

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Monday, January 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
Killingworth Town Hall

BOS Members in Attendance: First Selectman Eric Couture, Selectmen Joel D’Angelo and Eric Nunes

BOS Members Absent: None

Visitors: Joan Gay, Bill Tobelman, Wayne Lindsey, Mark Albrecht, Annie Stirna, Elizabeth Disbrow, Lisa Connelly, Greg Alfiero, Scott Kasper (Via Remote), Scott Papoosha, Becky Goetsch, Eileen Unger-Pleines (Via Remote), Regina Regolo (Via Remote), Eileen Blewett (Via Remote - Joined at 7:15 p.m.), Nancy Gorski, Walt Adametz (Via Remote - Joined at 7:42 p.m.), Glen Johnson (Arrived at 7:58 p.m.), and Jamie Sciascia (Via Remote)

Called to Order: First Selectman Couture called this meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion #1 - Selectman Nunes *Moved* and Selectman D’Angelo *Seconded* a motion to approve the Minutes of the Monday, December 11, 2023 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen as presented.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Refunds and Abatements:

Motion #2 - Selectman Nunes *Moved* and Selectman D’Angelo *Seconded* a motion to approve the following Refunds, all for overpayment and allow them to follow their normal course as presented.

Refunds

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Reason</u>
1. Aedan Lonergan	11 Route 148	\$13.74	Overpaid (paid online twice)
2. Aedan Lonergan	11 Route 148	\$13.74	overpaid (paid online twice)
3. VW Credit Leasing LTD	1401 Franklin Blvd	\$350.33	Overpaid COC#11201M
4. Integrated Inserts LLC	3 Linnea Lane	\$123.83	Overpaid COC#11203M

5. Steven Martins 303 Old Deep River Tpke \$22.77 Overpaid COC#11147M

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Budget:

Director of Finance Regolo reported that the Board of Selectmen receive the same monthly reports which have progressed over time, noting some of them could be removed if the new Boards chose to do so. Selectman Nunes inquired about line Item 1005308 (Crystal Rock Water Delivery/Ensafe Testing). Regolo also reported that she started to receive Budgets and is in the process of populating exhibits for the Budget discussions commencing in February.

2024 Appointments:

Motion #3 - Selectman D'Angelo *Moved* and Selectman Nunes *Seconded* a motion to appoint Kathy Digianantonio to the Conservation Commission with a term ending on December 31, 2026.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Department Reports:

Board of Education -

Lisa Connelly, from the Board of Education, provided a Monthly District Report for December 2023. The following topics were discussed in the Monthly Report: 1.) Cougar Pride; 2.) Welcome New Board Members; 3.) Election of Executive Board Officers; 4.) Student Representatives Report; 5.) Superintendent's Report; 6.) Reading Waiver; 7.) Kindergarten Entry Legislative Change; 8.) Master Plan Update; 9.) Website

You can view Agendas, Meeting Minutes, Budget Information, Newsletters, Facilities Study/Master Plan Information directly on the Board of Education's Website: [Board of Education - Regional School District 17 \(rsd17.org\)](http://Board of Education - Regional School District 17 (rsd17.org)).

Finance Department:

Nips Fund -

Director of Finance Regolo reported about the Nips Fund. Regolo advised that the Town receives funds from the State for small nips alcohol bottles due to the fact that they don't get recycled. It is known as the Bottle Bill, the ACT mandates that all wholesaler Distributors of NIPS, collect \$0.05 per nip environmental fee sold to all Connecticut package stores. To date, the Town has received \$7,413 and the Town is obligated to report how they are utilizing the funds. Regolo noted, as an example, how the Town purchased food scrap recycling bins for Town

residents who agreed to participate in the program and she anticipates a reduction in the municipal solid waste. The Conservation Committee is researching additional opportunities on how to utilize the funds, possibly holding a Town Clean up Day. Elizabeth Disbrow brought forth a suggestion to put signage at the Transfer Station in terms of recycling. Regolo reported that she is keeping track of all the monies received for nips bottles and further reported that the funds are reserved in the General Fund account.

Tax Collector's Report:

First Selectman Couture briefly reviewed the Tax Collector's Report with the Board showing Year-To-Dates, how much the Town collected and Revenue that has been received thus far. If the Board has any questions, Couture advised to reach out to Michelle Nuhn directly.

Building Department Report:

First Selectman Couture briefly reviewed the Building Department Report with the Board showing Year-To-Dates for permits that have been put out for new dwellings, commercial renovations, and additions giving a breakdown of what work has been done in Town. In addition, the Health Department Report contained information on what testing has been done, as well as who failed testing. The Building Permit Report for December was also included for the Board's review.

Old Business:

Permitting Software – OpenGov.

First Selectman Couture reported that the Town has been looking to implement new permit software for the Building Department in order to make the process easier for Contractors as well as for the Building Department to manage permits, and keep track of the process. Couture noted that although there were three quotes for permitting software received, two of them didn't fully fit the needs for the Town. Couture reviewed estimated costs including the license fee for the year totalling \$29,892 and also went over what was originally allocated in the Capital spending for the Permitting Software which was \$10,000. The Board had further discussion about future yearly costs. He noted that if the Town went with OpenGov they would receive benefits by partnering with the Capital Region COG which would be a cost reduction. Couture further reviewed the implementation process, noting contractors and/or homeowners would be able access a portal via the Town's website. Currently, contractors fill out the proper paperwork by hand and pay the necessary fees at the Town Hall. The benefit of utilizing OpenGov would provide workflow and cohesiveness in terms of the transferring of information, a smooth process for all.

Motion #4 - First Selectman Couture *Moved* to award the bid to OpenGov for the Permitting Software and to send the additional cost of \$19,892 to Town Meeting to fill the total cost of \$29,892 for the system setup contingent upon Town Approval.

Discussion - The Board had discussion whether this should go to the Board of Finance first as a check and balance.

After further discussion regarding the process, First Selectman Couture **Tabled** the Motion until the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.

New Business:

Updated Town Bidding Regulations -

First Selectman Couture reported that the Town Bidding Regulations have been updated. In the Board's packet, noted specifically in Sections 9 and 11, State Bidding Regulations were set at \$10,000 and have now increased to \$20,000. Couture reviewed with the Board another potential change in Section 11, advising an increase could be made to the minimum dollar amount if three quotes were to be received (currently, it is set at \$5,000 - \$20,000 increasing it to \$10,000). Anything above \$20,000 would need to go out to RFQ. The Board had further discussion regarding same.

Motion #5 - Selectman Nunes **Moved** and First Selectman Couture **Seconded** a motion to approve the Bidding Regulations as presented and to increase the minimum dollar amount for price quotes to \$10,000.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

KVFC Needs Assessment Award:

First Selectman Couture stated that the Killingworth Volunteer Fire Company read through the Bids and had no preference in terms of which proposal to go with. Couture mentioned that both companies had done work for the Town in the past.

Motion #6 - Selectman Nunes **Moved** and Selectman D'Angelo **Seconded** a motion to award the KVFC Facilities Needs Assessment to Silver Petrucelli & Associates in the amount of \$27,700.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Staffing Changes:

First Selectman Couture reported on some staffing changes:

Tax Collector's Office: Couture reported that Debbie Oehrle, who has been staffing the front desk in the Tax Collector's Office and also sharing some of the Secretarial duties, is retiring in March. The plan is to get Debbie's position posted this week internally, and if not filled by someone from within, the position will go out to external candidates.

ZEO/Inlands/Wetlands Watercourses Officer: Couture reported that Leo Bombalicki is stepping down in his position for health reasons and the process in order to find a replacement needs to go through the Planning & Zoning Commission. Couture noted that unfortunately this position across the State has had a lot of trouble filling. Couture wished Leo, "All the Best."

Assessor's Clerk: Couture reported that Michael Bekech is stepping down from full Assessor to Assistant Assessor and then continuing towards retirement. Shauna Ham has stepped up as full time Assessor. Couture advised that there has been discussion within the Assessor's Office about hiring a Part-Time Clerk in order to file paperwork and answer phones when the Assessor is out of the office.

Department of Public Works: Couture reported that Walt Adametz is retiring after 30 years of service with the Town and he will be posting his position internally. In the interim, if the position of Foreman is not filled internally, Couture's goal is to hopefully seek a retired Public Works Director from a neighboring Community that would be interested in a part-time position. Couture further reported that he is seeking to add two new full time positions to the Department of Public Works. Further, discussion took place regarding the timeframe of filling Walter's position. The Board acknowledged the urgency and importance of filling the full time Foreman position and concurred that it would be ideal to promote someone within the Department based on experience, dedication and knowledge. Couture noted that a Personnel Committee would be established to help interview potential candidates if no one is interested internally to take on the position.

February Meeting Schedule:

First Selectman Couture reported that they are in Budget Season and he would like to keep Thursday evenings open as well as Monday evenings available around 6:00 p.m. (before the regular Board of Selectmen Meetings) in order to schedule special meetings to discuss the Budget. D'Angelo/Nunes concurred.

Selectmen's Comments:

Joel D'Angelo - None.

Eric Nunes - None.

First Selectman's Comments:

Eric Couture -

- Couture reported that there has been a lot of CCM training in the last month. He noted that training is essential in order to help with questions especially when there are open positions in Town. He further noted that having resources available to him is important.
- Couture will be up in Hartford for FOI training tomorrow.
- Couture and Elizabeth Disbrow sat down with Killingworth Volunteer Fire Company Chief Rick Darin, Walter Adametz and Anthony Gentile and Brian Walsh from Emergency Management regarding storm/emergency prep. Couture stated they had a good discussion on communications that would be relayed to the public regarding their responsibilities when a storm arrives (be safe and stay home - if you don't have to go out, then don't go out); who to contact, what the lines of communication are internally to report things, whether to bring it to Eversource or to other agencies.
- Couture gave an update on the recent snowstorm. He advised that there is an ongoing crisis across the State where there is a shortage of contractors for snow plowing and you

have to be on top of the contractors you hire. Couture advised there were complications in this last storm with the Town's contractors that negatively impacted the Department of Public Works. Couture will be looking at staffing in the Public Works Department to make sure there is enough coverage especially in times of a snow storm.

- Couture met with Representative Courtney today in Deep River with the Selectmen of Chester and Deep River and spoke about issues on Affordable Housing and Infrastructure Development noting that they might have a budget in the Federal Government this year. Couture stated it was a very productive conversation and Representative Courtney stated that his door is always open to Community requests. Lastly, Representative Courtney informed them of certain ways of trying to get Federal Funding for Town projects.
- Couture spoke about some leakage in the upstairs of Parmelee Farms and they are now thinking it is the windows that are causing the issue. Lighthouse Construction assessed the project and Couture is waiting on an estimate for them. Couture noted that depending upon what the pricing is, they might have to either obtain two more quotes or go out to bid.
- Couture reported that Lovers Lane is closed. The Town is continuously keeping a close eye on this road during the winter season since it floods heavily due to its location.

Adjournment: First Selectman Couture *Moved* and Selectman D'Angelo *Seconded* a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk