

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

ROBERT J. BRULE, FIRST SELECTMAN

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

RICH MUCKLE, SELECTMAN

GREG ATTANASIO, SELECTMAN

SHANNON WITHEY, EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Completing my 6th year as First Selectman and it remains both an honor and a privilege to continue serving the Town of Waterford! At the heart of public service is a commitment to trust, open communication, transparency, and fostering a strong sense of belonging within our community. Every decision I make begins and ends with what is best for the people of Waterford. I am deeply proud of our town and the dedicated employees, volunteers, and elected officials who work tirelessly every day to make Waterford a great



FIRST SELECTMAN BRULE WITH SELECTMAN MUCKLE AND SELECTMAN ATTANASIO

place to live, work, and serve. My passion for this role continues to inspire me to share a thoughtful reflection on the year's progress through this Annual Summary. It is a privilege to work alongside Selectman Rich Muckle and Selectman Greg Attanasio as I present the 2025 Board of Selectmen Annual Report.

In 2025, as the First Selectman, I presented the Board of Selectmen (BOS) a FY26 Total Town Budget (Operating, Capital and Debt Services) with an increase of just (.75%) or \$373,394. The increase of the 34 town department budgets or “Total General Government Operations” was \$895,213 (2.28%). While ensuring town-side operating, capital and debt service funding increased just (.75%), it enabled my office, and the town, to continue to work with the Board of Education to “offset” their FY26 increase in operating costs of \$2,217,127 (3.85%) or a total BOE operating budget of \$59,828,308, not including capital, fleet, insurance, school debt and retirement costs. Previous annual general operating budget showed modest increases presented by the First Selectman of 1.32% in FY22, 1.25% in FY23, 1.65% in FY24, 2.07% in FY25, and 2.28% in FY26, were submitted and approved. This



**THE MILL RATE REMAINED
STABLE AT 23.36 IN 2025**

reflects an average Town annual budget increase of (1.7%) for all 34-town departments over the past five years.

Community Engagement

In 2025, the First Selectman participated in the Sangam Asian Heritage Event at the Waterford Library — a wonderful celebration of culture and community. In Indian culture, Sangam is a Sanskrit-origin word that means “confluence” or “coming together.” Attending this event provided an important opportunity to connect with more than 100 Waterford and regional residents, learn more about Sangam’s mission, and support the rich diversity that strengthens our community. Special thanks to the Waterford Public Library for hosting. Events like this remind us that understanding and celebrating different cultures brings us closer together and makes Waterford a more welcoming and inclusive place for all!



PROUD TO ATTEND THE 2025
SANGAM ASIAN HERITAGE EVENT

The First Selectman’s Office remains committed to community engagement and a “neighbors helping neighbors” approach. The “Waterford Cares” initiative, which started six years ago with my running mate and Selectwoman, the late Jody Nazarchyk, includes:

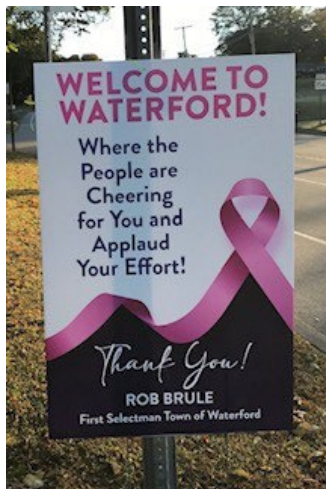
- Hosting First Selectman Food Drives for the Waterford Community Food Bank
- Providing holiday meals to veterans, seniors and families in need
- Sponsoring the holiday tree lightings at Jordan Green and Quaker Hill Green
- Starting and sponsoring the Waterford Day Parade
- Sponsoring the Halloween Trunk or Treat and Socks for Seniors events
- Distributing Town Proclamations and Town Coins to honor scouts, milestones and residents
- Hosting the Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies
- Participating in Wreaths-Across-America every December
- Supporting survivors of domestic violence and Safe Futures
- Supporting the Terri Brodeur Breast Cancer Foundation

- Starting and supporting the Waterford Veterans Coffeehouse - the largest attended Veterans Coffeehouse in eastern Connecticut.

The Town of Waterford and the First Selectman's Office continues to support a number of community agencies and initiatives in addition to Veteran events in town and the region. The Town of Waterford continues to host the Safe Futures Annual Walk and looks forward to the groundbreaking of their new Family Justice Center in 2026 in Waterford! The First Selectman was proud to attend the 2025 Holland Club Induction Ceremony at the U.S. Navy Base in Groton. It was a great opportunity to support Waterford residents and



**PROUD TO SUPPORT SAFE FUTURES
ANNUAL WALK IN WATERFORD!**



PROUD TO SUPPORT TBBCF!

veterans across our nation on their selection into this select club. The 5th Annual Waterford Day Parade included over 100 entries, the largest number of participants in 5 years. "Unity in our Community" and recognizing veterans, residents and employees, remains the theme every year for our town's parade. Tom Thurlow, a long-time Board of Education employee, received the 2025 First Selectman's Public Service Award and Barbara Burdick was selected as the 2025 Waterford Day Grand Marshal. Both of these recipients reflect the passion for the Town of Waterford and the connection they have with our residents. Congratulations Barbara and Tom!

The First Selectman and Emergency Management Director, Steve Sinagra, continue to attend the annual Connecticut Emergency Management Symposium at Camp Nett in Niantic. This past symposium allowed me the opportunity to speak directly with DESPP Commissioner, Ronald Higgins, about the Town's \$6.9M State Bonding Request Application to replace our aging radio system and join the state radio system, ensuring first responder communications and mutual aid in the event of an emergency. Unfortunately, in 2025, the Town of Waterford was awarded just \$1.5M in state bonding. With the possibility of \$1M in additional funding from the Nuclear Safety Grant in 2026, it still leaves the remaining balance for the town to finance. This "process" took over two



years from start to finish and with the contract signed, the town will implement this critical upgrade to the State Radio System and NexGen CAD Program for first responders and mutual aid partners.

In addition, the First Selectman was proud to work alongside the CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) Boating Division to split the cost (60% state 40% town) of rehabilitating the large state-owned Mago Point Boat Launch Public Parking lot as a state/town \$1M capital project. Waterford residents will now have accessible after-hour parking and additional parking for Waterford businesses during peak summer months and will eventually “connect” to the \$2M Niantic River Road Sidewalk Project, slated for 2026 by a recently approved Southeastern Connecticut Conference of Government’s LOCIP grant.

Capital Projects



IN 2025, NEW CAMERAS, BALLARDS AND FENCING INSTALLED AT ALL THREE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND NEW ARMED OFFICERS HIRED

In 2025, after completing or closing 24 approved and funded capital projects, ARPA projects and Lotcip/Locip projects, the Town of Waterford saw \$4,012,462 invested in completed capital investments. The First Selectman’s office continues to support the funding for the Town’s Fleet Plan at \$1M annually as well as the town’s retirement fund at \$7.2M. The highlight capital project was the \$2M school & community building security improvements, the largest capital project for school and community safety the Town has completed. The most complex part of this project, the video security cameras inside and around our schools, started in late 2024, and completed in 2025 despite significant supply chain delays.

The First Selectman would like to thank IT Manager, Jeff Robillard, for his leadership and professionalism completing this complex security upgrade. The First Selectman’s annual Capital Plan continues to feature a “Snap Shot” which remains a responsible and transparent tool for identifying use of the General Fund Balance for capital projects. The “Snap Shot” has helped ensure Town and BOE operating budgets impact on the



SENIORS ENJOYING THE ACCESSIBLE WALKWAY AROUND THE POND



THE FUNDING FOR THE NEW OSWEGATCHIE FIRE STATION WAS APPROVED IN 2025

tax rate remains as stable as possible for the taxpayer. The 5-year “Snap Shot” Capital Plan, continues to identify projects that fall into the following four categories: road paving, building maintenance, park improvements and Board of Education requests, like the new Turf Field and Tennis Courts. The newly renovated Arnold E. Holm Jr. Memorial Park officially saw additional benches installed for residents who needed shorter walking distance between benches. The past year also saw the Gardiner Foundation donate \$40,000 towards a much needed shade structure at the park’s playground, with the install scheduled for the spring of 2026. Road paving and town safety projects remained a priority. Road paving projects continue to include the Utility Commission replacing 30-year old plastic water connectors with copper piping, prior to road paving, eliminating the possibility of leaks forming under the newly paved roads. Finally, in a supportive bipartisan vote in town of 32-3 (Board of Selectmen 3-0, Board of Finance 6-0 and RTM 23-3) the building of a new town-owned firehouse was approved. The building and land was purchased by the town for \$1 and will be the future home of the first town-owned fire station in Waterford. Construction is expected to start in early 2026.

Other Notable Capital Projects Completed in 2025:

- Town paved Old Norwich Road, Jefferson Avenue, Phillips Street, North Phillips Street, Albacore Drive, Marlin Drive, Woodlawn Court, Quarry Road, Leary Drive and Goshen Road
- Replaced Emergency Management Antennas on the new Fargo Water Tank
- Transitioned 911 CAD system to Nexgen for future State Radio System upgrade
- Completed Security Upgrades to Town and School buildings
- Upgraded GIS system within town operating systems
- Improved the Waterford Police Department Cell Block and Kitchen areas
- Removed the Southwest School Underground Tanks
- Replaced the Cohanzie Fire Station Emergency Generator
- Replaced and updated all Town and Waterford School’s phone system hardware & software
- Upgraded the Quaker Hill Fire Station Fire Alarm

- Replaced the Town of Waterford's Content Filter for Website Protection
- Funded the Alewife Cove Conservancy federal grant request for dredging
- Replaced the Waterford Police Department Firearm Laser Sites
- Town replaced sidewalks on Norman Street, William Street, Summer Street and David Street



IN THE SUMMER OF 2025, THE LEARY PARK 6-COURT PICKLEBALL COMPLEX, 2 TENNIS COURTS AND A NEW BASKETBALL COURT CONSTRUCTION WAS STARTED WITH NEW FENCING AND POST-TENSION CONCRETE TO LAST 25 YEARS.

THANK YOU TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN, BOARD OF FINANCE AND THE REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING FOR ALL SUPPORTING THIS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT PROJECT FOR RESIDENTS WHO LIVE IN THE NORTHERN PART OF TOWN!

Fleet Management Plan

In 2025, the Town received seven large pieces of apparatus for Public Works, including a Sweeper for \$249,792, a Front Load Refuse Truck for \$401,472, a new Chassis for the Tree Truck for \$187,014, three DPW Dump Trucks for \$389,344 and a Side Load Refuse Truck for \$212,099. The Public Works Department and the Police Department fleet plans remain a priority, while future Fleet Plans will highlight fleet needs for the Waterford Fire Department. Although supply chain issues have occurred, the Town of Waterford remains in good position to purchase the fleet necessary to keep our town safe and operating efficiently. The Town continues to remove vehicles and equipment from the fleet in an effort to reduce the size of the fleet. The new Municipal Complex's 70,000 square foot garage continues to keep our trucks and other fleet equipment inside and protected from the elements. The DPW's incredibly important Tree Bucket Truck has been in the shop most of 2025 for extensive refurbishment. This critical piece of apparatus will ensure needed tree work will once again be in full operation come 2026! The First Selectman will continue to focus on Fleet



**WATERFORD PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
ENSURES OUR CAPITAL ASSETS ARE PROTECTED**

Management, focusing on how many vehicles the Town has in its fleet, maintenance of vehicles to extend life and budgeting for large vehicle replacement. In 2025, the Waterford Fire Department included its vehicles within the Fleetio Fleet Management system to ensure all town-owned vehicles, both small and large, are within the new fleet software program.



CTASLA MERIT AWARD WINNING ADA ACCESSIBLE TOWN PARK!

In 2025, the Town of Waterford achieved SustainableCT Bronze Certification for the third time since 2019, earning 480 points in 2025. Located along Connecticut's southeastern shoreline and home to roughly 19,500 residents, Waterford continues to balance its rich agricultural and granite-industry heritage with forward-looking investments that protect natural resources and strengthen community well-being. This recognition reflects achievements for Waterford and across SustainableCT's priority areas, including Inclusive and Equitable Communities; Thriving Local Economies; Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources; Vibrant and Creative Culture; Dynamic and Resilient Planning; Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems; Renewable and Efficient Energy; Inclusive Communication; Strategic Materials Management; Health and Wellness Opportunities; and Healthy and Diverse Housing and Homelessness Prevention Innovation. From expanding comprehensive recycling programs to improving accessible public spaces like the award-winning Arnold E. Holm Jr. Memorial Park, Waterford continues to demonstrate leadership in sustainability and community investment. I am incredibly proud of the dedicated team at Town Hall, especially Environmental Planner Maureen Fitzgerald, for their commitment to ensuring Waterford remains a great place to live, work, and raise a family.



WATERFORD WOODS WITH 400 UNITS OF WORKFORCE HOUSING

In 2025, Waterford Woods Luxury Apartment Complex Phase Three was completed. The final 100 units for Phase Four is expected to be completed Spring 2026 and provide 425 units of 1 & 2 bedroom apartments of workforce and affordable housing. The impressive complex stretches over 35-acres and includes a clubhouse, indoor pool, pickleball court, walking trail, vegetable and herb gardens and

additional storage units on the property. This \$120M project has brought much needed workforce family housing to the region. The Town of Waterford Planning & Zoning Commission is in the final stages of completing the town's Plan of Conservation and Development. "Plan Waterford" is our Town's guide for the future. It shows where we have been and lays out the vision for where we are going.

Finally, thank you to the Economic Development Commission Chairman, Mike Buscetto, and the Interim Planning Department Director, Mark Wujtewicz, who worked closely with my office on development options for the Crystal Mall property, providing flexibility for the three owners of the mall property and a much needed tax revenue for Waterford residents. The town continues to look for new economic development that will have long-term effects and will enhance our Net Taxable Grand List, including the Airport Property and areas in town that could create a Waterford "Main Street."



**NEVINS COTTAGE EXTERIOR RENOVATION
COMPLETED IN 2025 – INTERIOR
PLANNED FOR 2026!**

The Town continues to find creative and effective ways to reduce costs to taxpayers by supporting the Friends of Nevins Cottage, Inc. established in 2024. The picturesque vernacular house dates to c. 1890 and was a tenant house located on the Shaw-Perkins-Nevins farm that occupied acreage on both sides of Rope Ferry Road. The property descended through the family of successful New London merchant Nathaniel Shaw II (1735-1782). It passed to Thomas Shaw Perkins, brother of Nathaniel Shaw Perkins, and then to his daughter Cornelia L. Perkins Nevins who married David H. Nevins of Norwich. The title of the farm was settled to a daughter of the Nevins', Anna Nevins, who lived until 1958. She began selling off the portions of the farm on the north side of Rope Ferry Road in the early 1950s. Nevins Cottage was purchased from Anna Nevins' estate by the town in 1961.

The Friends group successfully completed the exterior renovation in 2025. Spring of 2026 will see the Friends group focus on the interior renovation with demo being donated by Waterford small business, Bayside Construction. Interior painting, electrical work and heating needs will restore and maintain this historic building through in-kind and private sector donations. Reducing the cost of historic preservation to the town by over \$250,000.

In 2025, the Town of Waterford saw the approval and start of the new Leary Park Pickleball Complex, Tennis Courts and Basketball Court, Town Hall Auditorium Renovation and ADA Accessible Restroom Project, the Mago Point Parking Lot, the Town Hall Basketball Courts and the new Waterford High School Turf Field and Tennis Courts. Outdoor parks, infrastructure and road paving with the General Fund Balance, CIP and CNR requests continue to be completed. All the while, public safety, town staffing levels and fleet management remain priorities for review. Waterford continues to host some of the largest retail shopping stores and plazas in and around Waterford Commons. Waterford is home to Dominion Energy's Millstone Power Station, the beautiful Great Neck Country Club, national chain restaurants and box stores and now a transformative mall property welcoming General Dynamics-Electric Boat Waterford Corporate Campus. These provide many benefits to our town as well as current and future tax revenue.



THE TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM NOW STREAMS TOWN MEETINGS LIVE VIA YOUTUBE & HOSTS VETERAN EVENTS DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER!

Conclusion



CONGRATULATIONS OFFICER FREDRICKS AND K-9 HODGES!

This past year brought both challenges and opportunities, yet our response has once again shown the strength, unity, and resilience that define our community. We celebrated Dominion Energy's Millstone Power Station Unit 2 50th Anniversary and reflected on the positive impact the nuclear power plant has had on our community. From successfully launching new hiring initiatives six more full-time Firefighter/EMT's, to completing long-term projects, every success reflects the dedication of our residents, volunteers, elected officials, and town employees whose hard work makes Waterford such a special place to call home. No employee in Waterford deserves more praise than Waterford Police Officer Eric Fredricks and K-9 Officer Hodges, who were proud recipients of the Connecticut Lion's Club 2025 Humanitarian of the Year Award. Their commitment to our community and residents of all ages has been a beacon of warmth, dignity and comfort. There was not an event in

Waterford or the region that did not include these amazing partners. Thank you Officers Fredricks and Hodges, well deserved! As I reflect on 2025 and my sixth year serving as Waterford's First Selectman, I am deeply proud of all that our town has accomplished together.

Through bipartisan collaboration, professionalism, and open dialogue in town, we have continued to move Waterford forward in meaningful ways. The Town continues to prioritize a working budget that supports capital investments, first responders, critical services and a level of education we expect in town, while



**WATERFORD'S COMMITMENT TO
INCREASING PAID FIREFIGHTER
/EMT'S CONTINUED IN 2025**

minimizing the growth of the taxpayers' burden. Waterford, like many of its neighboring communities, has seen a continuation of retirements by eligible employees. We worked hard on the recruitment and retention of town employees, most notably, assessors, building officials, police officers and firefighters. Looking ahead, I remain committed to building on our momentum — fostering a thriving, affordable, safe and vibrant community that values progress and respect. As we turn the page to 2026, I remain confident that Waterford's best days are still ahead and I look forward to achieving even more together!

