

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, AUGUST 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: Richard Pleines, Eileen Blewett, Nancy Gorski, Eileen Unger Pleines (Via Remote), Elizabeth Disbow, Annie Stirna (Via Remote), Tim Emerson (Via Remote), Regina Regolo (Via Remote), 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.

Public Comment: Eileen Blewett commented briefly about her concerns with Sheldon Park. First Selectman Couture reported that Park and Rec had replaced the broken equipment to which Eileen did not realize, and thanked Couture.

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, August 14, 2024; and 2) Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Monday, August 12, 2024.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Department Reports:

Sheldon Park Report -

First Selectman Couture gave an update about Sheldon Park. Couture reported that one of the reasons why he hadn't pulled the piece of equipment from the ground or had the Public Works Department do it was because he knew Park and Rec was working on it. Couture reported the delay was due to the piece of equipment no longer being manufactured; therefore, the proper ball bearing sizes couldn't be ordered. Couture reported it has since been replaced. Couture also reported that another item of concern for residents is the wood chips on the playground. Park and Rec is in the process of looking into moving the pile of wood chips from KRP down to Sheldon Park but is in need of volunteers in order to do so. Park and Rec has established bullet point items of what still needs to be accomplished at Sheldon Park which could be found in their

meeting minutes on the Town of Killingworth's website.

Couture further reported that Park and Rec discussed reaching out and getting a quote from the company the school district utilizes for their annual playground equipment check up in order to confirm the equipment is in safe condition for kids to play on. A brief discussion took place about continuing to keep kids safe on Town playgrounds.

Tax Collector's Report - Couture reported that everything is running smoothly in the Tax Collector Office thus far.

Old Business:

A. Hiring Committee Update:

First Selectman Couture reported that the Hiring Committee met and made the decision to hire a Director of Public Works versus a Foreman position. The Committee believes that hiring a Director of Public Works is in the best interest for the Town and for the Public Works Department. The Director of Public Works position will be posted externally tomorrow, and the Committee is hoping by September 15th they will have narrowed down a 5-8 pool of candidates to assess and interview in order to fill the position as soon as possible.

B. PFAS Update

First Selectman Couture reported about the changes surrounding PFAS, specifically with the court cases currently being challenged in other states on the levels at which action has to be taken on chemicals like PFAS. Couture noted that the criteria hasn't changed and the Town is still in the position because of the levels in the area that action needs to be taken. Couture reported that the EPA finalized guidelines and levels that above a certain amount is actionable noting that it is basically the minimum testing amount. DEEP is finalizing and updating its testing levels for these materials, however there is no timeline when it will come through the process. Couture stated that the Town is responsible for the installation and maintenance of home systems, similar to what is installed on Wolf Hollow. Couture also reported that currently there are some systems above the EPA standards but below the DEEP standards noting they don't have the same systems installed. Couture stated that it is possible when DEEP lowers their threshold that the Town will have to install those same systems in order to be consistent but Couture will follow up with DEEP regarding same.

The Board discussed what criteria is in place in order to get residents' water tested for PFAS as well as remediation. Couture reported that there is a boundary and general flow map noting these specific houses and it has to be tied to the proximity to where the PFAS source was located. The Board discussed their concerns about not having a better process in terms of identifying criteria of what is actionable/what is not actionable. Couture further discussed the long term solutions of getting the Town off these filtration systems. Couture mentioned the possibility as one of his long term discussions with GZA and CT Water bringing in a water main from one of the nearby locations. The Board had further discussion about the \$700,000 in DWSRF funds available for KES and the Town Hall campus, the KES building being owned by the School District but who pays for the maintenance aspect of it, what role would the Architect have?, and the location of the filtration tank.

Couture reported he spoke with the GZA contact on Friday, who presented a Change Order, reflecting the scope of the work of the project in order to get the filtration systems up and running. GZA is asking that either an architect or architectural firm help finalize a design for KES as part of building out the specifications in order to have more expertise with dealing with some of the technical challenges of doing work inside a school with higher standards for things like fire safety. Selectmen Nunes and D'Angelo expressed their concerns with the large amount of the Change Order as well as with some of the contract language. Couture will reach out to the GZA contact in order to get his availability so he can come in to discuss the Change Order/Contract in more detail. The Board will make themselves available if a special meeting needs to be held.

C. Traffic Safety

First Selectman Couture reported that over the weekend there were two bad accidents on Route 80, urging the residents to drive slowly, and pay attention to their surroundings, as well as the signs and rules of the road. Couture spoke about how there is work being done on a regional basis for work addressing Traffic Safety. The goal of the project is to get down to zero fatalities/zero accidents. Couture volunteered to serve on the Committee with RiverCog and sent out a Constant Contact to all residents in Town keeping them informed about how RiverCog setup on their website mapping software where you can leave comments (“thumbs up” or “thumbs down” with a comment, “light bulb” for an idea, “stop sign” or “speed bump” where one should be placed). All this information is being collected to get a better understanding of where the Town should devote more resources to either: improve infrastructure, park a cop car for an hour to monitor speeding, install safety cameras and/or flashing speed signs. Couture will continue to keep residents informed about public events in the surrounding areas that promote driving safety.

Public Comment:

- Nancy Gorski made several comments: 1) Gorski spoke about the new Public Works position and advised the Board to be cautious, to go back and read the Charter to see if there are any updates that need to be applied to since it is not an easy document to read; 2) Gorski commented on Traffic Safety about how she was coming back from the Market on Saturday and a full size semi McDonalds truck pulled onto Green Hill. A brief discussion took place on why these trucks are in the area.
- Annie Stirna made the following public comments: 1) Stirna reminded everyone that the Districts First Day of School is this Wednesday, August 28th, and in keeping with the Traffic Safety measures, she urged everyone to drive carefully and be safe especially since kids will be back outside waiting to be picked up for their buses; 2) Stirna thanked the Park and Rec Commission for their diligence in taking care of the Sheldon Playground; 3) Stirna thanked the HK Recreation Department for the programs that were held over the summer. She stated as a grandparent and parent she was able to see the programs with a fresh pair of eyes that she wasn't aware that were being offered around Town; 4) Stirna suggested to both Selectmen D'Angelo and Nunes to under the Health Department section on the Killingworth Town website where there are tons of PFAS related resources; 5) Stirna inquired about the new filtration system for KES and it is her

understanding it is the Town's responsibility even though the school owns the building. Stirna recommended that the Board not delay the approval of the Change Order from GZA since School is about to be underway and kids have already been through enough with covid, and a furnace breaking; and 6) Stirna spoke, and also confirmed with Nancy Gorski who was in attendance at the meeting, about how DEEP was paying for things up front out of a fund until Gorski was in her second year in office when they stated that it was the Town's responsibility. Stirna urged the Board to get in touch with State Representatives and also see if there are any grants available.

- Eileen Blewett had the following comments: 1) Blewett suggested in terms of moving the wood chips to Sheldon Park that the Board look into possibly hiring a contractor since volunteers are stretched thin in the Town; 2) Blewett inquired about when the Ethics Committee appointments will be made since it was discussed a few meetings back and she believes the Town Committees have passed on their list of recommendations; 3) Blewett commented about the GZA Change Order and understands the Board's concerns with the language aspect of it where it states the Agreement part between the School District and the Town; 4) Blewett inquired about the new Director of Public Works position being posted to the public tomorrow, if the additional Public Works Employee will now wait until the Board gets through the hiring process. Couture advised "yes."

Selectmen's Comments:

Eric Nunes -

- Nunes commented about how at the last few Board meetings he needed more clarification and more time to review a document and he is very appreciative of that. Nunes stated that he has an obligation to residents and wants to make sure when he executes a Change Order that he knows exactly what the amount reflects, especially if a resident inquires about it.
- Nunes expressed his happiness with the Sheldon Park progress and also agreed with Eileen Blewett that hiring a contractor might be the best way in order to transfer the wood chips from KRP to Sheldon Park.

Joel D'Angelo -

- D'Angelo thanked Couture for setting up time with GZA to come in so he can understand the scope of a Change Order. D'Angelo stated that he understands PFAS, and who's responsible for it, he just wants to have a conversation about it in more detail. D'Angelo stated he will make himself available for that meeting.
- D'Angelo stated how sorry he is to hear about the recent accidents in Killingworth over the weekend. He commented about Traffic Safety and during his recent vacation trip, speed spies were set up in high volume areas. D'Angelo stated these ones had LED lights around them, with flashing colors: green to red to orange. The speed of a driver was not flashing; however, the words "too fast", "slow down" or "good job" was which D'Angelo thought really worked for him.

First Selectman's Comments:

Eric Couture -

- Couture will reach out to GZA contact to set up a time either in person or virtually for a meeting with the Board for a review of the Change Order.
- Couture advised that the DWSRF has been changed recently and they are looking at projects that are ready to go. Couture noted that keeping in touch with all of the legislatures is important in getting updates to them. Also, having a plan to show EPA, DPH, GZA, and knowing what the Town will be spending it on and how much the cost will be, is important to clarify that aspect of it.
- Couture spoke about construction and one of the reasons why they wanted to get started on the bidding as soon as possible is that there are breaks that are available during the school year where some destructive work can limit that disruption to students.
- Couture commented that if he knows a project is being worked on in Town, and volunteers are putting their time and effort into it, he always gives the volunteer a chance in order to finish that project even if it looks like to some it's not being worked on. Couture noted the challenges the Town faces to find volunteers so wanted to share his prescriptive.

Adjournment: First Selectman Couture *Moved* to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk