

REGULAR MEETING of the Burrillville Town Council held Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. in the Burrillville Town Building, 105 Harrisville Main Street, Harrisville for and within the Town of Burrillville.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilors Stephen N. Rawson, Dennis M. Anderson, Jeremy P. Bailey, Justin P. Batalon, David Houle and Raymond J. Trinquere.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council President Donald A. Fox was excused

1. Council President pro tem Stephen N. Rawson led those present in pledging allegiance to the flag.

2. **Public Comment:** None

3. **General Good and Welfare of the Town of Burrillville:**

Councilor Justin P. Batalon congratulated the Burrillville Boys Hockey for their efforts in the Division I finals.

4. **Consent Agenda:**

Note: All items on the consent agenda were acted on as one item and equivalent to taking the action on each item individually.

- 24-083 VOTED to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 13, 2024; and dispense with the reading of said minutes.
- 24-084 VOTED to receive and file the notice from RI Department of Housing regarding the Town tentatively being selected for an award of a grant.
- 24-085 VOTED to declare surplus items previously used by the Jesse M. Smith Memorial Library as requested by Beth Ullucci, Library Director.
- 24-086 VOTED to approve the following as recommended by the Screening Subcommittee:
- Appointment of Lisa Rabideau as a member of the Burrillville 250 Commission;
 - Appointment of Jason Rhodes as a member of the Burrillville 250 Commission;
 - Reappointment of Paul A. MacDonald as a member of the Personnel Board to serve a three-year term to expire March 31, 2027;
 - Reappointment of Paul L. Menard as a member of the Conservation Commission to serve a three-year term to expire March 31, 2027;
 - Reappointment of Ronald L. Lapierre as a member of the Conservation Commission to serve a three-year term to expire March 31, 2027;

APPROVED
APR 10 2024 *am*

- Reappointment of Monique DeRoche as a member of the Conservation Commission to serve a three-year term to expire March 31, 2027;
- Reappointment of Roberta Lacey as a member of the Conservation Commission to serve a three-year term to expire March 31, 2027.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

5. Special Business:

24-087 VOTED to adopt a proclamation to honor the Burrillville Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Motion by Councilor Justin P. Batalon. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

The proclamation is as follows:

**Burrillville Town Council
Proclamation**

- WHEREAS, the Burrillville Wastewater Treatment Facility was presented the Environmental Protection Agency's 2023 Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Operation & Maintenance Excellence Award for Rhode Island; and
- WHEREAS, the Burrillville Wastewater Treatment Facility was nominated by Region 1 of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and was only one of three facilities to receive this award; and
- WHEREAS, this award was created to identify and honor publicly owned wastewater treatment plants and their employees committed to improving water quality and maintaining exceptional operations; and
- WHEREAS, led by Michael Emond, Superintendent, and the five member Burrillville Sewer Commission, the facility serves over 9,000 customers while treating approximately 0.83 million gallons of water per day; and
- WHEREAS, the Burrillville Wastewater Treatment Facility has had many years of excellence including 2015 when it was recognized with the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Excellence Award; and
- WHEREAS, even with challenges in the last year including shutdowns and a statewide sludge disposal issue, Superintendent Michael Emond was proactive in making sure the plant was a priority in resolving these concerns; and
- WHEREAS, on Wednesday January 24, 2024 Michael Emond, Superintendent and William Andrews, Chair of the Burrillville Sewer Commission received the award at the New England Water Environment Association Conference held in Boston, Massachusetts; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville on this 27th day of March, 2024 congratulate Michael Emond, the Burrillville Sewer Commission members and the facility's employees on being the recipient of the 2023 Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Operation & Maintenance Excellence Award for Rhode Island.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the Town Council do hereby honor the Burrillville Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Burrillville Sewer Commission for their continued commitment to excellence for the Burrillville community.

24-088 VOTED to adopt a proclamation declaring April 28 through May 4, 2024 as National Small Business Week.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

The proclamation is as follows:

**Burrillville Town Council
Proclamation**

- WHEREAS, the resilience of American small businesses continues to drive America's strongest economic growth in almost 40 years, fostering the competition and innovation that creates opportunities for families, workers, and neighborhoods; and
- WHEREAS, small businesses are the backbone of our communities and the American economy, employing more than half of our Nation's workers, enriching our Main Streets, making parts and products in America to fuel our supply chains, building our Nation's infrastructure, and innovating and inventing the products of tomorrow; and
- WHEREAS, the historic investments made through the President's American Rescue Plan, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, CHIPS and Science Act, and Inflation Reduction Act are ensuring small businesses can access federal capital support, technical assistance, contracting opportunities, and other resources to help lead the way as we rebuild America's roads and bridges and build a clean energy economy for the future; and
- WHEREAS, when we support small businesses, jobs are created, and local communities preserve their unique culture and enjoy new opportunities to build generational wealth; and
- WHEREAS, entrepreneurship continues to be one of the best pathways to the American Dream, evidenced by the historic small business boom, with a record 16.5 million Americans applying to start a business since January 20, 2021, including 5.5 million last year; and
- WHEREAS, by renewing our commitment to supporting small businesses, we can maintain our global competitiveness and build a stronger Nation where everyone can succeed - from the bottom up and middle out; and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States has proclaimed National Small Business Week every year since 1963 to highlight the programs and services available to entrepreneurs through the U.S. Small Business Administration and other government agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Burrillville supports and joins in this national effort to recognize the contributions of small businesses to the American economy and their importance in ensuring that our local communities remain as vibrant tomorrow as they are today.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville on this 27th day of March, 2024 do hereby proclaim April 28 through May 4, 2024 as National Small Business Week.

24-089 VOTED to adopt a resolution in support of Governor Daniel J. McKee's Litter-Free Rhode Island campaign.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

The resolution is as follows:

**Burrillville Town Council
Resolution**

WHEREAS, Rhode Island is known for its natural beauty, including its pristine beaches, vibrant cities and rural towns. Specifically, the Town of Burrillville enjoys its public parks, scenic bike paths and clean lakes; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Islanders in all thirty-nine cities and towns should be able to live in clean, litter-free and healthy communities; and

WHEREAS, as municipal officials, we are the stewards of such; and

WHEREAS, we must make a commitment to investing in environmental protection and educating residents on its importance and connection to improving our state's overall health; and

WHEREAS, we will work with our state partners to advance these goals, such as hosting community cleanups, passing local litter-related ordinances or working on shifting community culture around littering.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville,

- (1) Formally pledge to Keep Rhody Litter Free by supporting Governor Daniel J. McKee's Litter-Free Rhode Island campaign; and
- (2) Encourage each of the residents of the Town of Burrillville to join us in taking this pledge by visiting litterfree.ri.gov; and
- (3) Commit to fulfill our pledge through coordinating various events such as community cleanups.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon passage of this resolution it be sent to His Excellency, the Honorable Governor of the State of Rhode Island, Daniel J. McKee.

Adopted this 27th day of March 2024.

6. Petitions: None

7. Unfinished Business: None

8. Public Hearings: None

9. New Business:

- 24-090 Presentation by the Burrillville Prevention Action Coalition Coordinator Monica Blanchette and Burrillville Addiction Assistance Program Coordinator Brandy Bates to update the Council on the status of their programs.

Discussion: Monica Blanchette, Burrillville Prevention Action Coalition Coordinator, and Brandy Bates, Burrillville Addiction Assistance Program Coordinator, gave a presentation of services and programs. A summary is on file with the record of this meeting.

There was no action taken on this item.

- 24-091 Presentation from Beth Ullucci, Library Director; Monica Blanchette, BPAC Coordinator; and the Boys and Girls Club of Northern Rhode Island to provide an update on Burrillville's Learn365RI grant.

Discussion: Beth Ullucci, Library Director, and Monica Blanchette, Burrillville Prevention Action Coalition Coordinator, spoke about the programs offered through the Learn365 RI grant. They've geared this grant towards STEM (science, technology, education, mathematics) programs. They discussed opening up BEC (Burrillville Extended Care) to students with low school attendance so they can get extra tutoring, the afterschool and summer robotics camps, a trip to the Boys & Girls Club, ELA (English language arts) tutors to help with "Summer slide," and other programs.

Mike Kenyon, from the Boys & Girls Club of Northern RI, discussed the ISL (integrated service learning) platform being used at the Boys & Girls Club that is available to Burrillville students with the Learn365 RI grant.

There was no action taken on this item.

- 24-092 First reading of proposed amendments to the Revised General Ordinances of the Town of Burrillville, RI, 2004, as amended, Chapter 4 entitled *Animals* and Chapter 11 entitled *Courts*; and consider scheduling a public hearing.

VOTED to schedule a public hearing at the call of the chair.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-093 Consider and act on a recommendation from the Ordinance Subcommittee regarding updates to the Sick Leave Policy for Department Heads and Non Union Administrative Staff; or take any other action thereon.

VOTED to approve the Sick Leave Policy for Department Heads and Non Union Administrative Staff.

Motion by Councilor David Houle. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-094 Consider and act on proposed amendments to the Revised General Ordinances of the Town of Burrillville, RI, 2004, as amended, *Sec. 8-55 Class B and C license rules* in response to the recently passed Outdoor Dining Act; or take any other action thereon.

VOTED to refer to the Ordinance Subcommittee.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-095 Consider and act on a request from Councilor David Houle to rescind the vote taken on February 14, 2024 to refer his request for amendments to *Sec. 2-26 Conduct of town council meetings* to the Ordinance Subcommittee; or take any other action thereon.

Discussion: Councilor David Houle stated that after careful review of the ordinance as it is currently written, he is confident that there are already provisions in place for time limits to be given on a case by case basis as determined by the Town Council President.

VOTED to rescind the vote taken on item #24-031 on February 14, 2024, to refer the request for amendment of *§2-26 Conduct of town council meetings* of the Burrillville ordinances to add a time limit for public comment to the Ordinance Subcommittee.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-096 Consider and act on a request to enter into an access and use agreement to provide access to Pascoag Dam; or take any other action thereon.

Discussion: Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, explained that this would give access to the Pascoag Dam for maintenance or make any repairs if needed. There is no access otherwise, it's surrounded by private properties.

VOTED to authorize the Town Manager or DPW Director to enter into an access and use agreement with Kathleen and Bradford Provencal; and authorize the funds not to exceed \$2,370 for the agreement to be taken from the contingency line in the Restricted fund (fund #0130).

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-097 Consider and act on a request from Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, to consider options for the Juneteenth holiday; or take any other action thereon.

Discussion: Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, stated that although Juneteenth is a State holiday and it is now in the Council 94 union contract, it's not yet a holiday we would close the Town buildings for. The matter was discussed.

VOTED to consider Juneteenth an official holiday and close Town buildings for all non-essential services.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-098 Consider and act on a request to review the stipends for boards and commissions to consider an increase in compensation; or take any other action thereon.

VOTED to refer to the Ordinance Subcommittee

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

Legislation:

- 24-099 Consider and act on a resolution from the Burrillville School Committee regarding the State's school funding formula; or take any other action thereon.

VOTED to draft a letter of support and an identical resolution from the Town Council

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

The resolution is as follows:

**Burrillville Town Council Resolution
Funding Formula**

SECTION I

WHEREAS, In 2011, Rhode Island implemented a Foundation-based Funding Formula. The new Formula followed years of arbitrary education funding. A key element of the Formula is the Core Instructional Amount (CIA). The CIA funds essential education costs required by Rhode Island's Basic Education Program. The CIA is calculated using average expenditure and enrollment data from Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire. Under current law, the CIA will, in FY 2025, increase to \$12,617, a 6.2% increase. The Governor's proposed FY 2025 budget would index CIA funding to the Consumer Price Index and cap it to a 3.7% increase, or \$12,335. As a result, local education agencies would realize a \$26 million reduction in formula aid, and Rhode Island's per pupil expenditure average would fall further behind the other New England states.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville urges the members of the General Assembly to maintain CIA funding at the existing level for FY 2025 and beyond.

SECTION II

WHEREAS, In FY2024, the Rhode Island General Assembly increased the categorical funding for Multi Language Learners (MLL) from 10% of the CIA to 15%, increasing funding to \$20 million, and also directed the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) to develop objective benchmarks consistent with the WIDA consortium for determining student English proficiency by October 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Heretofore, RIDE has yet to develop WIDA-compliant benchmarks.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville urges the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education to direct RIDE staff to develop English proficiency benchmarks as soon as possible.

SECTION III

WHEREAS, The Rhode Island General Assembly increased the High-Cost Special Education categorical fund to \$15 million by lowering the reimbursement threshold from five times the CIA plus the student success factor to four times. And reduce it to three times the CIA would provide an additional \$25 million to LEAs to meet this critical need.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville urges the members of the General Assembly to lower the High-Cost Special Education categorical fund to 3% and provide full funding in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forward to the Honorable Daniel J. McKee, Governor of the State of Rhode Island; the Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives; the Honorable Dominick J. Ruggerio, President of the Rhode Island Senate; and the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education.

Adopted this 27th day of March 2024.

24-100 VOTED to adopt a resolution in support of the Municipal Road Fund in the State's FY2025 budget.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

The resolution is as follows:

Burrillville Town Council Resolution in support of the Municipal Road Fund in the State's FY2025 Budget

WHEREAS, the Town of Burrillville supports any allocation of funds directed towards municipalities, particularly the Municipal Road Fund that Governor Daniel J. McKee has presented in his FY2025 budget; and

WHEREAS, the infusion of state funds specifically earmarked for road improvement projects would provide a significant boost to the Town of Burrillville's efforts in enhancing the quality and safety of our roadways; and

WHEREAS, despite our best efforts, the challenges of sustaining and improving our road infrastructure persists, with additional financial support from the State we would be able to implement more comprehensive maintenance and replacement initiatives.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville urges the House Finance Subcommittee on Environment and Transportation to consider allocating funds for the Municipal Road Fund as outlined in Governor Daniel J. McKee's FY2025 budget.

Adopted this 27th day of March 2024.

24-101 Consider and act on adopting a resolution opposing House Bill 2024 – H 7763 Relating to Public Records – Access to Public Records Act; or take any other action thereon.

Discussion: It was discussed that there is a Senate version of this legislation, Senate Bill 2024 – S 2679, and the Town Council should include that bill in the resolution for opposition.

VOTED to adopt a resolution opposing House Bill 2024 – H 7763 and Senate Bill 2024 – S 2679 Relating to Public Records – Access to Public Records Act.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

The resolution is as follows:

**Burrillville Town Council Resolution
in opposition to
House Bill 2024 – H 7763 and Senate Bill 2024 – S 2679
Relating to Public Records – Access to Public Records Act**

WHEREAS, legislation has been introduced in the General Assembly to make amendments to the Access to Public Records Act specifically relating to online database centralization; and

WHEREAS, the amendments would require that all records maintained by any public body shall be, within 30 days of receipt by the public body, forwarded to the Department of Administration to be entered into a centralized online database to be maintained under the control of the Department of Administration pursuant to § 38-2-17; and

WHEREAS, according to Rhode Island General Law § 38-2-2(4) a public record shall mean all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, electronic data processing records, computer stored data (including electronic mail messages, except specifically for any electronic mail messages of or to elected officials with or relating to

those they represent and correspondence of or to elected officials in their official capacities), or other material regardless of physical form or characteristics made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any agency; and

WHEREAS, the many offices and public bodies of the cities and towns in Rhode Island, not to mention all of the State offices and public bodies, receive or produce an immeasurable amount of records on a daily basis; and

WHEREAS, the burden on cities and towns, and State agencies, to send all of these public records to the Department of Administration is just too great.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville strongly opposes House Bill 2024 – H 7763 and Senate Bill 2024 – S 2679.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville respectfully requests Burrillville legislators, the House Committee on State Government & Elections, the Senate Judiciary Committee, and the Rhode Island cities and towns to oppose House Bill 2024 – H 7763 and Senate Bill 2024 – S 2679.

Adopted this 27th day of March 2024.

- 24-102 Consider and act on resolutions from the towns of Charlestown and Hopkinton in opposition to the revival of the Old Saybrook to Kenyon Bypass; or take any other action thereon.

MOTION to receive and file.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. There was no second. The motion failed.

VOTED to support.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-103 VOTED to support the resolution from the town of Charlestown in support of House Bill 2024 – H 7688 An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government Tourism and Development.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-104 VOTED to support the resolution from the town of Hopkinton in opposition to House Bill 2024 – H 7683, Senate Bill 2024 – S 2361 and Senate Bill 2024 – S 2372, legislation relating to taxation – real estate conveyance tax.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-105 VOTED to support the resolution from the town of Hopkinton in opposition to House Bill 2024 – H 7681, legislation relating to towns and cities – tax valuation freeze on affordable housing.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-106 VOTED to support the resolution from the town of Hopkinton in opposition to House Bill 2024 – H 7651, legislation relating to towns and cities – low income housing (8% alternative tax rate).

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-107 VOTED to support the resolution from the town of Hopkinton in opposition to House Bill 2024 – H 7378, legislation relating to towns and cities – homestead exemption.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinqué. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-108 VOTED to support the resolution from the town of Hopkinton in opposition to Senate Bill 2024 – S 2018, legislation relating to taxation – levy and assessment of local taxes.

Motion by Councilor Justin P. Batalon. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- 24-109 Consider and act on legislation pending before the Rhode Island General Assembly relative to housing that will impact our community; or take any other action thereon.

Discussion: Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, stated that he is reviewing this list of legislation with the Town Planner and Town Clerk to gather more information to give the Town Council what is needed to make a decision on what to support or not. There is still some time to act on these, they're still in House committees. He will have something ready for the next Town Council meeting.

There was no action taken on this item.

- 24-110 Consider and act on legislation pending before the Rhode Island General Assembly; or take any other action thereon.

Discussion: Councilor Jeremy P. Bailey discussed legislation that was introduced that would establish a program at the RI Department of Environmental Management, and a fund within RIDEM, to aid with lake and pond management issues relating to the control of aquatic invasive plants. Burrillville has many lakes and ponds, and these are issues that we have. He's asking the Town Council to support this legislation.

VOTED to authorize the administration to draft a resolution in support of the legislation and for the Town Council President, Vice President or the Town Manager to sign it.

Motion by Councilor Dennis M. Anderson. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

10. Town Clerk/Communication: None

11. VOTED to receive reports A – X:

- A) Affordable Housing Board: No Report

- B) Animal Control Officer: Report of February 2024
- C) Board of Canvassers: Minutes of February 8 & 27, 2024
- D) Budget Board: No Report
- E) Building Official: No Report
- F) Burrillville Extended Care Board of Directors: Minutes of November 7, 2023
- G) Burrillville Extended Care: Report of February 2024
- H) Burrillville Prevention Action Coalition: No Report
- I) Conservation Commission: Minutes of January 16 & February 20, 2024
- J) Finance Department: Tax Collector & Treasurer Reports of January & February 2024
- K) Housing Authority: No Report
- L) Jesse M. Smith Library Board of Trustees: No Report
- M) Ordinance Subcommittee: No Report
- N) Personnel Board: Minutes of January 9, 2024
- O) Planning Board: Minutes of February 5, 2024
- P) Planning Department: Report of February 2024
- Q) Police Department: Report of February 2024
- R) Recreation Commission: Minutes of January 8, 2024
- S) Redevelopment Agency: Minutes of January 23, 2024
- T) School Committee: Minutes of February 20, 2024
- U) Screening Subcommittee: Minutes of February 20, 2024
- V) Senior Housing Exploratory Committee: No Report
- W) Sewer Commission: No Report
- X) Zoning Board: Minutes of January 9, 2024

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

12. Additional new business to be considered and acted on:

24-111 Request for executive session:

- A. VOTED to grant the request for executive session from Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, pursuant to Rhode Island Open Meetings Law §42-46-5(a)(2) for discussion, consideration and possible action relative to RI Council 94, Local 186 Union Contract; or take any other action thereon.

Motion by Councilor Justin P. Batalon. The motion carried unanimously by the six member present.

- B. The Town Council returned to open session at 8:53 p.m.
- C. VOTED to seal the minutes of executive session, making note that one vote was taken.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinque. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

- D. Consider and act on disclosing any votes taken in executive session, as appropriate.

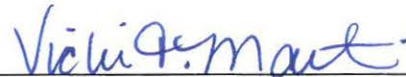
VOTED to disclose one vote publicly.

Motion by Councilor Raymond J. Trinke. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.

The vote is as follows: Voted to authorize the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with RI Council 94, Local 186 to add the position of Executive Assistant to Police Chief.

13. VOTED to adjourn at 8:54 P.M.

Motion by Councilor Jeremy P. Bailey. The motion carried unanimously by the six members present.



Vicki T. Martin, Town Clerk