

Town of Plymouth 2026 APR 21 PM 12: 28
80 Main Street
Terryville, Connecticut 06786
TOWN CLERK

Plymouth Town Council
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Special Meeting Minutes – April 14, 2026

Call to Order: The Plymouth Town Council Special Meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM on April 14, 2026, by Mayor David Sekorski. The meeting was designated as a special meeting because it was scheduled independent of the regular meeting, which needed to be postponed.

Roll Call: All members of the Town Council were present.

Fire Exit Notification: Mayor Sekorski provided fire exit instructions, directing attendees to exit through the back doors or through the police department entrance.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Invocation: An invocation was offered by Mayor Sekorski; "God Bless America and God Bless the Town of Plymouth".

Accept Meeting Minutes from March 03, 2026, Regular Meeting:

Motion: Councilor Green moved to accept the minutes from the March 3rd meeting. Councilor Zagurski seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention from Councilor Engle.

Accept Meeting Minutes from March 30, 2026, Special Meeting:

Motion: Councilor Green moved to accept the minutes from the March 30th special meeting. Councilor Engle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment on Agenda Items: Mayor Sekorski opened the floor for public comment on agenda items. No members of the public came forward to speak. He noted that additional public comment would be available later in the meeting for non-agenda items.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Sekorski provided an update on several town matters, noting that a supplemental report from the mayor's assistant was sent to council members via email.

- **Transfer Station Update** - The compactor unit at the transfer station failed this winter when the casing housing the piston burst, likely due to aging metal and extreme temperatures. Mayor Sekorski thanked the public works team and ES Metals for helping evaluate options. Repair of the existing unit was not possible, so a temporary dumping area is being established to maintain resident access. The temporary solution should be completed by Saturday. Multiple companies have been contacted regarding a replacement compactor, with a permanent solution expected soon.
- **Highway Department Staffing** - Aaron Heller was hired as highway department supervisor, beginning service on March 30th to replace the retiring Jim Schultz. Dennis Kizis, who served temporarily during the difficult winter, has returned to his role as lead mechanic. The agreement with former supervisor Jim Schultz for temporary support was completed and terminated at the end of March. The public works director and highway supervisor are currently conducting interviews to fill remaining open positions in the highway department.
- **Infrastructure Projects** - Meetings are ongoing with Connecticut DOT officials to confirm the schedule for the downtown Route 6 intersection project. Once details are finalized, they will be shared with the public to allow for planning around road closures and detours. Construction is expected to require overnight closures of the main section of Route 6. Plans for the Todd Street Bridge and work at the farms area are near completion. The finance team is working with financial advisors and bond counsel to issue \$3 million in bonds in late May or early June, with additional bonds possible later

in the summer. The current Town Roads budget has approximately \$240,000-\$260,000 remaining, allowing crews to begin some immediate work including drain replacement on North Street and South Main Street areas.

- Technology Updates - The IT team continues working on the website redesign with an expected launch by mid-May, though competing technical priorities have caused some delays.
- Personnel Updates - An interim building inspector was hired, working three days per week (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday), beginning today. The main building inspector position remains open, with certified vendors filling gaps until a full-time inspector is hired. The town will advertise for the land use compliance official position once the revised job description is completed.
- Recognition - Mayor Sekorski congratulated Emergency Preparedness Director Tony Orsini for receiving life member recognition from the National Fire Protection Association. Mr. Orsini served in various roles in the Plymouth Fire Department for several decades.

Town Council Liaison Reports

- Councilor Ray Engle - The Board of Finance passed a budget of \$48,625,299, representing a 2.79% increase with a suggested mill rate of 28.04. They proposed a Tri-board meeting for April 21st at 6 PM. Inland Wetlands has nothing on tomorrow evening's agenda, with most items from earlier meetings having been processed. The Housing Authority met on March 17th, passing their health inspection programs and a positive physical audit. They are considering a possible rate increase.
- Councilor Ron Tiscia - Planning and Zoning was cancelled last week. Both that board and the Board of Education will meet tomorrow.
- Councilor Joe Green - No reports at this time.
- Councilor Sue Boilard - She missed the last Fire Commission meeting due to the Board of Finance meeting. The Fire Commission is actively seeking volunteers, with signs posted throughout town. The Police Commission also did not hold their latest meeting. She thanked the Board of Finance for their extensive work on the budget process, noting she attended many meetings and learned about the comprehensive process involved. The Human Services Commission resolved a duplication of services issue and remains very active.
- Councilor TJ Zagurski - He attended numerous Board of Finance meetings over the past month and a half. At Public Works, Director Joe is working to bring everything up to standard, introducing new hire Aaron and noting they are currently down to five maintainers. Parks and Recreation have many activities planned for the upcoming year, with summer camp registration now open. Upcoming events include a Walk for Hunger for the food pantry on April 25th at Lake Winfield and a kid's fishing derby on May 9th at the same location. The Sewer Commission is in final inspection phases for 9 Scott Road sewer connections and reviewing large-scale site plans for South Street projects.

Boards/Committees: Mayor Sekorski presented the appointment of Elena Squires to fill a vacancy on the Plymouth Housing Authority for the balance of a 5-year term resulting from a resignation. **Motion:** Councilor Joe Green moved to appoint Elena Squires to the Plymouth Housing Authority for the balance of the 5-year term. Councilor Boilard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board of Education - Budget Presentation: Several Town Council members had requested this presentation to provide greater understanding of the Board of Education's budget, requests, proposals, and capital needs beyond what is typically available at the Tri-board meetings.

Board of Education Chair Karen Kulesa introduced the presentation, emphasizing their commitment to transparency and public engagement. She turned the presentation over to Superintendent Brian Falcone and Business Manager Matt Tencza.

The Board of Education's 2026–2027 budget was developed between October and April through collaboration among the superintendent, administrators, teachers, and the business manager, with reviews by both the Board of Education and Board of Finance. The budget aims to maintain current staffing and programs while supporting goals for student achievement, engagement, well-being, and fiscal oversight. Superintendent Falcone proposed adding building substitutes, a chemical hygiene specialist stipend for OSHA compliance, and lunch program support. The Board of Education added two elementary teacher aides and a daytime security monitor, with plans to phase in additional aides and security staff over the next several years. Enrollment is projected to rise through 2036, and staffing analyses show all schools operating at maximum capacity, with minimal central office staffing.

Budget constraints remain significant, with 99.14% of funds committed to required costs and less than 1% available for discretionary spending. Contractual increases total 3.67%, and several budget adjustments involve financial risks, including anticipated insurance savings and expected retirements. The board-adopted budget reflects a 3.99% increase, though state grants reduce the direct cost to taxpayers. Despite completing numerous capital projects through creative funding, major needs—such as roof replacements, sidewalk repairs, and parking lot reconstruction—remain unfunded, as they exceed the district's authority to support through operating budgets. The district emphasized that these infrastructure projects are critical to safety and long-term facility maintenance.

Questions and Discussion: Council members requested additional financial details on upcoming capital needs and school budget items. Councilor Green asked for sidewalk replacement estimates and classroom supply budget figures, with administrators noting they are gathering quotes and generally fund supply requests unless patterns show overspending. Councilor Engle inquired about retirement incentives and rising healthcare costs; the district explained that few employees are eligible for incentives and they are negotiating a shift to an HSA plan to address nearly 20% insurance increases. Questions about cafeteria deficits were addressed, with officials confirming the program is currently breaking even. Councilor Zagurski requested preliminary repair estimates for Plymouth Center's sidewalks and roof after recent scans confirmed moisture damage. Administrators emphasized that recurring sidewalk deterioration—previously patched for about \$55,000—makes full replacement a top safety priority. Mayor Sekorski thanked the Board of Education for its thorough presentation and confirmed that the public hearing and Tri-board meeting would be held on April 21st.

The meeting recessed at 8:00 PM for a short break.

Tax Refunds: Mayor Sekorski reconvened the special meeting at 8:06 PM and introduced item 13 on the agenda, explaining that refunding overpayment of taxes occurs on a regular basis. The list presented was prepared by the tax collector for taxes owed. Mayor Sekorski entertained a motion to refund the taxes as listed in the agenda. **Motion:** Councilor Ron Tiscia moved to refund the overpayment of taxes as listed in the agenda. Councilor Joe Green seconded. Motion carried unanimously with no discussion.

Discuss and Take Action on revision(s) to Veterans Ordinance:

Mayor Sekorski presented revisions recommended by the town attorney to the veterans' ordinance that was previously passed in late summer of last year. He noted there were a couple of technical items that needed to be addressed, and during the public hearing earlier, there was no public comment from the general public. Mayor Sekorski entertained a motion to approve the revisions presented by the attorney. Councilor Sue Boilard commented that she had gotten her times mixed up and apologized for not making the 6 o'clock meeting. She noted that she had spoken with the attorney to get caught up on the matter. Mayor Sekorski acknowledged her apology and admitted he had also failed to conduct roll call at the beginning of the meeting and did not state that she was missing. However, he confirmed they had a quorum and held a legitimate public hearing. Councilor Sue Boilard moved to approve the revisions to the veterans' ordinance as presented by the town attorney. Councilor TJ Zagurski seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Mayor Sekorski stated he would relay the information to the assessor's office, noting they had concerns about the technicalities and wanted to ensure everything was done correctly, especially during tax time. He emphasized the importance of making sure veterans are recognized appropriately to receive their benefits under state and local rules.

Discuss and Take Action on agreement to replace Fire Engine 8

Mayor Sekorski provided context for this agenda item, explaining that the actual purchase of the fire engine to replace Engine 8 would not take place until the end of fiscal year 2026-2027, and the town would not start incurring debt from this purchase until the very first part of fiscal year 2028. He explained that the purpose of entering into this agreement was to put the lease agreement in place, secure funding for financing over a 7-year period, and lock in the most favorable rates available. He noted that he and the finance director had met at length with the leasing company, and the motion would define the resolution required by the leasing company for him to enter into the agreement.

Councilor TJ Zagurski read a comprehensive resolution authorizing the mayor to enter into the necessary agreements. The resolution included several "whereas" clauses establishing that the Town of Plymouth had determined a true and real need existed for acquiring the equipment, that it would be used solely for essential government functions and not private business use, and that necessary steps had been taken to arrange for acquisition. **Motion:** Councilor TJ Zagurski moved to authorize the mayor to enter the necessary agreement to replace Fire Engine 8 as per the resolution read into the record, which designates and confirms the mayor to execute and deliver lease purchase agreements and escrow agreements, including any related documents necessary to complete the transaction. Seconded by Councilor Boilard. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Sekorski thanked TJ Zagurski for reading the detailed but necessary motion. He opened the floor for discussion or questions, noting that two representatives from the Plymouth Fire Department were present to answer any technical questions. Councilor Engle asked where Fire Engine 8 operates out of and was told it operates out of the Plymouth Station.

Mayor Sekorski thanked the council for their support and the fire department officers for being present in case there were questions. He committed to keeping the council advised of all agreement details, including rate schedules and debt schedules, once finalized. He noted that the finance director was pleased because they were not adding any additional debt service for this equipment in the current year budget being proposed for the following week.

Public comment on non-agenda items

Melanie Church of 328 Main Street questioned why the Board of Education pays for police officers and vehicles for events, arguing that it is part of the town and should not be charged under "extra duty" provisions. She criticized the practice as unfair to taxpayers and inconsistent with other town events. She also raised concerns about transparency, stating that residents cannot speak directly with the mayor and must go through his assistant. She mentioned understanding there are certain meetings that appear to be limited to his political party. Additionally, she requested information on increases in education cost-sharing and on any OSHA or DEEP fines paid by the town, emphasizing the public's right to clear and honest information.

Connie Kapralos of South Eagle Street addressed commission attendance issues. She noted from attending many commission meetings that some commissions are missing full quorum numbers, and there have been absences causing quorum problems. She suggested addressing the situation by increasing alternate members in these commissions to prevent having to cancel meetings due to lack of quorum.

Town Council comments: Councilor Zagurski asked about updates on three properties: 156 Main Street, 211 Main Street, and 8 South Main Street, noting these were all properties that had been damaged or condemned at some point. He specifically mentioned that 156 Main Street had been a huge problem with displaced residents and requested information for the next meeting if the mayor didn't have current details. Mayor Sekorski responded that he knew there was an application for restoration of 156 Main Street going through the process, which was the only update he had. He asked Mr. Zagurski to provide him with the addresses again so he could get comprehensive updates, noting that there was movement on 156 Main Street. Mr. Zagurski commented that looking downtown, the area "is looking very bad at the moment." Other council members - Sue Boilard, Joe Green, Ron Tiscia, and Ray Engle - had no comments.

Mayor Sekorski responded to the public comment about fines, stating he was not aware of any DEEP fines and would investigate that matter. Regarding OSHA fines, he provided detailed information about the inspection process that occurred just one month into his administration. State OSHA officials conducted a comprehensive review of all departments and town buildings

over eight business days, followed by meetings with department heads and the OSHA official who presented findings.

The initial fines exceeded \$15,000 total, spread across various departments including town hall, library, and transfer station. Through meetings with OSHA officials, including the fire marshal who helped direct activities, they were able to reduce the fines by approximately 65 percent to about \$8,000. The fines were paid out of a legal account since there was no established OSHA fine account, and Mayor Sekorski noted he was working with the finance department on how to handle such matters in the future. All abatements have been completed, with extensions requested on multiple items. Mayor Sekorski mentioned one example involving the library where they had to work with a company for asbestos evaluation, clarifying that he was not saying there was asbestos in the library, but rather that they didn't have a program in place to identify it as a possibility. He emphasized transparency by noting that the entire OSHA report was available in his office with copies also filed at every department. He invited anyone interested in getting details on OSHA inspections, current abatement status, and specific fines for each violation to contact his office. He committed to providing answers to other questions raised during public comment at the next meeting through his next mayor's report.

Adjournment: Mayor Sekorski noted they had covered a lot of ground during the meeting and called for a motion to adjourn. **Motion:** Councilor Ray Engle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Sue Boilard, motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Linda Konopaske

Linda Konopaske
Recording Secretary

Attachments: Tax Refunds, Veterans Ordinance, Engine 8 Lease.

A PROPOSED ORDINANCE ENTITLED

“Chapter 15, Article III, VETERAN’S EXEMPTIONS”

§ 15-46 Veteran's exemption.

[Ord. No. PLY-139, 9-27-1983; 1-3-2017]

(a) In accordance with the provisions of section 12-81f of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), an exemption from local property taxation in an amount not to exceed four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00) of assessed valuation is hereby granted to that veteran and to that veteran's surviving spouse who qualifies in accordance with the provisions of CGS section 12-81f commencing with the assessment date of October 1, 2016 and continuing on each assessment date thereafter.

(b) In accordance with the provisions of section 12-81h of the CGS, an exemption from property tax to be determined as a uniform percentage of the assessed value of any one motor vehicle owned by any veteran with a condition of disability enabling such veteran to qualify for the exemption from property tax currently allowed under subdivision (20), (21) or (83) of section 12-81, as amended by this act, provided such motor vehicle is specially equipped for purposes of adapting its use to the disability of such veteran and provided further no individual entitled to claim the exemption under this section and under subdivision (83) of section 12-81, as amended by this act, shall receive more than one exemption for a motor vehicle.

(c) Such exemptions shall be in addition to that provided by CGS section 12-81.

(d) All applications shall be made bi-annually between February 1 and September 30 and shall be renewable upon proof by such veteran or such veteran's spouse of eligibility in accordance with CGS section 12-81f.

§ 15-47 Veteran's exemption. – Total and Permanent Disability

[4-14-2026]

(a) In accordance with the provisions of section 12-81(83) of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) as amended by Public Act 25-168, § 233, which authorizes municipalities to provide tax exemptions to veterans of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, or Space Force, having a one hundred percent (100%) service-connected permanent and total disability, and the surviving spouses of such disabled veterans, an exemption from local property taxation is hereby granted to that veteran and to that veteran's surviving spouse who qualifies in accordance with the provisions of CGS section 12-95 commencing with the assessment date of October 1, 2024 and continuing on each assessment date thereafter.

(b) The following property is hereby exempted from municipal taxation for the assessment years commencing on or after October 1, 2025:

- A. A building lot of up to two (2) acres on which sits a dwelling owned by a veteran of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, or Space Force, who is a resident of Connecticut, and has a one hundred percent (100%) service-connected permanent and total disability rating, as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
- B. A building lot of up to two acres on which sits a dwelling owned by the surviving spouse, while such spouse remains an unmarried widow or widower, of any resident of Connecticut who:
 - (1) served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, or Space Force of the United States,
 - (2) had been determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to be one hundred percent (100%) service-connected permanently and totally disabled at the time of his or her death, and

(3) died prior to October 1, 2024, but after December 7, 1941.

(b) Such exemption shall be in addition to that provided by CGS section 12-81f.

(c) Applications for the tax exemption authorized by this section shall be filed annually with the Assessor no later than October 31 following the assessment date with respect to which such exemption is claimed. Failure to file such an application as prescribed herein with respect to any assessment year shall constitute a waiver of the right to claim such exemption for that assessment year. Such applications must include proof of the individual's or deceased spouse's one hundred percent (100%) service-connected permanent and total disability rating from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. If there is no change to such determination, such proof shall not be required for any assessment year following that for which the exemption was granted initially. If the United

States Department of Veterans Affairs modifies an individual's determination to other than permanently and totally disabled based on a service-connected disability rating of one hundred percent (100%), such modification shall be deemed a waiver of the right to the tax exemption.

Adopted by the Plymouth Town Council on April 14, 2026.

Recorded by Town Clerk on April 20, 2026.

Published in Republican-American on April 21, 2026.

Effective on May 12, 2026.

Certified by: *Linda Konopaske*
Linda Konopaske, Town Clerk

Date: April 20, 2026

Town of Plymouth, Connecticut

Motion:

To authorize the Mayor to enter into the necessary agreements for replacing Engine 8 as per the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Town of Plymouth has determined that a true and very real need exists for the acquisition of the Equipment described in the Lease-Purchase Agreement presented to this meeting; and has further determined that the Equipment will be used solely for essential governmental functions and not for private business use.

WHEREAS, the Town of Plymouth has taken the necessary steps, including any legal bidding requirements, under applicable law to arrange for the acquisition of such equipment.

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town of Plymouth that the terms of said Lease-Purchase Agreement and Escrow Agreement are in the best interest of Lessee for the acquisition of such equipment, and the Town of Plymouth designates and confirms the Mayor to execute and deliver, and to witness (or attest), respectively, **Leasing 2, Inc.** Lease-Purchase Agreement and Escrow Agreement, if applicable, and any related documents necessary to the consummation of the transactions contemplated by the Lease-Purchase Agreement and Escrow Agreement.

(Signature of Party to Execute Lease-
Purchase Agreement and Escrow
Agreement)

(Print Name and Title)

The undersigned further certifies that the above resolution has not been repealed or amended and remains in full force and effect and further certifies that the above and foregoing Lease-Purchase Agreement and Escrow Agreement is the same as presented at said meeting of the governing body of Lessee.

Secretary/Clerk

Print Name and Title

Date