



# Town of Plymouth

## Public Works Board

80 Main Street  
Terryville, Connecticut 06786

Regular Meeting  
October 27, 2026  
Meeting Minutes

PLYMOUTH, CT  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
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*Donna Lewandoski*  
TOWN CLERK

### 1. Call Meeting to Order

Member Joseph Carey, serving as acting chair in place of Chairman Nate Brown, called the meeting to order at 5:47 PM in the Assembly Room of Plymouth Town Hall.

### 2. Roll Call

**Present:** Vice Chairman Joseph Carey (presiding); Chairman Nate Brown (remotely, by telephone); Member Peter Giancesini; Public Works Director Joseph Sopczneski; Highway Superintendent Aaron Heller; Town Council Liaison TJ Zagurski; Recording Secretary Pamela Pelletier. Members of the public were also present. **Absent:** George Castle and Mark Lewandoski.

### 3. Fire Exit Notification

Vice Chairman Joseph Carey gave the fire exit notification. Attendees were directed to the exit to his right and out to the public way, or to the hallway to his left and then an immediate right out to the public way.

**4. Pledge of allegiance** - The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### 5. Acceptance of Minutes previous Meetings

#### Special Meeting – 09/29/2026

Vice Chairman Joseph Carey noted that the September 29 meeting was a special meeting, held because the regular meeting had been convened the week before. He asked that the agenda be noted accordingly. He also asked for one correction to the minutes: the roll call should include himself, the Public Works Director, and the Highway Superintendent.

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 29, 2026 special meeting, with the correction to the roll call, was made by Peter Giancesini and seconded by Nate Brown. The motion passed unanimously.

### 6. Monthly Reports

#### Public Works Director's

**Administrative.** Director Sopczneski reported that the main focus had been development of the fiscal year 2028 budget, with a working draft targeted for mid-November. He said drafts and narratives were due to the mayor on November 16. The budget will add detail and subcategories to targeted line items, including repairs, maintenance, and gasoline in the maintenance garage sub-department. These will account for work done for the fire department, police department, volunteer ambulance corps, and parks and recreation. Facilities repairs and maintenance will also be broken out by building, so that all town buildings, including outbuildings, are covered and maintenance needs can be addressed more

accurately. The Director confirmed he will have a working draft for the board's November 24 meeting. Capital committee review is scheduled for December 3 and December 10.

**Highway fleet.** The Director reported that the town is divided into nine plow routes and has exactly nine plow trucks. Two trucks are beyond the recommended 15-year age, one at about 20 years and one at 16 years, and a third is approaching 15 years. One capital request this year will be for an additional frontline plow truck. It would go on a main-route run, and the truck that makes the most sense to retire from the front line would become a backup. The Director clarified that the requested truck would not be a triaxle. Further detail on subsequent years will be included in the capital submission.

**Highway.** The Director reported that South Eagle Street and North Street paving were complete, with aprons underway. On Oakdale, Pond, and Fountainhead, the binder course was complete and curbing was underway. Backfilling, topcoat paving, and aprons would follow.

He reported that the Todd Hollow Road bridge was inspected on October 20 by WMC Engineers. The preliminary assessment, received that afternoon, deemed the bridge still passable but recommended reducing traffic to a single alternating lane. The Director will review it with Superintendent Heller and develop a traffic management plan. The formal report was still pending, and a budget and replacement plan would be included in the capital request. In response to Vice Chairman Joseph Carey, the Director said the bid package from the consulting engineer was "very close to going out today." Vice Chairman Joseph Carey noted that a member of the public had asked about the project at the prior meeting.

**Transfer station.** The compactor trailers were pulled out, power washed, and are being assessed so that capital needs can be anticipated. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey asked whether the board would evaluate rebuilding the trailers against purchasing replacements, given that one was reported to be in poor condition. The Director said the assessment, to be performed by an outside vendor, would produce a breakdown of each trailer's condition and a rebuild-versus-replace comparison. Replacement was likely if a rebuild proved not fiscally sound. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey called the approach a good one that avoids committing to a rebuild before the true condition is known. The compactor itself remained on schedule for winter installation. The Director also announced that a tire collection program, under a state end-user agreement, would begin. It will accept most tires at no cost to residents or the town, subject to some exemptions.

**Facilities.** The Director reported that the Town Hall HVAC system would be shut down Friday at 7 AM to replace a hydronic elbow. He also reported that on October 13 the Department of Transportation indicated it was ready to issue a commitment to fund a project (referred to in discussion as "Torrey Crossing"), pending administrative updates to the cost estimate. Those updates were made and submitted, and the project will move into final design. The Director stated it is a \$3,600,000 project funded 100 percent by the State of Connecticut. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey said the project had been discussed some 15 to 20 years ago and that it would be good to see it move forward.

There were no questions from Chairman Brown or Member Giancesini.

### **Highway Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Heller began by crediting the highway crew, which was built up this year from four to six on the maintenance side. He said the crew works hard with a positive attitude, though the department remains short-handed. In response to Vice Chairman Joseph Carey's question about adding positions in the budget, it was noted that the department has nine trucks and six drivers. The remaining routes are covered by a town police department employee, the assistant mechanic, and outside help.

**Storm and tree work.** The crew responded to storm damage on October 1 at East Plymouth Road and Preston Road. Tree maintenance was performed October 6 and 7 with a contracted harvesting crew, including complete takedowns on Bissell Road, Lakeview Road, Fall Mountain Lake Road, and Harwinton Avenue. The Harington Avenue tree, partly cut by Eversource, was deemed unsafe because of its proximity to a house.

**Signs and traffic safety.** Crews continued installing and replacing signs under the directives of the traffic authority board. In response to Vice Chairman Joseph Carey, the Superintendent reported no update on the stolen signs. He is working with the police department to file reports for vandalized or run-over signs. The parties discussed installing permanent, monitored cameras facing both directions at the Old Waterbury Road and South Main intersection near the transfer station. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey said the area has a recurring problem with discarded diapers, particularly on weekends, and that cameras had long been desired.

**Drainage and patch-based repairs.** Reported work included:

- Replacement on October 20 of a collapsed drainage outlet at 129 South Eagle Street, about 200 feet of pipe that had not functioned for years.
- Catch basin repairs addressing sinkholes on October 21 and 22, at Carter Road and other locations.
- Contractor installation, October 19 through 22, of approximately 250 linear feet of 15-inch ABS pipe, one full structure rebuild, and one basin top reset. The contractor then moved to Prospect Street to perform drainage upgrades ahead of sidewalk rehabilitation.

**Road maintenance.** Riprap was placed on October 23 to repair severe erosion on Fall Mountain Road, Allentown Road, and Scott Road. A turnaround for plow trucks was built at the end of Lassy Road. Driveway apron and curb repairs, stemming from last year's snow damage, were completed at 18 East Washington Road.

**Equipment.** Truck 23, which transports the hot box, was placed out of service on September 29, reducing hot patch operations to essential and high-priority work. The street sweeper remained out of order with an electrical issue and was a low priority. Winter preparation of plow trucks was under way. The Superintendent noted that there are no spare vehicles and that several vehicles are beyond their service life. About 12 to 13 sinkholes around basins remain to be addressed, which takes priority over

roadside mowing; the mower was also down for a month. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey asked the Superintendent to review sight lines at the bend at Allen Street and Old Waterbury Road.

**Completed projects.** North Street topcoat paving was completed October 6 and 7, and South Eagle Street paving was completed October 7. Line painting was completed on this year's road projects except stop bars. Curbing was finished the day of the meeting, and aprons would begin the next day.

**Discussion of project timelines.** Vice Chairman Joseph Carey asked why the paving contractor was so far behind schedule, noting that completion had been expected by the end of September. Steve Savero, a resident, expressed frustration that road work on his street and in the Fountainhead and Preston Road area had taken months, and said sections of curbing remained incomplete. Another speaker asked why there had been days or weeks with no visible activity.

The Director and Superintendent responded that poor subsurface conditions required extensive underdrainage and the rebuilding of completely blocked basins. Infrastructure must be completed before paving. Delays were also attributed to weather, multiple plant shutdowns that affected state schedules, and contractor scheduling, along with several other projects opened this year, including North Street and the chip seal program. They stated that they were not satisfied with the timeline but were proud of the improvements made. They said that going forward the town will open bids to multiple contractors rather than awarding one. Projects will be assigned selectively, matching contractors to the type of work, such as those who can mill and pave in-house.

Vice Chairman Joseph Carey asked whether all unfinished work would be completed by Thanksgiving, to avoid carrying projects through winter as in the past. The Director said the town was communicating regularly with the contractor and was not worried that the work would go unfinished.

## **7. Public Comment**

**Melaine Church, 328 Main Street,** said that in her lifetime in the town, this was the best administration and road work she had seen. She cited the work on the compactor, where the Director had evaluated the situation himself rather than give up on it, and said she heard similar praise from many residents. She added that weather had contributed to delays, such as the Todd Hollow Road bridge, and asked for patience.

**Vice Chairman Joseph Carey** commended the Director, the Superintendent, and the highway crew. He said the town had likely reconstructed or resurfaced more roads than in a long time, aided by the \$6,000,000 road project funding, of which about \$3,000,000 had been expended to date. He noted that in the past, projects begun in May or June were not finished before the asphalt plants closed. He said the Director and Superintendent had identified shortcomings in the bidding process and recommended allowing another season so the process could be refined.

**Ms. Church** also commented that the temporary compactor arrangement was working well for residents. **Vice Chairman Joseph Carey** said the open-trailer setup had worked well but would not be viable in rain and snow. He said the compactor replacement was being completed for roughly half of the previously discussed \$500,000 cost, which had caused the project to be deferred repeatedly. The

Director cited a cost of approximately \$183,000 for the new compactor, with additional work to cover it.

Councilman TJ Zagurski raised a question about warranties on contractor workmanship, discussed the previous month. The Director and Superintendent suggested walking the area together to identify specific concerns and agreed to schedule a visit. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey said Chairman Brown had reviewed the matter and might wish to join, and Chairman Brown agreed.

#### **8. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel Matters – if needed**

#### **9. Administrative**

Vice Chairman Joseph Carey and Chairman Brown each stated they had nothing to bring forward under this item.

Recording Secretary Pelletier raised an administrative matter: the 2027 meeting schedule must be approved and filed with the Town Clerk's office by the end of December. She will prepare the calendar based on the current schedule, meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:45 PM, for the board's review at the November 24 meeting. Adjustments can be made at that time so that it can be submitted by December 31. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey confirmed the board's intent to continue the fourth Tuesday, 5:45 PM schedule, subject to any changes in November.

**10. Chairman's Report** - No Chairman's report was given.

#### **11. Commission Member Comments**

Member Giancesini relayed a concern from a resident of 20 Joseph Street, whose property abuts the former East Main Street School fields. The resident reported that weeds had grown very high and were falling onto her property, and asked that the area be mowed. He asked who is responsible for maintaining the land.

Town Council Liaison Zegorski stated that the town owns the ball field and the school's owner holds only the parking lot and building. He noted that the issue arose last year, that the town crew mowed it then, and that it should be placed on a regular maintenance schedule. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey confirmed the field falls under Parks and Recreation. The Director said he would speak with Parks and Recreation (Maureen) about a one-time mowing and would follow up with the resident.

Chairman Brown and Vice Chairman Joseph Carey had no further comments.

#### **12. Old Business**

Vice Chairman Joseph Carey asked about three policies previously acted on by the board, to determine whether each had been forwarded to the Town Council. These were the Department of Public Works surplus property policy, the road escalation policy, and the policy on surplus fill. He recalled that a motion on the surplus property policy was made and passed but may never have moved forward. Chairman Brown also recalled the vote. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey said he moved to accept the revised road escalation policy and that the board approved it for Town Council consideration, though

whether it reached the Council was uncertain. The Director and Chairman Brown said they believed the surplus fill policy had moved forward, and noted fill had not been sold because the material was needed for future road projects. Vice Chairman Joseph Carey recalled the policy had set fill pricing at roughly double the earlier \$3 to \$4 rate, based on comparison with vendors.

Vice Chairman Joseph Carey said he would review prior minutes to confirm approvals. Liaison Zegorski would check on their status with the Town Council, whose next meeting is the week after Election Day. The matters remain open items to be followed up.

### **13. New Business**

Vice Chairman Joseph Carey asked the Director and Superintendent to maintain a log of the costs of each road project completed this year. The projects were bid as a package, but each had an associated budget. He said the log would show whether each came in over or under budget and help the board answer questions about the \$3,000,000 approved, and he suggested it be updated over the next few months as final tallies are received. The Director said he was already tracking the costs and would put them into an updatable, shareable format, either within the monthly report or separately.

Chairman Brown and Member Giancesini had nothing further.

### **14. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Member Giancesini and seconded by Chairman Brown. The motion carried.

Before adjourning, Vice Chairman Joseph Carey thanked members of the public for attending, noting that the board had often met with few attendees in the past, and thanked them for their support and concerns. He said the work was ongoing and expressed confidence that the town would continue to improve.

Submitted by,

Pam Pelletier  
Recording Secretary