TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Monday, September 2, 2025 – 6:00 PM

West Brookfield Town Hall, 2 East Main Street, Conf. Room (1st floor).

MINUTES

STAFF PRESENT: Catherine Lamica, Vice Chair; Brad Merkel, Clerk; Theresa Cofske, Town Administrator; Beth Gobeille, Exec. Asst. to TA/BOS; Ryan Shepard, CAC; Paul Lapenas, CAC; Scott Morris, Brookhaven Association; Police Chief Nathan Haggland; Officer Craig Charron; Officer Kendall Perrault; Jillian Patch, Treasurer Collector; Lieutenant Matt Letendre; Officer Cassidy Culver; Robert Mucha Jr. and David Pierce, Traffic Constables.

GUEST: Don Perham, resident of Belchertown re: Trench permit.

ABSENT: Roland Sickenberger, BOS Chair

CALL MEETING TO ORDER IN OPEN SESSION

6:00pm: Meeting called to order.

MINUTES FOR August 19th Open Session for approval.

Motion to approve the minutes of the August 19th Open BOS Session for approval made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye (2 yes).

MOTIONS FROM 4/15/2025 BOS Open meeting regarding the restructuring of the Treasurer Collector Dept. to be amended – The Select Board and Advisory have approved the new position Assistant Treasurer Collector, formed from the previous 2 positions (Clerical and Assistant Treasurer) in the Treasurer Collector's office, but needed to amend the motions from 4/15/25 to indicate that it is a funded position with the funds being transferred from the previous position line.

Jillian Patch indicated that the Tax Collector Nicole Perrault has no authority in the way that the position is currently structured (signature rights, on Town accounts, etc.), so this new position needed to be created. She also indicated that the rate of pay for this position falls in the middle of the wage scale of the Classification and Compensation Study the Collins Center completed in 2024.

Ms. Cofske indicated further that Advisory's previous concern was that the position was in the Union. The position has been pulled from the Union hence due to the position's need for confidentiality, having access to employee data including payroll.

Motion to unfund the current Clerical and Assistant Treasurer positions for the FY 2026 and create the new position of Assistant Treasurer Collector, transferring those funds from the original Clerical and Assistant Treasurer positions into that Assistant Treasurer Collector line, effective FY2026 made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor, aye (2 yes).

POLICE SERGEANT INTERVIEWS:

Candidates:

Officer Craig Charron followed by Officer Kendall Perrault.

*Both candidates were asked the same exact questions (attached) by Select Board members: Catherine Lamica, Vice Chair; Brad Merkel, Clerk and the Town Administrator, Theresa Cofske. Evaluation rubrics were filled out following interviews and handed to the Police Chief, Nathan Hagglund.

TRAFFIC CONSTABLES David Pierce, Thomas O'Donnell Jr., Lee Churchey, Robert Mucha Jr. for appointment – Ms. Lamica read the summary of what a traffic constable duties are (below).

Summary:

While working under the general direction of the Police Chief, Traffic Constables direct and control traffic to ensure its smooth and safe flow. Traffic Constables must demonstrate a firm commitment to carry out assignments in a competent, timely and professional manner. The power of traffic constables is strictly limited to the direction, control, and regulation of vehicular traffic. Such power shall only be exercised when in uniform and only while performing an official assignment given by the Police Department (The Department).

It was noted that traffic constables are paid by private entities requesting their services and not the taxpayers.

Motion to appoint Traffic Constable David Pierce, Traffic Constable Thomas O'Donnell Jr., Traffic Constable Lee Churchey, Traffic Constable Robert Mucha Jr. pending letters signed by their registered physicians for job clearance for approval made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye (2 yes).

PART TIME OFFICER/CONSTABLE FRANK JOLIN FOR APPOINTMENT –

Motion to appoint Part Time Officer Frank Jolin for the term September 2, 2025 – June 30, 2026 made by Mr. Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye (2 yes).

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS TOOTSIE DRIVE FOR APPROVAL –

Motion to approve the Knights of Columbus 11080 of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish annual Tootsie Drive on October 11th and 12th with rain dates on October 18th and 19th made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye (2 yes).

ONE DAY POUR LICENSE FOR SACRED HEART CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH'S MUSICAL BINGO EVENT – Ms. Gobeille explained that event coordinator has their TIPS certification. The Church has also taken out Alcohol liability insurance for their event day and they are purchasing alcohol from a recommended distributor from the ABCC. They have a maximum 2-drink limit per person at the event.

Motion to approve the One Day Pour Permit to Sacred Heart Congregational Church for their Musical Bingo event on Saturday, September 27th from 6-8pm made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye (2 yes).

TRENCH PERMIT FOR APPROVAL – It was stated that the permit will be issued for the duration of the project. To ensure the permit was given for the right amount of time, the Select Board issued it for 6 months. Mr. Perham stated that Trench permit is for a new build's water line, underground electric and septic. Mr. Merkel questioned the need for Mr. Perham to go before the Earth Removal Board and it was determined that he would not need to do so based on the work to be completed on the property.

Motion to approve a Trench Permit to Mr. Perham from today's date, September 2nd, expiring in 6 months, made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye (2 yes).

BROOKHAVEN ROADS CONDITIONS WARNING SIGNS – It was explained that Mr. Morris explained that he is part of Brookhaven Association and that the condition of the crossroads in Brookhaven is generally poor and are either owned by the Town or don't have occupancy. As it's up to the homeowners there to take care of the roads, he'd like to put up signage indicating warnings for drivers, who would be traveling on them. It was advised that Mr. Morris look at West Brookfield's Private Roads bylaw for sign placement, etc. Mr. Pierce and Mr. Mucha Jr. recommended that he also look at the Uniform Code book for appropriate sign options. Mr. Mucha Jr. indicated that a sign which was clear and to the point, like "Road Closed to Public" would be a good option. Brookhaven Association to look at options, including signs, which could help emergency vehicles to identify property locations. Mr. Morris will let the Select Board know what the signs are once decided upon.

TREASURY WARRANTS -

Motion to approve FY26 AP Warrant #5 and FY26 Payroll Warrant #5, as presented made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor - aye (2 yes).

TA REPORT –

School – Discussions. Open communication between the schools and with the Town. Speaking with Nicole/Dir. Of Finances and new Principal to discuss Finances for both.

Budget – Not sustainable re: finances.

Priorities: Personnel Working Group / Financial Team meetings will kick off soon to plan for FY27 budget.

POLICE CHIEF RECOMMENDATION FOR POLICE SERGEANT, APPOINTMENT EXPECTED.

Chief Nathan Hagglund stated that it was a long and complex progress.

<u>Breakdown of scoring for New Sergeant position:</u>

1) Assessment Center – 85% *scored by a Chief and 2 Lieutenants from other communities.
    a) Interview questions - worth 25 points
    b) Scenario-based questions – worth 25 points
    c) 2 written assignments – worth 25 points
        a. Dealing with a traffic problem in Town
        b. Redesigning our FTO program
    d) Resume and Cover Letter – worth 10 points
2) Police Chief interview – 10%
3) Select Board interview – 5%

Based on the scoring for the Sergeant position, Chief Hagglund had recommended to the Select Board Officer Kendall Perrault as the new Sergeant for the West Brookfield Police Department.

Motion to accept Police Chief Hagglund's recommendation of appointing Officer Kendall Perrault as the new Sergeant of the West Brookfield Police Department made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye (2 yes).

Next meeting scheduled for September 16th at 6pm. Following meeting date for September 30th may not happen. Will revisit next meeting.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:40pm made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor, aye (2 yes).

Respectfully submitted,

9/16/2025 — Authorized Party for the BOS — Date

9/16/25 — BOS Clerk — Date

Interview Questions – Police Sergeant Position

For Use By: Board of Selectmen & Town Administrator

Leadership & Supervision

1. What leadership style do you believe works best in supervising patrol officers, and how would you apply it in our department?
2. How would you handle conflict between officers under your supervision?
3. As Sergeant, how would you hold your officers accountable while still maintaining morale and respect?
4. Describe a time you had to make a difficult decision as a supervisor or while an acting leader. What was the outcome?
5. What steps would you take to mentor and develop less experienced officers?

Community Relations & Public Trust

6. How do you see the role of a Sergeant in strengthening community-police relations in a small town like ours?
7. How would you handle a situation where community members raise concerns about officer conduct?
8. What initiatives would you suggest improving transparency and trust between the department and residents?

Operations & Administrative Responsibilities

9. Part of the Sergeant's role involves managing schedules, reports, and resources. How do you prioritize administrative duties alongside field responsibilities?
10. How would you ensure fiscal responsibility when managing overtime, staffing levels, and department resources?
11. What's your approach to making sure your shift operates smoothly, and officers are prepared for their duties?

Legal Knowledge & Policy Compliance

12. How do you stay current with changes in Massachusetts laws, use-of-force standards, and policing best practices?

13. What would you do if you observed an officer violating departmental policy or state law?

14. How would you balance enforcement of laws with the need for discretion in policing a small community?

Crisis & Problem-Solving

15. Describe how you would respond if an officer on your shift made a split-second decision that created public controversy.

16. How would you manage a critical incident, such as a serious accident or violent crime, until higher command arrives?

17. How do you handle stress personally, and how do you support your officers in managing theirs?

Team & Departmental Culture

18. How do you build trust and respect with both your officers and your command staff?

19. Our town values professionalism and accountability. How would you ensure those values are upheld within your team?

20. Why do you believe you're the right candidate to serve as Sergeant in our community?