

**CITY OF NORWALK
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 21, 2025
VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE**

ATTENDEES: Lisa Shanahan, Heather Dunn, Anne Wennerstrand, Jalin Sead, Nora Niedzielski-Eichner, Josh Goldstein, Johan Lopez.

STAFF: Brian Candela, Jim Travers, Chris Torre, Bryan Lutz, Sarah Cruz, Tom Livingston, Vanessa Valadares.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Ordinance Committee was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Shanahan conducted the roll call.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Discuss and vote on Chapter 84, Retirement Benefits, Article I, Post-Employment Benefits Trust, Sections 84-2 and 84-3

Ms. Shanahan opened the public hearing on Chapter 84, Sections 84-2 and 84-3. Mr. Candela reported one attendee, Ms. Cece, but no one wished to speak, and no relevant emails had been received. Ms. Shanahan closed the public hearing.

B. Discuss and vote on Chapter 126, Pension Plan, Sections 126-1, 126-2, 126-3, 126-4, 126-5 and 126-6

Ms. Shanahan noted a typographical error in the agenda, confirming 126-5 was published in the legal notice and agenda materials. Ms. Shanahan opened the public hearing on Chapter 126. Mr. Candela displayed the document, noting minimal changes to align the ordinance with the controlling pension document. No one wished to speak, and no relevant emails had been received. Ms. Shanahan closed the public hearing.

Ms. Shanahan proposed discussing and voting on Chapters 84 and 126 together. Mr. Livingston confirmed these were the pension-related items and provided a brief synopsis, explaining that the changes to Chapter 84, Sections 84-2 and 84-3, involved updating references from comptroller to Chief Financial Officer or designee to reflect current practice. Mr. Candela confirmed the changes were minor. For Chapter 126, Mr. Candela reiterated that the revisions ensured consistency with the pension document, with more noticeable changes in Section 126-2 but overall minimal adjustments. Ms. Shanahan asked if any committee members had questions or comments; none were raised.

****MR. SEAD MOVED TO RECOMMEND CHAPTERS 84 AND 126 TO THE COMMON COUNCIL.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Candela noted that the amendments would enable adding a member to the Pension Board whose term had expired but who wished to continue serving, allowing for a full board.

C. Discuss and vote on new ordinance, Residential Parking Permit Program

Ms. Shanahan opened the public hearing on the new Residential Parking Permit Program ordinance. Mr. Candela reported two brief emails had been received, to be read after public speakers. Ms. Cece raised her hand to speak.

Public Participation - Diane Cece, Olmstead Place, Norwalk CT

Ms. Cece addressed the ordinance's purpose statement, suggesting rewording to encompass not only non-resident parking issues but also excessive parking from illegal apartments and excess cars on resident streets, citing best practices from other programs that limit permits per household. On the Parking Authority's role, Ms. Cece expressed concern that granting it full responsibility for drafting processes, procedures, criteria, rules, enforcement, and fines, followed only by a 30-day public comment period, limited public input; she recommended involving public stakeholders, residents from potential beta sites, the Norwalk Police Department, businesses, and a Planning and Zoning representative in drafting, with a robust public relations campaign to promote the comment period. Regarding petitions requiring majority resident agreement, Ms. Cece noted challenges with absentee owners lacking vested interest.

Mr. Candela read two emails for the record. The first from Ms. Hodenfield of 21 Yost Street expressed concern over potential overflow parking from Manresa Woods and offered a neighborhood petition for residential parking designation. The second from Mr. and Ms. Despegia of Osborne Avenue supported the ordinance as long overdue, urged a pilot program with elected oversight, highlighted petition challenges including absentee landlords, boarding houses, multiple vehicles, language barriers, suggested defining boundaries with off-street parking inventories and permit limits to one per unit plus guest passes, recommended opening Veterans Park for overnight residential parking, and striping streets for fair use. Copies will be attached to the posted minutes.

Ms. Shanahan closed the public hearing.

Ms. Shanahan invited Mr. Travers to address the concerns. Mr. Travers acknowledged previous discussions, explaining that while the Parking Authority's governance role under the ordinance limits its ability to dictate operations, the City remains involved, with Mr. Candela on board to review best practices. He described a flexible permit system determined by street capacity and the number of residences (such as one-, two-, or three-family homes), noting that implementation begins with a petition showing majority support, followed by an investigation to confirm need.

Ms. Shanahan sought clarification on assigning the Parking Authority over TMP and reassurance of robust public input. Mr. Travers explained the enabling ordinance vested parking operations in the Authority, similar to the Water Pollution Control Authority, with city heavy involvement but

respect for the board; engagement would leverage a new PR firm, Ms. Matthews-Woods' assistance, council-distributed flyers, and media pitches for the open 30-day period. Mr. Lopez suggested council members facilitate outreach. Mr. Travers endorsed developing a flyer for council mailing lists to boost engagement.

Ms. Wennerstrand inquired about the petition process addressing absentee owners and language barriers. Mr. Travers emphasized resident- over owner-based participation for inclusivity, given 50% renters; online petition forms with educational materials would aid, promoting neighbor engagement over door-to-door.

Ms. Dunn asked if this is tied to vehicle registrations, including company cars. Mr. Travers clarified it's initially to residents/households, not vehicles, with guest passes for non-owners and business passes as taxpayers. Ms. Shanahan referenced similar provisions in transfer station and recreation/park passes.

Ms. Dunn proposed extending it to 60 days and beta testing. Ms. Shanahan noted minor changes are feasible. The Authority's plan will return to Council for a whole/partial up-or-down vote, including interim public comment. Mr. Candela affirmed this is for the approval of the whole document, suggesting added language.

Ms. Dunn sought stakeholder involvement, timing, and beta integration. Mr. Travers proposed two 30-day cycles (draft-comment-revise-comment) to maintain momentum; beta testing could proceed resident-driven, but varying neighborhood needs made single-street reliance impractical, favoring best practices.

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner noted the Authority is bound by Charter/ordinance for comments and noted the Council could reclaim authority. Ms. Shanahan summarized multiple review opportunities, enabling start with Authority public comment.

Mr. Lopez inquired about enforcement. Mr. Travers explained that staff would conduct periodic and proactive inspections, similar to the process used at the beaches, as well as on-demand checks when potential issues are reported.

Ms. Shanahan proposed going over the changes discussed. Mr. Candela read changes. Ms. Dunn questioned full process for minor amendments. Mr. Travers cautioned against unworkability leading to unmade changes. Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner suggested initial-only, with simpler amendments (e.g., 30-day Council intervention delay like cannabis/CAPS). Mr. Livingston agreed initial process, subsequent as other ordinances.

****MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT PROGRAM ORDINANCE TO THE COMMON COUNCIL WITH CHANGES AS DISCUSSED.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

D. Discuss and vote on Chapter 112, Trees, Sections 112-1, 112-2, 112-3, 112-4, 112-5, 112-6, 112-7, 112-8, 112-9, 112-10, 112-11, 112-12, 112-13, 112-14 and 112-15

Ms. Shanahan opened the public hearing on Chapter 112, Trees, Sections 112-1 through 112-15. Mr. Candela reported no emails had been received and no attendees wished to speak. Ms. Shanahan closed the public hearing.

Ms. Shanahan introduced Mr. Torre, Ms. Valadares, and Ms. Cruz, noting the proposed changes were non-substantive word changes, standards updates, and alignment with prior revisions. Mr. Candela displayed the redlined document, explaining 99% of revisions were from the prior meeting, primarily capitalizing defined terms in Section 112-2 (e.g., "Tree Warden" with "as amended from time to time") and minor additions like the "Urban Forest" definition, which appeared once.

Ms. Cruz explained the revisions originated from the Tree Master Plan to ensure policies, definitions, and standards reflected its recommendations and industry best practices. The most substantive changes included new definitions in Section 112-2 for "Tree Warden," "Deputy Tree Warden," "Tree Master Plan," and "Tree Inventory," correlated throughout the ordinance for internal operations and public transparency on decisions like removals, plantings, and permitting. The Tree Advisory Committee was renamed the Urban Forestry Commission to modernize and broaden the program's scope. Substance was added to the Legacy Tree Program with checks and balances.

Ms. Valadares thanked Ms. Cruz, emphasizing modernization of language to align with urban forestry goals, transparency, public comment opportunities, and committee renaming to match duties.

Ms. Cruz added that past committee duties suited a smaller staff of three; with increased capacity and funding, the City now leads those initiatives.

****MR. LOPEZ MOVED TO RECOMMEND CHAPTER 112 TO THE COMMON COUNCIL.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMENT

No public participation or comment occurred on this item.

V. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Discuss and vote on September 16, 2025 – regular meeting of the ordinance committee

****MS. WENNERSTRAND MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2025, REGULAR MEETING.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

****MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO DO NEW BUSINESS ON THE AGENDA BEFORE OLD BUSINESS.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

A. Discuss and vote on new ordinance: Use of School Bus Violations Enforcement Systems

B. Discuss and vote on new ordinance: Use of Photo Noise Violation Monitoring Devices

Ms. Shanahan stated that the Committee would discuss both the school bus violation enforcement system and the photo noise violation monitoring device ordinances together. She explained that the intent of combining the discussion was to determine whether both should be included under a single RFP for efficiency.

Mr. Livingston summarized the new 2024 state legislation expanding traffic enforcement programs. In addition to previously approved speed cameras, the law authorizes school bus violation cameras and photo noise violation systems, both modeled on the city's speed camera ordinance. He explained that the school bus cameras detect drivers who illegally pass stopped buses, with a \$250 fine per offense (lower than the \$475 police-issued citation). The ordinance structure mirrors prior versions, including definitions, vendor use, and citation procedures.

Mr. Livingston noted that unlike other ordinances, this one does not currently authorize the city to collect a \$15 administrative fee, suggesting that this may need to be raised with legislators for consistency. Proceeds will support public safety initiatives. He further described the photo noise violation system, which uses mobile devices around the city to cite vehicles exceeding 80 decibels. Penalties include a warning for the first offense, \$100 for the second, and \$250 for subsequent violations.

Mr. Candela remarked that 80 decibels is extremely loud, and Ms. Shanahan agreed, noting it is comparable to a leaf blower before inviting Mr. Travers to speak.

Mr. Travers supported both ordinances, noting that cameras on school buses would enhance student safety and that the noise ordinance would address quality-of-life issues such as loud vehicles disrupting outdoor dining. He recommended using one vendor to manage all systems for efficiency.

Mr. Candela added that buses equipped with cameras must display visible notices to alert drivers.

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner opposed the proposals, supporting the school bus cameras only due to safety concerns but rejecting the noise ordinance over privacy and surveillance risks. She cited reports of misuse of license plate reader data in other states and warned of potential abuse even with local safeguards.

Mr. Livingston noted that the ordinance limits data sharing to enforcement purposes, but Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner maintained that such protections might not prevent misuse once data is collected.

Ms. Dunn asked how and where noise violations would be detected. Mr. Livingston explained that the devices would be placed in various areas throughout the city. Mr. Travers added that the cameras capture both sound and video, zooming in on the vehicle section producing the noise, such as a tailpipe or speaker. He noted that recordings accompany the citations and that violations could be disputed. Ms. Dunn asked about background or ambient noise affecting accuracy. Mr. Travers said the system focuses on specific roadway areas to isolate vehicle-related noise and would not pick up unrelated construction or environmental sounds.

Ms. Wennerstrand raised concerns about placement, noting that location decisions could unintentionally target certain neighborhoods or reflect bias depending on where complaints originate. Mr. Livingston acknowledged the point, explaining that while the ordinance calls for randomized placement, it does not specify how, and he would expect locations to be guided by areas generating complaints.

Mr. Goldstein said he supported the school bus camera ordinance for safety reasons but expressed concern over the necessity of the noise camera proposal, noting he had not seen evidence of a widespread problem. He said speed and traffic concerns were the primary issues raised by residents and that enforcement resources should reflect that.

Mr. Lopez questioned the urgency of the noise proposal and asked whether vendor contracts could include stronger data protection clauses. Mr. Goldstein responded that his hesitation was based more on the lack of a clear public policy need than data privacy concerns. Mr. Livingston said the authorizing legislation includes privacy safeguards and agreed that any vendor contract should further ensure data protection. He reiterated that the proposal was intended to address quality-of-life concerns, not to generate revenue.

Mr. Travers added that excessive vehicle noise is a common complaint, particularly from motorcycles and cars with modified exhaust systems, and that technology could assist enforcement where police presence is limited.

Ms. Dunn stated she remained opposed, saying the potential for federal access to data outweighed the benefits.

Ms. Shanahan concluded that the Committee would vote on the two ordinances separately.

****MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO SEND THE USE OF SCHOOL BUS VIOLATIONS ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS TO PUBLIC HEARING.
THE MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) OPPOSED (MS. NIEDZIELSKI-EICHNER).

****MR. LOPEZ MOVED TO SEND THE USE OF PHOTO NOISE VIOLATION MONITORING DEVICES TO PUBLIC HEARING.
THE MOTION FAILED WITH SIX (6) OPPOSED (MS. SHANAHAN, MS. DUNN, MS. WENNERSTRAND, MR. SEAD, MS. NIEDZIELSKI-EICHNER, MR. GOLDSTEIN).

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discuss and vote on Chapter 68 Noise, Sections 68-1, 68-2, 68-4, 68-6, 68-7, 68-8, 68-9, 68-10, 68-12, 68-13, 68-14 and 68-15

Ms. Shanahan announced she would need to leave at 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time due to a family matter in California and designated Mr. Goldstein to chair if necessary.

Ms. Dunn began the discussion, explaining that the current noise ordinance is hard to enforce and warnings aren't tracked; the draft clarifies procedures, aligns with state rules, simplifies tables, and lets officers issue a warning and cite if noncompliance continues, with penalties kept modest.

Mr. Candela said he benchmarked about 15 municipalities; the draft removes overly technical language, consolidates sound-limit tables (eliminating the separate Washington Street table), and focuses major changes in 68-4 and 68-5 on clearer measurement/use of meters. Exemptions largely remain; notable additions include limiting fireworks after 10 PM except for city events with permits, clarifying motor vehicle and loudspeaker provisions, authorizing police to issue violations, and simplifying penalties to \$50, \$100, and \$250 (each day a separate offense). He noted that more stringent zoning or state provisions control where applicable.

Mr. Goldstein commended the work. Mr. Sead asked about impacts on Washington Street businesses; Ms. Dunn and Mr. Candela said complaints there have declined, changes are modest (e.g., 63 dB outdoors/55 dB indoors vs. prior 75/65 day/night), the Chamber was notified, and businesses will have multiple chances to comment if this goes to public hearing.

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner thanked staff, said residents want enforceable rules, and was encouraged by limited business pushback. Mr. Candela confirmed the item could be sent to a November public hearing if the Committee is ready.

****MS. DUNN MOVED TO RECOMMEND CHAPTER 68 TO PUBLIC HEARING.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VIII. DISCUSSION

No discussion occurred on this item.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

****MS. DUNN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Courtney Baldwin
Recording Secretary

Candela, Brian

From: thodenfield@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 4:37 PM
To: Candela, Brian
Subject: FW: Residential Parking

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from thodenfield@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: EXTERNAL Email: Don't open links or attachments from untrusted senders

Dear Brian,

Can the letter below be included in the next (10/21) ordinance meeting or file. I have another meeting (mayor candidate) tomorrow night that conflicts. I'll look up the notes re: residential parking after your meeting.

thanks for your help,

Trudy Hodenfield
21 Yost St. Norwalk CT 06854
(203) 803-7210
thodenfield@gmail.com

From: trudyhod@optonline.net <trudyhod@optonline.net>
Date: Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 10:44 AM
To: bcandela@norwalkct.gov <bcandela@norwalkct.gov>
Subject: Residential Parking

Dear Ordinance Committee,

I attended the 9/18 Ordinance Committee meeting (zoom). I live on Yost St. S. Norwalk. (Harbor Shores) which is the last (small dead-end) street off of Woodward Ave. before the bend to Longshore Ave. and Manresa. My Yost neighbors and I are worried about becoming "overflow parking" to Manresa Wilds. We're a perfect parking target for those who want to drive but don't want to pay the car fee or are turned back because the MW parking lot is full. I appreciate the committee's attention to the upcoming traffic and parking problems that will result from opening this very large regional park with narrow & parked-up Woodward Ave. as the only entrance.

I would be happy to have all my neighbors sign a petition to have Yost St. turned into a residential parking street. Please keep me posted on progress with the Norwalk Parking Authority.

Sincerely

Trudy Hodenfield
21 Yost St. Norwalk CT 06854
(203) 803-7210
thodenfield@gmail.com

Candela, Brian

From: Roberta DiBisceglie <columbinellc@mac.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 9:37 AM
To: Candela, Brian
Cc: East Norwalk Neighborhood Association (ENNA)
Subject: Public Comment: RPP

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from columbinellc@mac.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Brian,

Thanks for reading this into the record. It is most definitely within the 3 minute limit.

Due to a scheduling conflict, we are unable to attend this meeting, but are very pleased that a Residential Parking Permit ordinance has been proposed and is now under review. This is long overdue. The parking situation for residents in many Norwalk neighborhoods has reached a critical point.

We would like to offer a few comments for the committee's consideration.

First, granting full authority to the Parking Authority is not the best path forward. We strongly urge the committee to consider a pilot program first—one that can be carefully evaluated by our elected officials before citywide implementation. Oversight must remain in the hands of our elected officials - those who represent the residents directly.

Second, attention must be paid to how residents are petitioned. Throughout the City, particularly in densely populated neighborhoods that are adversely affected by the dearth of street parking, there are absentee landlords, single-family homes converted into boarding houses, residents who already have off-street parking but prefer to park on the street, and single family households with multiple vehicles—sometimes four or five. These residents have little incentive to support an RPP program, and it's unreasonable to expect neighbors to go door-to-door collecting signatures. In addition, language barriers will make this process even more difficult.

We'd also like to know how the committee plans to define neighborhood boundaries under this ordinance. Each area has unique conditions that must be understood before permits are assigned.

It would be wise to take inventory of which houses have available off-street parking in each neighborhood. That data should inform how permits are distributed fairly. In dense areas, we recommend limiting permits to one per unit, with additional guest passes available as needed.

Finally, we want to highlight two practical points. Public parking areas, such as Veterans Park, should be opened for overnight residential parking—this would immediately relieve pressure on nearby streets. And certain streets, like Osborne Avenue, must be striped to ensure fair use of available space; without striping, cars routinely take more than their share.

We sincerely hope that this long-standing issue will be handled with care and accountability.

Sincerely,

**Charles and Roberta DiBisceglie
Osborne Avenue
Norwalk, CT**