COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AND VIA TELECONFERENCE

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Rilling said that he had been informed earlier in the day that former Superintendent of Schools, Ralph Sloan, had passed away. He requested a moment of silence in memory of Mr. Sloan. A Celebration of Life will be held on the third floor of City Hall in the Ralph Sloan Gallery sometime next week.

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Murillo called the Roll as follows:

Council at Large:	Mr. Gregory Burnett	Mr. Joshua Goldstein
	Mr. Johan Lopez	Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner
	Ms. Barbara Smyth	
District A:	Mr. Jalin Sead	
District B:	Mr. Dajuan Wiggins	Ms. Darlene Young
District C:	Ms. Nicole Eaddy	Ms. Anne Wennerstrand
District D:	Ms. Heather Dunn	Mr. Douglas W. Sutton
District E:	Mr. James Frayer	Ms. Lisa Shanahan

At Roll Call there were fourteen (14) Common Councilmembers present and one (1) absent. A quorum was present.

Also present were Mayor, Harry Rilling; Assistant City Clerk, Esther Murillo and Corporation Counsel, Mario Coppola.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: March 25, 2025

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 25, 2025 MEETING**.

The following corrections were noted:

Page 13, paragraph 4, line 1, please change “Mr. Goldberg” to “Mr. Goldstein”.

Page 16, paragraph 5, line 1 please make the following correction: change “Ms. Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner” to “Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner”

Page 16, paragraph 6, line 1, please change “Ms. Dunn” to “Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner”

Page 16, paragraph 7, line 1, please change “Ms. Dunn” to “Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner”

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 25, 2025 MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation comments are not verbatim and represent a summarization of statements unless otherwise noted. Speakers are Norwalk residents unless otherwise noted.

Ms. Diane Lauricella, of Little Fox Lane, greeted the Council via online access. She commented on the Capital Budget under Economic and Community Development and Land Use and Building Management.

She requested a Roll Call vote for the Capital Budget. With what is going on in Washington, she felt that they should be tightening their belts because she had been seeing too many wants rather than needs. Despite her earlier suggestions for trimming the budget, she still sees too many wants.

Ms. Lauricella then said that the City website is not functional and everyone knows it. It has been this way for years. She hoped that the allocated $625,000 will go toward making the site more user friendly.

She said that the City has a ways to go to become a green city and spoke about the Broad River Complex project for $2 million dollars. This money will be spent on artificial turf fields and the memo that was written was a joke since it is undated and the author of the memo is not an expert on health.

Ms. Lauricella said that it was ridiculous that the City will have 15 years of fracked gas contract from Eversource. The City is not looking at net zero schools, which she had tried to promote alternatives with Mr. Lo, Mr. Livingston, Mayor Rilling, Council President Smyth and the rest of the Council. It is time to look at the faulty policy for renewables. Thank you.

Mr. James McClellan, a member of the ADA Disability Committee, came forward and said that he wanted to emphasize the need for ADA accessibility such as City Hall Concert Hall and the City Hall sidewalk curb ramps. He said that he has trouble walking due to MS and scoliosis, so having access to City Hall is important. There needs to be adequate funding for these types of projects.

IV. MAYOR

A. RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. RESIGNATIONS

a. Sarah Rendon Garcia, Norwalk Commission on Gender Equity

Mayor Rilling thanked Ms. Garcia for her service.

B. MAYOR'S REMARKS

• This is National Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month. He spoke briefly about a recent ceremony on Norwalk Green with Secretary of State Thomas, Senator Duff and a number of other dignitaries and elected Council members. He thanked Atty. Spahr for bringing awareness about autism.

• This is also Donate Life Month. Mayor Rilling said that there were two speakers who received organ donations that changed their lives. He encouraged everyone to check on how to donate organs upon their death.

• The Ribbon Cutting for Dreamy Hollow Neighborhood Project, the largest drain mitigation for the City of Norwalk, will be held on April 9th. It is a $7 million dollar project and should reduce flooding in the area by 22%. This would not be possible without the funding from the American Rescue Plan, the Water Pollution Control Authority, and the City of Norwalk. He added that Senator Duff also supported the project with Federal funding.

• National Public Health Week – Ms. D'Amore and Mr. Daniels will be thanking the Public Health Workers and a proclamation will be issues on April 11th at 10 a.m.

The UConn Women's Basketball team won the National Championship title after winning against the University of South Carolina. He spoke briefly about Paige Bueckers' accomplishments on the team.

V. COUNCIL PRESIDENT

A. RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. APPOINTMENTS

a. Kitty Sang, Board of Ethics, Regular

**** MS. DUNN MOVED THE APPOINTMENT OF MS. SANG AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF ETHICS**.

Ms. Dunn said that she knew Ms. Sang, who is a woman of many talents.

Ms. Smyth said that she had spoken with Ms. Sang on the phone and thanked her for her willingness to serve.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

2**. REAPPOINTMENTS**

a. Michelle Sawyer, Board of Ethics, Regular

**** MS. WENNERSTRAND MOVED TO REAPPOINT MS. MICHELLE SAWYER AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF ETHICS**.

Ms. Wennerstrand said that she had briefly worked with Ms. Sawyer on the Board of Ethics and was pleased to present her reappointment.

Ms. Niedzielski-Eicher said she had also served with Ms. Sawyer on the Board of Ethics.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Ms. Smyth said that they would be handling the General Council Business before the Consent Calendar because Ms. V and CONNDOT were present to speak to the Council.

GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Update on The Walk Bridge Program by CONNDOT

Ms. Smyth said that Ms. Valadares and representatives from CONNDOT were ready to give a update on the Norwalk Walk Bridge project.

Mr. Frayer then introduced the PowerPoint presentation on Walk Bridge Update. Ms. Valadares greeted the Council and introduced Mr. Rory McGlasson said that Mr. Melo was experiencing technical difficulties. Rory and Stephanie are the two individuals who are very familiar with the project.

Mr. Melo joined the meeting and gave a brief overview of a map where there were a number of CTDOT projects underway.

Mr. McGlasson said that both he and Stephanie were in contact with the staffing at the on-site office. The public can go there for additional information Monday through Friday.

One of the questions that was asked was how the demolition materials will be removed. Ms. Valadares gave a brief overview of how the debris removal will be handled. All the permits have been approved. There were several questions about the debris that will be removed by truck and others that will be removed to Manresa by barge.

There were several concerns regarding the other events that will be held in the area, the traffic concerns and notifying the stakeholders and residents in English, Spanish and Creole when there is going to be a major change in the project.

B. CONSENT CALENDAR

VI. REPORTS: DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

There were no reports from the Departments, Boards or Commissions at this time.

VII. COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Ms. Smyth read the Consent Calendar into the record.

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED THE FOLLOWING CONSENT CALENDAR**:

A. PUBLIC SAFETY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT

1. AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT, SHARON CONNORS, TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO THE SOLE BIDDER, BROWN HELICOPTER INC 10100 AILERON AVE, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA, 32506 FOR THE PURCHASE OF A REFURBISHED BOAT, METALSHARK 29 VIGILANT NOT TO EXCEED $240,000. THE 25% MUNICIPAL GRANT MATCH OF $60,000 HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FOR IN THE 2022-2023 CAPITAL BUDGET. ACCOUNT NUMBER: 363185-5738-G000S

B. ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH GL CAPASSO, INC., IN THE AMOUNT OF $1,735,827 FOR PROJECT NPA2025-01, REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS AT THE HAVILAND PARKING GARAGE. ACCT: 09254095 5777 C03030

2. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXECUTE A TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT/RIGHT OF WAY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND NEA LIOSA, LLC FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF SIDEWALKS AT 26 WALL STREET AS PART OF TMP 2023-2 EAST WALL STREET LANDMARK SQUARE, SAFETY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT. ACCT: 0925 3750 5777 C0800

C. LAND USE AND BUILDING MANAGEMENT

1. ELEVATOR MAINTENANCE CONTRACT BID- #4421

A. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH TK ELEVATOR CORP. FOR THE ELEVATOR MAINTENANCE SERVICES AT VARIOUS CITY BUILDINGS. AGREEMENT WILL BE FOR FIVE (5) YEARS BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025 FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED. $130,286.19. FUNDING IS AVAILABLE IN VARIOUS BUILDING OPERATING ACCOUNTS FOR FY 2025 - 2026 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS WILL BE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF OPERATING FUNDS.

B. CONSENT TO TABLE AND SEND BACK TO COMMITTEE THE FOLLOWING ITEM: AUTHORIZE A CONTINGENCY ALLOWANCE IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $5,000 PER YEAR IN THE EVENT BUILDING MANAGEMENT TAKES ON THE MANAGEMENT OF LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION MUSEUM AS WELL AS THE NORWALK COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER UPON ITS COMPLETION.

2. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE A GENERAL GAS SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH EVERSOURCE ENERGY FOR THE NORWALK HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT FOR A TERM OF 15 YEARS AND A $0.00 CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT.

3. BOILER PURCHASE APPROVAL FOR ROWAYTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HVAC PROJECT

A. AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO F.W. WEBB COMPANY TO PURCHASE THE BOILERS FOR THE ROWAYTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (STATE PROJECT #103-001 HVACN) IN THE AMOUNT OF $109,840.00. FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE IN ACCT. #09245010 5777 C0843.

B. AUTHORIZE ALLOWANCE FOR CHANGE ORDER IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $5,492.00. ACCT. #09245010 5777 C0843.

D. PUBLIC WORKS

1. CITY OF NORWALK AND GRASSO COMPANIES, LLC FOR PROJECT RD2025-1 - ROADWAY PAVING AND SIDEWALKS FOR FLAX HILL ROAD

A. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND GRASSO COMPANIES, LLC FOR PROJECT RD2025-1 - ROADWAY PAVING AND SIDEWALKS FOR FLAX HILL ROAD (FROM ARBOR DRIVE TO HIGHLAND AVENUE) FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED $1,801,903.30.

ACCOUNT NO.	**09 24 4021 5777 C0021**
	09 25 4021 5777 C0021
	09 19 4021 5777 C0318
	09 25 4021 5777 C0318
	09 25 4021 5777 C0440

B. AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS TO EXECUTE ORDERS ON THE CONTRACT WITH GRASSO COMPANIES, LLC FOR PROJECT RD2025-1 - ROADWAY PAVING AND SIDEWALKS FOR FLAX HILL ROAD (FROM ARBOR DRIVE TO HIGHLAND AVENUE) FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED $180,190.33.

ACCOUNT NO. 09 24 4021 5777 C0021
09 25 4021 5777 C0021
09 19 4021 5777 C0318
09 25 4021 5777 C0318
09 25 4021 5777 C0440

2. AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT TO INCREASE THE PURCHASE ORDER FOR THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE APRIL 9, 2024, AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND BURNS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC., FOR PROJECT PM2024-2 – PERMANENT ROADWAY REPAIRS AND SURFACE RESTORATION, BY AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $400,000.00.
ACCOUNT NO.: 03 00 00 2602

3. TECHNICAL CORRECTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL ACTION OF DECEMBER 10, 2024, ITEM VII.E.6, AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND LANGAN CT, INC. TO PROVIDE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED $100,000.00, THROUGH SOLE SOURCE JUSTIFICATION.
ACCOUNT NO. 09 24 7100 5777 C0836

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR AS PRESENTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

B. ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3. Approve the 2025-2026 Capital Budget.

**** MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED THE 2025-2026 CAPITAL BUDGET.**

Mr. Goldstein explained that the Capital budget is designed to plan for long term projects. He then gave an overview of the various aspects of the budget creation. He thanked all those who worked so hard on this issue including Mr. Schmitt, the BET and various department heads. Not all the department requests were granted in full. The Economic and Development Committee met twice last week for a total of five and a half hours to work on this budget. He highlighted some significant projects in the budget such as the ADA improvement projects; City sidewalk improvements; expansion of the Norwalk Fire Department Station 4 on Westport Avenue; East Avenue Improvement Study; replacement of band instruments for the Norwalk middle schools; and a new 100 foot Norwalk Fire Department truck.

He spoke briefly about the Broad River project. The City is committed to having high quality fields with good drainage that is done in a safe and effective way. Mr. Goldstein said he is intending to support the implementation of turf field that are high quality and environmentally safe to protect the water in the wells, streams and Long Island Sound.

Ms. Smyth thanked everyone who worked so hard on the budget. She noted that regarding the Broad River turf field. Project , this allocation was for the project, not necessarily for artificial turf fields. In the past, Ms. Smyth said that she supported turf fields, but since learning about all the chemicals and PFAS, she is now against their use. The Broad River location is part of a watershed, so it is important to protect the area.

Ms. Shanahan agreed with Mr. Goldstein and Ms. Smyth about the drinking water. As the parent of two students in Norwalk, she is aware of the need for more athletic fields. She thanked Mr. Stowers for maximizing the fields in Norwalk. However, she cannot support the use of artificial turf fields for anyone’s children.

Mr. Sead said that Broad River was an important project and noted that one of the First Taxing District wells is located right down the street from the field. The First District has not used that well field for five or six years because of the PFAS. It is very expensive to remove PFAS from the water. It will cost millions of dollars to upgrade the Water Treatment Plant to remove the PFAS. It will have to be done, but it is also important not to add to the problem, which is why he is against artificial turf fields.

He thanked the BET for their work and appreciates their concerns about borrowing for projects. However the Fire Department expansion and new fire truck are also important. There was a long period of time when the City didn’t invest in capital projects. The City will have to go on a debt diet soon, but these projects are needs.

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner agreed with her colleagues regarding the issue of turf fields. She wished to speak about a number of other items in the budget such as moving a number of capital maintenance items from the Capital Budget into the Operating Budget which will prevent delayed maintenance; the completion of a number of long term, on-going projects, such as the Lockwood Mathews Mansion; expanding the Westport Avenue Fire Station; the ADA work in City Hall.

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner then spoke at length about the school construction projects at West Rocks and Wolfpit. The buildings are not useable as is unless major repairs are made so the students can use them. She also suggested a possible redistricting for the schools in order to more equally distribute the students.

Mr. Frayer then addressed the Council about BET and said they did a thorough job along with the Finance Department, who do the heavy lift. The City has an excellent credit rating and a good Fund Balance. While it looks like it would be easy to take funding from the Fund Balance, the rating agencies look very hard at the figures. He said that the credit rating agencies have assured the City that they would not be judged for using some of the Fund Balance. He said the City should consider a debt diet. He added that regarding the Broad River project, he was opposed to having an artificial turf field. The Council needs to be vigilant because he expects to see economic chaos later in the year.

Mayor Rilling thanked Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Ellis and the members of the BET for all their hard work on the budget. He reminded everyone that the City had built the first school in Norwalk in the last 50 years. Delay maintenance means greater cost in the future. He thanked Senator Duff for the 80% reimbursement for Norwalk High School and a 65% reimbursement rate for every other school building for the next 25 years. This will save millions and millions of dollars for the City.

Despite all of this, they have been able to keep the taxes low.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2025-2026 CAPITAL BUDGET AS PRESENTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VIII. RESOLUTIONS FROM COMMON COUNCIL

There were no resolutions from Common Council members this evening.

IX. MOTIONS POSTPONED TO A SPECIFIC DATE

There were no motions postponed to a specific date this evening.

X. SUSPENSION OF RULES

There were no suspensions of the rules this evening.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

There was no further discussion, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

ATTEST:_________________________
Irene Dixon, City Clerk