TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

September 29, 2026

Meeting Minutes

RECEIVED
OCT 15 2026
BY: Pam S.

Legislators' Present: Senator Peter Durant and Representative Donald Berthieume

Members and Staff Present: BOS Chair – H. Brogna, BOS member – J. Brooks, Town Administrator – T. Cofske, Town Clerk – K. Rose, Senior Center Director – K. Hitt, Cable Advisory Committee Chair – P. Lapenas, Cable Advisory Committee Member – Ryan Sheppard, Library Director – Amy Agro, Police Lieutenant – M. Letendre and WCBTV Studio Coordinator J. Conway

Member Absent: R. Sickenberger

Public Present: G. Simeone, S. Simeone, J. Whelan, S. Hitt, S. Winchenbach – Charter Communications, D. Provencher, G. Piermarini, M. Pontbriand and S. Garwood

H. Brogna called the meeting to order 6:02PM and announced that they will skip over the first couple of items.

Meeting Minutes of September 15, 2026

MOTION: J. Brooks, to accept the meeting minutes of September 15, 2026.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0

Appointments/Resignations

MOTION: J. Brooks, to accept the resignation of Stephanie Plante from the Recreation Committee.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0

H. Brogna announced that the Recreation Committee membership has only two out of five members. If anyone is interested, please stop by the Town Hall and apply.

Senior Center Recommendation to Hire Jennifer Whelan to the Position of Senior Center Programs Coordinator for 15 hours per week at the hourly rate of $20.67

MOTION: J. Brooks, to hire Jennifer Whelan to the position of Senior Center Programs Coordinator for 15 hours per week.
SECOND: H. Brogna

DISCUSSION: K. Hitt stated that they are looking forward to having her on board. It was hard to pick as there were some very qualified people.
VOTE: 2-0

Senior Center Recommendation to Hire Jennifer Whelan to the Position of Digital Skills Instructor for 4 hours per week at the hourly rate of $22.00

MOTION: J. Brooks, to hire Jennifer Whelan to the position of Digital Skills Instructor for 4 hours per week.
SECOND: H. Brogna
DISCUSSION: T. Cofske asked that when a motion is made to hire, that it includes not only the hours, but also the rate of pay. H. Brogna stated that the hourly rate for this position is $22.00 per hour and paid through the grant.
VOTE: 2-0

H. Brogna requested a motion to amend the prior recommendation to hire motion (Senior Center Programs Coordinator) to include the hourly rate of $20.67.

MOTION: J. Brooks, to amend the prior recommendation to hire motion (Senior Center Programs Coordinator) to include the hourly rate of $20.67.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0

Approve and Sign the Warrant for 2026 State Election

MOTION: J. Brooks, to approve the Warrant for the 2026 State Election.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0

Eagle Hill School – Special Use Permit for Wickaboag Pond for Rowing Race/Regatta on October 24, 2026

MOTION: J. Brooks to approve the Special Use Permit for Wickaboag Pond for Rowing Race/Regatta on October 24, 2026.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0

Treasury Warrants: FY27 AP Warrant #7 and FY27 Payroll Warrant #7

MOTION: J. Brooks, to approve the FY27 AP Warrant #7 and FY27 Payroll Warrant #7.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: 2-0

FY2026 Snow and Ice Deficit Amortization Schedule in Accordance with Chapter 101 of the Acts of 2026

This item was placed on the agenda in the event a vote was needed for amortization. This funding for the snow and ice deficits towns have gone through this past winter. Trista has been working on this and doing all the research and has determined a vote is not needed as the deficit amount is below the amount that was apportioned to West Brookfield. The amount apportioned is just over $134,000.00.
H. Brogna announced to place this item on hold.

Representative Donald Berthieaume and Senator Peter Durant to Present the Heroin of the Year Citation to Senior Center Director, Kelly Hitt

State Representative Donald Berthiueme gave the background of this citation. Every year the Commission on the Status of Women allow legislators to nominate someone as a Commonwealth Heroine. Because of the job Kelly does at the Senior Center and her personality, they decided to nominate Kelly Hitt. They brought Ms. Hitt to Boston for the Ceremony earlier this year. Senator Durant and Representative Berthiaume presented the framed document to Town Clerk, Klarissa Rose. This will be displayed in the Town Clerks office.

Representative Donald Berthieaume and Senator Peter Durant to Present a Dedication of the 250th Declaration to the Town of West Brookfield

State Representative Donald Berthiueme informed all present that when the declaration was signed 250 years ago, the State of Massachusetts commissioned a printer named Ezekiel Russell to print a copy for every town in the Commonwealth and were given to the Town Clerks. This year because of the 250th, the House and Senate commissioned a committee, and they made one for every town in the Commonwealth. These are just like the period correct paper (cotton linen) and were printed on a period correct printing press.

Shelley Winchenbach, Government Affairs Director – Charter Communications and West Brookfield Access Television Committee to Present the Proposed Renewal Cable Television License Between the Town of West Brookfield and Spectrum Northeast, LLC an Indirect Subsidiary of Charter Communications, Inc.

MOTION: J. Brooks to accept the proposed renewal of the Cable Television License Between the Town of West Brookfield and Spectrum Northeast, LLC an Indirect Subsidiary of Charter Communications, Inc.
SECOND: H. Brogna
DISCUSSON: Cable Advisory Chair, P. Lapenas provided a summary on the renewal process that has been undertaken over the last several years. They have worked on this renewal with Shelley Winchenbach, Government Affairs Director, Special Counsel, Bill Solomen for nine (9) months.

He spoke about the major points accomplished in this contract. One is the more robust definition of gross annual revenue. This is key for any financial calculations that would benefit the town (funding for the station and capital funding for equipment). Other definitions were included to provide assurances and more stringent protections for town interests with the help of Special Counsel and the Town Administrator. They feel there is more protection for the town in this contract than the prior contract.

He informed the board that the contract includes $25,000.00 grant to the town for capital for purchase of more equipment and increased the gross revenue from Spectrum to the Town (PEG funds) from 1% to 4.5%. That increases the funding for operating expenses, which is an increase of 300%.

Years ago, the Town received a $130,000.00 grant for capital and now it's down to $25,000.00 but the PEG funding. Over time the number of subscribers has declined significantly and hence our operating revenue has declined as well. The 4.5% is a great improvement at least at this point, however it is unknown what ten (10) years from now will look like with subscribers declining.

Spectrum is continuing the complimentary TV subscriptions to five (5) town departments at no cost to the town. Access TV has reduced the three broadcasting stations down to two (one government and one public) because there wouldn't be enough content. Also negotiated an opportunity to broadcast at least one of the stations in high definition upon our request to Spectrum within a timely manner.

Shelley Winchenbach, Government Affairs Director stated that she would have liked to have done more for the PEG channel. She is hopeful that maybe there will be an opportunity in the future to do so. There is language in this contract that watches out for changes such as if in the future streaming and telephone were to be calculated in the gross revenue income or changes in federal laws.
VOTE: 2-0

Amy Agro, Library Director – Requesting Support for the Public Comment Letter to the FCC Regarding the Proposed Changes to the E-Rate

Library Director Amy Agro is requesting support for the Public Comment Letter to the FCC regarding the proposed changes to the E-Rate. She explained that the E-Rate is an important program funded through the federal government that provides discounted rates to schools and libraries for their telecommunications, and their internet costs. There are two categories. One category is on the transport only which is just the internet. Category two includes stipulations for hardware, etc. The FCC has issued a notice proposing changes to discontinue entirely the federal E-Rate program. The program last year reduced $3000.00 from the total cost for the library's internet line.

H. Brogna expressed support of the board to sign the letter once finalized. Ms. Agro stated that the deadline for submission is October 13, 2026.

Amy Agro, Library Director – Explanation of the Municipal Appropriation Waiver

Library Director Amy Agro, explained that the Library was funded below the municipal appropriation requirement that MAR value requires some additional paperwork on behalf of the municipality. She has finished the statistical and financial reporting and submitted as required. There is a petition form that will need to be signed by the Chair of the Board of Trusties, Town Administrator and Library Director.

The $60,000.00 cut is 27% of the Library operating budget, which means that the West Brookfield Library is the number one largest Library budget cut in the state this year and considered to be disproportionate to the other government departments.

The waiver application can be applied for five consecutive years. By fiscal year 2031 the Library budget would need to be back at what the Mar funding value should be without any drops. That calculation is $228,650.00 that would need to be budgeted, otherwise the Library loses its certification.

Quaboag Youth Sports Complex License for Use of the Former West Brookfield Elementary School Sports Fields and Indoor Basketball Court – Votes Expected

MOTION: J. Brooks, to approve the Quaboag Youth Sports Inc. License for sse of the former West Brookfield Elementary School sports fields and indoor basketball court.
SECOND: H. Brogna
DISCUSSION: The license agreement between the Town of West Brookfield and the Quaboug Youth Sports, Inc. for use of the former elementary school sports fields and the indoor basketball court final. The only item needed in order for Town Counsel to sign off on it, is the certificate of insurance for the entity (Quaboag Youth Sports, Inc.).
Motion was amended as follows:
J. Brooks, to approve the Quaboag Youth Sports Inc. License for use of the former West Brookfield Elementary School sports fields and indoor basketball court contingent upon receiving the certificate of insurance.
H. Brogna seconded the amended motion and asked if there were any comments.
G. Piermarini informed the board that they are working on obtaining the insurance.
D. Provencher asked who pays for the electricity for the games and who cuts the lawn. G. Piermarini replied, stating that it is out of the money that was set aside to maintain the building.
VOTE: 2-0

Special One-Day Liquor License - Ragged Hill Cider Company on September 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, 27, October 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25, 31, November 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 24, 29, and December 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 2026 from 11:00am to 5:00pm at 107 East Main Street

T. Cofske explained that there is an amended application. H. Brogna asked about the language in MGL 138 Chapter 14 regarding non-profits. T. Cofske explained that these licenses are issued at the discretion of local licensing authority and are not governed by the ABCC. She further explained that in other municipalities using Wineries that are set up for a series of dates, at the Brimfield Flea Markets and are not nonprofits as an example.

MOTION: J Brooks, to approve a Special One-Day Liquor License for Ragged Hill Cider Company, LLC for the dates of October 10 and 11 Columber Day, October 17 and 18 New England Apple Symposium, November 7 and 8 Cider Days, November 21 and 22 Pre-Thanksgiving and December 5 and 6 White Christmas.
SECOND: H. Brogna

DISCUSSION: J. Brooks asked Mr. Garwood why they haven't applied for a pouring permit. Mr. Garwood stated that they will be applying at the beginning of the year. He stated that they had not applied earlier because they had just recently into this new location.

H. Brogna stated that he liked the fact that the application was pared down around events for a total of ten days.
VOTE: 2-0

Comments & Concerns

D. Provencher brought up Eagle Hill School's permit for their yearly regatta race that was voted for earlier in the evening and asked if the Town could charge a fee for these permits. T. Cofske explained that these are state permits issued, requiring the Select Board to record an approval for the State to then issue the permit.

Next Meeting Date

H. Brogna announced the next meeting date of the board will be October 13, 2026, at 6PM.

Meeting Adjournment

MOTION: J. Brooks, to adjourn the meeting.
SECOND: H. Brogna
VOTE: Unanimous
The meeting adjourned at 7:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa A. Cofske, Town Administrator

Approved:

Board of Selectmen Chair, Henry Brogna