

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, April 14, 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: Elizabeth Disbrow, Wayne Linsley, Regina Regolo, Annie Stirna, Lisa Connelly, Nancy Gorski (Via Remote), Eileen Unger-Pleines (Via Remote), Richard Pleines (Via Remote), Eileen Blewett (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 following sets of Minutes: 1) Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen that was held on Monday, March 24, 2025; 2) Minutes from the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen that was held on Thursday, March 13, 2025; and 3) 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>
1. Anderson Bros	3B Nod Place	\$1,757.52	Overpaid COC#0001095
2. Jessica Baldwin	17 Stonehill Dr	\$18.56	Overpaid COC#0230061

3. Cloe Savino	197 Route 80	\$528.36	Overpaid COC#0055888
4. Kenneth Callahan	63 Beech Tree Rdg	\$24.02	Overpaid COC#0050862
5. David Stahnke	10 Cedar Dr	\$472.66	Overpaid COC#0056495
6. Enterprise Trust	2281 Ball Dr	\$606.95	Overpaid COC#0051982
7. Lease Plan	1165 Sanctuary Pwky	\$302.21	Overpaid#COC#0230605
8. Lease Plan	1165 Sanctuary Pwky	\$280.69	Overpaid#COC#0230604

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Motion #3 - Selectman D'Angelo **Moved** and Selectman Nunes **Seconded** a motion to add onto the Agenda as the next topic of discussion, Appointments.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Appointments:

Motion #4 - First Selectman Couture **Moved** and Selectman D'Angelo **Seconded** a motion to appoint Christopher C. Pulm as Tree Warden for a term ending December 31, 2026.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Discussion - Couture noted that Chris recently retired as an arborist and has graciously agreed to volunteer his time to the Town as the Tree Warden. Couture reviewed the responsibilities of a Tree Warden with the Board.

Department Reports:

First Selectman Couture reported that the Department Reports have been provided in the Board's packet.

Board of Education -

Lisa Connelly, from the Board of Education, presented the Board Summary for the Month of March and spoke about the following items: 1) Cougar Pride at BES (CAS Artist and Musician of the year was presented to the Board); 2) Student Representatives Report; 3) Superintendent's Report; 4) HKHS Feasibility Update; 5) Budget Update.

You can find the RSD17 Board of Education information and past updates at:
<https://www.rsd17.org/district/board-of-education>

You can find Information on the HKHS Feasibility Study at
<https://sites.google.com/view/hkhsproject>

2024/25 Budget:

Director of Finance Regolo reported that year-end projections have no major changes since the last financial update. Regolo is scheduled to meet with the Director of Public Works on Wednesday to evaluate Operating Budget performance and potential underspending. While some funds have been utilized for training and safety, some line items may come in under budget. The Town originally budgeted to utilize \$1.5 Million from the Fund Balance to cover the fiscal year shortfall, however current projections indicate that the actual amount needed may be closer to \$1.3 Million which would be some cost savings. A brief discussion about Parmelee Farms' budget took place.

Old Business:

A. RFP Bid Awards/Opening

1. Pickleball Courts:

First Selectman Couture gave an update about the proposal of constructing new pickleball courts across from Rocco Field, adjacent to the Killingworth Library and the Transfer Station. Couture advised that Chair Jim Duffield noted that the Commission is currently divided on how to proceed.

The Board discussed whether to wait until the Parks & Recreation Commission provides a formal recommendation, or to proceed with a motion contingent on their support. Discussion about concerns regarding traffic volume and potential site limitations, overlapping with existing facilities, and how different user groups may be affected.

The Board recognizes the rising demand for pickleball, and also emphasized the importance of balancing resources to serve all demographics in the Community.

Couture recommended that both Selectmen Nunes and D'Angelo attend the next Parks & Rec meeting to join the discussion. D'Angelo suggested the possibility of a special meeting if necessary. No action was taken from the Board tonight and the project remains under consideration pending further input from Parks & Rec Commission.

2. Town Grounds Maintenance

Motion #5 - Selectman D'Angelo ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to Award Vincenzo Cortese the Contract for the Town Grounds Maintenance.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

3. Street Sweeping

Motion #6 - Selectman D'Angelo ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to Award the Street Sweeping Contract to M&S Trucking.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

4. Catch Basins

Motion #7 - Selectman D'Angelo ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to Award the Contract for Catch Basin Cleaning to American Pipe and Catch Basin Cleaning.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

5. KES POET System (bid opening)

First Selectman Couture reported that they received a bid extension by three weeks by a qualified Bidder. There will be a special meeting scheduled for May 5th and bids will be opened at that time. Couture noted that this should still meet State timelines.

B. Opioid Settlement

First Selectman Couture reported that the Town received approximately \$70,000 as part of the Opioid Settlement. This funding came from legal settlements against: 1) Jensens; 2) CVS; 3) Walgreens; 4) Walmart.

Motion #8 - First Selectman Couture ***Moved*** and Selectman D'Angelo ***Seconded*** a motion to give Haddam-Killingworth Youth and Family Services the amounts of \$5,713.44 for 2023 and \$4,423.20 for 2024 from the Opioid Settlement money for a total of \$10,136.64 for preventative services.

Discussion - Couture reported that Youth and Family Services is asking for this money in steps over the next few years in order to keep the program at a stable level. The funds will also be used for a Martial Arts program for boys and girls in order to channel students away from risky behavior. The Opioid Settlement funds have to be utilized on things that prevent opioid abuse or programs that support victims of opioid use; however it isn't specifically geared towards youths. Director of Finance Regolo stated that municipalities are required by law to report annually to the State on how they use the funds which is due every November 1st. Annie Stirna noted that another program Youth and Family Services are getting ready to organize is having narcans in all the businesses in Town. Over the summer, they are preparing to hold a session to train people on how to use it. Nunes inquired about the availability of narcans in the Town of Killingworth.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

HKHS Facilities Study:

The Board discussed how the HKHS Feasibility Study is exploring options to renovate or rebuild the High School due to ADA non-compliance and aging infrastructure. The estimated project cost is \$166 million, with an anticipated 40% reimbursement from the State of Connecticut. To remain eligible, plans must be submitted by June 30, 2025, with a June 10th Referendum targeted date to allow for State-requested revisions.

The Community expressed how the pool and field house are both highly valued, and this has been prioritized, though doing so limits design flexibility and adds to project cost. This is due to the cost of renovating the existing facilities (pool and field house) rather than a new construction. Project leaders noted that economic timing could influence costs, suggesting now may be the right time to move forward with the construction of the project. Community members have expressed concern over potential long-term tax impacts

New Business:

A. Board Of Finance 2025/26 Budget Presentation

Annie Stirna reported that the Board of Finance reviewed the Capital Budget line by line, using 5 and 10 year averages to guide decisions. She further reported that they agreed to deduct \$400 from the Finance Expense Account and defer the purchase of a new Tri-Axle Dump Truck after Public Works confirmed the current vehicle could suffice for 1–2 more years. The Dog Park Project was also removed due to ongoing Parks & Rec commitments. Annie noted that the high priority projects like the KRP Pavilion, Trail Lighting, and Road Improvements remain in the plan. The total Capital Request was reduced from \$1.46 Million to \$972,000. Lastly, Annie Stirna commented about how the Capital Budget decisions/votes made by the Board of Finance were all unanimous due to the hard work and collaboration of their Committee.

The Public Hearing on the Budget is scheduled for April 28, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. located at the Killingworth Elementary School.

B. Town Meeting Items

1. Class A Fire Engine

First Selectman Couture reported that a new fire engine had been approved and bid out and the amount exceeded the originally approved budget, requiring a Town Meeting vote to authorize the additional funds which is approx. \$142,000 over budget. The bidder has agreed to hold their price pending the outcome of the Town Meeting. If the additional funding is not approved the project may need to be rebid, or renegotiated.

2. KRP Pavilion

First Selectman Couture reported that the Town is moving forward with the pavilion project at Eric Auer Park noting that it will be a relocation of Sheldon pavilion's structure to this park. The contractor has indicated additional site work with an estimated cost increase of approximately \$6,000. ARPA funds were already allocated for this project and any additional cost will require approval at a Town Meeting, therefore Couture will try to negotiate further with the contractor to potentially reduce the extra cost.

3. Annual Report

First Selectman Couture reported that the Annual Reports must be submitted and approved by the Town. The 2023–2024 Report is still being finalized and will be submitted to the appropriate Board of Finance member this week.

4. Urban Act Grant

First Selectman Couture reported that the Town of Killingworth received a \$300,000 Urban Act Grant from the State last year. The original Grant application referenced a barn, but the Town now intends to use the funding for a centralized storage structure instead. In order to reallocate the Grant use, Legislative language must be changed. Senator Christine Cohen and Representative Christopher Aniskovich have been engaged in this effort and the revision will go

before the Bond Committee in late June or early July. A vote at a Town Meeting will be needed to accept the Grant for this updated purpose.

C. CMED Designation

First Selectman Couture reported that the Town of Killingworth does not operate its own emergency telecommunication system, noting that they utilize Valley Shore Communications for dispatch and emergency communications services. The State provides grant funds to municipalities for emergency telecommunications support. By designating Valley Shore as the Town's provider, Killingworth ensures that those funds are redirected to Valley Shore to help offset the costs of their services to the Town.

Motion #9 - Selectman D'Angelo ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to designate Valley Shore as the recipient of its Regional Emergency Telecommunications Service Credit for CMED Services for the fiscal year 2025/2026.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

D. River Valley Transit Municipal Grant

First Selectman Couture reported that the Town of Killingworth must formally designate River Valley Transit as the recipient of its State grant funds to ensure that Killingworth's portion of State funding goes directly to the regional agency that delivers the transportation service to residents. This is not primarily a cost-saving measure, but rather a way to defray expenses the Town would otherwise incur if it had to operate its own service.

Motion #10 - Selectman D'Angelo ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to authorize the First Selectman to sign two supplied letters in support of the Estuary Transit District Application for a State Matching Grant for Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Public Comment:

- Wayne Linsley sought clarification on when and how items can be added or removed from the Town Budget, and whether it's appropriate to address the Board of Finance directly at the meeting. Couture responded that, while the question was valid, it was better addressed after the meeting. Couture responded that the Public Hearing & Board of Finance Meeting scheduled for April 28, 2025 is the only opportunity in the budget process where items can be added or re-added to the Budget dollar amounts can be increased or decreased, based on public input. The Board of Finance reviews suggestions and may modify the proposed Budget accordingly. During the Town Budget Meeting which is scheduled for May 19, 2025 items may be removed from the Budget. Budget amounts can only be decreased, not increased, and additions are not permitted.

Selectmen's Comments:

Joel D'Angelo -

- D'Angelo expressed appreciation to the Board of Finance for their thoughtful and thorough deliberation, debate, and discussion in reviewing and finalizing the proposed budget.

Eric Nunes -

- Nunes thanked the Board of Finance for their hard work, noting it was encouraging to see unanimous decisions and thoughtful collaboration among members from different backgrounds.
- Nunes commented that it was encouraging to see the Opioid Settlement Funds being put to use. While he did not offer specific suggestions for allocation, he emphasized the importance of considering Killingworth families affected by the opioid crisis and keeping their experiences in mind as the Town moves forward with the use of these funds.

First Selectman's Comments:

Eric Couture -

- Couture echoed the sentiments of both Selectmen, for all the Board of Finance's hard work and thoughtful deliberation in preparing the Town Budget.
- Couture noted that the Town's Public Hearing on the Budget is scheduled for April 28th which is an opportunity to voice any concerns. The District's School Budget vote is May 6th, with absentee ballots available starting April 17th; and the Town's Budget Referendum will be held May 19th at KES.

Adjournment: First Selectman Couture *Moved* to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk