

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MONDAY, February 24, 2025 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:** Elizabeth Disbrow, Richard Pleines, Mark Albrecht, Wayne Linsley, Walt Adametz, Cindy Adametz, Nancy Gorski, Jen Favalora, Annie Stirna, Bob Szewczyk, Don Venuti, Marcel Couture, Richard Pleines, Chip Morgan, Todd Hjak, Glenn Johnson, Tom Shipman, Eileen Blewett, Carl Stafstrom, Regina Regolo (Via Remote), Tara Amatrudo (Via Remote), Bill Kosturko (Via Remote), Sara O'Brien (Via Remote), Michael Kovacs (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.

**Public Comment:**

- Walt Adametz from Sonora Road commented about several items: 1) Walt had concerns with the snowplowing job around his residence during the last storm noting the following: approximately 3 feet of snow was left from the edge of the road; Old County Road was never plowed until after the storm ended; the roads froze the following day leaving dozens of ice spots along the roads from the rain which no one came back to put sand down. Walt feels when he was in charge of the Public Works Department for the past 30 years they always took pride with the snow removal. Walt wanted to bring this to the Board's attention so it can be addressed; 2) Walt inquired about when the Chip Stone went out to bid since he was contacted by a few contractors for an update. Walt stated that there was an issue with the stone being earmarked for the Cow Hill Road drainage project noting damage to over 1,000 tons of chipped stone. Walt stated that the Town will have to purchase material to put in the base in order to lay the pipe (ravine runs deep.) Walt further explained that the chipped stone will be utilized to fill the bed to the pipes; however, since this was budgeted for, the funds will need to be increased in order for the Town to purchase the material.
- Eileen Blewett from 22 Clarkson Road commented about her concerns with the snowplowing job that occurred during the last storm. Eileen is uncertain as to when the Public Works

Department makes the decision when to go out to plow, however; she feels it wasn't enough to plow at the time, and she doesn't believe the Town sanded, but stated the road conditions were slick. Eileen stated she didn't see any Town plow trucks on her streets which was concerning to her.

- Nancy Gorski from 18 Wolf Hollow Road echoed the concerns of both Eileen Blewett and Walt Adamatz about the last snowstorm being treacherous. She feels that even though there was sand on the roads and snow coming down, there was no one on her roads to plow them. Nancy is unsure what the process is for the Town crew to start plowing, but she believes it needs to be evaluated.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

The Minutes from the Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting of February 10, 2025 was **Tabled** until the next Board meeting.

*(This was at the request of Selectman Nunes in order to have additional time to review the Minutes.)*

### **Open Bids: Class A - Fire Truck:**

First Selectman Couture opened two Bids that were received for the Class A - Fire Truck: 1) Bulldog Fire Apparatus in the amount of \$1,198,618; and 2) C&S Specialty, Inc. in the amount of \$1,272,568.42. Per the Bidding Process, both will be posted on the Town of Killingworth's website for public viewing. The Bid packages will be forwarded to the KVAC for their review.

### **Department Reports:**

#### **A. HKYFS**

Jen Favalora, from Haddam Killingworth Youth and Family Services, presented the Quarterly Report to the Board and Community: They hosted 14 community events bringing together 3422 attendees, with one of them being the HK Craft Fair with 2,000 shoppers; 2) Their Holiday Giving Program provided gifts for 106 local children; 3) Delivered 17 Prevention and Mental Health Programs to 645 Youths and their Parents which offered grief support, current education and weekly youth programming over the last quarter; 4) Facilitated critical discussions about cell phone use and its impact on Youth and Teens with the RSD17 Principals; 5) Hosted two 2 screenings of ScreenAgers, one at the Middle School Level and the other for the High School Level, along with their parents, highlighting research on digital habits and working together to help children navigate today's online world; 6) They have 21 Mentor connections which foster meaningful relationships providing guidance and encouragement to our HK youths; 7) Ashlyn Elliott, who is an LCSW, was hired in December. She joins Denise Grudziski, who is their current part-time LPC delivering counseling services. Denise provided 50 Clinical Therapy Sessions in the last quarter. This expansion will allow more flexible appointment times, additional mental health therapy for HK children, teens and young adults; 8) In December, they were the HKTV telephone recipient which raised \$10,700 in support of their services; 9) They are partnering with the HK High School Internship Program, which supports a student who is working with us to bring back the Kids Run Amok program scheduled on June 1st at Parmelee Farm; 10) Their partnership with the Town of Haddam in writing a 5 year Drug

Free Communities Grant is on pause until an opportunity becomes available; 11) They submitted a proposal to both Haddam and Killingworth recommending that the Opioid Settlement Funds be allocated towards several initiatives.

You can find more Information about Youth and Family Services on their website: [Youth and Family Services in Haddam and Killingworth, CT](#)

### **Appointments:**

First Selectman Couture asked for a Moment of Silence for the sudden passing of Robert Bruce Fagan who was the longtime Tree Warden in the Community. Couture recognized Bruce for the impact he made with his hard work of cutting down trees during the years. Couture advised that arrangements are being made for his commitment of cutting trees, noting one will be planted in his memory. Couture stated how Bruce will be missed.

### **25/26 Budget:**

#### **A. Board of Finance Discussion of Priorities**

First Selectman Couture reported that the Budget report has been shared with the Finance Department as well as with Select Members noting the first item of discussion is Priorities. Couture stated that one of the biggest challenges is the unknown of the dissolution of MIRA and what will transpire with the Tipping Fees. Couture discussed MIRA in length, the effect it would have on the Town's 25-26 Budget. As stated by Couture at a prior meeting, surrounding Towns agreed that sticking together to continue to form a cohesive unit is a better avenue. Couture is expected to have an update soon. Couture spoke about another challenge the Town faces this year with the shift in ADM and the impact it has on Killingworth noting the loss of fifty students from Haddam and Killingworth gaining one student. Couture reviewed preliminary Budget numbers with the Board noting how it is dependent upon what the Superintendent's Budget will be once released tomorrow.

Selectman D'Angelo, who sits on the HKHS Feasibility Study Group, gave an update about how they are still discussing cost estimates as well as in discussions with Architects, but noted with State reimbursements, they are looking at a 20-year Bond of approximately \$100 Million. D'Angelo confirmed there would be no impact to this upcoming fiscal year's budget.

Marcel Couture inquired about the Fire Company's large expense request for a Steel Shed, as well as to the number of quotes received to date. Couture plans to meet with the Fire Department on Thursday to confirm numbers. Chief Darin reported this was a part of their Capital Request.

Annie Stirna discussed MIRA, whether or not they will utilize the Tip Stabilization Fund in order to stabilize tipping fees as well as how the cost of hauling trash might roll into the next fiscal year. Annie confirmed with Couture that the canopies for the Transfer Station will be utilized over the containers in order to stop the rain from going in.

Director of Finance Regolo spoke about the reason the Board of Finance comes to this meeting is to have a general discussion about strategies, challenges and priorities noting that this Budget is an

early preliminary rough draft noting there will be another version coming forth for the Board of Selectmen's review. Regolo discussed the \$1.1 Million relating to the ADM and how she came to that number (combined last year's full budget, raised it by 3%, applied the new ADM and made an audit adjustment) noting the Budget number as of right now is not concrete.

A brief discussion took place about the Mill Rate.

### **B. Initial Budget Overview**

The Board had a brief discussion about Bonding, with no impact to this year's Budget; the State Legislature increasing ECS Funding to municipalities noting they are not sure how much increased funding municipalities would get from the State; 0.69% decrease in the Grand List (car tax which is assessed by the State Legislature and the Veteran's Exemption Benefit is the reason for the decrease.) Director of Finance Regolo gave an update about how the Committee on Aging has an increase to their Budget but isn't reflected as of yet in the Budget. Regolo confirmed a 2 ½ -3% increase in the Operating Budget (Tipping Fees and Insurance are the big outstanding items but Insurance won't be finalized until April.)

### **Old Business:**

#### **A. Multi-Year Capital Improvement Plan**

First Selectman Couture reported that there is uncertainty as to what the School District's plan is over the next 20 years and the impact it will have on the Town's Capital Planning. Couture advised that he spoke with Chief Darin regarding the Needs Assessment noting it's in the Engineer's hands, finalizing details. Couture clarified that the Capital Plan Storage Building is listed separately which addresses their lack of space. Couture reviewed the Fire Department's focus with the needs assessment including all options (renovating current building, what it would look like, moving it, doing partial rebuild.) Selectman Nunes addressed his concerns with not accomplishing any Chip Sealing in 2024 and the possibility of falling behind in 2025-26. Couture advised Chip Sealing is still on schedule, just delayed. The Board discussed Long Term Capital Bonding in length.

#### **B. 25/26 Capital Plan:**

First Selectman Couture reported about the Fire Suppression Tanks advising that the Fire Company's responsibility is making sure that the water holes in Town are functional and usable due to not having water mains. Couture noted that some ARPA funds were utilized in order to clear out some of the holes. Couture discussed briefly with Chief Darin about what the future ongoing maintenance would be or a more robust investment in the maintenance of the tanks. Regolo confirmed there's the issue with the condition of the tanks and an assessment will be provided, keeping in mind what the continued maintenance expense will be since some are located underground and the tanks can fail.

The Boards further discussed baskets for Disc Golf as well as the repaving of the walkway at Eric Auer Park; Parmelee's curtain project (RFP that came back); Maintaining Town owned cemeteries; Couture spoke about the importance of the Grand List; Library's new proposed Solar Array Project,

housed in the Capital Projects with no associated costs due to a resident offering to donate a solar array to the Library. Also discussed were the ARPA Funded projects: The FireHouse, the Pavilion at Eric Auer Park and The Barn Project.

### **Schedule Budget Meetings**

First Selectman Couture reviewed the upcoming Budget meetings advising the area of focus to start will be the Public Works Department due to the large amount in their Budget. Couture is in the process of scheduling a time with the Fire Department on Thursday, February 27th; Tuesday, March 3rd there is a Joint meeting scheduled with the Board of Education, the Board of Finance and the Haddam Board of Selectmen; Thursday, March 6th there is a Park and Rec Commission meeting noting Jim Duffield does have some availability; Couture will reach out to Robin from the Park and Rec to confirm a time. Director of Finance Regolo advised that Committee on Aging Chair Joan Gay would like to schedule a time to meet to discuss the Committee's proposed Budget, possibly getting Joan in on Monday evening. Couture will follow up with Joan to confirm.

### **Public Comment:**

- Nancy Gorski from Wolf Hollow Road commented about the Fire Department's Shed and recommended to the Board to continue to keep GZA in the process in terms of where they plan to put the filtration systems in.
- Eileen Blewett thanked First Selectman Couture for his quick response to the heat issue at the Food Pantry.
- Walt Adamatz commented about how it has been a year since he retired from his position within the Town, and right before his departure he met with the Hiring Committee about the qualifications and level of degree of the new Public Works Director. Walt inquired how many boxes were checked off during the hiring process when the position was filled, the salary of the position, and if it was factored into the current or the fiscal budget. Walt feels taken back that the Town hired a candidate with no qualifications, no engineering degree and no experience, including a higher level salary than when Walt was employed there. Walt stated how he still feels passionately about the Director of Public Works position, after investing 30 years in the Town, and would like to see it move forward. He is looking out for the best interest of the Town.

### **Selectmen's Comments:**

#### **Joel D'Angelo -**

- D'Angelo thanked Jen Favalora from HKYFS for her presenting the Quarterly Report and also for coming in and giving updates throughout the year. D'Angelo also stated how it sounds like HKYFS is holding really great events, noting 14 different ones.
- D'Angelo commented how he is looking forward to sitting with his colleagues regarding the Budget, noting the significant challenges they are to overcome this year and adding in his input throughout.

#### **Selectman Nunes -**

- Nunes commented about the Budget and how there are decisions that will have to be made

that directly impact the Town. Nunes stated since it is the Board's second time going through the

Budget process, he feels they will do the best that they can.

- Nunes thanked and appreciated all the feedback about the snow removal. He stated that on at a support level, he will have a discussion about the concerns that were brought forth with the Director of Public Works.

**First Selectman's Comments:** None.

**Adjournment:** Selectman D'Angelo *Moved* and Selectman Nunes *Seconded* a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia  
Clerk