

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, March 24, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Killingworth Town Hall/Remote Access Available**

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

BOS Members Absent: None

Visitors: Joan Gay, Elizabeth Disbrow, Todd Hajek (KVFC), Tom Shipman, Grace D'Angelo, Resident State Trooper Richard Mulhall, Eileen Unger-Pleines (Via Remote), JV (Full Name Unknown/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: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion #1 - Selectman D'Angelo ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen that was held on Monday, March 10, 2025 as presented.

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 its normal course as presented.

Refunds -

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Daniel Studzinski	5279 White Ibis Drive North Port FL 34287	\$5.12	Overpaid COC #11752M
Daniel Studzinski	5279 White Ibis Drive North Port FL 34287	\$67.82	Overpaid COC #11751M

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Department Reports:**Committee on Aging -**

Joan Gay, the Chair of the Committee on Aging, presented the Addendum Report on the Regional Affordable Housing Projects. She updated the Board on the following: 1) Pearson School in Clinton is being redeveloped into Senior housing by The HOPE Partnership and Xenolith Partners. The Town issued an RFP, and the building was acquired without needing further land preparation; 2) Ferry Crossing in Old Saybrook has 16 rental homes with currently no vacancies. The Town owns the land via State conveyance, and the developer has a 75-year land lease; 3) Lofts at Spencer's Corner has 17 units, also is fully occupied. This was originally vacant office condos, partially purchased and converted for mixed-use allowing for affordable and private units; 4) Wellington at Madison which has 28 units, with 7 open to renters regardless of income. This is funded via a combination of ownership and development partnerships.

Joan further reported that only 0.77% of housing in Killingworth qualifies as affordable, which is below the 10–20% target outlined in the River COG Regional Housing Plan. In addition, Joan recently presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission regarding affordable housing and local development opportunities. The Commission showed strong interest in the topic, as they have been engaged in ongoing conversations about the need for more affordable housing in Killingworth, and is currently reviewing a draft Active Adult Community Regulation, which is expected to go to a Public Hearing this May. Joan stated that while the proposed regulation currently dedicates 100% of the units to residents 55 and older, a recommendation was made to include a percentage of units to affordable housing within that development type. The Commission agreed to consider this recommendation.

First Selectman Couture spoke briefly on a few Town owned properties; specifically, on Lovers Lane and Roast Meat Hill. Chair Gay and the Board discussed the challenges the younger residents face about purchasing a home in Town due to high housing costs, noting evidence suggests a trend of young adults leaving the area, underscoring the need for affordable housing solutions to maintain a sustainable Community.

Carla Lindquist, Executive Director of HOPE Partnership, is available to present to the Board of Selectmen and other Committees to possibly provide valuable insights in the affordable housing development.

Appointments:

Motion #3 - First Selectman Couture ***Moved*** and Selectman D'Angelo ***Seconded*** a motion to appoint Benjamin A. Sodergren to the Health and Safety Committee for a term ending December 31, 2025.

Discussion - Couture reported that the Health and Safety Committee is driven by Union Rules and also Insurance, therefore, the Town has to have representatives in all the different major

organizations in Town (Public Works, Town Hall, the Fire Company, the Ambulance Company and the Library.) Couture advised that the Library was the last one to get filled. Ben Sodergren is the Director of the Library.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Old Business:

A. Pending RFPs

KES Poet System Update

First Selectman Couture reported that the POET system is scheduled for installation at Killingworth Elementary School to ensure water quality compliance, noting that the system being installed is identical to the one previously discussed. Couture further reported that the Bid deadline was extended to April 14th to accommodate the updated documentation which was administrative only, driven by State requirements, specifically from the Department of Public Health. Couture advised that the installation would begin around June 15th, with the goal to keep the process moving swiftly, in order to ensure the system is installed and operational before the start of the 2025-26 school year in August. Contractors are aware of this timeline. The Board plans to hold a special meeting after April 14th to address next steps following the new bid deadline.

Class A Fire Engine

Todd Hajek gave an update on the bid process for the new Fire Truck, noting there were two bids received and opened back in February, one Bid was immediately disqualified for not meeting specifications. The KVFC recommended awarding the Bid to C&S Speciality/Toyne Fire Apparatus. Todd also updated the Board about the uncertainties around the 2027 Emissions coming out and how Cummins is the only one that builds the fire trucks motors, advising that Vendors are recommending budgeting an additional \$95,000 contingency to accommodate potential design modifications since they're not sure what they will have to do in order to fit the motor in the cabin chassis. This would bring the total estimated cost of the bid to \$1,387,568.42. Todd also reviewed the associated costs for two trips that the KVFC Committee would take to the manufacturer in Iowa, in order to inspect the truck. An additional \$40,000 for equipment was mentioned but not requested immediately, as the truck wouldn't be delivered for about two years. Todd doesn't feel this is something worth visiting right now. Todd also discussed Bid deadlines and financing/lease purchase options with the Board.

Motion #4 - First Selectman Couture ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to accept the recommendation from the Killingworth Volunteer Fire Company to Award C&S Speciality/Toyne Fire Apparatus Engine 1 Bid dated March 24, 2025 in the amount of \$1,387,568.42 as presented.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

B. Multi-Year Capital Improvement Plan

First Selectman Couture reported he received the Needs Assessment for Firehouse Station #1 and

shared that with the Board.

The Needs Assessment presented two options: a New Construction with an estimated cost of \$23.9 Million or a Renovation with an estimated cost of \$16 Million. The Board raised concerns about the per-square-foot pricing, since estimates are notably higher compared to surrounding areas like Middlefield's new facility. Couture noted there is no action to be taken tonight. The Board discussed the possibility of a new location of the Firehouse behind the Library, also repurposing the old FireHouse for a meeting space or Helping Hands. Also, the Old Town Green Plan could also be revisited and updated to support future space planning.

C. Memorial Day Parade Update

First Selectman Couture reported that preparations for the Memorial Day Parade are underway and efforts are focused on filing all required permits and organizing the grade-level participants. Couture met with Charlie Smith, the lead representative for the event, and plans are moving forward.

D. MIRA Update

First Selectman Couture gave an update about meeting with all CEOs of the Towns currently utilizing the Essex Transfer Station, where the group emphasized the importance of regional unity, and sticking together would strengthen collective bargaining power during this transitional period. Couture further reported that even though financial details were discussed, these amounts are not yet public and could affect ongoing negotiations with MIRA so the Board would need to go into Executive Session in order to protect negotiation integrity.

Couture further advised that the plan under consideration is to maintain the use of the Essex Transfer Station for at least a few years. However, staying the course is currently less risky and less costly than Towns attempting to manage waste disposal independently. Couture advised that he has committed the Town to continuing with the regional group for the foreseeable future, maintaining in trash operations. Couture clarified earlier confusion stemming from Selectman Needleman's comments, that the Town of Essex planned to shut down the Transfer Station within two years which is not the case, noting that the Town of Essex does not want to assume full liability and operational risk to operate it. If the market-based model works well, Essex might keep the Transfer Station open for the long term, however, that's still uncertain.

The Board gave Consensus that maintaining the current arrangement with trash operations remains the best path, at least in the short term, knowing that the situation may need to be revisited in the future.

Motion #5 - First Selectman Couture ***Moved*** and Selectman D'Angelo ***Seconded*** a motion to add onto the Agenda, as the next item of Business, Motor Vehicle Assessment Legislation Changes.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Motor Vehicle Assessment Legislation Changes:

First Selectman Couture reported that Shauna Ham, The Town's Assessor, prepared information for the Board about the State of Connecticut allowing Towns the option to increase the Motor Vehicle Assessment rate which would shift more tax burden onto residents. Couture further reported that while it's not mandatory, many Towns have opted out. By adopting the new rate it would add approximately \$6.5 Million to the Grand List and generate \$170,000 in new Tax Revenue based on the current Mill Rate also noting that it could bring assessment appeals, administrative and technical costs for implementation.

The Consensus of the Board was not to adopt the New Motor Vehicle Interest Depreciation Status.

Public Comment: None.

Selectmen's Comments:**Joel D'Angelo -**

- D'Angelo thanked Todd Hajek for his excellent work on the fire truck project and noted that, while the cost came in slightly over budget, the pricing is reasonable considering it's projected over a 20-year lifespan.

Eric Nunes - None.

First Selectman's Comments:**Eric Couture -**

- Couture commented that the Budget is available which the Board of Finance is working on now, noting they in the process of finishing up discussion with Park and Recreation, next the Library, which will then be turned over to the Board of Selectmen in approximately two weeks. Couture encouraged everyone to attend the Informational Session meeting scheduled on Wednesday located at the Library starting at 6:00 PM with himself, members of the Board of Finance, members of the Board of Education, and the Superintendent to discuss all their budgetary budgeting.
- Couture commented for residents to drive slowly, and to be careful, as he heard it is supposed to snow on Wednesday morning.

Adjournment: First Selectman Couture *Moved* to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk