

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
Killingworth Town Hall/Remote Access Available

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

BOS Members Absent: None.

Visitors: Joan Gay, Bill Tobelman, Nancy Gorski, Eileen Blewett, Todd Hajek (KVFC), Wayne Lindsey, Richard Pleines, Michelle Nuhn, Elizabeth Disbrow, Mark Albrecht, Jean Panciera, Mary Solera, Ethan Drain, Jane Baird (HKY&FS), Jen Favalora (HKY&FS), Kerry Emerson (HKY&FS), Regina Regola (Via Remote), Annie Stirna (Via Remote), Eileen Unger-Pleines (Via Remote), and Jamie Sciascia (Via Remote)

Called to Order: First Selectman Couture called this meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the February 12, 2024 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen were approved as presented.

The Minutes of the February 12, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen were approved as presented.

The Minutes of the Tuesday, February 20, 2024 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen were approved as presented.

The Minutes of Thursday, February 22, 2024 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen were approved as presented.

Motion #1 - Selectmen D’Angelo *Moved* and Selectman Nunes *Seconded* a motion to approve the Minutes of the Thursday, February 15, 2024 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen with amendments:

Amendments are as follows:

1. Remove “R. Regolo” from the In attendance section for the Board of Selectmen and place her name under the Visitors section.
2. In the Top Header, Replace “Monday” with “Thursday”

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Refunds:

Motion #2 - First Selectman Couture *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. Thomas J. Scanlon III or Gay M. Scanlon | 26 Paper Mill Rd | \$8.00 | Overpaid |
| 2. Alexa J. Lee | 9 Keith Circle | \$7,843.21 | Overpaid (customer paid & Escrow agent paid. Spoke to Escrow agent-refund customer) |
| 3. James F. or Dawn M. McGoey | 32 Beech Tree Ridge | \$21.83 | Overpaid COC#11274M |

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Abatements & Transfers: None.

Budget:

First Selectman Couture reported that one piece of the Budget being worked on is Salaries and AFSCME Negotiations which are taking place soon. Couture brought to the Board's attention about a bridge located on Abner Lane being damaged (stones that held it together shifted due to age). The bridge is still passable; however, repairs will need to happen. Couture looked into the possibility of applying for State grants but unfortunately the bridge doesn't meet the requirements to obtain it. Couture also reported this bridge is on the Capital Plan List for the 2026-27 Budget.

Couture further reported that per the Building Official there are unsafe structures in Town and noted there is no line item for demolition of buildings. Couture wanted to bring this forth to the Board since it is Budget season in case a line item possibly wanted to be created for demolishing structures now or in the future.

2024 Appointments:

First Selectman Couture reported that the Board is still looking for candidates for the Ethics Committee.

Couture reported that the Board of Selectmen has been requested to remove Brian James Blair from the Park and Recreation Commission since he no longer has the time to serve and commit to the Committee. Couture stated that Brain has done a wonderful job serving on the Committee over the years. Jim Duffield is in the process of looking to fill the position with another candidate as soon as possible.

Motion #3 - First Selectman Couture ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to remove Brian James Blair from the Park and Recreation Commission effective immediately.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Department Reports:

A. HKYFS - Budget Discussion

Jen Favolora, Director of Operations, Kerry Emerson, Treasurer, and Jane Baird Board Chair were in attendance to present the Budget for the Haddam-Killingworth Youth and Family Services (HKYFS) and answer any questions the Board might have. Jen Favolora provided a brief update regarding the utilization of the Opioid Settlement money.

Jane Baird reported that in 2022 they went through a Strategic Planning process which included surveying of the Community, collecting data, and working with a consultant who helped them come up with a plan focusing on five key components: Community Awareness/Outreach, Mental Health, Prevention Programming, Financial Sustainability and Climate and Culture, which is their guiding document. Over the past several years, Jane stated they have had some challenges with staffing and consistency and thanked Jen Favolora for her Leadership in navigating them through the last year. Jane shared their new staff changes with the Board.

Committee on Aging - Budget Discussion

Joan Gay introduced Jean Panciera and Mary Solera who were the original members of Committee on Aging and also who were involved in the Budget discussion. She also introduced Nancy Gorski who is helping the Committee on Aging as a Researcher. Joan reviewed the Budget she prepared for the Board of Selectmen's consideration which involved several factors: 1) **Clerk:** Sciascia records the meeting minutes in order to meet the Freedom of Information Requirements and helps manage Sharepoint; 2) **Program and Activities:** Joan explained that while some programs/activities could require a fee for Seniors to participate, others programs/activities could be free; 3) **Senior Program Coordinator:** Joan reviewed the estimated Budget for this position and explained that the Committee on Aging consists of volunteers that are passionate about providing services to Killingworth Seniors but would need help in scheduling activities and also while looking for a physician location in order to hold these programs. A part-time Senior Program Coordinator with no benefits is needed to coordinate and collaborate with the Committee on Aging to develop social, educational, recreational and cultural programs for Seniors. Joan said there are also grants out there that the Committee could apply for these types of programs. The Senior Program Coordinator could work remotely or use the Municipal Agent for the Elderly's office as appropriate.

Joan shared that starting April 28th or May 1st, the River Valley Transit will make an additional stop at the Beechwood Community.

Joan thanked the Board for all their support and for the opportunity to meet with them regarding the Committee on Aging's proposed Budget.

Old Business:

A. Traffic Safety

First Selectman Couture reported that he reached out to RiverCog last month to request that a Road Safety Audit be done from Parmalee Farm down to Stevens Road (Main strip of 81) as well as Route 80 to Roast Meat and to the Circle. Couture hasn't heard back as of yet. The Board had a brief conversation about accessing the data in the Speedspy that is up on Route 148 and possibly getting a replacement speedspy for the one that was vandalized.

New Business:

A. Notice of Paper of Record

First Selectman Couture reported that under the new Charter they are no longer bound to a specific paper which has a daily subscription within the Community. Couture also noted that there had been discussion from moving from the Hartford Courant to another paper to lessen costs for the posting of Legal Notices. Couture suggested moving to a local newspaper like the Haddam-Killingworth News which also provides every resident in Town a newspaper. The Board will still be able to post RFPs, available positions, etc. in other newspapers if they choose to do so. The Board agreed to proceed in the direction of changing the statutory reporting to HK News. No action from the Board is needed.

First Selectman Couture read the below language into the record as follows:

“Pursuant to Article VII §3(m) of the Killingworth Charter, I am designating Haddam-Killingworth News and its online proponent HK-Now as the designated medium for Legal Notices for the Town of Killingworth.”

New Business:

B. Call to Meeting for Special Town Meeting

First Selectman Couture gave an update about the draft Legal Notice that was provided in the Board's packet. Couture noted that there was one question remaining regarding elevating the Committee on Aging to a Commission on Aging and they would need to check with Counsel regarding the wording. All the other items going out to Town meetings were approved by either the current Board of Selectmen or the previous Board of Selectmen minus the Annual Reports since they have been delayed due to covid.

Motion #4 - Selectman D'Angelo **Moved** and Selectman Nunes **Seconded** a motion to approve the following Legal Call, Contingent Upon Counsel Review:

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF KILLINGWORTH

The Electors of the Town of Killingworth and all those qualified to vote in meetings of said Town are hereby notified and warned that a Special Town Meeting will be held in the All Purpose Room of the Killingworth Elementary School, 340 Route 81, Killingworth, CT on

Monday, March 25, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. to consider and act upon the following items of business:

1. To authorize the additional expenditure of \$19,892 for on-line permitting software to be funded by the assigned fund balance of the capital reserves.
2. To authorize the use of the remaining unassigned ARPA funds amounting to approximately \$230,000 to be allocated to the Park and Recreation Commission for the following two (2) purposes:
 - 1) \$75,000 for the construction of Pickleball Courts, and
 - 2) \$155,000 and any remaining ARPA balance above this amount to be designated for the purpose of the construction of the Baseball/Multi-Purpose Field at Eric Auer Park, supplementing the existing DEEP grant, as unanimously approved at the October 23, 2023 Board of Selectmen and the November 14, 2023 Board of Finance meetings.
3. To enact an ordinance that would enable the Board of Selectmen, pursuant to CGS 12:127a, to offer full or partial tax abatement on taxes on structures of historical or architectural merit upon recommendation of the Historic Review Committee. The full text of the proposed ordinance is on file with the town clerk.
4. To elevate the Committee on Aging to a Commission on Aging pursuant any wording via Counsel.

Dated at Killingworth, Connecticut this 26th day of February, 2024

Eric Donavon Couture
First Selectman

Joel A. D'Angelo
Selectman

Eric J. Nunes
Selectman

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

B. Station 2 Paving RFP:

Ethan Drain briefly reviewed with the Board the project paving details, associated cost and putting the project out to bid to get the most competitive price for the project.

Motion #5 - Selectman Nunes *Moved* and Selectman D'Angelo *Seconded* a motion to approve the Station 2 Paving Request for Proposal as presented.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

C. DPW Coverage Stipend:

First Selectman Couture reported that he sent the Board the historical information on the DPW Coverage Stipend information. Mark Albrecht has been covering Walter Adametz's responsibilities since he retired a month ago and is doing a great job in the position. Couture also noted that Mark took on Walt's responsibilities while he was out last time and received the stipend. No action from the Board was needed just to get the Board's consensus.

E. Through-Town Event: Closer to Free Ride:

First Selectman Couture reported that the Through-Town Event scheduled for Saturday, September 7th is for the Smilow-Yale Cancer Bike Race going down Route 148. Couture noted it is the same approval process as per the Local Transit Authority and also noted that the route needs to be approved as presented.

Motion #6 - Selectman D'Angelo *Moved* and Selectman Nunes *Seconded* a motion to approve the Closer to Free Ride scheduled on Saturday, September 7, 2024 as presented.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Public Comment: None.

Selectmen's Comments:

Joel D'Angelo:

- D'Angelo thanked the Departments and Directors, Youth & Family Services, Committee on Aging, Fire Department and Highway Department all for coming in over the past weeks as well as tonight to answer his questions.

Eric Nunes -

- Nunes echoed Selectman D'Angelo's comments and also thanked First Selectman Couture in coordinating across multiple Departments to bring them into the Town Hall in order to have these discussions about what's important, what needs to be done and also looking into the next stage of what needs to be accomplished.

First Selectman's Comments:

Eric Couture:

- Couture thanked the High School students for volunteering their time to shovel a fair amount of Beechwood residents driveways during the last snowstorm. -
- Couture spoke to Beechwood residents last Wednesday about the issues facing Beechwood and the Town. Couture also reviewed the Budget with the residents. Couture reported about the septic issues and the ongoing Rent Control Legislation that is being debated in Hartford this year that would allow municipalities to form Rent Committees/Commissions. Couture noted that the Beechwood residents are facing increasing costs and stressed the importance that everyone needs to be looked at.

- Couture discussed the topic that has been raised recently in the Community of whether or not to hold special meetings in regards to the Budget in a hybrid fashion or to keep them in person only. Couture noted that the Board needed to review the Budget that was first presented and all the components involved. The budget numbers are rapidly changing and Couture stated that making sure good quality information is being presented to the public is extremely important.
- Couture addressed the topic of Social Media and as a Board they are governed around rules under FOIA. He stated if multiple Board members respond to a post at the same time it could accidentally create a meeting. Couture stated that the Board always uses caution and discretion to respond when it is appropriate since it is one of the reasons why they were elected and it is a large part of their job in general.
- Last week the Senator Blumenthal and Senator Murphy provided an overview of the Budget on Congressional Spending. They spoke about programs and agencies are available for that funding, and what those funding sources will cover. Couture noted that Congressional Spending is also dependant on Congress passing a Budget.
- Couture gave an update on how the Foreman open position sparked a lot of interest. Couture stated he will bring one candidate forward to the Board for approval to fill the open position.

Adjournment: First Selectman Couture *Moved* to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk