TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

August 18, 2026

Meeting Minutes

CALL MEETING TO ORDER IN OPEN SESSION

Members and Staff Present: BOS Chair – H. Brogna, BOS Vice Chair – R. Sickenberger, Town Administrator – T. Cofske, Police Chief Hagglund, Fire Chief Bessette, WCBTV Camera Operators J. Conway and R. Shepard

Public Present: Common Committee Members D. Vayda and C. Paolucci, J. Brooks,

Meeting Minutes of July 7, 2026 and August 4, 2026

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to accept the July 7, 2026 meeting minutes as presented.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to accept the August 4, 2026 meeting minutes as presented.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

Appointments/Resignations

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to appoint Maggie Piermarini to the Asparagus Committee for a two-year term.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to appoint George Hibbard and Richard Ullman to the Zoning Baord of Appeals for a three-year term. Richard Ullman to be an alternate member.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to appoint Nathan Haggland as Police Chief for a three-year term.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

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MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to appoint Craig Charron as full-time Police Officer and Constable for a three-year term.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to appoint Doug Blood, Lee Churchey, Justin Mansello, Robert Mucha, Jr., David Pierce and Thomas O'Donnel as Traffic Constables for a two-year term.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

Consideration of Appointment of Heather White and Harrington Heep as Special Counsel to Town of West Brookfield

Current Town Counsel, Attorney Christopher Petrini and associate Attorney, Heather White were present remotely. C. Petrini who has served as West Brookfield's Town Counsel for a number of years explained to the board, the upcoming restructuring of his law firm as he is transitioning to slow down his practice while nearing retirement. He will remain lead counsel until December 2026 and then stay on at least for the remainder of the fiscal year as counsel handling personnel matters. Attorney Heather White has been at his firm for many years and has been working with the Town of West Brookfield on several types of matters, ranging from the MassDOT Rt. 9 project to Town Meeting.
They are requesting the Board consider appointing Heather White and Harrington Heep as Special Counsel to the Town of West Brookfield. The Board has reviewed the proposal.

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to appoint Heather White and Harrington Heep as Special Counsel to the Town of West Brookfield
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart K of C Council 11080 – Requesting Permission to Conduct Annual Tootsie Roll Drive at the Intersection of Route 9, Cottage Street and Central Street on Saturday October 10th and Sunday October 11th from 9:00AM to Noon. (Rain Dates: October 17th & 18th)

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to approve the request of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart K of C Council 11080 to hold their annual Tootsie Roll Drive at the intersection of Route 9, Cottage Street and Central Street on Saturday, October 10th and Sunday, October 11th from 9:00AM to Noon with Rain Dates of October 17th & 18th.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

Common Committee to Discuss the Following Items

The first item the Committee wanted to discuss was creating a gift account specifically for the Christmas tree lighting at White Christmas. Common Committee Chair, D. Vayda informed the Board that the Committee had received an email from White Christmas stating that they no longer want to include the tree lighting at the event because it is too much responsibility at this

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time. The gift account being proposed would be for putting the lights up, taking them down, purchasing the lights, extension cords, etc. C. Paolucci stated that there are a lot of people who would like to donate to that because they don't want to see the tradition end.

H. Brogna read the White Christmas correspondence aloud. Further discussion ensued about the tree lighting ceremony. The Common Committee and the Board indicated that they would like to see it happen during the White Christmas event. The Common Committee reiterated that they really don't want to have discussions of White Christmas Committee as they are not present. H. Brogna stated the committees will need to work it out.

T. Cofske informed the board that the White Christmas Committee has issued correspondence and has been in communication regarding the White Christmas Event. They have requested to be on the agenda following the meeting they are holding within the next day or so. They are meeting to further finalize the event program for White Christmas. She further recommended that the Common Committee meet with the Town Accountant to discuss the possibility of a gift account for that purpose.

The next item discussed was the possibility of establishing a fee schedule for the use of electricity on the common during events. The committee has spent a significant amount of money on the electrical improvements. They are suggesting a $25.00 fee for each event. The committee will put together a formal proposed fee schedule and present it to the Board of Selectmen at a future meeting.

Lastly, the committee provided the board with an update on last year's expenditure using the Bill King Trust. Last year the Board had approved the Committee's usage of those funds with the stipulation that they return in a year and provide the Board with an update. Funds were used to repair the water bubbler and the electrical panel. The total amount used was around $11,000. The Committee is seeking permission from the board to use the trust again this year for fertilizer and the electrical box under the tree. D. Vayda assured the board that they will not be spending a large amount this year.

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to allow the Common Committee to continue using the Bill King Trust account.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

<u>Fire Department Updated Fee Schedule</u>

Fire Chief Bessette had provided the Board with the updated Fire Department fee schedule. The fee schedule was last updated in 2023. There have been several changes in the states fire codes, and those changes are reflected in this update and the schedule itself has been streamlined. One update noted was the addition of dumpsters. It is a new requirement from the Fire Marshall's office that dumpsters over six (6) cubic yards must be permitted though the Fire Department.

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Discussion of the $50.00 annual fee ensued. R. Sickenberger felt that it was a large amount for a temporary dumpster for a homeowner that is just cleaning out their property. Fire Chief Bessette agreed to lower the permit fee for residents to $10.00 monthly permit.

H. Brogna asked about the false alarm fee. Fire Chief Bessette explained that the Town has a nuisance fire alarm bylaw. He provided explanation on how the bylaw and it's fees are implemented.

H. Brogna asked about flammable storage above ground and if it pertained to residential propane storage tanks. Fire Chief Bessette explained that it pertains to above ground oil storage tank and further down the schedule does pertain to above ground propane tanks. The department used to charge $50.00 per property. Most towns charge that amount per tank and the department is going to do the same.

Some of the additional permits, such as much storage of over three hundred (300) cubic yards, or the hazardous materials, combustible materials, helps the department to keep aware of what hazards are in town and what the department may encounter.

R. Sickenberger asked about clarification on the Cannon or Mortar Permit. The Chief explained that it is a state permit. If someone in town wanted to make and fire a cannon or mortar they would need to go to the Fire Department and file for a permit.

H. Brogna asked what crop ripening and color processing is. The Chief explained that with Orchards in town, he added this. A lot of orchards use inert gases to quicken the ripening process. They do this in a sealed room that then will act as an asphyxiant. If the Fire Department responded to that location, they may be entering into a hazardous environment.

The board thanked the Fire Chief.

Executive Session: Pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(2), to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel and to discuss strategy with respect to such negotiations, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body.
Police Chief – Contract

H. Brogna read the notice of executive session as written on the meeting agenda into record and announced that the board would reconvene in open session.

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to enter into executive session.
SECOND: H. Brogna
ROLL-CALL VOTE: R. Sickenberger – I, H. Brogna – I

The board reconvened in open session. H. Brogna announced that during the executive session the Board of Selectmen voted to approve the Police Chief's three-year employment contract effective through June 30th, 2029.

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Treasury Warrants FY27 AP Warrant #4 and FY27 Payroll Warrant #4

MOTION: R. Sickenberger, to approve FY27 AP Warrant #4 and FY27 Payroll Warrant #4 as presented.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0 in favor

TA Report

T. Cofske requested the Town Administrator's report be provided monthly instead of biweekly, due to time constraints as a result of doing both the Administrator's job and the Board of Selectmen's Assistant's job. The Board agreed.

Next BOS Regular Meeting Date

Due to the next regularly scheduled meeting of Tuesday, September 1, 2026 falling on election day, the Board will meet on Wednesday, September 2, 2026.

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa A. Cofske, Town Administrator



Voted Approved:

Board of Selectmen, Chair