

Revised July 13, 2021

**TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Hicks Municipal Center

Council Chambers

Tolland, CT 06084

**VISION STATEMENT**

*To represent education at its best, preparing each student for an ever-changing society, and becoming a full community of learning where excellence is achieved through each individual's success.*

**BOE GOALS**

- Ensure the completion and implementation of the Portrait of a Graduate Report.
- Foster a culture and climate that supports high levels of learning and engagement, promotes mental and physical wellbeing, and leads to individual student success.
- Assess our district needs and advocate for resources to meet them, while pursuing non-traditional sources of revenue, ensuring a quality education for all students.
- Nurture and support an inclusive community where every person, regardless of their identity, is acknowledged and respected. This will ensure that Tolland students have the necessary resources to thrive at school, in the community, and in our diverse world.

REGULAR MEETING

7:00 PM

**AGENDA**

July 14, 2021

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86358441213?pwd=dUJPbnVDV3BoZW1MT1ZJZ1F1K21XZz09>

Meeting ID: 863 5844 1213

Passcode: 5FgfFH

Dial by your location

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 863 5844 1213

Passcode: 582724

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86358441213?pwd=dUJPbnVDV3BoZW1MT1ZJZ1F1K21XZz09>

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- June 23, 2021

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

*The members of the Tolland Board of Education welcome members of the public to share their thoughts and ideas at this time. When appropriate to do so, members of the Board and the administration may respond to comments during "Points of Information". However, in consideration of those in attendance and in an effort to proceed in a timely manner, follow-up discussion may need to take place outside of the meeting setting.*

E. CORRESPONDENCE

F. POINTS OF INFORMATION

G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- H.1 Audrey McKown – National Invention Convention Finalist from Tolland
- H.2 Celebrations
- H.3 COVID update
- H.4 Mask Draft Letter

I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

K. BOARD ACTION

- K.1 BGP Swing Set
- K.2 Meeting format
- K.3 Calendar - ER Day Additions
- K.4 Secretary Contract

L. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

*Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.*

M. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- [Town Council](#) - Special Meeting, June 30, 2021

N. ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION

O. FUTURE

P. NEW BUSINESS

Q. ADJOURNMENT

# TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

## ZOOM Meeting

REGULAR MEETING – June 23, 2021

Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Christina Plourd, Vice Chair (arrived at 7:28PM) ; Tony Holt, Secretary; Renie Besaw, Christine Griffin (arrived at 8:35PM), Jacob Marie, Madhu Renduchintala, Sophia Shaikh

Members Absent: Dana Philbin

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

**A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

*Mr. Renduchintala motioned to move items M and N to before item L respectively.*

*Ms. Shaikh seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- June 9, 2021

*Mr. Renduchintala motioned to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2021 meeting.*

*Mr. Holt seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken*

	<i>Aye</i>	<i>Nay</i>	<i>abstain</i>
<i>Besaw</i>	x		
<i>Holt</i>	x		
<i>Lundgren</i>	x		
<i>Marie</i>			x
<i>Renduchintala</i>	x		
<i>Shaikh</i>	x		

*Motion passed.*

**D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Liz Costa wished the Board a Happy Summer. She commended THS, Dr. Willett, the team and the Board for putting on an incredible end of the year and graduation. She encouraged that they find \$10,000 or whatever it costs to do this in the future. It was very well received. Ms. Costa commented that COVID introduced Zoom meeting content and she encouraged the Board to figure out how to use it in the future. There has been more public participation and engagement.

Colleen Yudichak, 12 Blueberry Hill, commented that she attended last night's Council meeting. She hopes the Board considers doing the hybrid version. More people including parents, the elderly, and others have the opportunity to pay attention to local government.

## E. CORRESPONDENCE

- e-mail concerning the negative effects of school children wearing masks; parent asked that mask-wearing be a choice
- 2 e-mails asking to remove the mask-wearing mandate
- e-mail asking for information on policy meeting cancellations
- e-mail asking for information on the ESSER III grant
- e-mail advocating for continuing virtual or hybrid meetings; author stressed higher participation rates
- e-mail asking that virtual meetings continue in perpetuity
- e-mail recommending that the Board adopt an optional mask policy rather than a require policy

## F. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- Ms. Lundgren noted that she sent an e-mail to Ms. Nuccio and cc'd Dr. Willett regarding the COVID fund and an item will be added to the Council's agenda.
- Ms. Lundgren noted that Ms. Plourd asked her to mention that she received everyone's e-mails about the masks and it will be on the Communications Committee's agenda.
- Mr. Holt offered his heartfelt congratulations and thanks to the district, staff, parents, and students. He participated in and attended the high school graduation, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade program, and the creative preschool program. It was amazing to see the look in students' eyes and how the programs were put together. It was nothing short of heartwarming. He thanked everyone involved for ensuring the programs happened and that the students were able to have the experience.
- Mr. Renduchintala commented that he enjoyed Alexandra Costa's speech. He knows it was the last thing she wanted to do but she did a great job. He congratulated Alexandra and Simar and is excited to see what their futures hold. He congratulated the Class of 2021 and thanked the district and staff for a successful year given the circumstances.
- Mr. Marie commented that all of the speeches were very good. He added that after reading the minutes of the last meeting, he likes what the Communications Committee is planning with the letter about the masks. It is a good way to advocate for some of the parents they are hearing from as they hopefully move past the worst of COVID.
- Ms. Shaikh echoed Mr. Holt and Mr. Renduchintala regarding graduation and end of year celebrations. She can only imagine the coordination and effort it took to put everything into place. It looked spectacular and perfect. She is appreciative of everyone.
- Dr. Willett commented that the Board members did a fantastic job. THS staff worked very hard and Alexandra's speech was amazing as were the others. It was a fantastic event thanks to the students, staff, and parents/guardians. He thanked them all.
- Ms. Lundgren commented that it was great to see the smiles at the high school graduation once students received their diplomas and people celebrating in the stands. She added that that parade was fantastic too. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade ceremony was great as well. They had smiles in their eyes with their masks on.

## G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Nathalie Mitchell and Emily Pereira

While there was not a report, Alexandra Costa thanked everyone for making graduation possible. She has had a really good time being a Board representative for the past 3 years and thanked everyone.

#### H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

##### H.1 EOY Phase III Reconciliation June

Dr. Willett noted that there will be a final budget when everything is closed out. When they end the year and the fiscal year, encumbrances and expenses sometimes run through August and a final accounting will be done. Dr. Willett noted that the numbers presented this evening are subject to change as they near closing out but they provide a picture of how things are playing out.

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment H.1.

In Section 2, some items have been adjusted as time has gone on. As of June 14<sup>th</sup> the total estimated balance for FY21 is \$786,136. In Section 3, the potential EOY expenditures and related balance is \$91,677. Section 4 lists the potential EOY FY21 investments/reductions for FY22 which total \$474,000 which they needed to find. Section 6 included the FY21 potential remaining balance of \$220,459 which will be split 50% to the educational reserve fund and 50% to the COVID fund as requested if they closed out on June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Willett reviewed Section 8 which included information about a conversation at the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting. If the COVID fund does not continue, instead of the 50/50 split, they discussed that 100% be added to the ERF (1% fund). Dr. Willett presented the proposed motion.

Mr. Marie confirmed that the transportation reimbursement is an estimate. In regard to the 50/50 split, he asked if Dr. Willett still believes this is a reasonable allocation. Dr. Willett responded that he does. If the COVID fund (CRF) continues, unused funds will roll to the ERF so long as it does not account for more than 1%.

Mr. Holt asked if the motion fails and the CRF is not continued what would happen to the 50% indicated. Dr. Willett explained that the Board voted on the 50/50 split and he would communicate this to the town. If there is no longer a CRF, it would roll to the town.

[Ms. Plourd arrived at 7:28PM]

Ms. Besaw motioned to move item H.1 to action to item K.5.

Mr. Renduchintala seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

##### H.2 Early Release ER days 2021-2022

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment H.2.

Dr. Willett explained that there is an increased need for tracking of populations and data analysis. Many student populations have been identified as having been effected during the pandemic. The district has data teams that need to meet regularly to analyze data

and identify student populations that are struggling. They also look at interventions and how they are working. Progress monitoring is done, data is collected, and the teams analyze the data. Dr. Willett explained that more time is needed to do this. The proposal, after speaking with staff and administration, is for 5 more early release days. He noted that early release days also provide students with social/emotional benefits. Frequent analysis of data is needed so they can catch evolving challenges. Dr. Willett reviewed the calendar. The additional proposed early release days are: October 6<sup>th</sup>, January 12<sup>th</sup>, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, May 4<sup>th</sup>, and June 1<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Willett reviewed the spans of time between sessions without the proposed dates and explained that in order to be responsive more frequent reviews are needed.

Mr. Holt commented that throughout the past year they have talked about the critical need to get students back into classes and make up for any slips due to COVID and that he understands what Dr. Willett is saying from a data perspective. Mr. Holt asked that now that 5 additional early release days are being recommended if the date of the last day of school is being adjusted. Dr. Willett responded that this would stay the same. Mr. Holt asked if the hours going toward the early release days are necessary. Dr. Willett responded that everything has a cost benefit. Teachers would still have time with the students on those days but would also be able to more clearly identify needs in populations, trends, and challenges. The tradeoff will be that the district can be more responsive with respect to the identification of students who are struggling. He added that the calendar was created long before they had an idea of what some of the dynamics would be.

Mr. Renduchintala noted that he understands why they want to do this. His concern is the effect it will have on working families. He asked if this will be done in ensuing years as well. Dr. Willett responded that it is necessary due to the pandemic. Traditionally, the number of early release days has fluctuated. In coming years, they will request the early release days that reflect what is needed at that time. Dr. Willett explained that if the work is not executed during an early release day, sometimes subs are brought in. Early release days allow the work to be done more predictably and systemically. Mr. Renduchintala explained that his concern is working families that will have to take off 5 half days. Dr. Willett noted that he respects this and only presents this request because of the need. Mr. Renduchintala noted that he understands that it is in the best interest of the students.

Ms. Besaw commented that her understanding is that students benefit the most from time in front of the teacher. They have lost a lot of time this year and at the end of last year. She explained that she could not in good conscience vote for more than 3 additional early release days. Students had half days every Wednesdays and there were comments about wasted Wednesdays. Ms. Besaw explained that it is painful and she does not feel that more time away from the teachers is beneficial for the students. She understands the need to review the data but feels that they need to find another way. Additionally, she is unsure what they will do with data found on June 1<sup>st</sup> when the students will be getting out of school 2 weeks later. After everything that has been said about students being far behind, it is hard for her to imagine that this is the best for the students.

Ms. Plourd confirmed that if the calendar remains as is that teachers would be pulled from the classrooms to analyze data and subs may be used. She explained that she understands that working families may struggle with this and about keeping students in front of the teachers. She has confidence that the teacher would give the sub something that could be implemented in their absence and is leaning toward a no. Dr. Willett explained that when teachers have to do this it is organization time which takes away from the class. Without being able to do the data team pieces students may go for a number of weeks before being identified as needing additional support. The most marginalized students will not be identified as quickly and a response will be delayed. Ms. Lundgren noted that they have at least 1 review every 4 weeks. Dr. Willett responded that that will not be enough for this year. He added that the staff has worked hard and seen results from the efforts but to be able to know what is/is not working and respond more rapidly to the need, more time is necessary to work with the data more frequently.

Ms. Shaikh asked if they are always collecting data of this nature. She imagines that the past year and even this year may have been different with the anomalies due to the pandemic but they collected the same kind of data in 2019. She explained that she does not understand the increase. Dr. Willett responded that there are more students who will have need. Under the circumstances a 4 week span between meetings will be too long. There is more data to compile and students to review. Ms. Shaikh asked if more students will be identified as needing services than in the past. Dr. Willett responded that hopefully the case will be that they can do this under Tier I or II RTI; otherwise, more students may need special education in the future. More students will need support under SRBI/RTI coming off the pandemic. Dr. Willett noted that the early release days are not total instructional losses especially when one considers the research on the length of students' attention spans and recommended class lengths. Many of the classes will match the recommended length with respect to attention span even with the half days. The half days are not wasted or lost days in terms of student learning. They are restructured but understandably can be a headache for families. Ms. Shaikh noted that she understands the need for the early release days and likes the idea of adding 3 days rather than 5. She believes that in terms of students' mental health, they do better when they are in school consistently. Ms. Lundgren agreed.

Ms. Lundgren commented to Dr. Willett that she does not believe that the Board will give 5 early release days but perhaps 2 or 3. Eight are already scheduled.

Mr. Holt commented that Policy 1360 addresses the school calendar and notes that it has to be reviewed by the Board at 2 regular meetings after review by the Policy Committee. The year before last the Board showed that this applies to modifications. He asked if what is being presented tonight is being done as providing information that will go before the Policy Committee and then back to the Board for 2 reading or if this is an action item. Dr. Willett responded that this is not an action item. It is a Superintendent item. The Board is still under a pandemic response condition and being able to know what they are doing as they enter July is helpful from an organizational standpoint. He understands the desire to have 2 readings and the sooner they know the information the more effectively they can plan. Mr. Holt noted that the Policy Committee could call a special meeting. Dr. Willett added that one of the biggest

struggles was when students were not in school and entire days are missed. There is literature that shows that this type of schedule modification can have social/emotional benefits for students because they can connect in other ways. Mr. Holt explained that his question is toward procedure and how the Board takes the recommendation and applies it within the existing Board policies. Dr. Willett respectfully suggested that a modification such as this can be handled through Board meetings but will do what people are more comfortable with in regard to process. In terms of the pandemic response, there have been many circumstances and they are trying to be responsive and he is reporting on the need.

Mr. Renduchintala asked if this was the consensus of the administration of all the schools. Dr. Willett responded that this came from a meeting where this was the consensus of the entire administrative group. Mr. Renduchintala explained that he understands the need for the 5 days and there is no worse feeling than that of a student who is struggling but agrees that students do better when they are in school and that it is in the best interest of the students but is leaning toward 3-4 days.

Ms. Besaw commented that it is difficult to balance the information where students benefit socially/emotionally yet all year the Board had heard that students are in a bad place from not being in school and she struggles with this. She believes after so much time out of school that more time in school is better. Dr. Willett explained that when they discussed this during the pandemic students were not attending school on Wednesdays – and overall the Wednesday early release model is not unique to Tolland. Whether in a pandemic or not, there is a benefit to having early release days on Wednesdays because many things can be accomplished and are very effective when used appropriately to help students and move progress monitoring forward. There are social/emotional benefits when early release Wednesdays are put in place during a typical year. The Wednesdays last year were remote as necessitated for a number of reasons during the pandemic.

Ms. Lundgren advised that the Board may approve 2-3 days and recommended bringing this to the Policy Committee. This would give the district time to select the dates that would be most beneficial. An agenda item can be added for the July 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

- Policy – Mr. Holt noted that the Committee met today at 6PM. Items discussed included the tabling of the mask policy; the mask issue being addressed by the Communications Committee; Policy 3010
- Communications Committee – will meet on June 28<sup>th</sup> at 3PM; will discuss state guidelines for masking and advocacy from the Board
- Mental Health and Substance Use Advisory Taskforce – Mr. Marie noted that they had a good discussion with State Trooper Kevin Eklund.

#### J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ms. Lundgren congratulated the Tolland seniors and noted that it was a wonderful experience going to the Dunkin' Donuts Park and seeing the smiles when students received their diplomas as well as seeing the 8<sup>th</sup> graders. She hopes students, teachers, and administration have a



relaxing summer and a little non-COVID related fun. She hopes they come back refreshed. Everyone needs a break and some fresh air. Fall will be the start of another great year.

K. BOARD ACTION

K.1 Obsolete and Surplus Equipment  
Dr. Willett reviewed attachment K.1.

*Mr. Renduchintala motioned to declare the items noted as obsolete and turn the items over to the Town in accordance with the Board of Education Policy 3040.*

*Mr. Marie seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

K.2 Birch Grove Primary School Change Orders  
Dr. Willett reviewed attachment K.2.

*Mr. Marie motioned to accept documentation related to Project 142-0083-N State Change Orders Numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, presented in the Board of Education meeting of June 23, 2021, and authorize the Superintendent to sign all related documentation and approvals to apply for reimbursement from the State for eligible items.*

*Mr. Renduchintala seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: Ms. Murray apologized and noted that they would like the approval of Change Order #1 included in the motion.*

*Mr. Marie motioned to rescind the motion.*

*Mr. Renduchintala seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Marie motioned to accept documentation related to Project 142-0083-N State Change Orders Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, presented in the Board of Education meeting of June 23, 2021, and authorize the Superintendent to sign all related documentation and approvals to apply for reimbursement from the State for eligible items.*

*Mr. Renduchintala seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: Mr. Holt asked about the appropriateness of adding Change Order #1. The item summary specifically says Change Orders #2-6. He asked if an additional change order can be added. Dr. Willett explained that Change Order #1 is included in the supporting materials and is in the spirit and intention of what it should be. Mr. Marie asked if this is something they have seen in the past. Ms. Murray noted that the Board has seen some of these and this is a process that they need to go through to ensure the Change Orders are in the correct format for consideration for eligibility for reimbursement by the state. Ms. Murray confirmed that the Building Committee has reviewed Change Order #1.*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

	Aye	Nay	abstain
Besaw	x		
Holt		x	
Lundgren	x		

<i>Marie</i>	<i>x</i>		
<i>Plourd</i>	<i>x</i>		
<i>Renduchintala</i>	<i>x</i>		
<i>Shaikh</i>	<i>x</i>		

*Motion passed.*

K.3. Field and Grounds Agreement  
Dr. Willett reviewed attachment K.3.

Dr. Willett noted that the major change is that it will be a 3-year agreement that may be revisited by either party at any time. Birch Grove will be a new facility with a new plant so there may be items as of October/November that may need to be modified in the agreement at that time.

Ms. Lundgren asked when the discussion about funding the update and upkeep of the turf field at THS will take place with the Council. Dr. Willett recommended that Ms. Lundgren reach out to the Chair of the Council to discuss having a formal conversation between both parties. To Dr. Willett's knowledge a date has not been set. At this time the agreement in the document is to work collaboratively. This would be a capital request since the Board cannot take out a loan. The Board would need to put \$700K-\$1M in the budget for the purpose of addressing the turf field and typically something of this size would be generally be a capital request and loan.

Mr. Marie commented that this was discussed by the Finance and Facilities Committee and they talked about introducing formal language in the form of a motion directing Ms. Lundgren to open discussions with the Council Chair and establish a date. He believes it makes sense to go forward with the agreement at this time.

Ms. Besaw commented that the agreement was signed last year with the same discussion regarding the turf field. It is \$750K and the turf field lasts for 10-12 years so they need to be more specific about what the plan is going forward. While the Board cannot take out a loan, they could include funds in the budget to go toward the ERF fund so money is available when the bill comes due. They do not want to take a 20 year bond for a field that lasts 10-12 years. They need to know what portion each party is covering so they can start the process of putting money aside. Dr. Willett explained that the Board has complied with the Agreement and the turf field was included in the Capital Improvement Request. It is then up to the town what to do with the request. A funding mechanism for this going forward would be a smart thing to do. Whether that sits on the Board side in the ERF or the town side is the conversation that needs to take place. The ERF can be used for technology, special education, or capital but there may be items that the Board will want with respect to technology, special education, or maintenance of effort. Some people may struggle with the idea that a \$1M capital expense would need to be paid through the Board's ERF. A discussion between the 2 bodies needs to take place because when it was decided not everyone was in agreement that this would be a Board item.

Ms. Lundgren asked why part of the pay to play fees does not go toward the turf field. Dr. Willett explained that Tolland has one of the highest fees in the area and there are

no additional monies to put toward anything in the current funding model. Pay to play fees fund sports as they exist and have nothing to do with capital improvements. Dr. Willett noted that the town has collected some usage fees in the past but he does not know if this was put aside but doubts it is enough to make a dent.

Mr. Renduchintala agreed that they need to know what they are getting into. They are pre-investing in FY22 and if they go into FY23 it will appear that they are asking for a large increase. People will only look at the bottom line increase.

Ms. Lundgren agreed that a discussion about how this will be paid for would be ideal for a joint meeting of the Board and the Council.

*Mr. Marie motioned to approve the Fields and Grounds Agreement as presented in the June 23, 2021 meeting.*

*Mr. Holt seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

	<i>Aye</i>	<i>Nay</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
<i>Besaw</i>		x	
<i>Griffin</i>		x	
<i>Holt</i>		x	
<i>Lundgren</i>		x	
<i>Marie</i>	x		
<i>Plourd</i>		x	
<i>Renduchintala</i>	x		
<i>Shaikh</i>			x

*Motion failed.*

A discussion regarding including information about seeking a joint meeting with the Council took place. It was noted that if the meeting does not occur the Board is rescinding its approval.

*Mr. Marie motioned to approve the Fields and Grounds Agreement as presented in the June 23, 2021 meeting with the stipulation that a joint meeting must occur by September 2021 between the Board of Education and the Town Council to discuss the financial resolution to the artificial turf field at the high school.*

*Mr. Holt seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

Ms. Lundgren will reach out to the Chair of the Council to let her know about the motion.

- K.4. Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan  
Dr. Willett reviewed attachment K.4.

Dr. Willett noted that the caveat is if state guidance changes or something is required of the district, they would need to go with the guidance of the state or the DPH. The items are in compliance with the ESSER III American Rescue Plan and in order to be eligible the plan needs to be filed with the state this evening. The requirement is that it is seen by the public. The public saw it on July 9<sup>th</sup>, on the website, and again this evening, June 23<sup>rd</sup> and has had an opportunity to respond. This replaces the Continuity of Learning Plan.

Mr. Renduchintala noted that under S1.1 the e-mail address is incorrect. Dr. Willett made the correction.

Mr. Marie confirmed that once created the document is flexible. Dr. Willett noted that the document is revisited every 6 months for the next 2 years. He will let the Board know of modifications.

*Mr. Marie motioned to approve the Tolland Public Schools Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan and approve its submission in compliance with the ARP ESSER III grant process.*

*Mr. Holt seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

#### K.5 EOY Phase III Reconciliation June

*Mr. Renduchintala motioned that in the event the Town of Tolland's Education COVID Relief Fund is discontinued, any funds the Board of Education requested be rolled into the fund from FY21 be instead rolled into the Educational Reserve Fund.*

*Mr. Marie seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

	<i>Aye</i>	<i>Nay</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
<i>Besaw</i>	x		
<i>Griffin</i>	x		
<i>Holt</i>		x	
<i>Lundgren</i>	x		
<i>Marie</i>	x		
<i>Plourd</i>	x		
<i>Renduchintala</i>	x		
<i>Shaikh</i>	x		

*Motion passed.*

#### L. ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION

*Mr. Marie motioned to enter executive session at 8:59PM for the purpose of the Superintendent's evaluation and invited Dr. Willett to attend.*

*Mr. Renduchintala seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

The Board exited executive session at 10:11PM.

M. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none

N. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- 2021-06-08 Regular Meeting Minutes
- Mr. Renduchintala commented that they received many e-mails about masks. They need to follow the guidelines of the EHHD and the DPH and it will be discussed in the Communications Committee. He encouraged people to write to state representatives to let them know their feelings on this.
- Mr. Holt commented that many people attended the Policy Committee meeting today. He believes this is largely due to the discussion about masks. They were unable to have a Public Participation session during the meeting but Mr. Holt encouraged people to bring up questions and concerns in public session at Board meetings or write to the Board.

O. FUTURE

P. NEW BUSINESS – none

Q. ADJOURNMENT

*Mr. Marie motioned to adjourn at 10:11PM.*

*Ms. Besaw seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Pascuzzi  
Clerk

**SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND**

**ITEM:** Honoring Audrey McKown – National Invention Convention

**ITEM SUBMITTED BY:** Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

**FOR BOE MEETING:** 7-14-2021

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

Ms. Audrey McKown made nationals three years in a row for the Invention Convention. The Invention Convention is a global K-12 invention education program that teaches students problem-identification, problem-solving, entrepreneurship and creativity skills and builds confidence in invention, innovation and entrepreneurship for life.

Despite the pandemic, and the extra work being involved in the Invention Convention entails, Audrey persevered and was selected to represent Tolland at the Connecticut Invention Convention. She was recognized in the Connecticut Invention Convention and identified as a finalist and allowed to compete in the National Invention Convention.

She is with us tonight to share her invention!

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:** N/A

**BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:** N/A

**BOE ACTION DESIRED:**

Review of the hard work of our gifted student.

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:**

More information on the invention convention:

<https://inhub.thehenryford.org/icw/home>

**SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND**

**ITEM:** Celebrations of our students, staff, and community

**ITEM SUBMITTED BY:** Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

**FOR BOE MEETING:** 7-14-2021

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

Tolland High School students participated in the Technology Student Association national competition for the first time. Daniel Duff, Will Glaser, and Eric Eckblom placed third in the regional competition for Video Game Design which included participants from Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York.

The Technology Student Association (TSA) is a national, non-profit organization of more than 250,000 middle and high school students which fosters personal growth, leadership, and career opportunities in technology, innovation, design, and engineering.

Dan, Will, and Eric were tasked with creating an adventure themed interactive, online game. They researched, designed, and programmed the game independently. Their game was judged by creativity and artisanship, technical programming skill, and storyline. They created a portfolio which included game directions, control function, and storyboard.

Their design then moved on to the national competition. This competition was held virtually during the month of June. The students are looking forward to competing again next year and hope to attend the national conference in person in June of 2022.

TSA Chapter Advisor is Beth L. Penney, P.E. She also serves as a Technology Education Teacher, Sophomore Class Advisor, and Habitat for Humanity Women Build Team Captain.

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:** N / A

**BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:** N/A

**BOE ACTION DESIRED:**

Honor/Celebration of our students, faculty, and community.

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:**

None

**SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND**

**ITEM:** COVID update

**ITEM SUBMITTED BY:** Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

**FOR BOE MEETING:** 7-14-2021

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

Information from the EHHD:

- The risk of COVID-19 transmission among an unvaccinated population increases with the absence of universal mask usage, regardless of age group.
- Data from England where there is reasonable vaccination coverage, indicates the Delta variant is significantly more transmissible compared to other variants within the population, including the younger age groups.
  - [https://spiral.imperial.ac.uk/bitstream/10044/1/89629/10/react1\\_r12\\_preprint\\_final.pdf](https://spiral.imperial.ac.uk/bitstream/10044/1/89629/10/react1_r12_preprint_final.pdf)
  - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/993321/S1267\\_SPI-M-O\\_Consensus\\_Statement.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/993321/S1267_SPI-M-O_Consensus_Statement.pdf)
- Recent data from Scotland suggests that the Delta variant may result in more severe disease. However, more data is needed.
  - [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(21\)01358-1/fulltext#coronavirus-linkback-header](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(21)01358-1/fulltext#coronavirus-linkback-header)

The CDC (and DPH) continue to recommend face coverings for those older than two years of age as an effective mechanism to mitigate the risk of transmission in public places, including school settings.

- [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprevent-getting-sick%2Fmasks-protect-you-and-me.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprevent-getting-sick%2Fmasks-protect-you-and-me.html)

Due to the emergence of the more transmissible variants, and the increase in prevalence that can occur with many respiratory diseases in the fall and winter, the regional transmission risk levels remain uncertain for the near future, particularly for those unvaccinated.

The CT DPH is anticipating an update to the CDC's school guidance in "early July" for the up-coming school year.

This guidance will be crucial to review guidance prior to establishing any final position on student health and wellness as it pertains to COVID-19 precautions, and allow for an informed decision on this important issue.

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:** N / A

**BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:** N / A

**BOE ACTION DESIRED:** Review

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:** None



**SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND**

**ITEM:** Draft Mask Letter

**ITEM SUBMITTED BY:** Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

**FOR BOE MEETING:** 7-14-2021

**ITEM SUMMARY:**  
Draft letter to DPH / State of Connecticut from Tolland Board of Education:

To whom it may concern:

The Tolland Board of Education requests that the State of Connecticut make mask-wearing optional for all students and school staff for the 2021-2022 school year, provided that Covid-19 cases remain at low levels.

Mask wearing, like all public health measures have their time and place, but each measure also comes with costs. During the heat of the pandemic, those costs were justified. Many years from now Americans will look back at this time and have respect for the great sacrifice students, parents, and teachers made to protect each other by quarantining, social distancing, and mask wearing. The Board does not want to understate this point, and believes that countless lives were saved by these measures.

Luckily, vaccines have turned the tide of the pandemic, and deaths and case-counts have plummeted in the past few months. This is something to be celebrated, but with each passing day the costs of many public health measures, particularly mask wearing, become greater relative to the benefits they provide.

The costs of wearing a mask are not trivial. Besides the discomfort experienced by the wearer, masks conceal the face, which is the focal point of human interaction. After the mask mandate was lifted for vaccinated individuals outside of school, many felt that the end of a dark era had arrived, that the most visible symbol of the pandemic that had caused so much death and pain was no more.

For young students who have lived through a pandemic that has lasted more than a year (that is 20% of a kindergartner's life), the joy of seeing their friend's faces, of being back to normal, will be of enormous benefit to their mental health.

Furthermore, even though the youngest students cannot be vaccinated as of the writing of this letter, it should be noted that Connecticut still has one of the highest vaccination rates in the country, and this protects everyone. Additionally, it is known that young children are the least likely to be severely affected by Covid-19, whereas the age group most affected, the elderly, are mostly vaccinated. These factors are incredibly important in determining the Board's view on this subject. Safety will always be our top priority, but we believe that with the vastly improved outlook, we are ready to help our students' mental health recover by taking this step towards normalcy.

[Board of Education Members Names and Signatures]

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:** N / A

**BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:** N / A

**BOE ACTION DESIRED:**

Review of draft letter, potential move to action, adoption, and authorization for the Superintendent to send this on behalf of the Tolland Board of Education.

**Move to action.**

**Motion:** *Approve the Board of Education Mask Letter as presented in H.4 of the 7-14-2021 Board of Education Meeting and authorize the Superintendent to send the letter on behalf of the Tolland Board of Education to the appropriate representatives at the State of Connecticut, Connecticut State Department of Education and Department of Public Health.*

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:**

None

**SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND**

**ITEM:** BGP Swing Set Package

**ITEM SUBMITTED BY:** Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

**FOR BOE MEETING:** 7-14-2021

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

The Swing Set Package for the Birch Grove Primary School project is very similar to the Phase 4: FF&E and the Phase 5: Technology packages which the BOE approved earlier this year. The architect firm, JCJ Architecture has been working diligently to prepare the Swing Set package, including:

- Site Civil Engineer determination of the optimal location for the swing set based on site conditions, safety, and accessibility.
- The same playground vendor that provided all the new playground equipment for the project would be contracted for the swing set.
- A professional cost estimate will be compiled for the Swing Set package. This cost is included with the paperwork.
- If and when OCSGR approves the swing set package, JCJ will work with D'Amato to get final pricing, which will be reviewed by the Building Committee. The Building Committee will make the final decision as to whether this component will be included as part of the project.

The State of CT Office of School Construction Grants and Review (OSCGR) requires that the Swing Set package be approved by both the Building Committee and Board of Education for the determination on whether the purchase would be eligible for reimbursement.

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**

See attachments.

**BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW: N / A**

**BOE ACTION DESIRED:**

Recommended Motion:

*Motion to approve the final Birch Grove Primary School Swing Set Plans and Project Manuals, as prepared for bidding and dated June 28, 2021, including the professional cost estimate, which is within the \$46 Million total project cost, for the State Office of School Construction Grants and Review Project Number 142-0083N. This motion authorizes the Chair of the Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools to sign State Forms SCG-042: Request for Review of Final Plans.*

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:**

Attachments:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qpljrVguLT4VAsJskgfbG3VjuXJQpAbi?usp=sharing>

[2021-0728 D'Amato Estimated Costs](#)

[H19006.00 Birch Grove Primary School Phase 3 Added Swing Set](#)

[Project Manual – Birch Grove ES-Phase 3 CD – 2021-07-01](#)

[O'Brien & Sons – Swing Set Playground Layout](#)

[C-4.0 ADA Swing Set Plan](#)

[C-4.0 Swing Set Site Plan](#)

**SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND**

**ITEM:** Meeting Format

**ITEM SUBMITTED BY:** Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

**FOR BOE MEETING:** 7-14-2021

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

Executive Order expired on June 30, 2021. State Senate Bill 1202, the "Implementer Bill" passed the State House and Senate. The new law gives public agencies as of July 1, 2021 and extending through April 30, 2022, the ability to hold meetings accessible to the public by means of electronic equipment or by means of electronic equipment in conjunction with an in-person meeting. For more information about the Implementer Bill see:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2021/TOB/S/PDF/2021SB-01202-R00-SB.PDF>

Each Town board will have to decide the meeting method through which it will conduct its business for the period of July 1, 2021, through April 30, 2022. There are three choices, further elaborated with Pros/Cons below:

- 1) Fully In-person (meeting method typically used prior to pandemic)
- 2) Fully Remote (solely by means of electronic equipment)
- 3) Hybrid (in-person plus by means of electronic equipment for those not in person)

**1) Option One: Public meetings could go back fully in-person**

**Pros:**

- Fully in-person puts us back within the realm of FOIA. There is a comfort to this, since it is what we have been doing for decades.
- In-person interaction at public meetings has been cited as something that has been missed. Looking someone in the eye, and not through a screen, helps build relationships and foster understanding. Sometimes, virtually, things can be lost, and words and intent are misconstrued.

**Cons:**

- Some members of the public won't be able to participate in-person, for whatever reasons.
- Board members may request to participate remotely, and accommodations would have to be made to have that meeting in a space where the proper technology exists to have the remote participator be able to interact with those in-person. This does not extend to members of the public. Only remote board participators would receive the telephone credentials or Zoom link to the meeting.

## **2) Option Two: Public meetings could stay fully remote**

Pros:

- Remote meetings have had higher participation rates than in-person meetings.
- Convenience for staff, guests, and residents to participate from home and not have to drive home afterwards.
- People at higher risk can participate without having to come in-person and subject themselves to risk.

Cons:

- Upon written request at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, a member of the public must be provided with a physical location and any electronic equipment necessary to attend the meeting in real time in such a manner as to allow that member of the public to participate in the same manner in which he/she would participate at an in-person meeting at which they were in attendance. The agency shall ensure that the electronic meeting is recorded and later available for viewing.
- Cost impacts, whether it be for the technology used to view the meeting, or the staff time to oversee the space where the accommodation is taking place.
- Vigilance against security threats and Zoom bombings.
- Cost of software licenses.
- Convenience has meant that meetings have trended longer.
- Some persons have cited minor trouble with the remote meeting software, or possible issues stemming from disabilities, resulting in aversion to the technology.

## **Option 3: Hybrid approach**

Pros:

- Depending on your comfort level with attending public meetings in-person, or attending remotely, almost everyone can be accommodated using a hybrid approach. Those who wish to come in person may be able to do so. Those who wish to stay home and participate may be able to do so.

Cons:

- Staff has to come in-person regardless. Someone has to be responsible for the equipment.
- Some Town boards do not have staff and will have to figure out the technology for themselves and are responsible for the meeting happening without interruption.
- Protocols will have to be established to ensure decorum and fair participation between remote and in-person participants. Someone will need to monitor virtual participants. Feedback I have heard from a neighboring community is that the staff has not been able to concentrate on the meeting itself, as their responsibility and attention becomes divided to all the other goings-on in the room. For those boards that do not have staff, the Chair will be the most likely person to keep the order of the meeting, which would subject them to distraction.

- Room availability is another issue. At the moment, the only room that is outfitted for this hybrid model is the Council Chambers. We may not be able to have multiple hybrid board meetings happening at the same time. May take some time to procure additional equipment for other rooms if funding allows.

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**                      **N / A**

**BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:**        **N / A**

**BOE ACTION DESIRED:**

Determine the meeting method utilized by the Tolland Board of Education, in accordance with State Senate Bill 1202, of Fully In-Person, Fully Remote, or Hybrid as defined above.

Motion:

In accordance with State Senate Bill 1202, the Tolland Board of Education will practice the (*Fully In-Person, Fully Remote, or Hybrid* ) meeting method for the period of July 2021 through April 30, 2022.

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:**

None

**SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND**

**ITEM:** Calendar – ER Additions

**ITEM SUBMITTED BY:** Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

**FOR BOE MEETING:** 7-14-2021

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

Addition of three Early Release days. Request was seven, presented as five in 6/23/2021 Board of Education meeting, and reduced further to three:

October 6

January 12

June 8

This is a second read.

Calendar with additions in blue:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1j\\_dim5NionLtJwUtYXQaGsoWtqUc01mqe6posmYzA7M/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1j_dim5NionLtJwUtYXQaGsoWtqUc01mqe6posmYzA7M/edit?usp=sharing)

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:** N/A

**BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:** N/A

**BOE ACTION DESIRED:**

**Motion:**

Motion to approve the addition of October 6, January 12, June 8 Early Release days to the 2021-2022 Tolland Public School Calendar.

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:**

None

## MINUTES

### TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL ZOOM REMOTE MEETING June 22, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tammy Nuccio, Chair; Steve Jones, Vice Chair; Brenda Falusi, Sophia Johnson; Lou Luba, Kurt Schenher

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** John Reagan

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Rosen, Town Manager; Mike Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services; Beverly Bellody, Director, Human Services; Lisa Hancock, Director, Finance & Records/Treasurer; Michele Manas, Collector of Revenue

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Nuccio called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited
3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Observed
4. **PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:** none
5. **PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** *(on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council) (2-minute limit)*

Rebecca Risley, 103 Mountain Spring Road, commented that as the Council is preparing to go back to in-person meetings, she is speaking in support of continuing Zoom access for all town meetings: boards, committees, commissions, and task forces. She explained that while the pandemic caused havoc in people's lives, one silver lining was that Zoom enabled community members to participate in their local government. The process allowed parents, senior citizens, people with disabilities, and residents who would not be able to attend meetings in person to be included in the work of town government. People have attended consistently and in record numbers. She explained that it seems evident that it is a service the town utilizes and appreciates. Tonight there are about 25 public participants which is a greater number than would likely attend in-person meetings on a regular basis. She hopes Zoom can continue to be implemented for the town.

Colleen Yudichak, 12 Blueberry Hill, commented on item 8.3. She believes having the option of Zoom meetings and in-person meetings would benefit the town. She explained that there are many people in town, as noted by the last speaker, such as parents, senior citizens, residents with disabilities for whom Zoom is an easier way for them to stay tuned to what is going on in local government and she looks forward to the Council's discussion.

Kristen Morgan, 167 Dockerel Road, commented that she is grateful to have the opportunity to express her support for continuing to have meetings available to the public via Zoom. She has 2 young kids and it would be a hardship for her to attend meetings. Like other adaptations due to COVID, she believes this one has proven to have value because it allows citizens to not only view meeting proceedings but also to participate. She believes many have discovered a way to engage in public government that was difficult previously due to accessibility issues such as disabilities, compromised immune systems, difficulty driving at night, or a lack of reliable transportation. Additionally, she explained that she can use her computer for closed captioning because she has a hard time hearing in person. She appreciates the meetings being on Zoom and is in favor of keeping them in this format.

Kate Howard-Bender, 103 Goose Lane, commented that she does not anticipate hearing from anyone other than Ms. Nuccio or possibly Mr. Luba or others. She read an e-mail that she sent to the Town Council and the Board of Education. This e-mail explained that Ms. Howard-Bender understood that the Council would be discussing whether or not to continue virtual participation at town meetings. She believes it is worth the investment to ensure that Tolland residents have full access to the decisions and discussions. During the pandemic there has been higher attendance at town meetings and she cannot conceive of any reason to discontinue this public access. She believes the Council agrees that transparency in government is essential and it would show that the Council believes in transparency if it ensures Zoom or other remote participation. She asked the Council if it wants to keep residents informed and engaged in the proceedings or if the Council wants to shut residents out. She hopes it is not the latter.



Bob Rubino, 296 Weigold Road, commented that in regard to item 8.3 that the previous speakers hit the right note. Continuing Zoom is great for access and he supports its continuation. Mr. Rubino commented on item 8.1. He is in support of this item and explained that the property represents a unique complement to Tolland's open space properties. It offers an equal portion of a number of intangible underpinnings that constitute Tolland's quality of life such as protection of farmland represented by the 5 acre hay field, preservation of 2 mill sites, enhancement of the Greenway connectivity between open space parcels: Joshua's Trust, the Tobiassen property, the Weigold Conservation Area, the Skungamaug River and the surrounding parcels. The Weigold Living Trust is willing to gift this parcel to the town and this speaks volumes to the Conservation Commission as a vibrant and trustworthy organization dedicated to its charge of conserving open space. This has been demonstrated over the past 22 years and the Commission has a reputation of honoring the legacies of the family names of generous benefactors. Couple this with respectful care of the property at little to no cost to the taxpayers thanks to community volunteers; it secures Tolland's quality of life into the future. As with the other open space properties in town, if the Council approves entering into the sales agreement, Mr. Rubino believes the Conservation Commission's Open Space Management Plan will strike an appropriate balance between conservation of the unique aspects of the public's safety when visiting this latest crown jewel of Tolland's irreplaceable portfolio of open space.

**6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS: none**

**7a. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL**

Tourism – Ms. Falusi noted that the Facebook page is continuing to get a lot of likes and interaction including from people outside of town. The annual and marketing meetings will be held next Tuesday.

Sustainable CT – Ms. Falusi noted that a meeting was held with a couple of the summer fellows. In regard to the Wanat property, they are checking if Tolland can up the matching even though they have not asked for the maximum amount. It is believed they may be able to increase it since enough was collected from the residents. When asked, Mr. Rosen noted that he has not yet received a response. Ms. Falusi added that they are looking at getting an equity coach to work with the town. They need to take one town project and ensure that every aspect of it is looked at through an equity lens to ensure that no marginalized group is excluded from participating or benefiting from the program. They are also looking to see about having someone who can do equity training that would be open to residents. She noted that there does not appear to be a cost for this. Another option is to pair with another community and offer residents equity training.

**7b. REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS**

- Historic District Commission- meeting cancelled
- Blight Committee – meeting cancelled
- Planning & Zoning Commission – Ms. Falusi provided an update.
- Board of Education – Ms. Johnson provided an update.
- Permanent Celebration Committee – Ms. Johnson provided an update.
- Conservation Commission – Mr. Jones provided an update of the June 10th meeting. Next meeting June 24th.
- Water Commission – Mr. Jones provided an update of the June 21st meeting.
- Birch Grove Building Committee – Mr. Luba provided an update.
- Mental Health and Substance Use Advisory Task Force – Mr. Schenher provided an update.
- Recreation Advisory Board - Mr. Schenher provided an update.
- Commission on People with Disabilities – Ms. Nuccio provided an update.
- Eastern Highlands Health District – Mr. Rosen provided an update.

**8. NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):**

- 8.1** Consideration of a resolution for the Town Manager and Town Attorney to enter into a negotiated Purchase and Sale Agreement for the Weigold Property at a cost of \$0.  
Mr. Rosen provided background information on this item.  
Mr. Rosen noted that the Conservation Commission and the Land Acquisition Advisory Committee have both reviewed this parcel and recommend that the town enter into a purchase and sale agreement. The owner is willing to gift and donate it for a cost of \$0.00 to the town.



If approved by the Council, Mr. Rosen and the Town Attorney will enter into formal negotiations with the property owner. While the dollar amount is zero, there are other items that will need to be addressed in the purchase and sale agreement.

Mr. Jones asked what the next step would be if approved. Mr. Rosen responded that the Council will need to designate at a future meeting who will maintain the parcel.

Ms. Nuccio asked if there are any limitations on this gift. She believes that one of the conditions is that the property would not be sold or developed – that it would remain open conserved space. Mr. Rosen responded that they have not yet drafted the agreement. They will speak with the owner to learn what they want in exchange for the purchase price but he believes they want it to be preserved as open space for perpetuity. Mr. Hutton noted that this is his understanding as well. Ms. Nuccio asked if it would be named after the family. Mr. Hutton responded that that would be the leaning of the Conservation Commission but he does not recall the owner asking for a specific naming of the property. Ms. Nuccio noted that the property is beautiful and can be used as open space. If the Council gives permission to negotiate the purchase and sale agreement, Attorney Conti explained that he would expect that the owner will ask for what he and other members of the trust would want included. Mr. Rosen and Attorney Conti would use their best judgment and if they find something could be controversial or something that the Council should consider, Attorney Conti expects they would return the Council; otherwise, it would be executed. Ms. Nuccio noted that she would like it to be in perpetuity open space and she does not have any issue with having the naming rights to the Weigold family.

Mr. Luba commented that they are discussing this as being open space in perpetuity per the deed but his concern is if it could still be considered developable land. Even though there may be a provision in the deed, if there is a statutory change as far as the definition of open space, he asked how it would be effected if at all. Ms. Nuccio commented that she toured the property and does not believe there is enough to develop. She explained that it includes a beautiful lake, a river, woods, dams, and a mill. Mr. Luba explained that he has concern because he believes this has been expressed previously in the legislature and he wants to ensure they examine all possible issues.

Ms. Johnson asked about open space in perpetuity and about air rights for items such as cell towers and billboards. She would like this to be addressed in the details of the contract.

*Mr. Jones motioned:*

***BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby authorizes the Town Manager and Town Attorney to enter into a negotiated Purchase and Sale Agreement for the Weigold Property for a cost of \$0.

*Ms. Falusi seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

8.2 Consideration and action on the Suspense Tax List for June 30, 2021.

Mr. Rosen noted this is an annual business item that addresses taxes that they have not been able to collect. There are 105 accounts that total just under \$35,000. Multiple attempts have been made to collect on the accounts. In some cases they have been unable to locate the person while in others some are deceased or there are bankruptcies. Mr. Rosen noted that the town has a 99% collection rate. He noted that some of the listed accounts have been turned over to law offices, at no cost to the town for collection. Tonight, they are requesting approval of the 2021 Suspense Tax List in the amount of \$34,927.99.

Ms. Nuccio asked if when the List is sent for collection if the town receives any portion of what is collected. Ms. Manas explained a 15% fee is charged to the entity that owes the money in addition to the taxes owed so the town receives the taxes that are due. This includes the 18% penalty.

*Mr. Jones motioned:*

***BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby approves the June 30, 2021 Suspense List in the amount of \$34,927.99.

*Mr. Luba seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

- 8.3 Discussion of Executive Order 7B expiration.  
Mr. Rosen presented the following information:

SUBJECT: Executive Order 7B Expiration, and subsequent Implementer Bill Provisions

**Background**

We have been operating remote public meetings under Governor Executive Order (EO) 7B for about 15 months now, and the Town of Tolland has adapted well to this measure. However, EO 7B is going to expire on June 30, 2021, and we now find ourselves at the crossroads of how do we best conduct public meetings going forward.

**What happens on July 1?**

EO 7B expires, and originally the thought was without that provision in place, the Town would automatically revert back to what it was doing pre-COVID 19 pandemic, which was operating in-person public meetings, held in public venues, subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). We had been working on a remote participation policy for officials, which we held off on implementing until after the pandemic, to see if anything changed due to the pandemic. In that draft, remote participation was only allowed as a matter of need and not convenience. With the EO expiring, we did not have much choice except to universally go back to in-person meetings, as remote meetings would no longer be permissible after July 1.

However, last week, State Senate Bill 1202, also known as the Implementer Bill, passed the State House and the State Senate, and is currently awaiting signature by the governor. This new law does in fact give public agencies, after July 1, 2021 and until April 30, 2022, the ability to hold meetings accessible to the public by means of electronic equipment or by means of electronic equipment in conjunction with an in-person meeting. The Implementer Bill can be viewed at the following link, with relevant sections beginning around lines 6650 and 7006:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2021/TOB/S/PDF/2021SB-01202-R00-SB.PDF>

The Town Attorney has opined that the Town Charter allows Town boards to make their own protocols for meetings. Therefore, the Town Council cannot mandate to any other Town board in which manner it will conduct its meetings, so long as it complies with FOIA and the measures in the Implementer Bill.

Thus, each Town board will have to post a meeting and decide which way it wishes to conduct its business for the time period of July 1, 2021 through at least April 30, 2022 when the Implementer Bill initially expires. I would recommend that all Town boards post a remote meeting using Zoom sometime in the next few weeks to gather together virtually, and discuss what it would prefer to do. Again, the three choices are 1) holding a meeting in-person (like the old days), 2) in-person plus by means of electronic equipment (aka hybrid), or 3) solely by means of electronic equipment (aka fully remote).

**A few other items to note, for Boards looking for help to make this decision**

1. Per the implementer bill, If an agency conducts a meeting solely by means of electronic equipment after July 1, then: (1) upon written request at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, a member of the public must be provided with a physical location and any electronic equipment necessary to attend the meeting in real time in such a manner as to allow that member of the public to participate in the same manner in which

he/she would participate at an in-person meeting at which they were in attendance; (2) the agency shall ensure that the electronic meeting is recorded and later available for viewing.

What this means is that if a board is having a purely remote meeting and someone requests to be accommodated in the fashion I just described, the Board would have to make arrangements to find a location and equipment to view and participate in the remote meeting. This option will almost certainly have some cost impact, whether it is for the technology used to view the meeting, or the staff time to oversee the space where the accommodation is taking place.

2. Any public agency that conducts an in-person only meeting shall provide members of the public agency the opportunity to participate by means of electronic equipment, except that a public agency is not required to adjourn or postpone a meeting if a member loses the ability to participate because of an interruption, failure or degradation of that member's connection by electronic equipment, unless the member's participation is necessary to form a quorum.

What this means is that if you are having an in-person meeting and a member of that board requests an electronic accommodation to that meeting, accommodations would have to be made to have that meeting in a space where the proper technology exists to have the remote participator be able to interact with those in-person. This does not extend to members of the public, but just to those on the board to participate remotely. If there are no requests from board members to have a remote component, then no remote component is required. Only a member of the board can request this accommodation, and although the law does not stipulate this, it would be helpful if a policy or practice was put in place to have a cutoff of when this request can be made so that proper arrangements can be prepared. Our only room location in a Town facility that is fully equipped to have remote participators is the Town Council Chambers on the 6th floor of Town Hall. No other room has the computer/ TV screen/ Owl camera setup that make this a doable measure. Inherently, there will be conflicts for that room, and even if we begin to outfit more Town rooms with the technology, it will be awhile for the procurements to take place, and I foresee issues. Meetings may have to be rescheduled to nights where the Chambers is vacant in order to accommodate remote participators. Only remote board participators would receive the telephone credentials or the Zoom link to the meeting. Just as a caveat, there is also a learning curve for board members and staff alike, who will need training on how the technology works, and there may be growing pains and things may go wrong at first. I can imagine a scenario where a public hearing or perhaps a budget meeting may get cancelled or postponed due to technical issues, and the fallout that might cause.

3. Lastly, there is the hybrid option, which mirrors many of the issues the in-person option poses if there are remote participators, the difference being that now members of the public are also remotely participating as well as board members. Again the major themes here are how many rooms is the Town able to outfit for what might end up being a temporary measure, as well as who is going to keep an eye on everything that is taking place electronically while there are folks also physically in the room, and cyber security and Zoom-bombing will be more difficult to keep track of with the hybrid option. Coventry, for example, has had 3 Zoom bombs, even with their controlled settings. Then there are also some Town boards that do not have staff, and will have to figure out the technology for themselves and are responsible for the meeting happening without interruption. Lastly, there will be an initial period of time where we will not be able to accommodate multiple hybrid meetings happening simultaneously within Town Hall.

Ms. Nuccio requested that Mr. Rosen send the information to all of the boards, both elected and appointed, so they can start having conversations. She recommended that the boards add this to their next agenda or schedule an independent meeting so they can have something in place by July 1<sup>st</sup>. She noted that there will be a lot of logistics to consider including scheduling rooms and equipment availability. Mr. Rosen noted that although Executive Order 7B expires on June 30<sup>th</sup>, the implementer bill allows for meetings to take place remotely after July 1<sup>st</sup> so boards may hold their first meetings remotely. He noted that the implementer bill has not yet been signed by the Governor.

Ms. Johnson commented that she trusts and is relying on Mr. Rosen's expertise as the administrator and operations manager with regard to what he perceives to be the best option financially and logistically.

Mr. Schenher asked what rooms could be outfitted with the necessary technology for the hybrid model, aside from Council Chambers. Additionally, he asked if there is board hierarchy if there is limited space. Mr. Rosen

responded that he recommends outfitting either Conference Room B or C which are smaller rooms. Boards would be able to meet in-person in those rooms and if a participant needed to attend remotely, a television screen, dedicated computer, and Owl or some competitor camera would need to be procured. These will be required for hybrid meetings or in-person meetings with a remote participant. That said there may be a situation where Council and the Birch Grove Building Committee meet on the same evening. In that case, they may need to outfit the Library Program Room. The caveat however is that there may be a conflict with a library program. In summary, Mr. Rosen recommended one of the small conference rooms and the Library Program room be outfitted. The other small conference rooms can be for boards meeting in-person. In terms of hierarchy, the elected boards traditionally meet in Council Chambers. Other options for hybrid meetings may be the recreation or senior centers. Mr. Schenher asked if the hybrid model requires a video or if a speakerphone could be used. Mr. Rosen explained that everyone would need to participate the same way. It may be a problem for land use boards where a physical map may be presented. The important part is that everyone has the same ability to participate.

Ms. Falusi asked about public meetings that use spaces such as the conference rooms. She assumes there are cleaning and mask requirements in Town Hall as well as 6' spacing between masked people. She asked if they have the capacity for cleaning when there are multiple and back to back meetings. She added that she is concerned about the safety of town staff. The public will be going in and out and on Thursday night's there will be an overlap of Town Hall being open and meetings taking place. Ms. Falusi asked if there have been any discussions about using classrooms and if town staff could be used to clean the areas. She also asked about the safety of students and overlap of school events and using the space for meetings. Mr. Rosen responded that there will no longer be spacing or cleaning requirements. The masking requirements would be in effect for all town facilities. Ms. Falusi asked how they would ensure equity and that everyone can hear and understand if she needed to wear a mask and people could not read her lips or understand her through the microphone. Mr. Rosen responded that clear masks or the face shield are made but he does not believe there is a supply of either in Town Hall. If needed, people could bring them. In regard to the classrooms, Mr. Rosen believes this would need to be negotiated in the custodian contract and would need to be discussed. That said, Board of Education meetings could take place in the schools. Ms. Falusi asked if she is vaccinated but contracts COVID if there will be stipulations for those who test positive to not attend meetings or make accommodations if they are on a board and need to conduct business. Ms. Nuccio commented that under all options elected officials may attend remotely. Ms. Falusi asked if this pertains to staff as well if needed to conduct business. Ms. Nuccio noted that legislation is silent on anybody besides elected officials so the town would need to institute a policy. Mr. Rosen noted that in line 7006 in the bill there is no mention of anybody except board members. Ms. Nuccio noted that whatever is decided now is only through April 30, 2022. Mr. Luba noted that if the bill has a built-in sunset clause, it would automatically end and return to the original revision of public meeting requirements.

Mr. Luba commented that he would like to keep the standard of participation that they have had over the past year and almost a year and a half but he would like to try and phase in some type of in-person meeting with the Council. He clarified the options: continuing fully remote, a hybrid model with the Council meeting in-person with the provisions for councilors who would like to attend remotely, and the capability for residents to participate remotely. Mr. Rosen added that for full remote (only), if a member of the public requests an in-person accommodation, they would need to be afforded the opportunity to do so such as going to Town Hall or another building where they could sit in a room and view the meeting in real time via a device. A staff member would need to be present with them. Mr. Luba requested input from the IT providers regarding the requirements and what is needed to set up the different scenarios. He noted that his personal preference is the hybrid model. Further, he would like to look at other possible facilities such as the schools and library so they know what is available and could be properly equipped. Ms. Nuccio explained that her only concern is the need to provide equipment and space for members of the public to participate in a room other than where a meeting is taking place and that someone will need to sit with them to address technology and other issues. This would only be for meetings being held remotely. Mr. Rosen noted that his immediate concern, since the books are not yet closed for this fiscal year, is if any upgrades will be needed in the near term so he can start the purchase orders. Mr. Rosen added that in terms of other facilities, there will need to be further discussions including the facilities' hours. Further, there would be impacts to staff work weeks including time and costs.

Mr. Jones asked about acquiring and securing potential equipment and if those purchases would fall under either the American Rescue Plan or the emergency declaration fund. Ms. Nuccio responded that she does not believe it could be done under the emergency declaration or FEMA. She asked about what the cost would be to the town. Mr. Rosen responded that it would depend on how many rooms they would like to outfit with hardware (dedicated computer, monitor, camera) – staff costs would not be part of this. He noted that he is citing the Owl Camera because it interacts better with people in a room by turning and autofocusing on the speaker. They will need something better equipped than a webcam or stationary camera. He estimates it would be \$3,000 per room. Council Chambers is fully equipped. In terms of reimbursement, he does not know if this would be covered under the ARP. Ms. Hancock agreed that she does not believe this would fall under FEMA but the Council could approve using the emergency declaration fund. Mr. Jones asked if boards and commissions can switch from one option to another. Mr. Rosen responded that he does not believe this is dictated by the implementer bill but would be by the Charter which says that each board can set its own meeting protocols. Attorney Conti was in agreement. Mr. Jones asked about the Council and staff video recording. Currently, while remote, meetings are being recorded and uploaded to the cloud. For in-person meetings he assumes they would go back to meetings being recorded by the videographer with the recording clerk doing the minutes and recording. He asked if there would need to be a designated staffer if they go fully remote and if someone wants to attend in person, if the videographer or the recording clerk would be the staff member in attendance at Town Hall to assist with technology. Mr. Rosen responded that he would need to check with the HR manager. The recording clerk job has a certain job description and he does not know if something could be added to it without compensation. If the meeting was in-person only, he believes the handheld camera would be back in use and CVC feeds from this. Fully remote or hybrid would likely still be recorded via Zoom. Mr. Rosen added that the Council, BOE, and PZC are recorded so people can see what is going on via television but it is not required. If a board is meeting in person there are no requirements that the meetings be recorded. Mr. Jones asked about reimagining the remote participation policy while under either the emergency declaration or under the regulations of the implementer. Mr. Rosen responded that essentially the implementer bill has become the remote participation policy.

Ms. Nuccio asked what would happen if multiple people want accommodations such as attending a meeting in town hall but while sitting in other rooms. Mr. Rosen explained that the only time a member of public would be alone in a room is if it is a fully remote meeting. That said, if there are multiple board meetings going on remotely in a given evening, attendees would need to wear headphones if they are in the same room. Ms. Nuccio asked what would happen if a person requesting accommodation does not want to sit with someone else in the room even if both are attending the same meeting. Would multiple rooms need to be made available? She explained that she does not know how this can be controlled. They cannot limit the number of people requesting accommodation. Mr. Rosen cited the bill, line 7035 and noted that the town has the ability to say someone may attend in person and provide information on the location and the necessary equipment. He does not believe there is a need to offer multiple rooms. The town is providing accommodation. Attorney Conti noted that when on Zoom meetings with multiple attorneys in the room, more than a single laptop cannot be used.

Ms. Johnson asked if a conference bridge would be considered a reasonable accommodation. Mr. Rosen explained that this is the point of the remote and hybrid options. Similar to tonight's agenda where people can dial in via phone, this will always be an option for remote and hybrid meetings. The accommodation as part of the implementer bill in line 7035 addresses that regardless of whether or not someone has a phone or device at home, if they want to be at a physical meeting location then accommodations need to be made and any electronic equipment necessary to attend such meetings in real time must be provided. Many rooms at Town Hall have phones but he is unsure if "electronics" specifically refers to the Zoom aspect. Ms. Johnson commented that reasonable accommodation would mean that they would not have to spend thousands of dollars to create a reasonable accommodation. She asked if the town can establish what works in terms of providing reasonable accommodation. Attorney Conti commented that a physical location could be the person's house and somebody could bring them a device.

Mr. Jones commented that if they are going to outfit rooms he is thinking of doing 2: 1 on the second floor and the Library Program Room. The Library Foundation extended their Zoom subscription for another year to assist the library with its programs and meetings. While it would be their decision, a Zoom account is in place.

Additionally, the library rents out a wireless internet system and other technologies so that may be another resource.

Ms. Falusi commented that many families have laptops over the summer because students are home. They will have those laptops through the year. While this is not an acceptable use, there is a procedure for residents to use equipment owned by the BOE and they can learn from the procedures that are in place. She added they need to make accommodations for those with hearing or visual impairments who are using the town's equipment.

Mr. Schenher asked if the library's computers could be used by those who wish to attend meetings in person. Mr. Rosen responded that the library closes at 8PM and many meetings go past this time. Additionally, according to the implementer bill, if an agenda has public comment, the attendee needs to be able to speak. Thus, someone would then be talking while in the library and there may also be a time limit for library computer use. Mr. Jones commented that the Library Program Room would be the most ideal location with the hurdle being providing the necessary technology.

Ms. Nuccio commented that she hears a lot of concern about the full remote option. It opens them up to many possible expenses as well as technology and staffing issues in addition to outfitting rooms. Given this she asked if they want to eliminate the full remote option.

Ms. Nuccio noted that a decision would not be made tonight but perhaps at the next meeting and asked Mr. Rosen to make a list of the pros and cons of each option. It was confirmed that if the next meeting is held fully remote after July 1<sup>st</sup> that accommodations would need to be offered. A brief discussion took place about possibly scheduling a special meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup> given the Chair's schedule. Mr. Rosen noted that he will send the document he cited this evening to the Council.

Mr. Jones noted that the agenda item was for a discussion and not an intention to make a decision yet there is some urgency but it seems that full remote may be the option for the first meeting in July. Mr. Luba concurred.

Straw poll:

Rate the following: in-person, hybrid, fully remote in the order of top, middle, and least favorite

Ms. Falusi: fully remote, hybrid, in-person  
Ms. Johnson: hybrid, in-person, fully remote  
Mr. Jones: hybrid, in-person, fully remote  
Mr. Luba: hybrid, in-person, fully remote  
Mr. Schenher: hybrid, in-person, fully remote  
Ms. Nuccio: hybrid, in-person, fully remote

It was noted that the Council has questions about the logistics of the hybrid option. Ms. Falusi requested that Mr. Rosen join the July 13<sup>th</sup> remote meeting from Council Chambers using the Owl. Mr. Rosen agreed to do so.

In terms of the hybrid option, Mr. Jones noted that the chair and vice chair could cover the room and Zoom respectively. Ms. Nuccio posed what would happen if the chair or vice chair were attending remotely and how one would know if a member of the public attending in person wished to speak. Mr. Rosen explained that he is unsure if a pro/con list for the options would be much different than the information he presented today (and document he will e-mail the Council). He requested that a decision be made regarding if he should start the procurement of equipment to outfit 2 rooms. Further, he asked if a special meeting will be scheduled this week. Ms. Nuccio responded that given the results of the straw poll, the majority of the Council has fully remote as the last option. Mr. Rosen noted that the in-person and hybrid options require the technology. Ms. Falusi noted that the other boards have not made a decision so all 3 options may still be in play. Ms. Nuccio asked if they could encumber with the intent that it may be released so available money may be used. Ms. Hancock explained that when something is encumbered there is usually a commitment. An order has usually been placed. If the funds are encumbered but the order is not placed, it is not really appropriate but it has been done. The encumbrance can be released. Ms. Nuccio explained that they are in a difficult position but she wants to be able to use money from this year and not tap into next year's budget. Ms. Hancock noted that the

Owl cameras have been on backorder and she is unsure how soon they could get them. Additionally, they will need to see what the other boards will want to do. At the moment, they will need to be tight with scheduling rooms. Mr. Rosen requested a straw poll commitment to equip at least 1 room with this year's money.

Straw poll:

Commitment to equip 1 room with this year's money

Ms. Falusi – yes

Ms. Johnson – yes

Mr. Jones – yes

Mr. Luba – yes

Mr. Schenher – yes

Ms. Nuccio - yes

Ms. Nuccio requested that Ms. Hancock encumber the equipment for 3 rooms. Ms. Hancock responded that she will do so.

The next Council meeting will be held on July 13<sup>th</sup> as scheduled.

- 8.4 Consideration of a resolution appropriating \$140,000 for certain school patio entrance and bus parking lot pavement improvements, appropriating \$151,800 for certain parking lot pavement improvements, and appropriating \$434,029 for heavy machinery and equipment acquisition, and authorizing the issuance of up to \$725,829 bonds and notes to finance the appropriations and the setting of a Public Hearing thereon for July 13, 2021.

*Mr. Jones motioned:*

***MOTION*** that the following resolution be introduced and set down for a Public Hearing on July 13, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. via a Zoom Remote or in-person Meeting in the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Town Council Chambers:

***DRAFT RESOLUTION***

***BE IT RESOLVED***, by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby appropriates as follows:

*A resolution appropriating \$140,000 for certain school patio entrance and bus parking lot pavement improvements, appropriating \$151,800 for certain parking lot pavement improvements, and appropriating \$434,029 for heavy machinery and equipment acquisition, and authorizing the issuance of up to \$725,829 bonds and notes to finance the appropriations. A copy of the full text of the resolution is recorded following these meeting minutes.*

*Ms. Johnson seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Rosen called a point of order and recommended amending the motion to identify if the public hearing will be held via Zoom Remote or in-person.

*Mr. Jones amended the motion:*

***MOTION*** that the following resolution be introduced and set down for a Public Hearing on July 13, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. via a Zoom Remote Meeting in the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Town Council Chambers:

***DRAFT RESOLUTION***

***BE IT RESOLVED***, by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby appropriates as follows:

*A resolution appropriating \$140,000 for certain school patio entrance and bus parking lot pavement improvements, appropriating \$151,800 for certain parking lot pavement improvements, and appropriating \$434,029 for heavy machinery and equipment acquisition, and authorizing the issuance of up to \$725,829 bonds and notes to finance the appropriations. A copy of the full text of the resolution is recorded following these meeting minutes.*

*Ms. Johnson seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

**8.5 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions.**

8.5.a. Appointments to Tolland Housing Authority

8.5.b. Appointment to Agriculture Commission (Member)

8.5.c. Reappointments to Technology Advisory Board

Mr. Rosen noted that Carolyn McLeod and Frances Maynard, members of the Housing Authority, are leaving their appointments prior to the end of their terms (June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2021 respectively). Thus, 2 upcoming vacancies are listed.

Mr. Rosen noted that Sarah Farrell, whose term ends July 9, 2021, is leaving her appointment. Further, Linda Palmer, whose term ends July 9, 2024, is vacating her position.

Mr. Rosen summarized the following:

Housing Authority:

Janett Moore will take over the term of Frances Maynard (term July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2024)

Rudy Fiorillo will take over the term of Carolyn McLeod (term July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2024)

Agriculture Commission:

Steven Bassett will move from being an alternate to the member position of Sarah Farrell (term July 9, 2021 – July 9, 2024)

Mr. Rosen noted that the terms of the members of the Technology Advisory Board were up on May 28, 2021 so they will need to be reappointed.

*Mr. Jones motioned to approve the following reappointments to the Technology Advisory Board: George Ecabert, Robert Powell, Kyle Daigle, John Livingston, Manuel Medeiros, Mike Martel for a term of 5/28/21 – 5/28/23.*

*Ms. Falusi seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Jones motioned to approve the appointments as laid out in the packet for the Tolland Housing Authority: Janett Moore (term 7/1/21 – 6/30/26); Rudy Fiorillo (term 7/1/19 – 6/30/24) and in addition approve the appointment of Steven Bassett (term 7/9/21 – 7/9/24) for the Agriculture Commission.*

*Ms. Falusi seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

**9. OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):**

**9.1 Consideration of a resolution to adopt a Proclamation Policy.**

Mr. Rosen provided background information on this item and presented the draft dated June 22<sup>nd</sup>.



Mr. Rosen summarized the edits recommended at the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting: numbering; Presidential Proclamations is now the third paragraph; information on the Proclamation Review Process (item 3).  
Mr. Rosen noted that the Town Attorney agrees that as written the draft now complies with FOIA regulations.

Mr. Luba confirmed that if a proclamation request is submitted, the screening committee would make a recommendation to the Council but the Council would decide whether or not to put it on the agenda. Mr. Rosen noted that the Town Attorney said that the 2-person screening committee does not have the ability to reject or accept the validity of a proclamation request. It still has to be voted on by the full Council to comply with FOIA. Rather than having discussions outside of FOIA, the Council could delegate authority and the 2-member screening committee would become a formal subcommittee of the Council with meetings in public and posted agendas. Mr. Rosen noted that this would extend the length of the proclamation process.

Ms. Falusi asked about item 3 and cited the last paragraph. She explained that if it is a 2-person screening committee then the Chair votes is how it will go. Ms. Nuccio explained that the agenda is at the Chair's discretion per the Charter. A discussion followed.

Summary of amendments under item 3:

- 1<sup>st</sup> sentence remains as presented
- 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, "To assist in setting agendas for future Town Council meetings, the review process will be conducted by the Town Council Chairperson.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence, "As part of the process, the Chair will make recommendations to the Town Council regarding action on the Proclamation request."
- Strike item a. and b.
- Strike last paragraph

*Mr. Jones motioned:*

***BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby approves the Proclamation Policy as amended.

*Mr. Luba seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken.*

	<i>Aye</i>	<i>Nay</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
<i>Falusi</i>		x	
<i>Johnson</i>	x		
<i>Jones</i>	x		
<i>Luba</i>	x		
<i>Nuccio</i>	x		
<i>Schenher</i>	x		

*Motion passed.*

#### 10. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

- Updated mask protocols at Town Hall (effective June 22, 2021):
  - If one is vaccinated a mask does not need to be worn.
  - If one is not vaccinated, a mask still needs to be worn.
- EHHD: A request was made for pandemic response expenses from the 9 member communities. EHHD is looking to recoup a total of \$20,405 and Tolland's share is \$5,470.
- Reminder: If a resident has a town issue it is requested that they let the town know. Anonymous communications do not work well because the town cannot follow up with the resident. Discussions can be confidential.

#### 11. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

##### 11.1 June 8, 2021 Remote Regular Meeting Minutes

*Mr. Jones motioned to approve the minutes as laid out in 11.1.*

*Ms. Falusi seconded the motion.*

*Discussion: none*

*A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.*

**12. CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL**

(Received as of 4PM)

- e-mail –in support of Weigold to help protect the farmland, the Greenway connectivity, and to preserve the two mills
- e-mail –in favor of virtual meetings; reasons included enabling more participation, virtual workspaces, transparency, and accountability
- e-mail – in support of virtual meetings; cited childcare, parental care, and care for loved ones as well as transparency
- e-mail – saying "yes" to virtual meetings; working mom who does not get off until late; helps with accessibility; not allowing disenfranchises residents
- e-mail – in support of virtual meetings; writer has young kids in sports and evening activities get in the way; being online helps with accessibility
- e-mail – citing accessibility of virtual meetings; cited health reasons
- e-mail – wants to keep virtual meetings; can listen and learn more; with their work schedule they were unable to participate previously; a lot of people including themselves suffer from anxiety and going into a crowded room may not be comfortable or achievable
- e-mail – support of in-person meetings; difficulty with packets, discussions, connectivity; time to return in-person
- e-mail - in support of virtual meetings; it is a valuable engaging tool; cannot imagine denying residents with illnesses, disabilities, compromised immune systems etc.; beneficial to have closed captioning
- e-mail – in favor of the Weigold property and keeping it untouched
- e-mail - support for the Weigold property; endorses the property acquisition to keep the habitat area connectivity
- e-mail – in favor of Weigold; an asset to the town and would like to leave it unchanged
- e-mail – EV vehicles; link provided to an article
- e-mail – in favor of virtual meetings; record attendance numbers
- e-mail – in favor of virtual meetings; offers an opportunity to participate; gives greater access to people who have cut the cord and do not have access to the cable channel

**13. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

- Upcoming agenda item – an e-mail was received from the Chair of the Board of Education regarding the COVID Fund request
- Ms. Nuccio was successful during this legislative session in securing a \$1M bond for the fire stations. She will be on the August bonding agenda to have it allocated to the town. In turn, the town will be able to reduce the amount it bonds by \$1M. An announcement will be made once finalized. It has already been signed by the Governor.
- Chair Hour: July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30PM, Zoom
- Congratulations to the 2021 High School Graduates

**14. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS**

- Ms. Falusi commented that PZC has been discussing finding more affordable housing. Tolland is below what the state wants as a percentage of affordable housing. Over the past few meetings the PZC has been discussing what they can do but there are things the Council could do to possibly attract more affordable housing. She would like the Council to have a discussion, perhaps a joint meeting, with the PZC on how they can work together and create an integrated plan. Some suggestions were to offer incentives or create policy to have more affordable housing. Ms. Falusi congratulated the graduates and the girls' lacrosse, boys' lacrosse, the golf team, girls and boys track, and the Tolland Middle School Invention Convention. The students, through the pandemic and with their families and coaches, have persevered and received many awards. She congratulated the staff, coaches, and teachers for getting them so far.

- Mr. Jones referred back to the May 26<sup>th</sup> minutes. Mr. Ferrigno from Eversource was going to provide information about gas line expansion plans, costs, and possible partnerships. Mr. Jones was unsure if this was communicated. He would like a copy of the information or for the town to reach out if it has not yet been received. Mr. Jones was pleased to hear about the bond council for the \$1M. In line with this, Mr. Jones asked if a formal building committee has been established, or is necessary, for the firehouse project. He would be interested in being the Council liaison. Lastly, Mr. Jones would like there to be a joint meeting of the Council, Conservation Commission, and possibly the Historical Society once Weigold is finalized to discuss who will take responsibility. The Conservation Commission has a thorough site plan and management plan process but there seems to be a lot of moving parts so it may be good to have a site walk. Mr. Rosen responded that he will look into if a formal building committee for the firehouse is necessary. In regard to Eversource, a representative was working with the planning department to get maps of the business districts.
- Ms. Johnson commented that she would like to walk the Weigold property. She added that she is an advocate for affordable housing and it was enlightening to hear the positioning of Eversource regarding the gas line. She asked if residents would be able to tap into the line and the representative explained that they would need to look into the feasibility of this and do a cost analysis. Ms. Johnson learned that one cannot just drop affordable housing in without infrastructure such as gas lines, public sewer, and water access. Affordable housing could cause a burst to the school district and infrastructure. She noted that there is not enough public transportation to get people to and from work and she does not know if there are enough jobs nearby. Ms. Johnson commented that there are a lot of houses on the market and wondered if the state would look toward working to have lower interest rates to get people into homes instead of affordable housing. She is not an advocate of large complexes. She is interested in having a conversation with PZC to learn what they can do with what is in place in order to meet the benchmark

15. **PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION** *(on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council)*  
*(3 minute limit)*

Kate Howard-Bender, 103 Goose Lane, thanked the Council for holding a reasonable meeting. She asked the Town Manager if because the change of town meetings is so recent if either of the state representatives or the state senator gave him a heads up regarding the implementer bill's pending impact on public meetings. She guesses that he knew this and is why he presented the information. Ms. Howard-Bender commented that she is disappointed that the proclamation request will not be in the hands of the whole Council regardless of whether the agenda is within the purview of the Town Council appointed Town Council Chair. She thanked Mr. Rosen for doing the legal FOIA legwork on that item. In regard to equipment and remote access, Ms. Howard-Bender commented that she is sure that the town staff will do a survey of in-house equipment before encumbering, ordering, or buying more. She added that it is important that they continue to be frugal. The educational professionals have been doing the remote hybrid business for over a year she is sure they would be happy to supply technical assistance and that an agreement could be made to borrow some equipment in the interim. She offered that perhaps the Council could contact the BOE to ask the Civics Class at THS to assist as tech hosts for class credit. Ms. Howard-Bender commented that encumbering but not planning to pay is a morally murky area and she does not think it is the right thing to do. Ms. Howard-Bender asked the Council to work with the BOE regarding the upgrades to the turf fields. She thanked the Council for listening to residents regarding continuing the remote option. She added that it is good for democracy and shows the citizens that their input is worth it.

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

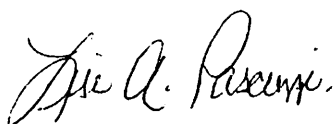
Mr. Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:22 PM

Mr. Schenher seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken.

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,



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Lisa Pascuzzi  
Town Council Clerk

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Town Council Chair