

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

The Special Town Meeting was called to order by First Selectman Eric Couture at 7:07 P.M. in the All Purpose Room of the Killingworth Elementary School on March 25, 2024 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:**
 - A. \$75,000 for the construction of Pickleball Courts, and**
 - B. \$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.**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Bill Tobelman moved to nominate Rob Rimmer to serve as Moderator; seconded by William Kosturko. Following a voice vote the motion carried unanimously.

Assistant Town Clerk Michele O'Toole read the call of the meeting. Mary Robbenhaar-Fretz moved to accept the call of the meeting; seconded by William Kosturko. Following a voice vote the motion carried unanimously.

Moderator Rob Rimmer reviewed the emergency exits and eligibility requirements to vote in the Town Meeting. He also stated that all votes will be by voice vote.

Mr. Couture introduced and made the following motion:

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,

Seconded by Nancy Gorski. Mr. Couture explained this software (Open Gov) was approved by the previous selectmen but was underbudgeted. The additional funds would cover the start-up expenses. Discussion ensued over yearly renewal fees, savings for the town, and comparison to other options. Following a lengthy discussion the motion carried.

Mr. Couture introduced and made the following motion:

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:

A. \$75,000 for the construction of Pickleball Courts, and

B. \$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

Seconded by Eileen Blewett. Mrs. Blewett stressed that this field is already funded by a grant she has a problem with extra funds going toward enhancements. Several residents disagreed with the language of the motion; additional funds should not automatically go to the ball field. Donna Duley stated that seniors and young children are both underserved populations in Killingworth and would like to see

monies going toward their well-being and recreation needs; the need for Pickleball courts and better maintained playground equipment was later stated by additional residents. Others questioned the need to spend additional funds on recreation when there should be other priorities for the money like infrastructure and the Fire Department. Questions were also addressed about the impact of the additional field on the existing facilities at Eric Auer Park. Mr. Couture stressed that ARPA funds must be accounted for by the end of this year. After discussion of the tennis courts and pickleball courts at Sheldon Park, Nancy Gorski motioned to move the vote which was seconded by John Mancini. Following the lengthy discussion and an indeterminate voice vote, the motion failed by a show of hands with 17 in favor and 29 against.

Mr. Couture introduced and made the following motion:

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.

Seconded by Mike Trosuk. Mr. Couture read a letter from the Historic Review Chair in favor of the ordinance and clarified concerns over abatements given to all historic homes regardless of condition. Municipal Historian Tom Lentz stressed that the abatement would be for homes facing demolition because of a tax burden to the owner. Following this short discussion and an indeterminate voice vote, the motion carried by a show of hands with 25 in favor and 19 against the ordinance.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele O'Toole, Assistant Town Clerk