

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND BURGESSES
MAY 27, 2025**

The Borough of Naugatuck held the Board of Mayor and Burgesses meeting on a hybrid basis. Everyone was welcomed to attend in person, by Zoom Webinar or by phone.

1. Mayor “Pete” Hess called the special meeting to order at **6:52 p.m.** with the following in attendance:

BURGESSES:

R. Vitale	R. Neth
M. Bronko, virtual	D. Neth-Kunin
F. Dambowsky	J. Rosenblatt
K. Gallo	M. Smith, virtual
C. Marenghi	

PRESS:

A. Yilma

RESIDENTS:

Unable to determine due to the format

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

E. Cornacchia, Acting Controller

OTHERS:

M. Cornacchia, Mayor Hess’ Intern
J. Speed, Berkshire & Eastern Railroad
C. Hunter, Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Services

L. Wehry, IT Assistant
M. De Pecol, SLD LLC

2. Burgess Robert Neth led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.
3. Mayor Hess said before we begin the presentation, we will be conducting some business authorizing Eileen Cornacchia to sign financial paperwork as our acting controller. He has been working with Mrs. Cornacchia and Bill Stowell on restructuring the finance department since Controller Allyson Bruce resigned. He said things are running very smoothly.
4. Motion by Deputy Mayor Vitale and seconded by Burgess Rosenblatt that the Board of Mayor and Burgesses adopt the following resolution, as if read:

RESOLVED, any financial institution designated by the Borough of Naugatuck, depository for this municipality, be and it is hereby requested, authorized and directed said depository honor checks, drafts or other orders for the payment of money drawn in this municipality name, including those payable to the individual order of any two persons whose names appear there on as signers thereof, when bearing or purporting to bear the facsimile signatures (s) of any two of the following: **Mayor N. Warren Hess, Treasurer Adam M. Bronko, and Acting Controller Eileen A. Cornacchia** removing **Controller Allyson W. Bruce**.

Acting Controller Eileen A. Cornacchia is authorized to open new accounts on behalf of the town, its affiliates or its projects.

Minutes – Board of Mayor and Burgesses
Special Meeting – May 27, 2025

The financial institution shall be entitled to honor and to charge this municipality for such checks, drafts or other orders, regardless of by whom or by what means the actual or purported facsimile signature or signatures thereon may have been affixed thereto, if such signature or signatures resemble the facsimile specimens duly certified to or filed with said financial institution by the Borough Clerk or other official of this municipality, effective May 27, 2025.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

FOR

Mayor N.W. Hess
R. Vitale
M. Bronko
F. Dambowsky
K. Gallo

C. Marengi
R. Neth
D. Neth-Kunin
J. Rosenblatt
M. Smith

OPPOSE

None

ABSTAIN

None

Motion carried 10-0-0

5. **VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Deputy Mayor Vitale and seconded by Burgess Rosenblatt that the Board of Mayor and Burgesses authorize **Acting Controller Eileen A. Cornacchia** to be the **Plan Administrator, Sponsor and Trustee for Equitable-Retirement** removing Controller Allyson W. Bruce as the Plan Administrator, Sponsor and Trustee, effective May 27, 2025 for **Plan ID#s 690189, 690190, 693073, 693074, 693075, 693076, 698551 and 698552.**

6. Mayor Hess said there will be a presentation on the **Freight Rail/Industrial Park Section III Phase II** by Charles Hunter and James Speed from G&W Railroad Services. It will be a public-private partnership to bring freight rail to the borough. He gave a brief history of where we were going with the project to where we are now. G&W's plan includes spurs at the former Uniroyal site. We are not asking the federal government for money. Some capital is needed in addition to TIF (Tax Incremental Financing) Funds and state funds. We will be working with Mark De Pecol, a developer and Principal/CEO with SLD LLC, to pay for the spurs. Mr. De Pecol will be working with the borough to find opportunities. We will do an RFP for a logistics operator to load and off load the tracks. Mayor Hess discussed the rail lines as shown on a map and the different owners of the lines. Two of the rail lines connect to the Canadian National Railway and Canadian Pacific Railway. He said we had a deal with Pan Am Railways and were moving forward until they decided to sell the railroad. Pan Am covered a large portion of New England into eastern Canada. The purchaser, CSX Corporation, had no immediate interest in the Naugatuck site. The Surface Transportation Board needed to approve the merger between CSX and Pan Am. The Surface Transportation Board selected G&W (Genesee & Wyoming) Railroad Services as a neutral operator. G&W created a subsidiary company called B&E (Berkshire & Eastern) Railroad which is owned by G&W. We would've been working with containers which requires a more expensive infrastructure. The deal now is not containers but freight rail. The freight rail is intact. Infrastructure does not cost as much now and we won't be using containers. We will be able to cover a wider territory up the center of the country. The mayor said there are a lot of pluses working with G&W Railroad.

Charles D. Hunter – G&W Railroad Services – Assistant VP, Government Affairs

Mr. Hunter works with municipalities and the federal government. He covers thirteen states. He does legislation, projects and grants. He recently worked with the CTDOT on a project through Waterbury. He gave a history of G&W Railroad Services (Genesee & Wyoming). G&W operates railroads through the US and Canada. Their headquarters is in Darien, Connecticut. They do not own it, nor lease it, but operate the Metro-North Railroad on a long-term basis. He said CSX Corporation owns the property and Pam Am Southern owns the railroad. G&W is a contract operator. Mr. Hunter is excited about the project and thinks it has a great future.

James Speed – B&E Railroad – Director, Sales & Marketing

Mr. Speed works for B&E Railroad (Berkshire & Eastern), a G&W Railroad Services Company. He is proud they had zero safety incidents this year. Their budget this year is 12-million-dollar capital investments. Their current operation ends at Waterbury, Metro North, there is nothing south. He said the timing and location is perfect for this project. He sees this project serving a perfect market niche. Rail has benefits over trucks. Mr. Speed said this is a better project now with the way the railroad is set up. It will connect to four railroads. He envisions multiple types of businesses using the rail line.

Mayor Hess

The Borough of Naugatuck controls the site and will decide what will be done there. We are committed to building the Industrial Park with pad sites and a road. Mark De Pecol, the developer, will help us find businesses and users who will work with G&W. G&W will maintain the tracks and operate the railroad. Mr. De Pecol will fund the engineering and the site work for the railroad with spurs. The mayor said there will be a redesign of the lower portion of the site, moving the road back against the ridge so businesses can have frontage.

Mark De Pecol – SLD LLC – Principal/CEO

Mr. De Pecol from SLD (Senior Living Development) said Naugatuck has transformed itself since Uniroyal. He is the developer of the KindCare Senior Living Community in Naugatuck. He likes Mayor Hess' vision and his twenty-year plan. The borough can begin operations right away because G&W uses normal rail cars on the short line. The infrastructure is already there. Spurs have to be built on each of the main lines along with some additional work. If the road is moved west, it frees up the real estate from the rail to the road for businesses. The advantages to businesses are 1. Direct rail access 2. Domestic supply chain 3. Strategic location, ninety-minute round trip 4. Lower transportation costs 5. Access to labor and incentives 6. Ready infrastructure.

Mayor Hess said a public-private partnership agreement will be developed. Three letters of intent are needed for CTDOT.

7. **VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Deputy Mayor Vitale and seconded by Burgess Rosenblatt to recess to Executive Session at **8:16 p.m.** for discussion on the following: **Real Estate** (Industrial Park Section III Phase II/Freight Rail, Parcel B/Pennrose) and **Pending Litigation** inviting in Mayor Hess' Intern Marcello Cornacchia.

Minutes – Board of Mayor and Burgesses
Special Meeting – May 27, 2025

Mayor Hess reconvened the meeting at **8:37 p.m.**

8. There were no matters emanating from executive session.
9. **VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Deputy Mayor Vitale and seconded by Burgess Rosenblatt to adjourn the special meeting **8:38 p.m.**

A digital recording of this meeting is available in the office of the Borough Clerk for further review.

Attest:

Nancy K. DiMeo
Borough Clerk