



Jonathan Altshul
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

200 GARFIELD STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR JON TRISTER

NEWINGTON TOWN POOLS PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Council Chambers, Room 103– Town Hall
200 Garfield Street

Monday, January 26, 2026, 6:30 P.M.

This meeting was presented as a Zoom Webinar/Hybrid Meeting.

Present: Members Bernadette Conway, Eileen Francolino, Tim Manke, Jim Perrotti, AJ Tiniakos and Nancy Cappello

Others Present: Jonathan Altshul, Town Manager; Patrick Bates, Weston & Sampson; Tim Sheehan, Weston & Sampson

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Altshul called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Altshul led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance

3. ROLL CALL

Members Tim Manke, Bernadette Conway, Eileen Francolino, A.J. Tiniakos, Jim Perrotti, and Nancy Cappello were present. Carol Anest was not present.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- a. Chair – Ms. Conway made a motion to appoint Mr. Tiniakos as Chair. Ms. Francolino seconded. Mr. Tiniakos accepted the nomination. The motion passed 4-2, with Ms. Anest absent and Mr. Manke and Ms. Cappello opposed.
- b. Vice-Chair – Ms. Cappello made a motion to appoint Mr. Manke as Vice-Chair. Ms. Conway seconded. Mr. Manke accepted the nomination. The motion passed 5-1, with Mr. Tiniakos opposed and Ms. Anest absent.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Conway made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2025 special meeting. Mr. Manke seconded. The motion passed 6-0, with Ms. Anest absent.

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Jonathan Altshul
Town Clerk

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6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Scott Greczkowski, 46 Miami Avenue, asked if a member of Town Council can be the chair of a committee.

7. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Manke stated that he doesn't believe there is a conflict to serve on Council and be a Chair of a Committee. Mr. Altshul agreed to confirm with the Town Clerk.

Ms. Conway thanked Ms. Francolino for her service as the out-going Chair and Bill DeMaio for providing the data about pool usage.

Mr. Tiniakos also thanked Ms. Francolino for her service.

8. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discussion with Patrick Bates

Mr. Sheehan showed a new design for the Mill Pond Park pool, reflecting 6 swim lanes.

Mr. Manke asked about the application of gunnite and shotcrete, to which Mr. Bates explained that gunnite/shotcrete are the industry standard for relining pools. He explained that the material is denser than traditional poured concrete.

Mr. Bates explained that shallow pools are often preferable because they're safer, but he acknowledged that those safety concerns need to be balanced against the American Red Cross swim lesson certification standards.

Ms. Francolino advocated for a diving board. Mr. Bates explained that diving boards require a large splash zone area, which Mill Pond pool may not have. He also noted that in his interviews with stakeholders, there was no appetite for a diving board. Ms. Francolino stated that a diving board was needed to meet Red Cross certification standards. Committee members raised questions about this, noting that we currently offer Red Cross lessons without a diving board. Mr. Altshul stated that he would research this issue further.

Ms. Conway asked about the depth at the starting blocks to ensure there was adequate depth for flip turns, to which Mr. Sheehan responded that 3'8" of depth is the minimum for flip turns, but that his designs provide for 4' of depth.

Mr. Manke asked whether a diving board at Mill Pond Park would be feasible. Mr. Sheehan noted that almost all municipal pools have gotten rid of diving boards due to liability concerns.

Ms. Francolino asked about the geotechnical analysis at Mill Pond, to which Mr. Bates explained that it has a high water table and that a dewatering system would likely need to be added there. Ms. Francolino then asked whether it's preferable to rebuild the pools in place or relocate them elsewhere, to which Mr. Bates responded that rebuilding them in their current location would result in significant cost savings.

Mr. Tiniakos asked if Weston & Sampson had prepared a new design for Churchill Park pool, to which Mr. Bates responded that the original Churchill design accommodated swim competitions. Mr. Tiniakos asked about increasing the depth of the pool, to which Mr. Bates noted that the depth of the pools could be increased with a new filter system.

Ms. Francolino noted that Churchill was always ideal for long-course competitions.

Mr. Sheehan stated that it's important for the Town to determine whether it prioritizes a community pool or swim competitions.

Mr. Manke raised concerns about the number of lifeguards that would be needed at Churchill based on the pool layout. Mr. Perrotti inquired about how many lifeguards are currently needed. Mr. Sheehan explained that the standard metric is that pools need one lifeguard per 25 swimmers. Ms. Francolino stated that currently at Churchill there are 3 guards, with one additional roving guard. Ms. Conway asked whether the Town has difficulty filling lifeguard positions.

Mr. Manke asked whether Weston and Sampson had recommended designs for the bath houses, to which Mr. Bates responded that the bath house upgrades are largely dependent on the design of the new pools.

b. Continued Committee discussion about pool renovation options

Mr. Tiniakos asked Committee members if they would like both pools to be repaired, or just one. He noted that he was in favor of renovating both pools. Mr. Manke, Ms. Cappello, Mr. Perrotti, and Ms. Conway all signaled that they were in favor of repairing both pools.

Mr. Tiniakos then asked about next steps, to which Mr. Altshul noted that the town doesn't have any available funding for a final conceptual design and cost estimates necessary to bring the matter to Council for a referendum. Therefore, in his view any referendum would need to wait until 2027 at the earliest.

Mr. Perrotti noted that that would mean that it would likely be up to 3 years before new pools could be constructed, and asked about the insurance implications of waiting so long. Mr. Altshul explained that the Town had had a conversation with CIRMA, the Health District, and the Town Attorney about the pools last month, and that while CIRMA had some questions, there was broad agreement that the pools could be safely opened this summer. Mr. Altshul also noted that Weston & Sampson would be revising one finding about entrapment concerns, in response to additional documentation that the Town and the Health District had provided showing that the Town was in full compliance with all regulatory requirements.

Ms. Cappello asked if we could do an off-election cycle referendum, to which Mr. Manke observed that doing so would cost an additional \$30,000 and require a higher threshold for passage.

Mr. Tiniakos stated that he would like to prioritize longevity when determining which repair option to use. Ms. Conway and Ms. Cappello agreed, stating that the concrete liner was their preferred approach. Mr. Manke stated that in his view the repair option would be dictated by the pool layout. Ms. Francolino expressed concern about spraying concrete over a bad foundation.

Mr. Perrotti advocated for developing an RFP for design and cost estimation that was specific about the repair option that we wanted to see used. He also asked about Committee interest in splash pads.

Ms. Francolino suggested that there be two separate referendums, one for Mill Pond and one for Churchill, and make clear that the Town would repair one pool at a time. She also raised concerns about the impact of the project's cost on the Town's bonding capacity. Ms. Conway and Mr. Manke suggested that we have one referendum, but make clear that the projects would be phased. Mr. Altshul stated that he wasn't sure if the referendum language could be that specific and that that was a question for bond counsel.

Mr. Altshul agreed to work on a draft RFP for the next Committee meeting. He suggested that the RFP could be issued prior to the end of the fiscal year, so that the funds could be obligated shortly after July 1.

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. Review 2026 meeting dates

Committee members were in agreement that the meeting dates for 2026 would work.

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Dana Havens, 113 Stoddard Avenue, raised concerns about the Town's liability for the pools and encouraged the Committee to figure out who the pools are for.

Mr. Greczkowski raised questions about the Red Cross swimming certification standards, especially about the diving board.

Matt Braddock, 69 Audubon, stated that one pool should be for the benefit of the community at large and the other should be focused on aquatic events. He encouraged the Committee to keep focused on the bath houses. He also suggested extending the fenced-in area to include more grassy area.

11. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Tiniakos stated that he would like clarification about the Red Cross swimming certification standards.

Mr. Manke thanked Ms. Francolino for her service as Chair.

Ms. Francolino explained that the Red Cross certification for diving is conducted at the high school pool, as it's deeper. She stated that she would like a diving board at one of the Town pools, and that she'd like for one of the pools to be for aquatics and the other to be more of a community pool.

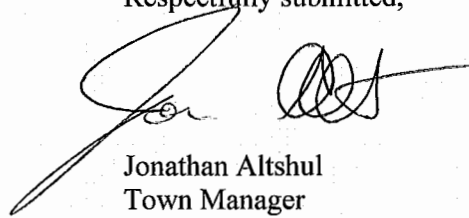
Mr. Perrotti asked for clarification about changes to state legislation around swimming pools. Mr. Altshul explained that there was pending legislation last year about summer camp staffing that failed, but that legislation was not, to his knowledge, specific to swimming pools.

Mr. Tiniakos asked Mr. Altshul to follow up with CIRMA regarding the insurability of diving boards.

12. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:19pm, Mr. Manke made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cappello seconded. The motion passed 6-0, with Ms. Anest absent.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jonathan Altshul', written over a horizontal line.

Jonathan Altshul
Town Manager