

REGULAR SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

REGULAR SESSION of the Town Council of the Town of South Kingstown, County of Washington, in the State of Rhode Island held at the Town Hall, in and for said Town on the 26th day of February 2026 at 7:06 PM.

PRESENT: Rory H. McEntee, President
 Michael K. Marran, Vice President
 Patricia A. Alley
 Deborah D. Bergner
 Jay G. Wegimont

1. REGULAR SESSION

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag is given.

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

The Land Acknowledgement Statement is read.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll Call is taken and all members are present.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve the Consent Agenda as indicated by (CA) on same.

(CA) A. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to grant Victualling and Holiday Sales Licenses for the year beginning December 1, 2025 for Green Tea Eatery, Inc. Peking Tokyo d/b/a Peking Tokyo, 120 Fortin Road, Kingston, RI 02881. Application by Cai Xiuyu, President. Renewal; License No. 60677.

(CA) B. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize the Town Assessor to abate taxes in the amount of \$3,523.26, as shown on Tax Abatement Request No. 659

(CA) C. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize an award to StarNet Solutions Incorporated, 90 Main Street, Farmingdale, NJ 07727 for the purchase of Server Infrastructure Support and Licenses in an amount not to exceed \$15,545 from the IT Hardware Maintenance account with a 2-year renewal option not to exceed a ten percent (10%) increase over the prior year as further described in a memorandum from the Director of Information Technology to the Town Manager dated February 13, 2026, entitled "Server Infrastructure Support and Licenses".

(CA) D. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize the Town Clerk to advertise for Order of Notice a Public Hearing relative to an application for transfer of a license to keep and sell alcoholic beverages in South Kingstown in accordance with the General Laws of 1956, as amended, as follows:

CLASS B VICTUALLER LIQUOR LICENSE

REGULAR SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

Transfer of a Class B Victualler Liquor License from A&S Investments, LLC d/b/a Terminesi's Café, 501 High Street, Wakefield, RI by Albert Terminesi, Partner to Jacks Place, LLC d/b/a Jacks Place by Quinn Earley, Owner for the first floor bar and dining areas; and as further defined in a site plan on file in the Town Clerk's office.

4. LICENSES

A. Matthew Brown and Freida Sahady, Co Owners are present, and after testimony and discussion it is

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to grant a Victualling License to Butterhead, LLC d/b/a St. Charbel, 254 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI 02879, subject to approval from the Building Department. Application by Matthew Brown, Owner. New; License No. 88888.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS – 30 Minutes

Council President McEntee invites residents to come forward with comments.

Elizabeth Gardiner is present and comments on her family history and the proposed demolition of Wakefield Elementary School.

6. NEW BUSINESS

New Business Item 6B is brought forward.

B. James Manni, Town Manager reviews the purpose of ratifying an Executive Order made effective February 23, 2026 declaring a state of disaster emergency due to the storm that occurred on February 22, 2026, the volume of snow, safety concerns, and the process in clearing Town roads.

The Town Manager highly commends Town staff, Union Fire, Kingston Fire for their hard work and dedication in responding to this storm.

Discussion ensues relative to the effective date of the order.

Town Council commends neighbors coming together to help each other, and Town staff for their hard work and consistent updates on storm response.

Council Member Bergner reads a message from former Council Member Jessica Rose expressing her appreciation and gratitude towards storm responders.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to adopt an Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency for the Town of South Kingstown due to the dangers posed by the February 22, 2026 winter storm and activating the Town's disaster emergency plan, as follows:

TOWN OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN EXECUTIVE ORDER: DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER EMERGENCY – WINTER STORM EVENT OF 2/22/2026

WHEREAS, Governor Daniel McKee issued Executive Order 26-02 on February 22, 2026, declaring a disaster emergency due to the winter storm event impacting the State of Rhode Island; and

REGULAR SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

WHEREAS, these weather conditions may result in dangerous driving conditions, road closures, stranded vehicles, power outages, structural damage, and other potential hazards which pose an imminent threat to public safety and to public and private property; and

WHEREAS, the Town of South Kingstown has experienced blizzard conditions and a significant accumulation of snow, hindering travel by emergency vehicles and plow trucks; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety and resources of the people of the Town of South Kingstown may be endangered thereby;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Town Manager of the Town of South Kingstown, pursuant to R.I. General Laws § 30-15-13(a), I hereby order and direct the following:

1. A state of disaster emergency is declared for the Town of South Kingstown due to the dangers posed by the present winter storm and the Town's disaster emergency plan shall be activated.

This Order shall take effect immediately and will remain in effect until the threat or danger has passed or the emergency conditions no longer exist.

C. Mark Conboy, Town Engineer reviews a request for municipal tree and stump removal services.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize an award of bid to Regal Tree and Shrub Experts, LLC, 111 Eastman Street, Easton, MA 02375 for municipal tree and stump removal services, in an amount not to exceed \$26,070 from the Arborist Services account, as further described in a memorandum from the Director of Public Services to the Town Manager dated February 9, 2026, entitled "Bid Recommendation – FY 2025-26 Municipal Tree & Stump Removal Services".

D. Craig Stanley, Chief of Emergency Medical Services reviews a request for a resolution in support of House Bill H7485 establishing reimbursement for Community Paramedic Programs and provides the bill's status with the General Assembly.

Discussion ensues relative to when a hearing with the General Assembly will be held to provide testimony on this bill.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to adopt a resolution in support of establishing Reimbursement for Community Paramedic Programs, as follows:

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ESTABLISHING REIMBURSEMENT FOR COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the Town Council of South Kingstown recognizes the critical role that community paramedicine plays in improving public health, reducing emergency room visits, and enhancing healthcare accessibility for residents; and

WHEREAS, community paramedics provide essential services such as in-home healthcare assessments, chronic disease management, post-hospital discharge follow-ups, and mental health crisis intervention, thereby reducing unnecessary emergency medical services (EMS) and hospital admissions; and

REGULAR SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

WHEREAS, the absence of a dedicated reimbursement mechanism for community paramedic programs creates financial barriers that limit their expansion and sustainability, despite their proven benefits in reducing overall healthcare costs and improving patient outcomes; and

WHEREAS, House Bill H7485, currently under consideration by the Rhode Island Legislature, seeks to establish a reimbursement framework for community paramedic services through Medicaid and other state-supported healthcare programs, ensuring the financial viability of these programs; and

WHEREAS, supporting this legislation aligns with the Town of South Kingstown's commitment to enhancing public health, optimizing emergency response resources, and fostering a more proactive and preventive healthcare system;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the South Kingstown hereby expresses its full support for House Bill H7485 and urges the Rhode Island Legislature to pass this critical legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the Governor, State Legislators representing the Town of South Kingstown, and other relevant stakeholders to advocate for the passage and implementation of House Bill H7485.

E. The Town Manager requests that New Business Items 6E. and 6J. are tabled to the March 9, 2026 Town Council Meeting.

Discussion ensues relative to whether tabling these items combined with the recent snow storm will delay the construction schedule of the South Kingstown High School Project.

The Town Manager notes there won't be a delay.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to table to March 9, 2026, a resolution authorizing the Town Manager to execute change orders to the AIA A133-2019 Contract with Gilbane Building Company, 7 Jackson Walkway, Suite 2, Providence, Rhode Island 02903, in connection with Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) Agreement #2 for the South Kingstown High School Replacement Project, specifically Alternate #1 (Ceramic Wall Tile in Lieu of Wall Protection) in the amount of \$74,981 and Alternate #8 (Deduct for PVC Material for Underground Sanitary Lines in Lieu of Cast Iron) in the amount of (\$68,416), as further detailed in a memorandum from the Deputy Town Manager to the Town Manager dated February 13, 2026, and as recommended by the Change Order Task Force and School Building Committee.

New Business 6J. is brought forward

J. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to table to March 9, 2026, a resolution authorizing the Town Clerk to advertise for Order of Notice a Public Hearing relative to proposed amendments to the Town Code, Chapter 11 Nuisances, Article III. Construction Activities, Section 11-26 Exemptions, as follows:

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 11 OF THE ORDINANCES OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN

Chapter 11 - NUISANCES

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Article III. – CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

REGULAR SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

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Sec. 11-26. - Exemptions.

The provisions of this article shall not apply to:

(1) The operation of snow removal equipment at any time provided that such equipment shall be maintained in good repair so as to minimize noise. Noise discharged from exhausts shall be adequately muffled so as to prevent loud and/or explosive sounds;

(2) Lawn care and grounds maintenance equipment in normal daytime use if used and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications;

(3) Public emergency activities required to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the citizenry.

(4) The normal day to day agricultural activities associated with the raising of livestock and crops.

(5) Construction or demolition activities conducted on property owned by the Town of South Kingstown, provided that such activities are associated with a specific project that has been expressly approved by the Town Council by resolution, and that advance public notice of such authorized construction activity is provided.

* * *

This ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

F. Mark Conboy, Town Engineer reviews a request to amend a contract for engineering services.

Discussion ensues relative to the purpose of continually extending the contract instead of establishing a new contract.

Council Vice President Marran requests an answer be provided prior to another contract amendment.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize an amendment to an award of contract, originally granted on October 13, 2015 and subsequently amended on September 25, 2017, November 26, 2018, February 26, 2024, and July 22, 2024 to James J. Geremia & Associates, Inc., 272 W. Exchange Street, Suite 201, Providence, RI 02903 for Engineering Services from an amount not to exceed \$689,628 to an amount not to exceed \$778,988, as further described in a purchasing recommendation from the Director of Public Services to the Town Manager dated February 13, 2026, and entitled "JGA Contract Amendment No. 5, Change Order #9, Construction Administration Services".

G. Council President McEntee reviews his request to add clarifying language in the Town's Schedule of Fees that rentals being rented for 30 days or less during any portion of the registration period be subject to the short-term rental fee of \$300 per unit.

Amy Goins, Town Solicitor proposes revised language to include in the Town's Schedule of Fees.

Discussion ensues relative to the purpose of amending the language and encouraging long-term rentals.

REGULAR SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to amend the Town's Schedule of Fees relative to Rental Dwellings Registration Fees, as follows:

Rental Dwellings - Registration Fees

Filing fee associated with the annual registration for rental dwelling/unit.

Rental unit for period of 30 days or less - \$300.00 per unit

Rental unit for period of more than 30 days - \$50.00 per unit, but not to exceed a total of \$1,000.00 (20 units) for any one property owner.

Rental units that are rented for 30 days or less during any portion of the registration period shall be assessed the short-term rental registration fee.

Late filing fee - \$300.00

H. Matthew Moynihan, Chief of Police reviews a request for Office of Highway Safety–supported traffic safety communications and media consulting services.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize an award of contract to Cromwell Public Affairs, 649 Hope Street, Bristol, RI 02809, for Office of Highway Safety–supported traffic safety communications and media consulting services in an amount not to exceed \$37,950, subject to the availability of grant funding, and in accordance with RI Master Price Agreement No. 479, as further described in a memorandum from the Chief of Police to the Town Manager dated December 17, 2025, entitled "OHS Grant Funded Media Consulting Services – Cromwell Public Affairs (FY'26 Renewal)."

I. The Chief of Police reviews a request to purchase a mobile solar message board trailer with a telescopic PTZ camera and WiFi modem.

Discussion ensues relative to the use of the message board trailer, flock cameras, and ensuring the message board will not be used for license plate recognition.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize an award to Safeware, Inc., 4403 Forbes Boulevard, Lanham, MD 20706 for the purchase of one mobile solar message board trailer with a telescopic PTZ camera and WiFi modem in an amount not to exceed \$45,000 using State Homeland Security Program (HSGP) grant funds and Police Department Forfeiture funds, pursuant to State of Rhode Island Master Price Agreement 577, and as further described in a memorandum from the Chief of Police to the Town Manager dated February 12, 2026, entitled "Mobile Solar Message Board Trailer Purchase".

K. Council Member Wegimont reviews his request for two stop signs on Church Street at the intersection of Railroad Street and the bike path crossing and ensuring the safety of cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: that a request by Council Member Wegimont to add two stop signs on Church Street at the intersection of Railroad Street and the bike path crossing be referred to the Public Services and Police Departments for further study.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

REGULAR SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

A. Notice having been duly given, a Public Hearing is held relative to a new Class B Victualler Liquor License for Butterhead, LLC d/b/a St. Charbel, 254 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI.

There being no public comments, it is

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to close the Public Hearing.

New Business Item 6A. is brought forward.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to amend the Town's Liquor License Rules and Regulations, Section I. The current number of licenses for each class shall be authorized as indicated below, unless changed by a majority vote of the Town Council:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Number</u>
A - Retail	4 maximum
B - Victualler	32 -33
B - Tavern	1
B - Limited	5
B - Hotel	1
B - M	0
C	0
D - Club Privilege	1
D - Limited	0
F	Five per year per organization
F - 1	Five per year per organization
J - Limited	1
T - Legitimate Theater	2

Public Hearing Item 7A. is brought back.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to grant an application for a license to keep and sell alcoholic beverages in South Kingstown in accordance with the General Laws of 1956, as amended, as follows:

CLASS B VICTUALLER LIQUOR LICENSE

Application for a Class B Victualler Liquor License by Butterhead, LLC d/b/a St. Charbel, 254 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI by Matthew Brown, Owner for the main dining and bar area as well as the patio in accordance with a Special Use Permit granted by the Zoning Board of Review on June 18, 2025 and Public Laws Chapters 23-188 and 23-189; and as further defined in a site plan on file in the Town Clerk's office.

Said license is contingent upon the issuance of a Certificate of Good Standing from the RI Division of Taxation, a Certificate of Insurance evidencing required liability coverage, compliance with all Town ordinances and regulations, the payment of any municipal taxes and user fees in arrears to the Town, and correction of any fire code violations.

8. SPECIAL WORK SESSION

REGULAR SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

A. The Town Manager notes the Special Work Session regarding form-based code for Old Tower Hill Road had to be cancelled. Able City East is unable to attend due to weather conditions causing travel delays.

The Town Manager reviews alternate dates to hold the Work Session.

The Town Council reaches consensus to hold the Special Work Session on April 9, 2026 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - continued

Council President McEntee invites residents to come forward with comments.

Bret Harrington is present and comments in support of flock cameras.

Council Member Bergner comments on a training held by Attorney Andrew Teitz regarding Planning Board approvals and denials, notes Mr. Teitz did a wonderful job, and expresses interest in having a public discussion on the Planning Board approval process.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to adjourn at 8:13 PM.

Nichole C. Romane
Town Clerk