



## Woodbury Republican Town Committee Minutes – February 12, 2026

P.O. Box 255, Woodbury, CT 06798

Emergency Services Building – 7:00 PM

**Present:** Chairman Mike Cunningham, John Hughes, Paul Luchetti, Nancy Mackey, Dennis Roberts, Burt Stevens, Tom Benedetto, Drew Gwiazdoski, Lee Warner and Bob DeLuca by phone.

**Absent:** Tim Drakley, Rob Scott, and Don Trella

### **1) Call to Order by Chairman:**

Chairman Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

### **2) Seating of Alternates:**

No Alternates

### **3) Pledge of Allegiance:**

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **4) Recognition of Guests:**

\* Johnathan DeBaros who is running for Congress from the 5<sup>th</sup> District spoke about his past and present political history and what goals he sees for the future of the Republican party. He asked for the support of the WRTC and passed out his cards. He then answered questions from the floor about his past and present personal life, his strategy for Waterbury and where he feels that tapping into the inner cities with information on the Republican party will be of great value.

\* Pastor Jake Dell of the First Church in Woodbury. Pastor Dell came tonight to represent the Litchfield Chapter of the Connecticut Republican Assembly (CTRA). He was elected to be the president of the Litchfield Chapter which is newly organized. He asked members of the WRTC to join the Chapter. The Chapter represents the Republican wing of the Republican Party, and they are there to co-operate and work with the RTC's in the area. They want to see the Republican's win in 2026 and will help wherever they can. John Hughes a member of CTRA spoke highly of the organization.

\* Karen Reddington-Hughes a member of the Connecticut House of Representatives from the 66<sup>th</sup>. District spoke and said she appreciates all the support she has had in the past from the WRTC. She will be running again for the 66<sup>th</sup>. District. She urged all Republicans to get out and help get Republicans into the state government. She spoke about the detrimental things that the Democrats are doing in the State government

one of which is making every child, even though they are home schooled, register with the State. Karen has an open-door policy and anyone can come and speak with her if they would like to. John Hughes asked how the Republicans mobilize to win the elections in the state and she feels that when people show up at meetings and gatherings make sure people from the Republican party are there to stand up and support the Republican candidates. She suggested that when people vote they should think about who will actually worry about and help them.

\*Senator Eric Berthel who is a Republican member of the CT State Senate representing the 32<sup>nd</sup>. District. was at the meeting and said he had been to many meetings lately that were along the line of what Karen Reddington Hughes was talking about and that is for the Republicans to get out and be seen and heard. He sees in the last 60 to 90 days a really hard turn of people pandering to the left. He feels that there will be a lot of talk about affordability and they are going to talk about President Trump and how he is responsible for the high cost of living even though the Democrats have been in power for the last 50 years. Senator Berthel also said that the Republicans in this District are going to go into a little more of a fight mode. The position of the Republicans has been to stand up for what they believe in but we now need to fight to make it happen and drag people out to vote for the Republican party. Senator Berthel will be at the Brewery in Middlebury on Wednesday from 5 to 7 PM. Senator Berthel needs to raise \$20,000 to apply for a campaign grant. There are QR forms or forms on his website to donate to help him reach the \$20,000.

Senator Berthel thanked Mike Cunningham for his service as Chairman of the WRTC as Chairman Cunningham is leaving the WRTC.

#### **5) Approval of Minutes:**

Secretary Mackey said that there were two corrections to the minutes as follows: Page #1, #2 – **No Alternates** are seated as Tom Benedetto was already seated as a regular member by Chairman Cunningham. Page #2, 6-B – Paul **Zulpa** said that Woodbury is the largest Republican Town of all 169 Towns in the State. Chairman Cunningham asked if there were any other corrections and there were none. Burt Stevens made a motion to approve the minutes of December 11, 2025 with the two corrections. The motion was seconded by Paul Luchetti. All were in favor **Unanimously Approved.**

#### **6) Officers' Reports:**

**a) Chairman** - No report at this time.

**b) Vice Chairman** – Vice Chairman Luchetti thanked Mike Cunningham for all his hard work from the time this WRTC started a couple of years ago as a fledgling group to today. He said he hoped Mike would stay around when he is doing whatever he does in the future. Mike said he would.

**c) Treasurer** – Burt Stevens reported that the balance on hand in the check book as of February 12, 2026 is \$445.50. The balance has depleted significantly from last year. He said that the party for Barbara Perkinson on January 24, 2026 was a wash with no money going out or coming in to the Town Committee. At the end of 2025 the Committee had \$6,141.28 in the bank with expenses of \$7,210.02 and a deficit of -\$1,068.74. As was said the WRTC now has \$445.50 in the checking account from money that came in from January 1, 2026 to February 12, 2026 .

**d) Secretary** – Nancy Mackey reported that the Registrar's had recently done a Canvass and there are now more accurate numbers of registered voters in Woodbury. The biggest movement was with the unaffiliated voters. Secretary Mackey then read the voter Registration Summary as follows: Democratic – 1,880, Republican – 2,366, Unaffiliated – 2,629 and Other – 152 with a total of 7,027 registered voters.

\* Please see the Voter Registration Summary as of 2/11/2026 and the Voter Registration Summary from 1/30/2024 to 2/11/2026 that is included with these minutes.

## **7) Committee Reports:**

### **a) Candidate Recruitment**

\*Chairman Roberts said that there was no report for December at the January Caucus meeting. Chairman Roberts signed up Tom Benedetto for the AD OC Technology Committee and Paul Luchetti for the Woodbury Library of the Future AD HOC Committee with the Selectman's Office in order to secure these positions as quickly as possible. Lee Warner applied for membership on the WRTC and was voted in unanimously at the January meeting. There are no other applicants at this time.

\*Chairman Roberts listed the following Town Committees/Commissions which have vacancies:

AD Hoc Arts and Culture Committee – 7 members and 2 alternates, Ad Hoc Code of Conduct Committee-between 6 and 15 members, Ad Hoc Technology Committee - 5 members and 2 alternates, AD Hoc Grant Writing Committee - 2 members, Commission for Seniors – 1 member, Conservation Commission – 1 member, Public Building Commission – 1 member, Retirement & Pension Board – 1 member, Shade Tree & Sidewalk Committee – 3 members, Waste Advisory Ad Hoc Committee – 3 members, Zoning Board of Appeals – 2 members. \*Chairman Roberts asked to be notified if anyone knows of anyone who might be interested in filling one of these Committee or Commission seats.

Burt Stevens and Karen Reddington-Hughes said that there is also the following new Committees that has been formed:

Library of the Future AD Hoc Committee – 1 member, and America's 250 Commission – several members needed. Burt also said that The Cannon Green's name is being changed to Veterans Memorial Green. Burt Stevens also mentioned that Cannon Green's name is being changed to Veterans Memorial Green.

\* Please see the CRC Committee Report for December, 2025 and January 2026 that is included with these minutes.

America 250 Committee

### **b) Scholarship –**

Nancy Mackey reported on the Scholarship Committee. She spoke with Mary Jane Travers who is the head of the Scholarship Committee and found out that the Committee is beginning to read applications now. April 3<sup>rd</sup>. will be the scoring of the applications with Awards Night on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The Woodbury Scholarship Committee gave a \$600 scholarship last year and it is thought that this year it should be the same.

### **c) Fund Raising/Events:**

None at this time.

### **d) Media – Public Information – Technology –**

Tom Benedetto is a new member of the WRTC. He is also a technology person and took over the Media – Public Information – Technology Committee from Paul Zulpa. He has done a lot of upgrades and modifications to the Web site which is at [woodburyrtc.org](http://woodburyrtc.org). Included in his changes is a new area which is called the WRTC Events Gallery. It lists all the new events coming up. He said that this should help show the public what the WRTC has to offer and that we are a good substantial group who is out in the world helping people. He also asked If anyone has an idea that they would like to add to the web site to let him know,

## **8) New Business:**

\* State Central Representative John Hughes:

John Hughes had four things he wanted to mention as follows:

- 1) State Central has a new vendor for our contact manager called Right Insight, which he explained.
- 2) We need to start working on selecting state delegates for the various conventions.
- 3) The State party in co-ordination with the RTC has formed an Election Integrity Committee
- 4) The WRTC needs to look at and see how it can support the candidates with donations, talent, or time and must also work with other towns to help their candidates.

Johnathan DeBaros also spoke on how the committee can help to get state candidates elected.

**9) Old Business:**

None at this time.

**10) Privilege of the Floor:**

\* Chairman Cunningham reminded everyone that there will be a vote on Chairman, Vice Charman and Secretary at the next WRTC meeting on March 12th.

**11) Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Mackey, Secretary