

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 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 (Via Remote)

**BOS Members Absent:** None.

**Visitors:** Richard Pleines, Wayne Linsley, Kathy Zandi, Alli Benhke, Glenn Johnson, Josh Dobbs-McAuliffe, Eileen Unger Pleines (Via Remote), Elizabeth Disbow, Annie Stirna (Via Remote), Laura Lefko (Via Remote), EMB (Via Remote), and Jamie Sciascia (Via Remote)

**Called to Order:** First Selectman Couture called this meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Public Comment:**

Laura Lefko had several comments: 1) Laura commented about the condition of Sheldon Park and how residents feel it has been left in unsafe conditions for their children to play in. Laura also expressed how residents feel embarrassed when other baseball teams come to play at the field and feels they deserve a timeframe of when the park will be put back together; 2) Laura commented on the Over and Unders meeting and inquired if she could obtain a breakdown of what the \$60,000 overs regarding Legal Fees were for this year. Couture noted that the Director of Finance Regolo tracks this information so it could be requested.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Motion #1 - Selectman Nunes *Moved* and Selectman D’Angelo *Seconded* a motion to approve the following sets of Minutes: 1) Minutes from the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Wednesday, July 16, 2024; 2) Minutes from the Special Meeting of the Board of Education held on Friday, July 26, 2024; 3) Minutes from the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Wednesday, July 03, 2024; 4) Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Monday, June 24, 2024; 5) Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Monday, July 08, 2024 with the following amendment:

**Amendment to the July 08, 2024 Minutes is as follows:**

1. Page 2, Under Old Business: A, ARPA Funds: The Board is speaking about the Public Works Truck in this section, not about the Fire Truck. Delete “fire” throughout this

section.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Selectman Nunes thanked Clerk Sciascia for writing the Minutes with good detail.

**Refunds:** None. Couture reported this is due to not having a Tax Collector.

**Budget Report:** First Selectman Couture reported that invoices are coming in for July and more information will be provided at the next Board meeting. Couture also reported that Legal Bills are being paid, and trees are being cut.

**Department Reports:** First Selectman Couture reported that in the Board's packet are copies of the Town Clerk, Land Use Office and Building Department Reports for their review.

**Haddam Killingworth Youth and Family Services Report:** Alli Benhke presented the Haddam Killingworth Youth and Family Services First Quarter Report:

Alli reported that in 2023/2024 HKYFS had accomplishments from the past year which included:

- HKYFS held and participated in 17 Community Events;
- Partnered with 25 Businesses, Agencies, and Non-Profits;
- Received 1,244 Volunteer Hours;
- Hosted 31 Mental Health and Prevention Programs;
- Expanded the Mentor Connections to 18.

HKYFS also held their Summer Solstice event at Parmelee Farm; Held their Summer Youth Programming where 55 Middle and High School Students, 78 Elementary and Intermediate School Students joined in various enriching activities.

Upcoming for HKYFS: 1) School Supply Program; 2) Yard Goats Stadium scheduled on August 15th for a fun-filled Family Baseball Night; 3) On August 23rd at Parmelee Farm is their Family Movie Night featuring "Elemental."; 4) On August 27th at the Haddam FireHouse, Dillon Zak and friends at Glenwood Barber Shop, will be offering free haircuts for the Haddam and Killingworth students; 5) On September 11th is Mentor Training. Alli noted they are still seeking male mentors.

Faith Sprigg joined HKYFS as their Positive Youth Development Coordinator. Faith was their QPR Suicide Awareness Trainer last year. Faith will be focusing on the Elementary and Intermediate School Programs and will work alongside their Prevention Coordinator, Kyana, who leads Middle and High School programs.

A brief discussion about the Opiate Settlement funds and how they might be used over the years

took place.

### **RSD17 Board of Education Report:**

Kathy Zandi presented the RSD17 Board of Education's Report for July:

Kathy reported on the following information: 1) The New Finance and Operations Director started on July 1st, Alison Pierce; 2) Extended School Year (ESY) commenced the first week of July; 3) Master Plan Update - The Board voted to focus on a 9-12 Grade structure and Referendum is targeted to commence at the beginning of the 2025 Year; 4) Haddam Board Member Prem Aithal announced his resignation effective August 20th.

The public can access the RSD17 Board of Education's Meeting Agendas, Minutes, Budget related materials as well as the Master Plan Updates directly on the RSD17 website via: [Regional School District 17 - Regional School District 17 \(rsd17.org\)](http://Regional School District 17 - Regional School District 17 (rsd17.org)).

### **Old Business:**

#### **A. Open Bids: RFP for Eric Auer KRP Pavilion:**

First Selectman Couture reported that there is one bid for the Eric Auer KRP Pavillon from Engineered Building Contractors, LLC in the amount of \$192,922.00. Per the bid process, this will be uploaded to the Town of Killingworth Website for public viewing.

#### **B. Open Foreman Position:**

First Selectman Couture updated the Board about the Open Foreman Position. Couture reviewed the candidates/interview process noting that the final candidate that was selected came back with a counter offer that was higher than what was budgeted for. Couture discussed with the Board the following: 1) What are they looking for in the position? 2) Should it remain a Foreman position? 3) Should they move the position into something different? 4) Should they move to a Director of Public Works position based on what the Town is moving towards which would require a higher salary? 5) Can the Board get buy-in from the Town? If so, how do they do that? 6) How do they support the positions for the Town to function, with the economic development that the Town has and think they might have?

Selectman D'Angelo and Selectman Nunes both recommended that due to the challenges that Couture faced in filling the vacancy of the Foreman position, they needed to establish a Hiring Committee. D'Angelo also suggested since the laborer position was budgeted for they should fill that as soon as possible which will provide assistance to the Public Works Department. Selectman Nunes concurred. The Board had discussion about moving forward in this direction, creating the Open Foreman Hiring Committee, and selecting the candidates for this Committee.

Motion #2 - Selectman Nunes *Moved* and Selectman D'Angelo *Seconded* a motion to create a Hiring Committee for the Road Foreman Position consisting of the Board of Selectmen, and two to three other members, appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

**C. Tax Collector Position:**

First Selectman Couture reported that the Board received Abigail Albrecht’s resume for their review. A motion was made shortly thereafter by Couture appointing Abigail as the Tax Collector.

Motion #3 - First Selectman Couture ***Moved*** and Selectman D’Angelo ***Seconded*** a motion to appoint Abigail Albrecht to the position of Tax Collector for a term commencing August 19, 2024 and ending on November 16, 2027.

*Discussion took place about getting Abigail the proper training and materials in order to be successful in her new position as Tax Collector. The Board had a brief discussion about the operation of the Tax Collector’s office since Michelle Nuhn departed. Couture noted that refunds couldn’t be processed since it requires a Tax Collector’s signature.*

Couture/D’Angelo - Yes  
Nunes - Abstain

Motion passed [2-0-1].

**D. WCPA Pumps Out Ordinance:**

First Selectman Couture reported that he spoke with Attorney Dave Tycz, who is legal counsel for the Town of Killingworth, regarding the authority around the Board of Selectmen acting as the WPCA. Attorney Tycz agreed with Couture as to when the old WPCA was dissolved, it was folded into the Board of Selectmen. Couture questioned whether appointing some alternates would be beneficial in order to fulfill this role. Couture suggested revisiting the idea of having community septic systems, smaller in nature, and pumped every 3 years versus every five years. Discussion about maintenance, making sure it fits with the Town’s Charter, and residents receiving a 5-year letter notification reminder for pumpouts took place. Selectman Nunes noted that the Beechwood Community is in favor of doing a 3-year pumpout as well.

**E. Ethics Committee:**

Motion #4 - First Selectman Couture ***Moved*** and Selectman D’Angelo ***Seconded*** a motion to amend the Ethics Committee charge as made by the Board of Selectmen on November 27, 2023 and remove “as per Charter and State Statutes” from the charge.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

*Discussion - First Selectman Couture stated at the next Board of Selectmen’s meeting they will appoint the five candidates they currently have to the Ethics Committee.*

**F. Barn Renovation Update:**

First Selectman Couture gave an update on the Barn Renovation. In attendance at the meeting was Josh Dobbs-McAuliffe, an engineer with GNCB Consulting Engineers, who the Board commissioned to do a structural engineer study on the Barn. Josh provided a brief overview to the Board of the overall condition of the Barn to the Board. Back in November 2023, Carl Auer,

the Building Inspector, recommended to the Board to get a structural assessment done in case a gust of wind came through and undoes any repairs that already took place. In the interim, ARPA funds were approved for the Barn project as well as \$300,000 from the Urban Act Grant.

The Board discussed next steps: filling the necessary paperwork with the State, putting it out to RFP in order to get the project underway. Couture confirmed the amount of total funds: \$350,000 (ARPA funds) and \$300,000 (State funds). The ARPA funds have to be contracted out by December 31st, work has to take place in 2025 and utilized by December 31st 2026. Discussion took place about the scope of the project.

## **New Business:**

### **A. Snow Removal Contracts:**

First Selectman Couture reported how the Snow Removal offers have been published in the papers noting there is currently one more snow route to fill. Couture reported receiving a commitment from a local contractor for two trucks for the upcoming snow plowing season and is hopeful to be able to move forward on that. Couture thanked the Public Works Department for all the work they have done in getting people to commit to snow plowing.

### **B. Historic Review Application:**

First Selectman Couture reported about an application for the Historic Structure Abatement. This would be a tax abatement that gets recorded on the property records for structures that have historical merit in the Town of Killingworth.

Elizabeth Disbow, the Chair of The Historical Review Committee, gave an update about the owners of Country Squire. Elizabeth gave some background on Country Squire noting how their building is an important structure to the Town which is in extreme disrepair. Elizabeth further reported that the amount of renovations they are looking to accomplish would be a project that this abatement is designed for. The Historical Review Committee determines whether an applicant is eligible and then it goes to the Board of Selectmen. In this particular case, The Historical Review Committee stated Country Squire is eligible. Elizabeth reviewed the next steps with the Board.

## **Public Comment:**

- Wayne Linsley commented about how the snow plowing contractor that Couture mentioned tonight hasn't physically committed yet. Couture apologized for misspeaking previously, noting he knew it had been discussed but couldn't remember what the commitment level was.
- Eileen Unger Pleines commented about how she feels it is unacceptable the state in which the Sheldon Park Playground has been left in and is worried that a child will get hurt. Eileen feels that the playground equipment could have been easily been fixed by the Public Works Department and noted how it has been at Park and Rec for a while now. Eileen stated how she is very appreciative of Selectman D'Angelo for helping out recently at Sheldon Park and asked that the situation at Sheldon Park be rectified immediately before someone gets hurt.

**Selectmen's Comments:**

**Joel D'Angelo -**

- D'Angelo commented about how he is looking forward to meeting with both Couture/Nunes as well as the two other members from the Community to kick start the Foreman search. He is eager to find the best candidate for the Town.
- D'Angelo commented about the passionate volunteers he heard from regarding the status of Sheldon Park and feels that it is a reasonable request in terms of letting residents know a timeframe of when it will be fixed.

**Eric Nunes -** No Comments.

**First Selectman's Comments:**

**Eric Couture -**

- Couture commented about having more of a Traffic Safety update at the next meeting. Couture also commented briefly about his volunteering to serve on the Safe Streets Committee for the traffic plan updates as part of the RiverCog planning. A map has been created as part of their plan to assess the safety of the roads which can be found at: [RiverCOG Map \(fhistudio-apps.com\)](http://fhistudio-apps.com) Residents can leave a pin/comment about streets throughout Killingworth.
- Couture gave an update about PFAS. GZA is still working on the bidding documents. The systems that have been installed in homes back in April/May have come back and been sent to CHRAD and other authorities at DEEP. Couture noted one of the systems has been maintained for leaking issues, otherwise no major issues.
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**Adjournment:** First Selectman Couture *Moved* to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia  
Clerk