

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Monday, February 9, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.
Killingworth Town Hall/Via Remote Teams**

BOS Members in Attendance: First Selectman Eric Couture, Selectmen Nancy Gorski and Joel D'Angelo

BOS Members Absent: None.

Staff in Attendance: Regina Regolo (Director of Finance/Via Remote), and Jamie Sciascia (Clerk/Via Remote)

Visitors: Richard Pleines, Ed Gorman, Tim Gannon, Eileen Blewett, Margaret Scofield, Linda Dudek, Michael Milano, Karen Milano, Greg Wind, Christine Cronin, Lisa Connelly (BOE), Annie Stirna (Chair, Board of Finance), Terry Doyle, Clark Judge, Jr., Bill Kosturko, John Mancini (Board of Finance/Via Remote), and Eileen Unger-Pleines (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.

Motion #1 - Selectman Gorski ***Moved*** and Selectman D'Angelo ***Seconded*** a motion to add to the Agenda after Items 7A&B under Old/New Business and before Agenda Item 8, Public Comment, Parmelee Farm.

First Selectman Couture recommended that the Parmelee Farm addition be considered prior to the Budget Priorities discussion, as it may impact those priorities.

Selectman Gorski ***Accepted the Amendment*** and Selectman D'Angelo ***Seconded*** the motion to add Parmelee Farm as Agenda Item 7A, to be addressed prior to Old/New Business, with Old/New Business, A. Budget Priorities for FY 2026/27, and B. MYCIP renumbered as Agenda Item 8A.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Approval of Minutes:

Motion #2 - Selectman Gorski ***Moved*** and Selectman D'Angelo ***Seconded*** a motion to approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of the Selectmen that was held on Monday, January 26, 2026 as presented.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Refunds, Abatements and Transfers:

Motion #3 - 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. Grove Systems Inc.	572 Route 148	\$138.05	Sec. 12-129 Excess Payment
2. Michael & Susan Irwin	26 Beech Tree Ridge Ridge	\$30.00	Sec. 12-129 Excess Payment
3. Christopher Laviola	19 Parker Hill Road	\$4,173.70	Sec. 12-129 Excess Payment
4. Toyota Lease Trust	Lockbox 830238 525 Fellowship Rd. Ste. 330 Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054	\$442.33	COC#: 12312M

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Department Reports:

Board of Education -

Lisa Connelly, from the Board of Education, presented the RSD17 Monthly Summary to the Board. Ms. Connelly reported on the following: 1) HK Holiday Telethon, raised \$19,483 for families of heart transplant patients, describing it as an incredible and successful event; 2) Schools of Distinction Banners were presented to: Burr Elementary School, Killingworth Elementary School, and Haddam-Killingworth High School; 3) Building Project Update: The Feasibility Study team hosted a well attended public input meeting on January 24th which was live streamed and is available for viewing on HKTV through the RSD17 website; 4) Upcoming Budget Dates: Superintendent’s Budget Presentation is scheduled on February 24th at 6:00 PM in the Middle School Auditorium; Joint Meeting with the Board of Education, Board of Selectmen, and the Board of Finance scheduled on March 3rd in the Middle School Cafeteria; Community Input Session is scheduled on March 17th at 6:00 PM in the High School Auditorium; and the Annual Meeting is scheduled on March 31st at 6:00 PM at the HK High School.

Selectman Gorski expressed interest in scheduling a meeting at Town Hall with Chair Pach, and Vice-Chair Connelly to review plans and priorities to increase dialogue with the Board of Education. Scheduling challenges, including overlapping meeting times were noted. First Selectman Couture will follow up with Pach/Connelly to coordinate a future discussion.

Appointments: None.

Budget Report:

First Selectman Couture gave an update on snow and ice conditions, stating that the town currently has sufficient resources, though other communities are experiencing shortages, and additional storms could create challenges. Couture also noted that cold weather makes timely

road treatment critical. The town budgets proactively for tree trimming to help prevent blocked roads and power outages, using contractors for difficult work to keep costs down. Selectman Gorski inquired about tax refunds and abatements, and Director of Finance Regolo explained that these occur annually due to car leases, mortgage refinancing, or home sales. Regolo added that the OPM does not allow the town to budget for these refunds, which are instead offset by over collected revenue and returned to taxpayers as needed.

A. Parmelee Farm

Ms. Scofield provided an overview of Parmelee Farm, emphasizing that the property's revitalization has been driven predominantly by volunteers and sustained through community engagement. She explained that the farm originated with a community garden supported by town leadership and that the committee has consistently opted to fund initiatives independently rather than rely on municipal resources. Community events, such as concerts, have contributed to ongoing support and development. Ms. Scofield noted that all undertakings are meticulously documented and reinvested into the property, reflecting the committee's unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability, and prudent stewardship for the benefit of the farm and the broader community.

Ms. Scofield detailed the committee's success in securing grant funding and identifying potential improvements through a master planning process. A \$150,000 STEAP grant allowed the farmhouse to be restored and brought up to code, which also facilitated a partnership with the Historical Society, with the town maintaining the exterior and the Society managing interior programming. She noted that most work on the farm, including roofing, electrical, and landscaping, was completed through donated labor and professional expertise, with materials funded by the committee, resulting in substantial savings for the town.

Ms. Scofield spoke about the activity fund, which comes entirely from revenues generated by events, rentals, and donations, emphasizing that these are not taxpayer dollars, despite the farm being town-owned. The fund allows the committee to maintain flexibility to respond to needs or make improvements without requesting municipal funds. Examples include replacing unsafe picnic tables and modest facility enhancements. She clarified that revenue-generating events, such as weddings or birthday parties, are community driven initiatives rather than required quotas, and that the committee prioritizes maintenance and stewardship over expansion.

The committee discussed the management and use of funds for capital projects, including the bridge contributed by the Boy Scouts, which is now town-owned. They highlighted transparency in fundraising, noting that participants understand net proceeds are reinvested into the farm. The committee expressed pride in the community's multi-generational stewardship and emphasized the need for ongoing support from town officials to guide future projects.

Ms. Scofield noted that the farm's success depends on operational flexibility, careful stewardship, and volunteer contributions. She reaffirmed the committee's goal to maintain, improve, and preserve Parmelee Farm as a safe, vibrant, and accessible community resource without placing a burden on taxpayers.

Eileen Unger-Pleines, speaking remotely, highlighted the farm's important role in supporting youth, noting that Youth and Family Services holds six to seven events per season at Parmelee

Farm. She emphasized the value of maintaining the committee's current operational approach to ensure continued access and opportunities for young people in the community.

Old/New Business:

A. Budget Priorities for FY 2026/27

First Selectman Couture outlined the town's key spending goals for the year, focusing on water safety, public safety, and efficient operations. The priorities include addressing PFAS water issues in residential areas, considering a second state trooper to improve response times, and implementing asset management software to track town resources. While commercial properties aren't required to be covered for PFAS, testing may be offered at cost.

Currently, one state trooper is not enough to handle administrative duties and traffic enforcement, and backup patrols covering multiple towns along Route 9 can cause delays. Regionalizing patrols with neighboring towns was considered but is too complex. Ensuring community safety, especially for older residents, reinforces the need for the additional trooper.

The Board scheduled meetings to review these priorities on February 17th, February 19th (Library and Youth & Family Services), and a Friday 10:00 a.m. meeting for the Department of Public Works. The Park & Recreation meeting was postponed. Couture emphasized coordinating schedules so the Board of Finance receives the completed budget by the third week of March, ensuring all priorities and department needs are considered.

B. MYCIP (Multi-Year Capital Improvement Plan)

First Selectman Couture reported on the draft Multi-Year Capital Improvement Plan (MYCIP). Some departmental submissions, including Park & Recreation, Parmelee Farm, and the Fire Company, are still pending. Committees will meet next to review these submissions and discuss departmental needs, guiding the development of a 10-year plan for long-term town projects.

The MYCIP provides a roadmap for major capital projects, including potential PFAS water solutions, asset management software, and improvements to culverts, drainage systems, and other town infrastructure. Legal, engineering, and departmental reviews are still underway to determine the most feasible water filtration options, with sodium contamination from road salt factored into the planning. Couture emphasized that the MYCIP ensures all departmental needs are incorporated before the budget is finalized, helping the town plan efficiently and in a coordinated way for the future.

Public Comment: None.

Selectmen's Comments:

Nancy Gorski -

- Gorski commented that the discussion with Parmelee Farm was robust and productive and expressed appreciation for their participation.
- Gorski was happy the Board had the opportunity to discuss budget priorities.
- Gorski raised concerns about the town's budget, noting that with current financial constraints and staff already stretched thin, it may be challenging to add new resources this year.

Joel D'Angelo -

- D'Angelo echoed expressed sentiments from Selectman Gorski about the Parmelee Farm Committee and thanked them for their efforts. D'Angelo noted that the timing was appropriate as the Board began discussions on budget priorities.
- D'Angelo expressed appreciation for the time, effort, and initiation of dialogue by all those involved.

First Selectman's Comments:

Eric Couture -

- Couture echoed the sentiments of Selectmen Gorski and D'Angelo regarding the Parmelee Farm Committee
- Couture reminded residents to stay warm and to keep an eye out for one another.

Adjournment: First Selectman Couture adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk