

December 16, 2024

Manager's Report

A. Ralph Mollis, Town Manager



Projects/Initiatives

Revolution Wind Offshore Wind Farm



- Bi-weekly meetings continue.
- Their work continues on the Offshore Wind Farm with significant site work at the Onshore Substation, Circuit Drive Roadway and Interconnection Facility.
- Community outreach also continues, including with a local Toys for Tots holiday campaign.
- Town Councilors were taken on a tour a few weeks ago; we were able to see first-hand the progress of the project and the aspects of the project that we discuss virtually each week. The current schedule is for RI Energy to assess the site sometime in the March 2025 timeframe, with the project being energized in the early part of 2026, providing power to the grid in mid-2026. This will result in tax revenue and contributions via the Host Community Agreement, sometime in 2026 as well.
- Questions/Concerns? Contact Revolution Wind at (401) 255-2207 or info@revolution-wind.com – we receive weekly reports on these matters.

North Kingstown Police Department

Update from Chief Urban: January



- Chief Urban and the North Kingstown Police Department will present a traffic/speed zone report for the community to include recommendations at a January Town Council meeting.
- Chief Urban and I will be meeting a final time this week as they finalize the comprehensive report complete with statistics and recommendations to address traffic/speeding concerns in our community.

Projects/Initiatives

Senior Center Analysis Results



- Town Councilperson Matt McCoy asked that we prepare an analysis outlining statistics for participation and programming at our Senior Center, for the upcoming FY26 budget process.
- The analysis shows that the Senior Center is returning to pre-COVID participation and has witnessed a significant increase in participation since FY2021:
 - 24,579 visits in 2021, compared to 56,846 visits in 2024
- This and additional findings will be discussed further during budget deliberations.

FY24 Draft Financials Received by Audit Committee



- FY2024 Draft Financials were presented to the Audit Committee just before Thanksgiving. This is the earliest we have ever had our draft financials and is dramatic progress from 8 years ago when the FY2016 Audit was finalized in May of the following year.
 - I want to thank our Finance Department, the School's Finance Department, and our auditing firm for their outstanding work.
 - There is significant good news in the Draft Financials, showing a growing surplus on the Town's balance sheet and a growing surplus on the school's financials.
 - Interest income being generated by our surplus provides revenue to reduce our tax rate, and more.
 - The Audit Committee and Auditors will present the Audit during an Exit Conference with Town Council sometime in early 2025.

Projects/Initiatives

Save America's Treasures Grant Application Submitted



- An application to the National Park Service for a Save America's Treasures program grant for \$270,000 was submitted to fund the renovation and restoration of the Old Town Meeting House.
 - My thanks to all involved in the writing and submission of this application.
 - I will keep the Council and public up to date.

Wickford Waterfront Project Municipal Parking Lot Update



- The Wickford Waterfront Project within the Brown Street Municipal Parking Lot continues.
- The retaining wall is in the process of being constructed; this needs to be completed before sidewalk, drainage, and surface parking lot improvements can be addressed.
 - Dewatering of the cofferdam experienced some obstacles but is moving forward as well.
 - Concrete footing of the masonry wall is currently being worked on.
 - BETA is scheduled to take drone footage of the project area during construction as it continues to progress.
 - I hope to have additional updates, and a more detailed one at an upcoming January meeting.
- Thanks to BETA and NEBB for their partnership last weekend in the Holiday events as they helped to dress up the site for the weekend's festivities which was appreciated and noticed by all.

Projects/Initiatives

Planning Department Post Rd. Decorating Contest



- The Post Road Winter Wonderland Decoration Program is moving forward successfully with the inclusion of a decorating competition for the first time this year. Voting is live on our website and a QR Code has been distributed to participating businesses.
 - Over 47 Post Road businesses are participating with 7 plazas and 11 new entities in the mix.
 - The winner of the decoration contest will be announced at the Polar Plunge at the Town Beach on January 1st.
 - To vote: https://bit.ly/vote_winterwonderland

Election Day 2024 Thank You to all involved!



- With Election Day behind us, I want to thank the **Town Clerk's Office**, the **Board of Canvassers**, and all those who worked on, or prior to, **Election Day here in North Kingstown**.
- With over 17,000 people voting and over a 73% turnout, North Kingstown had one of the highest turnouts in all of Rhode Island.
 - More impressively, over half of those voters voted early in our Municipal Office Building or by mail, seamlessly handled by those working within our Municipal Office Building while still maintaining daily operations.

Projects/Initiatives

Wickford Elementary Update



- We are attempting to set up a meeting with the developer of Wickford Elementary. They've indicated there is availability after the first of the year.
 - I hope to have an update on this project with some concrete information at one of the January 2025 Council Meetings.

Town Beach Update



- It appears for the first time in many years, we are moving forward with Town Beach operations without the assistance or a contract with the Greater Providence YMCA. This will be challenging as one of the reasons behind this is shortage of lifeguards. We are currently aggressively pursing the hiring of Lifeguards and other personnel. We hope to have the Summer 2025 plan prior to Budget deliberations; I will provide an update to Council as this develops.
- The 2024 Beach season experienced a net loss over \$100,000. While our Town Beach expenses totaled over \$163,000, our revenues for parking passes were just over \$62,000.
 - This challenge will be exaggerated in 2025, for the Town Beach and Summer Camp, as RI's minimum wage is going to be increasing again on January 1st by \$1.00/hour. These increases have an adverse impact on our balance sheet for our Town Beach, Summer Camps, and the cost of camp on our local families.



Thank You

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