

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET SESSION

MARCH 12, 2026

At an ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET 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 12th day of March 2026 at 7:03 PM.

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

Also present: James M. Manni, Town Manager; Lucas Murray, Deputy Town Manager/DOAS; and Brian Silvia, Finance Director.

The Pledge of Allegiance is given. The Land Acknowledgement Statement is read.

James Manni, Town Manager notes that this evening's Budget Work Session will begin with an overview of the FY 2026-2027 Human Services and Outside Agencies (HSOA) grant program, and the agencies will present their requests.

Luke Murray, Deputy Town Manager/DOAS gives a brief introduction of the Human Services and Outside Agencies (HSOA) program and requirements and provides an overview of the FY 2025-2026 budget summary. There are 24 applicants this year, which are non-profit agencies, groups serving the disadvantaged population, and outside agencies making a positive impact on the community. The Town Manager has proposed \$182,050 in funding for the HSOA program in the FY2026-2027 Proposed Budget. Requests submitted total \$269,024. Annual funding in the amount of \$7,000 has been included for Celebrations to support the Veterans Day Parade and Memorial Day Parade. No funding request has been received for the Fireman's Parade, so funds have been reallocated to the other Parades.

Kate Brewster, Chief Executive Officer, Jonnycake Center for Hope is present and requests \$30,000 in level funding to support ongoing nutrition programs, including "shopping" in the Jonnycake market, school vacation meals, homebound deliveries, and fresh produce distribution.

Kate Brewster, speaking on behalf of Jason Colonies, Executive Director at the Education Exchange, reviews a funding request from the Education Exchange to support assisting adult learners with basic education, GED, literacy, and workforce training programs. Their request is for level funding in the amount of \$15,000. It is noted that the applicant was unable to attend this meeting.

Michelle LePage, Executive Director, Domestic Violence Resource Center is present and requests \$15,000 to support their helpline and drop-in center and provide advocacy and support to victims of domestic violence.

Jessica Mowry, Executive Director, WARM Welcome House of South County is present and requests funding in the amount of \$25,000 to support WARM Welcome House of Peace Dale's 17 bed emergency shelter and related operations and support the Community Outreach Program.

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Mark Collins, Director, Chris Collins Foundation is present and requests \$10,000 to support their Peer-2-Peer student-led mental health awareness program at South Kingstown High School and Broad Rock Middle School and grow mental health programming.

Christina Boone, Director, CANE Child Development Center is present and requests \$15,000 to support upgrades to their outside playground, toys, and classroom equipment.

Lindsay Bush, Executive Director, Southern RI Volunteers is present and requests level funding of \$6,000 to support them in providing independent aging assistance services, delivering meals, groceries, and medication, companionship, and transportation.

Lisa Hazelwood, Board Member, Neighbors Helping Neighbors is present and requests level funding in the amount of \$5,000 to support their free home repair for low income families.

A representative from St. Peter's by the Sea is present and requests funding in the amount of \$2,500 to supply their food pantry.

Amy Garafalo, External Affairs and Mission Advancement Director, Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island, a first-time applicant, is present and requests funding in the amount of \$1,000 to support their home-delivered meal program for residents aged 60 and older.

Discussion ensues relative to federal funding for the Meals on Wheels program.

Steven Pinch, Chief of the Union Fire District is present and requests funding in the amount of \$10,000 for the scholarship program for volunteer firefighters, and ongoing recruitment and retention efforts for the Union and Kingston Fire Districts.

Discussion ensues relative to recruitment and the scholarship program.

Jennifer Nauck, Vice President, Wakefield Village Association is present and requests funding in the amount of \$15,000 to support Main Street beautification efforts, events, and the upgrade and expansion of holiday lighting.

Joe Viele, Executive Director, Southern RI Chamber of Commerce is present and requests funding in the amount of \$20,000 to be used to support the business community, educational opportunities, the local gift certificate program, holiday decorations, and other efforts.

Joe "Tiger" Patrick, Commander, VFW Post #916 reviews a level funding request in the amount of \$7,500 to support their Veteran Services Program, assist with utilities, and supply the food pantry and warming station.

Erica Luke, Executive Director, South County History Center is present and requests level funding in the amount of \$7,500 to support document preservation of two large local history collections, the Sheldon's Furniture Company collection and Anne Kenyon Morse collection.

Discussion ensues relative to when the Sheldon and Anne collections will be available to be viewed by the public.

Alicia Schaffner, Executive Director, Salt Ponds Coalition is present and requests funding in the amount of \$4,500 to support water quality monitoring of the Saugatucket River, litter cleanup, and educational materials. It is noted that the Salt Ponds Coalition has absorbed the tasks and duties

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of the Friends of the Saugatucket, which has been dissolved. The funds requested were previously allocated to Friends of the Saugatucket.

Discussion ensues relative to hydrilla monitoring at the Saugatucket River and partnering with the Wakefield Village Association on Saugatucket cleanup efforts.

Jeremy Walsh, Vice President, Wakefield Concert Band is present and reviews a funding request in the amount of \$3,500 to continue to provide free concerts throughout Town, for musical instruments, and other operating costs.

Laura Lee Costello, Executive Director, South Kingstown Housing Authority/SKHA Services and Development Corporation is present and requests \$20,000 to provide support services to residents of the South Kingstown Housing Authority and cover the costs of affiliate service providers.

Bill Morrisette, Executive Director, Wildlife Clinic of RI is present and reviews a funding request in the amount of \$5,024 to support their wildlife emergency veterinary clinic and home rehabilitations. No funding has been received in previous years.

Jessica Gosselin, Director, St. Elizabeth Adult Day Center, also known as Cornerstone, is present and reviews a request for funding in the amount of \$2,500 to support the therapeutic activities provided to their participants.

Shirley Freitag, Executive Coordinator, Narrow River Preservation Association is present and reviews a funding request in the amount of \$4,000 to support the cost of water testing, lab processing and data analysis for their Water Watch Program.

Discussion ensues relative to dredging of the Narrow River and a cleanup scheduled for May 2, 2026.

A representative of Animal Rescue Rhode Island is present and reviews a funding request in the amount of \$5,000 to support the community pet food pantry. No funding has been received in previous years.

Tim Gray, President, World War II Foundation is present and reviews a funding request in the amount of \$10,000 to produce documentary films, provide free admission to the museum for students and seniors, and provide educational programming. It is noted that the WWII Foundation is a first-time applicant.

Discussion ensues.

Mr. Murray advises that the next steps are for the Town Council to review these funding requests and determine the allocation of HSOA funds at their next regular meeting on March 18th.

A representative of the Boys and Girls Club of Newport County is present and reviews a funding request in the amount of \$23,000 for summer camp scholarships to Camp Grosvenor.

The Town Council thanks the HSOA applicants.

Adjourn at 8:40 PM.

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Emily R. Houle
Town Clerk