklyn has been primarily an agricultural community, the many streams provided power for a number of small mills. Eventually areas like West Wauregan and East Brooklyn were built around substantial textile mills. For a time, the center of Brooklyn supported a bank (now the library) and a newspaper, as well as several stores.

In more recent times, Brooklyn has developed into two distinct areas. The central and western parts have continued along a residential and rural path, whereas the eastern sector has become predominantly commercial.

The rural colonial beauty of Brooklyn Center has been preserved in spite of the fact that the Town is one of the fastest growing communities in Windham County. Many of the old churches and homes have been restored. The old Court House has been internally renovated to provide town office facilities, but the colonial exterior was left unchanged.

# HISTORY OF BROOKLYN

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Planning and Zoning were adapted early to preserve and guide the character and development of the Town. The result has been an attractive residential center in rural surroundings at a density level, which can be supported by the environment. Farming had ceased to be a major factor in the community. A school and recreation complex are centrally located. The former town garage is well screened by trees so as not to disturb the residential surrounding and additional recreational facilities are provided on adjacent property.

Brooklyn's Economic Development Commission continues to work on several projects to promote growth in key areas of the Town's economic front. Brooklyn has joined with Eastern Connecticut Enterprise Corridor (ECEC). This is a competitive incentive program to benefit business that expand or relocate into the industrial development areas of the participating Town's along our Interstate 395 corridor.

The northeast Connecticut Visitors District has been relocated to the Citizen's Bank building in the center of Brooklyn. This location will be a key launching place for travel, writers, and tourists to start their exploration of our quiet corner.

Several initiatives are being investigated to enhance the South Main Street business district in East Brooklyn. Our 'welcome' signs at the Brooklyn Center roads have received much praise. Economic Development Commission members individually are looking at specific programs to enhance our town's presence and friendly atmosphere. The amount of time that the Town receives from the variety of commission and board volunteer members enforces our belief that our citizens 'feel good about Brooklyn.'

Brooklyn has purchased 32 acres of river frontage along the Quinebaug River. Together with two lots already owned by the

# HISTORY OF BROOKLYN

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Town and the transfer of a lot from the CT DOT, we now own 3,550 feet of river frontage. Working with landscape design, UCONN will generate a plan that will encompass activities and passive recreation for this area.

Located in the center of Windham County, proud of its heritage and its preservation but progressive in its outlook, Brooklyn intends to continue to be a vital element in Eastern Connecticut.

# TOWN OFFICIALS

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## **Board of Selectmen**

Richard Ives – First Selectman  
Austin Tanner, Lucien Brodeur

## **Selectman’s Office**

Richard Ives – First Selectman  
Melissa Bradley – Administrative Assistant

## **Finance Department**

Stephanie Levin – Finance Director  
Shelly Cates – Finance Assistant

## **Building Office**

John Berard – Building Official  
Audrey Cross-Lussier – Building/Planning Assistant

## **Land Use/Planning & Zoning Office**

Jana Butts Roberson – Land Use Administrator  
Margaret Washburn – Zoning/Blight Enforcement Officer

## **Town Clerk’s Office**

Katherine Bisson – Town Clerk  
Kelsey McConnell – Assistant Town Clerk

## **Revenue Collector’s Office**

Jocelyne Ruffo – Revenue Collector  
April Lamothe – Assistant Revenue Collector

## **Assessor’s Office**

Stephanie Kosoff – Assessor  
Maryann Szela – Assistant Assessor

## **Recreation Office**

Matthew ‘Bucky’ Lohbusch – Director  
JoAnn Lohbusch – Assistant



# TOWN OFFICIALS

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## **Board of Finance**

Jeffery Otto – Chairperson

## **Board of Education**

Mae Lyons – Chairperson

## **Board of Assessment Appeals**

Buddy Conroy – Chairperson

## **Judge of Probate**

Leah Schad

## **Town Counsel**

Suisman Shapiro

## **Animal Control Officer**

Jennifer Hutchins, Director - NECCOG

## **Fire Marshal**

Doug Kramer

## **Tree Warden**

Jeff Page

## **Road Foreman**

Thomas Rukstela

## **Agent for Elderly**

Tamsen Harris

## **Water Pollution Control Authority**

Robert Kiley, Jr. – Chairperson

## **Planning & Zoning Commission**

Michelle Sigfridson – Chairperson

# TOWN OFFICIALS

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## **Zoning Board of Appeals**

Bruce Parsons – Chairperson

## **Board of Fire Commissioners**

Richard Ives – Chairperson

## **Parks & Recreation Commission**

Michael Gaudreau – Chairperson

## **Inland Wetland Commission**

Jeff Arends – Chairperson

## **Justices of the Peace**

Valerie Bruzzi-Krsulic, Cara Coraccio-Bellantone, Marie  
Dusseault, Charlene Hill, Richard Ives, Henry Jeffs, Jessica  
A. Maclean, Leona Mainville, James Paquin,  
Lisa Roberts-Sangillo, Sherri Vogt

## **Town Office Hours**

Town Hall & Clifford B. Green Memorial Center Offices

Monday – Wednesday 8:00am-5:00pm  
Thursday 8:00am-6:00pm  
Friday CLOSED

## **Town Highway Department**

Monday – Thursday 7:00am-4:00pm  
Friday 7:00am-11:00am

[www.brooklynct.org](http://www.brooklynct.org)

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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## First Selectman's Report

The Town receives intergovernmental revenues from the State of Connecticut. Connecticut's economy moves in the same general cycle as the national economy, which from time to time will affect the amount of governmental revenues the Town will receive.

The Town's general fund unreserved balance is \$1,532,475 at year end June 30, 2021.

The Town's revenue is comprised of 52% property taxes, 44% grants and contributions, 3% charged services, and less than 1% investments. The Town's expenditure is comprised of 77% education, 3% general government, 6% public works, and 14% remainder of government expenses.

Major capital asset events during the current fiscal year are solar panels on the Elementary and Middle School buildings, a new service truck, and various road improvements.

Long term debt outstanding is \$12,231,865.

Housing stats for single family dwellings decreased from - eighteen fiscal year end June 30, 2020 to sixteen fiscal year end June 30, 2021. Our Town is a choice place for professionals to relocate to while maintaining employment in Providence, Boston, Worcester, and surrounding cities.

The strength of town government is measured by its staff, citizen volunteers and customer satisfaction. Our offices are staffed with professionals who are customer friendly and answer questions. We can all make Brooklyn a Town we are all proud to call home.

Austin Tanner, First Selectman

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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## **Veterans**

Brooklyn was unable to hold the annual Memorial Day Parade due to the spread of the Corona Virus. A ceremony was held on Monday, May 31, 2021 at the Monuments across from Mortlake Fire Department. Students Shelbi Bellows and Sydney Rosen read the Gettysburg Address and Cover them over with flowers, AMVETS Post 47 assisted along with the Colorguard and Firing Squad. Wreaths were laid by local Scouts on the monuments and prayer was given. We hope to hold our annual parade next year!

AMVETS Post 47 participated in our Town's annual Veterans Day Memorial Ceremony as well as the Color Guard. The remembrance ceremony was held on Veterans Day, November 11, 2021 at the monuments for the II World War, Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

The Town appreciates the support of the AMVETS and those who dedicated their time to these ceremonies and to the help received from the Fire Departments and our Resident Troopers.

## **Building Official**

During the fiscal year of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, four hundred sixty-three (463) building permits were issued valued at \$31,362,854.56. One permit was renewed and sixteen were new homes. Total value to the Town was \$219,854.56 in permit fees. There were also sixteen apartment inspections done with receipts equaling \$240. The office hours of the Building Official, John A. Berard, are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Mondays and 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday evenings.

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## Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's office records and maintains all land record transactions for all property owners in the Town of Brooklyn. Our office recorded approximately 1,794 land records in the 2020-2021 fiscal year and maintained over 689 volumes of land records. The office has an electronic search system available to the public for researching land transactions. In addition, all land records are available on our website at [www.brooklynct.org](http://www.brooklynct.org) to search online. Survey and subdivision maps are also filed in the office and are now available electronically for printing. Eighty-nine maps were recorded in 2020-2021 and over 2,800 maps are on file. A total of \$384,926 in fees were collected with 33% of the total submitted to the State of Connecticut.

In addition, the Town Clerk is the Registrar of Vital Statistics on behalf of the State Department of Public Health. In 2020-2021, 44 births, 56 marriages and 91 deaths were recorded, and authenticated copies were sent to the State. Any resident requiring a certified copy of a vital record can request a copy for \$20 from the office.

Dog licenses are also available from the Town Clerk. Yearly registration is due during the month of June and all dogs must be registered when they become six (6) months old. All dogs must be vaccinated against rabies and the certificate showing the expiration date must be presented to the Town Clerk when licensing. Fees are as follows: \$19.00 per dog or \$8.00 per dog that is spayed or neutered.

The State of Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection provides the Town Clerk's office with a licensing system for obtaining hunting and fishing licenses. Residents also have the option to purchase their licenses online at [www.ctwildlifelicense.com](http://www.ctwildlifelicense.com).

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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Notary application forms to become a Notary Public are available in the office. A Notary Public is required by State Statute to record his/her commission in their Town of residence with the Town Clerk. Notary Public services are available for a fee of \$5.00.

The office provides voter applications throughout the year and accepts new voter registration on behalf of the Registrar of Voters. This office also processes absentee ballot requests and is responsible for the preparation of election material for all elections and primaries.

Katherine Bisson, CCTC

## **Treasurer**

As the Town Treasurer, the Treasurer promotes transparency, efficiency, and accountability to the Brooklyn residents and taxpayers.

The Treasurer is part of the Finance Department. This department's duties are budget, banking, revenue collection, purchasing, payroll, and financial reporting. Also, enforcing accounting oversight, the Town must abide by generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) set forth by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The Finance department policies help the town do this.

Rushie Bean  
Treasurer

## **Revenue Collector**

The Revenue Collector's Office bills, collects, processes, and safeguards the Town's tax receipts, Water Pollution Control fees and Fire District taxes. The office maintains balanced records of all accounts.

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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The Town of Brooklyn collects real estate and personal property taxes quarterly and are due July 1<sup>st</sup>, October 1<sup>st</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup>, and April 1<sup>st</sup>. East Brooklyn Fire District taxes are due once a year on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Motor vehicle taxes are due July 1<sup>st</sup>. Sewer usage taxes are due twice a year July 1<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>. Bills are mailed each year in July. Motor Vehicle Supplemental taxes are due January 1<sup>st</sup>. If for any reason a resident does not receive a tax bill for property that they own, they should contact the revenue office as soon as possible. Failure to receive a bill does not excuse a taxpayer from paying late charges. Sewer usage fees are billed at the request of the WPCA upon passage of their annual budget.

Current collections this year on the October 1, 2019 Grand list totaled \$17,161,303.00 Collections resulted as follows:

Type of Tax Bill	Amount Collected	Percent Collected
Real Estate	\$13,070,640	99.00%
Personal Property	\$1,594,742	99.00%
Motor Vehicle	\$1,687,195	97.00%
Motor Vehicle Supplemental	\$260,156	91.00%
Sewer Usage	\$339,329	96.00%
CML Sewer	\$149,597	85.00%
East Brooklyn Fire District	\$59,644	99.00%

## **How Your Tax Bill is Computed**

**Grand Levy:** The total amount of money that must be raised by the property tax to meet Town expenses during the ensuing year.

**Grand List:** An official listing of the assessed value of all taxable property in Town. Compiled each October 1<sup>st</sup> by the Assessor.

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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**Tax Rate:** Grand Levy divided by the grand list; usually expressed in terms of ‘mills’.

**Mill:** One thousandth of a dollar (.001)

The taxpayer’s bill is determined by multiplying the net assessed value of taxable property by the tax rate. Example: If net value is \$10,000 and the tax rate is 28.92 mills, then the taxpayer’s bill is \$289.20.

If you have any questions regarding your taxes, please do not hesitate to call the office at 860-779-3411, option 5.

Jocelyne Ruffo – Revenue Collector, CCMC

April Lamothe – Assistant Revenue Collector, CCMC

## Assessor

October 1, 2019 Taxable Grand List

Real Estate	\$ 454,647,323
Personal Property	\$ 55,450,063
Motor Vehicles	<u>\$ 62,154,240</u>
Total	\$ 572,251,626

The total grand list represented an overall increase of 2.9% from the October 1, 2018 Grand List.

## Tax Relief Programs/Exemptions Filing Date

- Ambulance/Handicapped Vehicle Exemption – October 1st
- Elderly and/or Totally Disabled Homeowners Program\* February 1<sup>st</sup> to May 15<sup>th</sup>
- Elderly and/or Totally Disabled Renters Program\* April 1<sup>st</sup> to October 1st
- Veterans Exemption (DD214) Before October 1<sup>st</sup>
- Additional Veterans\* February 1<sup>st</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>
- Farm Building Exemption – November 1<sup>st</sup>



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- Farm Machinery & Equipment – November 1<sup>st</sup>
- Manufacturing Machinery & Equipment – November 1<sup>st</sup>
- New Commercial Trucks – November 1<sup>st</sup>
- Totally Disabled Exemption – January 31<sup>st</sup>

\*Income based

Property field cards are available online at [www.vgsi.com](http://www.vgsi.com)  
Assessor maps are available online at [www.neccog.org](http://www.neccog.org)  
Both sites can be accessed from the assessor's webpage at [www.brooklynct.org](http://www.brooklynct.org)

If you have any questions regarding the Grand List or any of the tax relief programs, please call the Assessor's Office at (860) 779-3411 Option #6 or visit the assessor's webpage at [www.brooklynct.org](http://www.brooklynct.org)

Stephanie Kosoff, CCMA I  
Assessor

## **Board of Assessment Appeals**

The Board of Assessment Appeals members (3) are elected positions for a two-year term. The Board is a review board to hear appeals of assessment for real estate, personal property, and motor vehicles.

The Board meets twice a year in the months of September and March.

We would like to remind taxpayers of the State Statute, Section Sec. 12-110, Sessions of board of assessment appeals shall meet at least once in the month of September, annually, provided any meeting in the month of September shall be for the sole purpose of hearing appeals related to the assessment of motor vehicles and shall meet in the month of March to

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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hear appeals related to the assessment of property

A legal notice is filed for the September hearing.

A petition needs to be filed by February 20 for the March hearing.

The petition can be accessed on the Assessor's page of the Town's web site, [www.brooklynct.org](http://www.brooklynct.org), or by contacting the Assessor's office.

The Board wishes to extend our thanks for everyone's cooperation and understanding of our decisions during this past year.

Buddy Conroy, Chairperson  
Joanne Eiler, Board Member  
Justin Phaiah, Board Member

## **Registrars of Voters**

### **Voter Registration**

There are presently 1,295 registered Democrats, 1,340 registered Republicans, 2,457 Unaffiliated, and 122 Other registered voters for a total of 5,204 at the time of this submission.

### **Annual Canvass and Voting History**

The annual canvass of voters is presently being conducted in compliance with Connecticut General Statutes. This is a mandated task to update the Town's voter registry to help ensure a current and accurate voter list. The Secretary of State provides the Town with a bi-annual ERIC (Electronic Registration Information Center) report that identifies those voters who have not voted in over 4 years, changed their

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address locally, or moved out of state without notifying the Registrars. The Town also uses the National Change of Address System that is available from the U.S. Postal Service. This software enables Registrars to also track voters who may have moved out of town or the state to allow removal from our voter records.

## **Mandated Voter Enrollment Sessions**

There were State mandated (Sec. 9-17) enrollment sessions at Woodstock Academy E.O. Smith, and Killingly High School in September 2021, delayed due to Covid 19. Town Registrars also conducted a mandated day-long enrollment session prior to the November 2021 Municipal election. The process of “EDR” or Election Day Registration also occurred during the November election.

## **Required Training**

There were no ROVAC (Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut) conferences due to COVID – 19 restrictions. Conferences will be resumed when restrictions are lifted. State Law (Sec 9-192b) requires Registrars to obtain at least 10 hours of instruction for elections training processes per year. Registrars also maintain active memberships in both the State ROVAC Association and the Windham County ROVAC Association.

## **Election Results:**

### **November 2, 2021 Municipal Election**

In the race for First Selectman, voters chose Republican Austin Tanner over Democrat Richard Ives in this election. Austin Tanner received 978 votes and Richard Ives received 726. In the contest for Board of Selectmen, Republican Lou Brodeur

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received 968 votes and Democrat Joe Voccio received 727 votes. Running unopposed, Democrat Katherine Ives received 1028 votes in the Town Clerk race. The Board of Finance race resulted as follows: Republicans R. David Lee received 944 votes; Aaron Soucy received 874 votes and Democrats Kim Conroy received 785 votes; Ken Dykstra received 712 votes. The Board of Education race resulted as follows: Republicans Kayla Burgess received 988 votes; Justin Phaiah received 913 votes and Democrats Melissa Perkins-Banas received 865 votes; Ailla Wasstrom-Evans received 801 votes; Nathan Richards received 691 votes. For the Board of Education race to fill two-year vacancies, Republican Isaias Sostre received 876 votes and Democrat Samuel Bonfante received 763 votes. The race for Board of Assessment Appeals resulted as follows: Republicans Joanne Eiler received 907 votes; Justin Phaiah received 896 votes and Democrats Susan Wasstrom received 773 votes; Natalie Dionne received 716 votes. There were 5,330 registered voters overall with an 32.33% turnout for this election. 1,644 voters voted in person while 79 voters voted by absentee ballot.

## **Recreation Commission**

Parks & Recreation Commission Members:

Michael Gaudreau, Chairperson	Cliff Soucy
Harry Adams	Chris Toney
Stephen Danna	David Wilterdink
Kim Conroy, liaison	
Melissa Perkins Banas, liaison	Secretary: Christine Boyle

The fiscal year 2020-21 saw the return of some programming and events in the latter part of the year. School resumed in

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person in the fall of 2020 and with this our Before/After School Recreation Programs pivoted back to normal. The Before School Program (for grades K-6<sup>th</sup>) and After School Program (for grades K-6<sup>th</sup>) were once again available to our residents. Both programs are near or at capacity. We also offered our Full Day Recreation Program to program participants on school staff development days. Summer Day Camp and TEEN Camp was cancelled for the summer of 2020 due to COVID outbreak. After much planning and then much discussion, the trips and activities planned were cancelled and the season ended before it began. It was the correct response to the health climate at the time. We looked forward to planning a new season in the spring of 2021, for that summer, and the return of our camp staff and campers!

We also did not have our annual favorite, Summer Slam, during the summer of 2020, as well as many of our other adult and youth programming, during parts of 2020. Spooky Nights, our Halloween themed event was also cancelled, as we were unable to use the Fairgrounds and could not safely host the crowd of people this event brings in. We did get creative, keeping busy with virtual offerings and safe activities and events. We were excited to be able to work with the QV Senior Center on two events. In the winter of 2020, we helped with their drive up holiday event for their members. With carols playing loudly and a tent set up in front of our entrance, we helped spread good cheer as they handed out goodie bags and Santa greeted the cars. It was a wonderful event, and a great way for members to see familiar faces after a long absence.

We also co-hosted a QV Senior Center Spring Fling event at our Maury Bowen Complex at Riverside Park in the spring of 2021. This event was a success for all involved and we look

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forward to co-hosting again in 2022. We were also able to offer our Fall Concert series in the fall of 2020, following all health guidelines at the time.

The 2020 holiday season programs still included our annual events such as Letters to Santa, Toys for Giving Toy Drive, and our Holiday Coloring Contest which is presented in partnership with the Brooklyn Post Office. Our Toy Drive was again a success thanks to the generosity of our local businesses and residents. We changed the distribution to keep both our staff and participants safe but were still able to help over 130 Brooklyn children. Many children entered our Coloring Contest with entries displayed at the Brooklyn Post Office. We thank the Post Office and staff for their yearly assistance with this program. We once again offered our Holiday Lighting Contest and added a Business Category to the contest. Our 2021 spring event was re-designed as a Drive-up Bunny Event instead of the traditional breakfast and egg hunt. We set up at the school parking lot, with our staff and volunteers handing out goodie bags to the many, many Brooklyn families who drove through, along with our Spring Bunny greeting all the children!

We were unable to offer trips in the fall/winter of 2020 or the spring/summer of 2021. We were hard at work planning their return for the fall of 2021.

All the department's trips, programs and events are listed in our semi-annual brochures, mailed to all Brooklyn households in August and January. Information can also be accessed on the town website. You can also stay up to date with our department's programs and events by following us on Facebook at Town of Brooklyn Parks & Recreation. Flyer updates are handed out in the Brooklyn Schools to all students. Many registration forms are also available online. The Parks & Recreation Department maintains our town parks

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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and many non-recreational areas in town also including monuments, school fields, and snow removal on Route 6 sidewalks, town building entryways and parking lots. The Michael Dragon Complex at Prince Hill Park continues to be a popular facility used by leagues and individuals throughout the year. This park includes two playscapes and a swing set. It also includes picnic tables, walking track, trails, and playing fields. Many take advantage of the park's lighted basketball courts. The softball field is utilized by the local little league teams and is also used as a "home" field for the Brooklyn school's softball team. The Brooklyn School Cross Country Team again enjoyed a season of competing and practicing on the department's well-maintained trails. The playing fields are aerated and seeded each season, to keep them at optimal condition. South Street Park offers a playscape, picnic tables and basketball courts, and is located at the corner of South Street and South Main Street. The Parks & Recreation Departments Parks Maintenance employee, along with a seasonal part time employee, maintains these parks, many walking trails, and the other areas mentioned earlier. The Riverside Park is used for Little League play and by anyone interested in using the volleyball court or passive walking trails. This is also the location of our Concerts at Riverside series each September. Davis Park's 18-hole Disc Golf Course is available almost year-round and has become a popular sport for our area.

The Recreation Department's & Commission's goal is to continue to maintain and improve the current facilities and programs to meet the needs of our residents. We work to provide the quality of life that our residents deserve while keeping in mind the economic conditions impacting our community. We continue to work in cooperation with our town leaders, our school officials and various town departments, boards, and commissions, to achieve the

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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commission and department's goals. Our town is fortunate to have many residents who share the same vision for our community and continue to assist and support our efforts. We look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead as we continue to serve our residents.

Matthew "Bucky" Lohbusch,  
Parks & Recreation Director

## **Conservation Commission**

The Brooklyn Conservation Commission proudly presents our annual report for the year 2021.

The Conservation Commission is a seven-member volunteer board appointed by the Board of Selectman whose purpose is to protect and conserve the plants, animals and natural resources in the Town. In 2021, the Commission had five members – Diane Wimmer, Jeannine Noel, Dana Heilemann, Carolyn Teed-Ives and Richard Calarco. Diane Wimmer continued in her position as Chair and handled Treasurer duties as well. Sara Deshaies took over as Recording Secretary from April Lamothe in August 2021. The Commission continued to function within a reduced budget.

The Commission continues to maintain a Facebook page. It is updated regularly with events, photos, conservation topics and local information. The Commission also updates its page on the town's website. <https://www.brooklynct.org/conservation-commission>



# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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## **Activities\Projects\Trails**

Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, the Commission is still functioning at a limited capacity. Activities and projects are on hold. Meetings are being held virtually with a transition to in-person meetings with social distancing and masks being worn per the CDC guidelines.

The trails and disc golf course continue to be maintained by the Commission and the town. Trail maps can be found on the Conservation Commission's page on the Town's website under "Links" and "Brooklyn Trails".

A table was set up at the 2021 Brooklyn Fair providing residents with trail maps, informational pamphlets on "Save the Water" and natural resources and invasive plant brochures from UCONN.

## **Development Reviews**

As a non-regulatory land use commission, the Brooklyn Conservation Commission conducts development site plan reviews and forwards recommendations to the other regulatory land use commissions, Inland Wetlands and Planning and Zoning. These recommendations are based on review of our natural resource inventory mapping and the potential for impacts from site plan proposals. For subdivisions of three or more parcels, Subdivision Regulations stipulate Open Space donations (quit claim or conservation easement) either to the Town of Brooklyn or other not-for-profit land preservation trust or a fee in-lieu of the property donation.

In February 2021, the Brooklyn Conservation Commission reviewed a reduction of an open space dedication on one property and an addition to existing open space on another property. The Commission submitted recommendations. In

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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June 2021, the Commission reviewed three subdivision plans and recommended fee-in-lieu and open space set asides as well as an archaeology review by the State Archeologist. In October 2021, the Commission recommended a trail easement linking the Creamery Brook trail with the Carol Randall trail.

## **Training**

Richard Calarco and Diane Wimmer virtually attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> biennial UCONN Native Plants and Pollinators conference on Friday, November 5, 2021, from 9 am – 1:45 pm. They learned how native plants support pollinator health throughout the year. Presentations featured current science-based research and information on supporting pollinators in managed landscapes. This program was designed for garden club members, growers and commissions, municipalities, schools, and homeowners.

Brooklyn Conservation Commission members did not attend any other training events due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. The Commission looks forward to attending future local conservation and land use educational training events, in addition to free webinars at <http://clear.uconn.edu/> and <https://sustainablect.org/trainings-events/>. These training events, workshops and webinars are essential in developing the skills necessary to protect open space and the environment for future Brooklyn residents. The Commission continues to be a member of CACIWC and to receive copies of The Habitat newsletter quarterly. (CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions). <http://www.caciwc.org>

Jeannine Noel  
Brooklyn Conservation Commission

# SERVICES

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## **Brooklyn Library Association**

The first independent Brooklyn Library Association was founded in 1775. The present Association was organized in 1893. In 1913, a group of citizens purchased the building presently housing the library and donated it to the Association. The library continues to be governed by an independent association and its executive board. The day-to-day operation is the responsibility of Library Director, Elizabeth Swagger.

The library is open to the public on Monday, Friday, and Saturday 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM and Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 12:00 PM to 5:30 PM. Any Brooklyn resident may obtain a first library card and renew that card free of charge. The contact email for the library is [info@brooklyntownlibrary.org](mailto:info@brooklyntownlibrary.org).

The library offers popular reading from the bestseller list, an extensive mystery collection, a growing juvenile collection, an enlarged children's area, and access to online services. Free WiFi, two computers, and chrome books are available. Wireless printing is now available with a laser printer, as well as a meeting table and study room.

The library also offers a wide variety of online services for Brooklyn Library card holders on its website, <http://www.brooklyntownlibrary.org>. Using Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome, you may access Consumer Reports Online, Overdrive (ebooks and eaudiobooks), Book Flix, True Flix, Freedom Flix, and Science Flix. The Brooklyn Library is a member of the Connecticut Library database findIT CT, research IT CT, and requestIT CT. Find IT CT and researchIT CT enable patrons to explore the holdings of other libraries throughout the state. With the assistance of a staff member, patrons may request library materials from the state catalog.

## SERVICES

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Discounted and free passes to the following local museums are available at the library:

Florence Griswold Museum

CT State Parks Centers and Historic Buildings Day Pass covering entrance fees to Dinosaur Park, Gillette Castle State Park, and Fort Trumbull State Park

The library is very active in promoting reading for children of all ages. Each year the library provides a Reading Room at the Brooklyn Summer Recreation Camp. Library Staff provides reading activities, books and games for all who attend summer recreation. The library offers a summer reading program and activities for children who do not attend the summer recreation camp. The library has joined with the Canterbury and Scotland libraries for a monthly book discussion that meets regularly at one of these libraries. Book titles, location, and date of upcoming discussions are posted on the library website.

The Friends of the Brooklyn Library continue to contribute to the library's program. They also offer a selection of historic Brooklyn buildings by Cat's Meow. Pieces include Friendship Valley, the Israel Putnam Statue, the Town Pump, the Unitarian Church, Old Trinity, the Brooklyn Library, Mortlake Firehouse, and the Copper Beech Tree. Also available are Cat's Meow Christmas Ornaments of the library and Mortlake Firehouse. These may be purchased at the library. Proceeds from Friends' projects support library programs such as museum passes.

Wendy E. Harrington, President  
Brooklyn Town Library Association

# SERVICES

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## **Animal Services**

The Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) provides a range of services to its sixteen member towns, including:

- Property Revaluation Program
- Regional Engineering Program
- Town Technical Assistance Program
- Intergovernmental Relations Program
- Human Services Coordination Program
- Regional Elections Monitor Program
- Regional Human Services/Veteran's Advisor
- Crumbling Foundations
- GIS Services Program
- Paramedic Intercept Program
- Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Study - Phase III
- Region IV Emergency Planning
- Natural Hazard Mitigation Program
- Animal Services Program
- Trap, Neuter, Release and Maintain Program
- Regional Land Use Referrals
- Land Use Technical/Policy Assistance
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Eastern Connecticut Enterprise Corridor Administration
- Transit District Administration
- Rural Major and Minor Collector Program and Urban Program for road project development and construction
- Route 169 Byway Administration
- Veteran's Interstate Services Transportation
- COVID-19 Response and Recovery

Notably, during the COVID-19 Pandemic NECCOG assisted the state by developing and maintaining more than thirty Municipal Best Practices Guides to assist towns during the pandemic.

## SERVICES

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NECCOG's Executive Director assisted the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations in the study and publication of two reports "Remote Meetings" ([https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/ACIR/Misc\\_Reports/2022/ACIR\\_Remote\\_Meetings\\_Report\\_2022.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/ACIR/Misc_Reports/2022/ACIR_Remote_Meetings_Report_2022.pdf)) and "Home Rule and Local Control" ([https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/ACIR/Misc\\_Reports/2022/ACIR\\_Home\\_Rule\\_and\\_Local\\_Control\\_in\\_CT.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/ACIR/Misc_Reports/2022/ACIR_Home_Rule_and_Local_Control_in_CT.pdf)). The Director additionally authored a special report (note: not a NECCOG project: Connecticut Property Taxes: Opportunity for Change" (<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bdf8da94eddec7efc3b5071/t/61b1a3cb9ca84b26dabedf4d/1639031757238/Property+Taxes+-+Opportunity+for+Change.pdf>))

Brooklyn's participation in the Regional Animal Services Program resulted (2021) in 75 total investigation and more than 50 animals being impounded - all of which were either reunited with their owner or adopted. In total for 2021, the NECCOG program conducted 1,195 investigations, impounded 450 animals, and redeemed or adopted 367 animals. Any animal that could be adopted - was - no animal was euthanized due to lack of space. To date, the program has placed more than 8,000 animals.

The Northeastern Connecticut Transit District (NECTD), which is operated by NECCOG, continued operations throughout the pandemic. Ridership continued to be low - operating at just over 50 percent of our pre-pandemic level for our deviated-fixed route service and down about 80 percent for the elderly and disabled services.

The NECCOG Regional Paramedic Intercept Service is performing very well - with a total of 2,471 transports in 2021

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- 306 (out of 482 calls for service) of which came from Brooklyn.

## **Brooklyn Resource Recovery Commission**

The BRRC completed its twenty sixth year of operation of the transfer station and curbside recycling, electronic waste, and disposal of waste paint. We also keep the brush and leaf collection up to State DEEP standards. We monitor water quality and have continued to pass all tests by DEEP.

The model airplane club is still going strong and extends an invitation to anyone who wishes to join or just come and watch.

We have put television monitors in to support surveillance of all areas and discourage trespassing when the dump is closes.

Hours of Operation:

Daylight Savings Time Hours (March – November)

Wednesday & Friday 10am-5pm & Saturday 8am-5pm

Winter Hours (November – March)

Wednesday & Friday 10am-4pm & Saturday 8am-4pm

## **Board of Fire Commissioners**

The Brooklyn Board of Fire Commissioners is responsible for establishing polices of the Town's Government related to public safety and emergency medical services as required by ordinance and state statutes. It is also responsible for overseeing the activities of the independent volunteer fire departments as they relate to the public and the Town's Government. Current members are First Selectman Austin Tanner, Michael Podzaline, Felix Ramos, Patrick Gauthier, David Lee, Leo Berube and James Soler.

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The Board reviews each department's budget request and updates a capital expenditures plan for equipment replacement, both of which are presented to the Boards of Fire Commissioners and Finance for approval and incorporation as approved into the Selectmen's and capital budgets for taxpayer approval. The board has recently decided to extend expected useful life of most types of fire apparatus from twenty to twenty-five years, reflecting the quality of Brooklyn's apparatus, maintenance provided, duty cycles anticipated and effecting a nominal 25% reduction in replacement capital cost.

## **Volunteer Fire Companies**

Brooklyn's volunteer fire companies operate out of two fire stations to provide emergency services to the Town. The East Brooklyn Company operates out of a station owned by the Brooklyn Fire District that is located on South Main Street. The Mortlake Company operates out of its station on Canterbury Road in Brooklyn Center. Each Company is a non-profit corporation responsible for its own operations. The Town supplies funds to cover operating expenses, worker's compensation, and liability insurance as well as capital funds for major apparatus and equipment purchases for each company. The Town also supplies capital funds for the periodic replacement of smaller capital equipment with limited lifetimes such as hoses, radios, pagers, and personal protective equipment, including self-contained breathing apparatus.

Both fire companies conduct fund raising events during the year to supplement the funds provided by the Town. The proceeds from these events lower the cost of taxpayer-supported emergency services to residents of Brooklyn and enable the fire companies to purchase supplies and equipment



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beyond the bare minimums. The fire companies appreciate your support of these worthwhile fund-raising endeavors.

The fire companies are also active in soliciting and obtaining grant funds from the state and federal government and from private sources. The East Brooklyn Fire Department was successful in obtaining a FEMA grant that paid for a mobile breathing air compressor and storage unit. The Mortlake Fire Company has been the recipient of several grants that have provided an Attack Tanker Fire Truck, a Rescue Truck, a HazMat Decontamination Trailer, a Regional Trench and Collapse Rescue Team and an Environmental Contamination Response Trailer and Equipment as well as numerous smaller equipment items. Unfortunately, state and federal grants for these purposes are increasingly categorical and are not as available as they have been in past years.

The level of training and performance certification required to Brooklyn's volunteer firefighters are identical to those required of full-time paid firefighters. Our volunteers participate and instruct in local and regional training programs. Members are active participants and hold leadership positions in several associations and organizations that are influential in determining regional and state-wide policies in the public safety area. The fire companies are proud of the achievements of their members and feel that attaining these high standards demonstrates to the taxpayers the seriousness of their efforts.

In addition to responding to alarms of fire and serving as first responders to hazardous materials incidents, each fire company provides first response service to medical emergencies occurring within their respective areas. Early intervention by trained medical responders coupled with rapid transportation to a primary care hospital has shown an

## SERVICES

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improvement in the outcome of critical medical emergencies. Each of the fire companies responds with semi-automatic defibrillators and other state-of-the-art lifesaving equipment. This technology for monitoring and restoring correct cardiac rhythm has improved the chances of survival in certain coronary disorders. The Town participates in the Regional Paramedic Intercept program. This effort allows a paramedic, trained to higher levels than local EMTs, to respond to the scene of an emergency or to intercept the ambulance en route to the hospital. The paramedic can administer drugs and perform other procedures under the direction of the Emergency Room physician.

The response of the federal and state governments to the threat of terrorist activities has brought new training and organizational responsibilities to our fire companies and town government. Mortlake organized and hosted a major regional drill at the Brooklyn Fairgrounds involving many Eastern Connecticut emergency response agencies. These training activities are aimed at sharpening skills in multiple disciplines and in improving coordination and communications between agencies that might not work together regularly. The potential to respond to multiple hazard events requires that our fire companies develop a broader range of skills and capabilities than have heretofore been required.

In small towns such as Brooklyn, the volunteer fire departments are the only large trained and disciplined force available to respond to immediate emergency needs of residents. The Town of Brooklyn is fortunate to have an adequate supply of volunteer firefighters and mutual aid responders from adjacent communities to handle emergencies that occur at any time, day or night. These firefighters give their time unselfishly to help others and provide the only effective alternative to the very high cost of having to employ

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emergency responders. However, as the time demands of modern family life increase, it becomes more difficult for each company to retain and recruit new members. One consequence of this situation is that the Mortlake Fire Company now employs one paid ambulance crew, twelve hours a day, seven days a week and will in the future expand the paid manning to eighteen hours a day. The cost of the paid crew is largely covered by receipts from state-regulated ambulance billing.

The skills learned as well as experience and satisfaction received in serving the Town as a volunteer fire fighter or ambulance technician are beneficial, personally rewarding and make it affordable for the Town to provide competent emergency services. Each fire company is eager to explain the responsibilities and rewards of membership and will bend over backwards to make it easy for you to participate. If you think you might be able to serve in one of Brooklyn's fire companies, please contact any firefighter or the Selectman's office.

## **Ambulance Service**

The Mortlake Fire Company provides ambulance service for the Town of Brooklyn. They operate a volunteer ambulance service and maintain a staff of over 15 Connecticut certified Emergency Medical Responders. In addition to responding to emergencies, ambulance volunteers train on a monthly basis and also participate in State of Connecticut mandated refresher training to maintain their certification. Other training activities such as a defibrillator, mass casualty, helicopter familiarity, and other specialized training are available for members. Increasing call volume (1,166 responses during 2021) has placed pressure on the volunteer responders that is beyond their capacity. Following regional trends, starting on

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January 1, 2007, volunteer response was supplemented with a paid daytime crew.

The ambulance service is operated on a user payment system. All residents who utilize the service bill their respective insurance companies to provide payment for the service. Experience to date has shown that third party payers contribute most of the funds required to operate the service.

The ambulance service is part of a mutual aid network that allows access to neighboring ambulances, or, if needed, other resources such as medical helicopters. A regional paramedic program has been established at Day Kimball Hospital and is partially supported, in proportion to their use of the service, by the towns that operate out of the hospital. This service is dispatched through Quinebaug Valley Emergency Communications located in East Killingly and is available for any life-threatening emergency. The paramedic responds from the hospital and usually intercepts with the ambulance en route to the hospital. Operating under the medical control of the Hospital's Emergency Physician, the paramedic is able to administer drugs and provide a wider range of interventions than EMT's.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created additional responsibilities on Mortlake's ambulance service. In addition to requiring additional transports, complete disinfection of the ambulance following each use and the need for full personal protective gear are now mandatory. The number of personnel exposed to patients has to be minimized consistent with providing necessary assistance and frequent testing of personnel is required. Brooklyn owes a pat on the back to these dedicated volunteers.

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Serving as an ambulance volunteer is very rewarding way to develop valuable skills while contributing to the community. Interested residents are encouraged to discuss participating in this worthwhile activity with members of the Mortlake Fire Company.

## **Northeast District Department of Health**

COVID-19 first appeared in December of 2019. By the summer of 2020, infections were common in northeast CT. The team at NDDH provided leadership and support to the community and we, in turn, were supported by many public health partners. We are fortunate to work in a state with a strong public health system—and a local community dedicated to working cooperatively to care for friends and neighbors.

NDDH helped schools prepare for re-opening and helped businesses understand and adhere to the Governor’s Executive Orders and the state’s Department of Economic and Community Development’s Rules such as social distancing and mask-wearing. We counseled individuals and businesses on isolation and quarantine requirements. NDDH contact tracers reached out to people to talk about very challenging personal experiences. They were the helpful voices that provided information and assistance including referrals to social services. Throughout the year we promoted COVID-19 testing services.

In December 2020, NDDH became one of the first in the northeast to offer COVID-19 vaccinations. NDDH conducted training programs to ensure that health-care workers and other high priority groups received their vaccines in a timely fashion. As vaccine eligibility expanded, NDDH expanded its outreach and education efforts. We used new technologies including Zoom meetings for a train the trainer initiative to

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teach employers, municipalities, social service agencies, and others to help people schedule vaccination appointments. NDDH was among the first in the region to offer COVID-19 vaccines to children and worked with Day Kimball Healthcare to bring vaccination clinics to all district schools in record time. By May 2021, we focused on socially vulnerable and hard to reach audiences using Vaccine Equity Partnership Funds from the CT DPH. Our activities were aligned with our strategic plan—including website development, customer service, health informatics, and performance management. Consequently, we were working on strategic goals while combating COVID.

NDDH provided 651 doses of COVID vaccine to Brooklyn residents and held 91 COVID vaccination clinics in Brooklyn. We contacted 876 residents from Brooklyn for COVID case investigations.

Community partnerships and the outpouring of support of the community was integral to our efforts. We would not have been able to vaccinate so many without our Medical Reserve Corps volunteers. They provided endless hours of work and heaps of compassion and caring. (Anyone interested in becoming an MRC volunteer can learn more on our [NDDH.org](http://NDDH.org) website.) We received funding from the CT Office of Rural Health and Loos & Company, hand sanitizer from Walgreen's, and a vaccine freezer from Bousquet's Appliances. Interns from Eastern CT State University's Business Information Systems program helped us design a website to simplify the vaccination registration process. Day Kimball and Generations Healthcare agencies were excellent partners in providing vaccine, and Access Community Action Agency, the Family Resource Centers of Plainfield and Putnam, Hale YMCA, InterFaith Human Services of Putnam, Project PIN, Quinebaug Valley Senior Citizens Center Senior

## SERVICES

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Resources Area Agency on Aging, TEEG, and United Services helped us to locate, educate, and vaccinate community members. **We thank you all and look forward to another year of successful programs to continue to make this a great and healthy community.**

*Susan Starkey, MPH MS RD*

Susan Starkey, MPH, MS, RD  
Director of Health

# SERVICES

<b>Subsurface Sewage Disposal</b>	
As-Built	21
B100	57
Plan Review – Comm	0
Plan Review- New	20
Plan Review-Repair	15
Plan review-Revised	12
Plan Review-Subdivision	3
Permit to Construct-Comm	0
Permit to Construct-New	21
Permit to Construct - Repair	16
Sieve Analysis	0
Soil Test-Additional	9
Soil Test – New	4
Soil Test – Repair	11
Tank or Sewer Line	5
Water Treatment Permit	4
Property Doc Search	0
<b>Portable Water</b>	
Well Permit	37
<b>Food Service Sanitation</b>	
Restaurant Inspections	5
Restaurant Re-inspection	1
Restaurant Plan Review	1
Temporary Food Event	15
<b>Health Inspections</b>	
Campgrounds	0
Daycare	2
Group Homes	6
Hair Salons	31
Hotel/Motel	1
Medical	0
Nail Salon	2
Pool Inspections	0
<b>Complaints</b>	
Animal or Animal Waste	1
Bed Bugs	1
Food Service	2
Garbage	4
Heat/Water	4

Housing	2
Insects, Vermin	2
Lead Complaint	0
Mold	1
Odor	1
Outdoor Wood Furnace/Smoke	1
Septic	2
COVID-19 Related	20
<b>Health Services</b>	
Lead Poisoning Prevention	0
Rabies Prevention	1
Number of Animals Tested Positive for Rabies	0
<b>Total Environmental Services</b>	341
<b>Reportable 2020 Communicable Diseases</b>	
Babesiosis	5
Giardiasis	1
Chlamydia	n/a
Gonorrhea	n/a
Group B Streptococcus	0
Hepatitis B	0
Hepatitis C	2
Influenza	81
Legionellosis	2
Listeriosis	0
Lyme Disease	4
Rotavirus	0
Salmonellosis	0
Streptococcus pneumoniae	0
<b>Total</b>	95
<b>NDDH Oral Health Screening &amp; Educational Program</b>	
Total Seen	NA
Number with Caries	NA
Number with other dental care needs	NA



# SERVICES

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## NDDH District Wide Services

- Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Response
- Community Health Education covering a broad range of topics that prevent illness, promote wellness, and protect health
- Radon Awareness and Test Kits – for free home testing for radon, a lead cause of lung cancer
- Flu Immunizations

## Grants (Federal, State & Private Funds):

- **CT Department of Public Health (CT DPH) Per-Capita Allocation** for support of municipal and district departments of health
- **CT DPH and U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) Obesity Prevention** through environmental and policy strategies
- **Chronic Disease Prevention** using environmental and policy strategies to increase opportunities for physical activity
- **CT DPH Freedom from Smoking**-tobacco cessation, multi session classes and nicotine replacement
- **CT DPH/CDC** for Public Health Emergency Preparedness
- **CT DPH** to build a Medical Reserve Corps of volunteers to respond to events of public health concern
- **CT Office of Rural Health with HRSA funding** to teach people to register online for COVID vaccine

# SERVICES

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## COVID-Related Grants

- **CT DPH Vaccine Program/CDC** – For support and staff to conduct COVID-19 vaccinations
- **CT DPH/CDC – Epidemiology and Laboratory capacity** for detection, response, surveillance, and prevention of COVID-19
- **CT COVID-19 Crisis Relief** to enhance response including education, personal protective supplies, and equipment
- **CT DPH Vaccine Equity Partnership Funding** to locate, educate and vaccinate vulnerable populations against COVID-19
- **Generations Family Health Center/HRSA** – Subcontracted with NDDH to develop COVID-19 messaging campaigns (Norm the COVID-19 Community Watchdog & Mask it Up music video)

# FINANCIAL

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## Independent Auditor's Report

### Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Brooklyn, CT, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2021, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Town of Brooklyn, CT's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

### Management's Responsibility for Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's

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judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluation the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

## **Opinions**

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Brooklyn, CT, as of June 30, 2021 and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

## **Other Matters**

### *Required Supplementary Information*

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis on pages 3-9, budgetary comparison

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information on pages 56-59, and Pension and OPEB schedules on pages 60-67 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statement, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

## **Other Information**

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Town of Brooklyn, CT's basic financial statements. The combining and individual nonmajor fund financial statements and supplemental schedules are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not required part of the basic financial statements.

The combining and individual nonmajor fund financial statements and supplemental schedules are the responsibility of management and were derived from and relate directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. Such information has been

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subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the combining and individual nonmajor fund financial statements and supplemental schedules are fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.

## **Our Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards**

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated February 16, 2022, on our consideration of the Town of Brooklyn, CT's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of compliance with certain provision of laws, regulation, contracts, and grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the Town of Brooklyn, CT's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

King, King & Associates, P.C., CPA's  
Winsted, CT  
February 16, 2022

# FINANCIAL

## Revenues

<b>Property Taxes</b>	<b>Final Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variances</b>
Current Year	16,065,298	16,286,233	220,935
Prior Years	175,000	167,127	(7,873)
Interest & Lien Fees	80,000	129,150	49,150
Supplemental MV Tax	200,000	255,095	55,095
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,520,298</b>	<b>16,837,605</b>	<b>317,307</b>

<b>Intergovernmental</b>	<b>Final Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variances</b>
Education Assistance	6,926,095	6,950,876	24,781
Mashantucket Grant	191,703	191,703	0
PILOT – State Owned Property	79,919	79,919	0
PILOT – Disability	0	1,190	1,190
PILOT – Veterans Exemption	0	6,242	6,242
Motor Vehicle Fines	2,750	1,315	(1,435)
Telephone Tax	12,200	12,635	435
Z Recs	36,600	7,088	(29,512)
Other Grants	0	9,190	9,190
Municipal Revenue Sharing	10,379	10,379	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,259,646</b>	<b>7,270,537</b>	<b>10,891</b>

<b>Local Revenues</b>	<b>Final Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variances</b>
Health Dept Rent	35,060	34,894	(166)
Community Center Rental Fee	400	(70)	(470)
Recreation Fees	183,200	96,935	(86,265)

# FINANCIAL

Pistol Permits	3,000	11,740	8,740
Town Clerk Fees	60,000	83,041	23,041
Conveyance Tax	105,000	152,835	47,835
Miscellaneous Income	1,000	110,476	109,476
Copier Fees	7,500	12,213	4,713
Apartment Inspections	800	240	(560)
Building Permits	80,000	219,574	139,574
Fire Marshal Fees	1,500	605	(895)
Zoning Board of Appeals	500	500	0
Bingo Permits	150	145	(5)
Planning & Zoning Fees	9,000	19,770	10,770
Wetlands Fees	2,500	3,450	950
Transfer Station Fees	98,550	115,291	16,741
Insurance Dividend	14,000	15,876	1,876
Dog License/Fees	1,400	0	(1,400)
<b>Total</b>	<b>603,560</b>	<b>877,515</b>	<b>273,955</b>

<b>Investment Income</b>	13,000	3,026	(9,974)
<b>Use of Fund Balance</b>	453,000	0	(453,000)
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>24,849,504</b>	<b>24,988,683</b>	<b>139,179</b>

## Expenditures

<b>General Government</b>	Final Budget	Actual	Variances
Board Finance	42,206	40,748	1,458
Board of Selectmen	38,428	20,718	17,710
Administration	296,020	236,088	59,932
Revenue Collector	120,713	119,048	1,665
Assessor	158,096	141,065	17,031
Board of Assessment	610	461	149



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Town Clerk	124,067	116,992	7,075
Elections	40,900	30,077	10,823
Legal	40,000	22,265	17,735
Probate	9,160	9,160	0
Town Hall	36,327	29,721	6,606
Central Supplies	93,978	87,473	6,505
Ethics	3,000	0	3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,003,505</b>	<b>853,816</b>	<b>149,689</b>

<b>Public Safety</b>	Final Budget	Actual	Variances
Canine Control	26,467	24,467	0
Patrol Services	99,323	180,025	(80,702)
Fire Marshal	59,489	57,277	2,212
Fire Facilities	398,898	390,696	8,202
Emergency Services	44,892	44,892	0
Homeland Security	6,050	1,947	4,103
<b>Total</b>	<b>635,119</b>	<b>701,304</b>	<b>(66,185)</b>

<b>Public Works</b>	Final Budget	Actual	Variances
Roads & Drainage	619,252	606,976	12,276
Maintenance & Equipment	111,204	101,113	10,091
Snow Removal	65,780	51,274	14,506
Garage Maintenance	25,847	23,463	2,384
Engineering	20,286	20,286	0
Storm Water Management	45,480	33,480	12,000
Resource Recovery	351,524	329,484	22,040
Building Official	97,473	94,553	2,920
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,336,846</b>	<b>1,260,629</b>	<b>76,217</b>

# FINANCIAL

<b>Human Services</b>	Final Budget	Actual	Variances
Health	91,910	89,910	2,000
Cemeteries	6,079	6,079	0
<b>Total</b>	97,989	95,989	2,000
<b>Civic &amp; Cultural</b>	Final Budget	Actual	Variances
Library	146,057	146,057	0
Transit District	14,490	14,490	0
Special Programs	7,010	7,010	0
Recreation	287,929	274,131	13,798
Park Maintenance	143,367	138,842	4,525
Community Center	16,002	14,743	1,259
Clifford B. Green Bldg	31,929	30,305	1,624
<b>Total</b>	646,784	625,578	21,206

<b>Development &amp; Planning</b>	Final Budget	Actual	Variances
Planning & Zoning	29,290	21,049	8,241
Zoning Board of Appeal	950	50	900
Agriculture Commission	1,600	300	1m300
Conservation Commission	2,563	313	2,250
Inland/Wetland Commission	5,852	4m923	929
Land Use Admin/Planner	115,431	114,196	1,235
Economic Development Commission	600	0	600
Open Space	8,208	8,208	0
<b>Total</b>	164,494	149,039	15,455

## FINANCIAL

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<b>Debt &amp; Sundry</b>	<b>Final Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variances</b>
Fringe Benefits	723,818	663,804	60,014
Municipal Insurance	128,732	119,453	9,279
Long Term Debt Service	20,974	10,424	10,550
Short Term Debt Service	794,252	778,605	15,647
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,667,776</b>	<b>1,572,286</b>	<b>95,490</b>

<b>Capital Outlay</b>	123,000	123,000	0
<b>Total Board of Education</b>	19,173,991	18,962,537	211,454
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	24,849,504	24,344,178	505,326
<b>Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures – Budgetary Basis</b>	0	644,505	644,505

# **TOWN OFFICES TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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First Selectman's Office	860-779-3411	# 2
Director of Highway Department	860-779-3411	# 3
Town Clerk	860-779-3411	# 4
Tax Collector	860-779-3411	# 5
Assessor	860-779-3411	# 6
Recreation	860-779-3411	# 7
Finance Office	860-779-3411	# 8
Land Use Administrator	860-779-3411	# 9
Fire Marshal	860-779-3411	# 9
Building Official	860-779-3411	# 9
Animal Control Officer	860-774-1253	
Landfill Attendant	860-779-1105	
Housing Authority	860-963-6829	
Resident Trooper	860-779-9008	

## **Other Frequently Requested Numbers**

UCONN Extension Center	860-774-9600
Quinebaug Valley Senior Center	860-774-1243
NE District Department of Health	860-774-7350
Brooklyn Fair Grounds	860-779-0012
Brooklyn Post Office	860-774-4449
Brooklyn Library	860-774-0649
Judge of Probate	860-928-4844
NE Children's Probate Court	860-928-4833
Willimantic Waste – Recycling	860-423-4527
NE CT Council of Government	860-774-1253
Mortlake Fire Department	860-774-2032
East Brooklyn Fire Department	860-774-1192
First Student Bus Garage	860-779-1256
Troop D – non-emergencies	860-779-4900

**EMERGENCIES      911**

## SCHOOL & HISTORICAL SITES

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### **School Officials & Telephone Numbers**

#### Brooklyn Schools

Patricia Buell, Superintendent	860-774-9153
Heather Tamsin, Middle Sch Principal	860-774-9153
Paula Graef, Elementary Sch Principal	860-774-7577

Killingly High School	860-779-6620
Woodstock Academy	860-928-6575
H.H. Ellis Tech	860-774-8511

### **Historical Sites**

Old Trinity Church – Located on Church Street, Built in 1771 by Col. Godfrey Malbone, a Tory, after a disagreement with Brooklyn Church.

Old Court House – Located in Brooklyn Center, Presently the Brooklyn Town Hall, built when Brooklyn became the County Seat in 1820.

Old Unitarian Church – Located in Brooklyn Center, Built as Congregational Church in 1771, Israel Putnam was Sexton after completion of Church.

Israel Putnam Monument – Located in Brooklyn Center, at his burial place.

## EDUCATION

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### Federated Church of Christ

Sundays.....10:00am

[www.federatedchurchbrooklynct.org](http://www.federatedchurchbrooklynct.org)

### Our Lady of LaSalette Church

Saturdays.....4:00pm

Sundays.....8:00am & 11:00am

(Roman Catholic)

### Trinity-Episcopal Church

Sundays.....10:00am

[www.trinitychurchbrooklyn.org](http://www.trinitychurchbrooklyn.org)

### Old Trinity Church

July & August.....5:00pm & All Saints Day.....11:00am

### Unitarian Universalist Society

April-December @ Brooklyn Green Rte 6&169.....10:30am

Jan-April @ Brooklyn Community Center.....10:30am

(Semi-monthly Sunday)

Facebook: Unitarian Universalist Society in Brooklyn

# EDUCATION

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## **BROOKLYN SCHOOLS**

Superintendent's Annual Report  
2020-21

### **Mission Statement**

The Brooklyn School will foster a drive for learning within each student that will allow that student to reach his/her greatest potential. To achieve this mission, the school will continually improve its education programs and services to meet the needs of all students and to meet this community's expectations for a quality education for all.

### School Officials

Mrs. Patricia Buell, Superintendent, 860-774-9732  
Mrs. Heather Tamsin, Middle School Principal, 860-774-9153  
Mrs. Paula Graef, Elementary School Principal 860-774-7577

The school system is governed by a six-member Board of Education through a committee structure and when appropriate involves members of the school staff and the community. Board members serve on a variety of committees such as Budget, Curriculum, Negotiations, High School and Policy. The Brooklyn Board of Education also has representatives on the Killingly High School, and The Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees.

### 2020-2021 Board of Education

Chair: Mae Lyons  
Vice Chair: Melissa Perkins-Banas  
Secretary: Keith Atchinson  
Tana Jolley  
Justin Phaiah  
Nathan Richards

## EDUCATION

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The Brooklyn Public Schools is fortunate to have dedicated community members who serve as Board of Education members. They are dedicated to what is best for the students of Brooklyn and give of their time and talents to promote the highest quality of education possible. They take pride in the students of Brooklyn and work tirelessly to ensure all students receive a high-quality education.

### School Improvement Plans and Activities

The Brooklyn Public Schools typically develops an advancement plan that focuses on the goals and objectives aligned to student achievement. We ended the 2019-2020 school year with 58 full remote learning days, and it was a challenge. We were not prepared, and we did not have a one-to-one model of technology to provide every child with the necessary devices to access learning. We discovered quickly that not all families had a way for students to access on-line learning due to hardware or no internet connectivity. During the 2020-21 school year we did not develop an advancement plan due to the changing landscape of schools due to the requirements with COVID-19. Students were provided the option of attending school through distance learning or in person. The in-person model was filled with many shifts in the model. We had **hybrid instruction** where students attended two days in person, two days remotely and one day when all students were remote. Hybrid instruction as for 42 school days or 24% of the school year. We had all students in **remote learning** which meant the school was shut down and all instruction was delivered remotely via Zoom platform. We were under this mode for 38 days or 21% of the school year. We had **full in-person learning** for 98 days, or 55% of the school year. There were multiple shifts or “pivots” from one learning model to the next. We were learning what strategies needed to be in place to keep students and staff safe while



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learning how to teach in a remote or hybrid manner. Staff did an amazing job pivoting through the instructional models.

### Enrollment

The Brooklyn Public Schools enrollment has increased slightly over the past 5 years. The following is the October 1st student count.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	<b>Change in 5 yrs</b>
Brooklyn Elementary	521	512	545	548	566	476	-69
Brooklyn Middle School	372	353	346	359	338	333	-39
Killingly High School	114	112	121	116	118	107	-13
Woodstock Academy	168	195	167	181	195	190	+22
Other High Schools	116	104	86	108	109	113	-3
Out of District IEP			19	19	22	23	+1
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>1,276</b>	<b>1,314</b>	<b>1,331</b>	<b>1,348</b>	<b>1,142</b>	<b>-139</b>

\*estimated number

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The COVID pandemic caused schools to shut down in March 2020. The last three months of school were taught fully remotely and students and staff stayed home while the world determined how we would respond to COVID in a way that we could keep students and staff safe. When Brooklyn brought students back to the schools for the 2020-21 school year it was with a range of mitigation strategies in place. Students were able to choose if they wanted to attend school remotely. Some students would come to school for in person learning while approximately 165 students remained at home full time for distance or remote instruction. Distance learning was required to be offered by the State of Connecticut Mitigation strategies included cohorting students with the same group of peers all day long. Students would remain with their peers all day in one classroom from PK to grade 8. has maintained a class size PK-8. Students attending preschool are able to attend 2, 3 and 5 day a week half-day programs. Many families report moving to Brooklyn because of the school system, specifically the preschool opportunities. Brooklyn is able to offer preschool to every child at no cost. The preschool classes are located in the beautiful Louise Berry Early Childhood Center which is a modern preschool-kindergarten building attached to the Brooklyn Elementary School. Students are educated in an inclusive model of education and receive services required under 504 and IDEA.

### Budget

The Board of Education budget for the 2020-2021 school year was approved at \$19,173,991. There were a few initiatives including creating a one-to-one environment for the middle school. Students each have access to a Chromebook and teachers are working to increase Google classrooms. We are working to create additional one to one classrooms at the elementary level.

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### Budget Summary by Account

Object	Account	2019-20	2020-21
100	Salaries	\$7,629,304	\$8,140,273
200	Employee Benefits	\$2,061,953	\$2,113,039
300	Purchased Services	\$292,584	\$409,108
400	Purchased Property	\$166,717	\$167,750
500	Services	\$7,884,719	\$7,853,457
600	Supplies & Materials	\$555,499	\$452,780
700	Property	\$1,000	\$5,500
800	Dues & Fees	\$50,992	\$29,548
900	Other-Contingency	\$20,000	\$2,533
Total		\$18,662,768	\$19,173,991

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The administration works carefully to ensure that students and staff have what they need to provide high quality instruction and student outcomes. In addition to receiving funds from the Town of Brooklyn, the Brooklyn Public Schools receive grant funding to support education, services, and teachers. Grant funds are received from Title I, II, IV, IDEA, School Readiness and Adult Education. These funds exceed \$500,000 and are used to offset the cost of preschool education, special education services, adult education, and intervention instruction such as reading and mathematics.

### Curriculum and Programming

Students continued to make academic growth while attending school in different learning models. While this was challenging and there were some learning gaps, students were provided an opportunity to engage in instruction during the summer of 2021. Staff at each grade level identified specific skills that students needed in order to be successful as they left one grade level and entered the next. That was the target of summer instruction. We learned that students made more progress in reading during remote or hybrid instruction than they did in mathematics.

Brooklyn continued to use the same curriculum as they did the year before and worked with smaller classes. Classes were carefully planned to reduce the number of students per cohort and to reduce the crossing of cohorts as a mitigation strategy to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. At the middle school, there were times that students engaged with their classroom teacher via Zoom on the SMART Board to reduce movement of students and teachers. When possible, we conducted class outside as a mitigation strategy.

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While there were some families who chose to homeschool their children or remain in a remote learning model, most students did return to school during the 2020-2021 school year. We were glad to have them back to school in person and had very few students who became very ill with COVID. The mitigation strategies used in schools and in the community did limit exposure and wide spread cases. We did eliminate all extra curricular activities such as school dances, plays and musical performances.

The Brooklyn Public Schools is an exceptional school district for students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Our Louise Berry Early Childhood Center houses our National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited preschool and kindergarten. The success and popularity of our preschool programming has resulted in very full classes.

### Teacher of the Year

The Brooklyn Public Schools' Teacher of the Year Committee determined that they would not select a teacher of the year due to the highly unusual year. Instructionally teachers had to pivot to remote learning in March 2020 and during the 20-21 school year teachers shifted multiple times from a hybrid model of instruction and in person learning. Teachers agreed that we should not identify one teacher of the year, but all teachers should be recognized for their exceptional work during the pandemic.

### Community Involvement

Brooklyn Public Schools collaborates with the Brooklyn Parks and Recreation to offer before and after school care at Brooklyn Elementary School. Due to the constraints of COVID, Parks and Recreation had to follow similar

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mitigation strategies and limit students and create small cohorts. As the school year progressed, and the number of COVID cases declined, the Brooklyn Public Schools and Parks and Recreation began planning additional slots for summer 2021 for students to play and be a part of the summer programming. Brooklyn Public Schools supports the program by creating a location for the program and supporting some of the custodial needs for this program.

Brooklyn Parks and Recreation supports the schools through these offerings and maintaining the walkways in the snow and the ball fields during the sports seasons. There are many activities that are offered through Parks and Recreation that are held in the schools which students and families participate in.

The Department of Public Works collaborates with the Brooklyn Public Schools to remove snow from driveways and parking lots. They communicate with school administration to ensure school lots are cleared when staff and students begin arriving for school.

Due to the pandemic our collaboration was limited, however we enhanced our communication via social media and zoom platform meetings.

### Brooklyn Parent Teacher Organization

The Brooklyn PTO is very active at Brooklyn Elementary School and supports students, teachers and families. The welcome families back to school at their annual BBQ! This is a huge community event that includes boy scouts and fire department members preparing and serving hamburgers and hotdogs. Students and their families have a wonderful time greeting each other and playing outside before entering the

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building to visit their child's new teacher. The PTO also sponsors a holiday event and showcases student works and talents. The PTO meets monthly to determine how to best meet the needs of the schools. We are very grateful to the PTO for their generous involvement and support.

Respectfully submitted by: Patricia L. Buell, Superintendent