

May 19, 2025

The Joint Meeting of the City Council and Board of Finance was held on May 19, 2025 in the City Hall Council Chambers, 111 N Main Street at 5:30 p.m. Present: Mayor Caggiano; Council Members Dickau, Olsen, Panioto, Thibeault and Tyler; Commissioners Campion, Heiser, Mace, Maikowski, Massarelli, Murdock, O'Brien and Peterson. Absent: Council Member Rosengren.

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISION OF SECTION 12-144A OF THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES, 1965 REVISION, THE CITY ADOPTS A SINGLE INSTALLMENT TAX PAYMENT FOR MOTOR VEHICLES IN 2025-2026 FISCAL YEAR TO BE PAYABLE JULY 1, 2025.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was unanimously voted: To adopt a single installment tax payment for motor vehicles in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to be payable July 1, 2025 in accordance with the provision of Section 12-144a of the Connecticut General Statutes, 1965 Revision.

2. ADOPTION OF A SINGLE INSTALLMENT TAX PAYMENT FOR PROPERTY TAX DUE IN AN AMOUNT OF \$100 OR LESS PAYABLE JULY 1, 2025 AND TWO INSTALLMENTS BASED ON PROPERTY TAX DUE IN AN AMOUNT GREATER THAN \$100 PAYABLE ON JULY 1, 2025 AND JANUARY 1, 2026.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Tyler and seconded by Council Member Olsen, it was unanimously voted: To adopt a single installment tax payment for property tax due in an amount of \$100 or less payable on July 1, 2025 and two installments based on a property tax due in an amount greater than \$100 payable on July 1, 2025 and January 1, 2026.

3. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE BRISTOL WATER DEPARTMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$10,852,081.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Olsen and seconded by Commissioner O'Brien, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Bristol Water Department for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$10,852,081.

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4. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR SEWER OPERATING AND ASSESSMENT FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$10,160,603.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Olsen and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Sewer Operating and Assessment Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$10,160,603.

5. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$1,725,205.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Solid Waste Disposal Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$1,725,205.

6. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE TRANSFER STATION FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$903,320.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Transfer Station Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$903,320.

7. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$5,951,025.

On motion of Commissioner Maikowski and seconded by Council Member Thibeault, a motion was made to amend the dollar amount in item 7 to \$5,951,025.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Commissioner O'Brien, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Road Improvements Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$5,951,025., as amended.

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- 8. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$1,038,630 CONSISTING OF \$492,985 IN ENTITLEMENT FUNDS, \$20,000 IN REPROGRAMMED CDBG FUNDS, \$490,645 TRANSFERRED FROM GENERAL FUND, AND \$35,000 IN PROGRAM INCOME.**

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Tyler and seconded by Commissioner O'Brien, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Community Development Block Grant Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$1,038,630 consisting of \$492,985 in Entitlement funds, \$20,000 in reprogrammed CDBG funds, \$490,645 transferred from the General Fund, and \$35,000 in Program Income.

- 9. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE PINE LAKE ADVENTURE PARK FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$60,000.**

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Commissioner Mace, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Pine Lake Adventure Park Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$60,000.

- 10. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE ARTS & CULTURE FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$248,540.**

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Arts & Culture Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$248,540.

- 11. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE INTERNAL SERVICE FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$54,907,610; \$3,773,715 FOR THE NEW SELF-INSURED WORKERS' COMPENSATION FUND AND \$51,133,895 FOR THE HEALTH BENEFITS FUND.**

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Internal Service Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$54,907,610; \$3,773,715 for the New Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Fund and \$51,133,895 for the Health Benefits Fund.

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12. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$5,695,090.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner Massarelli, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the School Lunch Program for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$5,695,090.

13. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR THE POLICE PRIVATE DUTY FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$1,950,300.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Tyler and seconded by Commissioner Peterson, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Police Private Duty Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$1,950,300.

14. TO ADOPT THE CAPITAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$19,790,450.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Peterson and seconded by Council Member Thibeault, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the Capital Budget for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$19,790,450.

A roll call vote was taken.

YES

NO

ABSTAIN

Mayor Caggiano

Council Member Dickau

“ ” Olsen

“ ” Panioto

“ ” Thibeault

“ ” Tyler

Commissioner Campion

“ ” Heiser

“ ” Mace

“ ” Maikowski

“ ” Massarelli

“ ” Murdock

“ ” O'Brien

“ ” Peterson

CAPITAL BUDGET ADOPTED: YES – 14; NO – 0; ABSTAIN – 0.

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15. ADOPTION OF GENERAL FUND BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TOTALING \$242,658,950.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Dickau and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was voted: To adopt the General Fund budget estimate for fiscal year 2025-2026 totaling \$242,658,950.

A roll call vote was taken.

<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Mayor Caggiano	Council Member Dickau	
Council Member Olsen	“ ” Tyler	
“ ” Panioto	Commissioner O’Brien	
“ ” Thibeault		
Commissioner Campion		
“ ” Heiser		
“ ” Mace		
“ ” Maikowski		
“ ” Massarelli		
“ ” Murdock		
“ ” Peterson		

GENERAL FUND BUDGET ADOPTED: YES – 11; NO – 3; ABSTAIN – 0.

The Mayor declared the budget adopted.

16. TAX RATE SET AT 32.46 MILLS FOR MOTOR VEHICLES AND 33.75 MILLS FOR REAL ESTATE & PERSONAL PROPERTY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE, OR AS AMENDED.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was voted: To set the tax rate at 32.46 mills for Motor Vehicles and 33.75 mills for Real Estate & Personal Property as recommended by the Board of Finance, or as amended.

A roll call vote was taken.

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<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Mayor Caggiano	Council Member Dickau	
Council Member Olsen	“ ” Tyler	
“ ” Panioto	Commissioner O’Brien	
“ ” Thibeault		
Commissioner Campion		
“ ” Heiser		
“ ” Mace		
“ ” Maikowski		
“ ” Massarelli		
“ ” Murdock		
“ ” Peterson		

TAX RATE ADOPTED: YES – 11; NO – 3; ABSTAIN – 0

17. MAYOR OR ACTING MAYOR AND CHAIRPERSON OF BOARD OF FINANCE AUTHORIZED TO SIGN NECESSARY RATE BOOKS.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Council Member Panioto, it was unanimously voted: That the Mayor or Acting Mayor and the Chairperson of the Board of Finance be authorized to sign the necessary rate books for the Tax Collector.

A roll call vote was taken.

<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Mayor Caggiano		
Council Member Dickau		
“ ” Olsen		
“ ” Panioto		
“ ” Thibeault		
“ ” Tyler		
Commissioner Campion		
“ ” Heiser		
“ ” Mace		
“ ” Maikowski		
“ ” Massarelli		
“ ” Murdock		
“ ” O’Brien		
“ ” Peterson		

MOTION ADOPTED: YES – 14; NO – 0; ABSTAIN – 0

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18. OTHER BUSINESS.

Board of Finance Chairperson David Maikowski delivered the following budget message:

“To the Mayor, City Council, Citizens and Taxpayers of Bristol:

On behalf of the members of the Bristol Board of Finance, I present its recommended budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year for adoption by the Joint Meeting of the City Council and Board of Finance as mandated by Section 25(l) of the Charter of the City of Bristol.

The Board of Finance recommended budget for 2025-2026 is \$242,658,950 and represents a 5.28% increase from the City’s 2024-2025 budget. Comprised of both fixed and non-fixed components, it is the result of information and data presented by City Departments, after having worked with their respective Boards and Commissions, as applicable. In addition, there was a comprehensive and deliberative process for the City’s Capital Improvement Program. The Mayor’s Capital and Strategic Planning Committee approved several projects that will ensure the continued operation of the City’s infrastructure and capital assets along with the development and expansion of others such as storm drainage replacement on Brace Avenue, targeted alterations at Bristol Central and Bristol Eastern, traffic box/intersection upgrades, and park improvements. Additionally, Departmental cooperation and collaboration has expanded resulting in operational economies.

Overall, the Grand List increased 1.4%. While real estate property values and personal property increased 0.66% and 15.9% respectively, there was a 5.1% decrease in motor vehicles which offsets the majority of real estate and personal property growth. Overall, the increase in the grand list generates an estimated \$2.4 million in additional revenue at the 2024-2025 31.85 mill rate. Most recently this compares to \$2.5 million and \$0.5 million in revenue growth from the grand list for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, respectively.

Expenditure changes from 2025-2026 are as follows:

- *General City increased \$4.4 million or 5.20%.*
- *Debt Service and Capital Transfers increased \$1.1 million or 7.65%*
- *Education increased \$6.6 million or 5.06%*

Revenue

Revenue estimates have been adjusted to reflect current trends, specifically Investment Income and Conveyance fees but otherwise remain relatively constant with 2024-2025. As mentioned, the City’s Grand List increase will generate approximately \$2.4 million in tax revenue. To balance the budget the mill rate for July 1, 2025 will increase 1.9 mills to 33.75 or 5.97% for Real Estate and Personal Property. Motor Vehicles will be taxed at the state mandated capped mill rate of 32.46.

Mill Rate Stabilization reserve funds in the amount of \$2,000,000 is recommended to be used to offset the 2025-2026 budget. This essentially depletes this reserve unless it can be restored with any FY25 year-end surplus.

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Chairman's Message

The fiscal outlook for 2025–2026 indicates that the City will remain on a solid financial foundation. Our operational and financial management practices continue to be both strategic and forward-thinking. We are now witnessing the tangible results of long-term planning and investment.

Downtown revitalization efforts are yielding visible progress. The Wheeler Clinic has officially opened its doors, and Phase I of the Carrier Centre Square Village has been completed, with residential units fully leased. Construction of Phase II is currently underway. On Route 6, the development of the Mohanna Family Farm continues to advance, and the 26,000-square-foot ProHealth facility opened today.

In a significant economic development milestone, Express Kitchens has announced its relocation of distribution and manufacturing operations from New Jersey to Bristol. The company recently acquired the former Associated Spring manufacturing facility, which closed in 2022. The scale of the site, coupled with Bristol's growing economic momentum, played a key role in this strategic move—bringing new employment opportunities and renewed economic activity to the area.

These achievements represent the return on investments made in recent years. However, sustaining this progress will require City leadership to remain diligent, responsive to emerging challenges, and committed to continuous improvement. We must embrace innovation, challenge the status quo, and implement policies and initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all who live and work in Bristol.

We can take pride in how far we have come, and we must remain united in our shared commitment to building a prosperous and resilient future for our City.

Acknowledgements

The Board of Finance extends its sincere appreciation to all individuals and departments that contributed to the preparation of the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 budget. Our process relies heavily on collaboration, transparency, and thoughtful planning.

We acknowledge the City department heads and the leadership of the Board of Education for their valuable input—submitting not only detailed financial data but also long-term strategic objectives that align with the City's broader vision.

Special recognition is due to Diane Waldron, Comptroller, and her dedicated team:

- Robin Manuele, Assistant Comptroller
- Jodi McGrane, Assistant to the Comptroller
- Jessica Pilgrim, Senior Accountant
- Joann Martin, Budget & Accounting Assistant

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Your leadership, timely information, and prudent counsel—especially your willingness to raise cautionary notes when warranted—were instrumental throughout the budgeting process.

I would also like to extend personal gratitude to the members of the Board of Finance. Your unwavering commitment, countless hours of service, and thoughtful deliberation are the foundation of our financial governance. Your efforts throughout the year—attending meetings, reviewing financial data, engaging in robust discussion, and making informed decisions—are deeply appreciated.

Additionally, I thank the Mayor’s Capital and Strategic Planning Committee for its diligent review of major capital requests, evaluation of financing alternatives, and well-considered recommendations that have shaped the development of the Capital Budget.

Respectfully submitted,

*David Maikowski
Board of Finance Chairperson”*

Mayor Caggiano noted that as of Friday, May 16, 2025, the Board of Education deficit was \$7.3 million.

Council Member Tyler explained her “no” vote on the budget.

19. ADJOURNMENT.

At 5:55 p.m., on motion of Commissioner O’Brien and seconded, it was unanimously voted: To adjourn.

ATTEST: _____
Erica Cabiya
Town & City Clerk