MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING
TOWN OF KILLINGWORTH - BOARD OF FINANCE
Tuesday, July 7, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. |
Killingworth Town Hall

BOF Members in Attendance: Marcel Couture, William Kosturko, John Mancini, Stephen Reeps, Michael Kovacs, and Annie Stirna (Chair) - All present.

Visitors: Selectman Nancy Gorski, Richard Pleines, Eileen Blewett, Tim Gagnon, Regina Regolo (Director of Finance/Via Telephone), and Jamie Sciascia (Clerk/Via Remote)

Called to Order: Chair Annie Stirna called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chair Stirna asked if anyone present had comments. A member of the public stated that the meeting was being recorded. No further comments were offered.

Reports: First Selectman | Finance Director | Tax Collector -
Chair Stirna acknowledged receipt of the First Selectman, Finance Director, and Tax Collector reports and invited questions. No questions were raised.

Discussion of Funding of Fire Truck: Chair Stirna inquired whether the Board wished to discuss fire truck funding and asked Director of Finance Regolo whether she had any additional information. Regolo reported the anticipated delivery is August 2027. No further discussion or action was taken.

Discussion of canceling August meeting: The Board agreed to keep the August meeting scheduled as a working session if needed and not cancel it, despite one member's anticipated absence.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from 6/9/2026 and 6/13/2026:
Motion #1 - Marcel Couture ***Moved*** and John Mancini ***Seconded*** a motion to approve both the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance dated June 9, 2026 and Minutes from the Special Meeting of the Board of Finance dated June 13, 2026 as presented. Motion unanimously passed [6-0-0].

Parmelee Farm Committee - Approval of BOS Vote on Request to Fund Items:
Chair Stirna reviewed the Board of Selectmen's request to fund additional Parmelee Farm expenditures and clarified that any approved funding could not be charged to the FY 2025–2026 Budget because the fiscal year had ended. Any approved expenditures would instead be reflected in the FY 2026–2027 Budget. The Board discussed ensuring the request remained an exception and did not establish a precedent for other Town agencies. Members noted the request resulted from an oversight during budget contingency planning following the failed bond referendum and confirmed that the Board of Selectmen had approved and referred the request to the Board of Finance. The Board also discussed whether the expenditures should be funded through the capital or operating budget. The Board agreed the expenditures should be funded through the operating budget to avoid the need for Town Meeting approval, with Director of Finance Regolo explaining that the expenditures would be tracked through the appropriate operating accounts during the transition to a revised accounting structure.

Motion #2 - Marcel Couture ***Moved*** and Chair Stirna ***Seconded*** a motion to approve the expenses presented by the Parmelee Farm Committee to the Board of Selectmen, not to exceed $10,650 for the FY 2026–2027 Budget, consisting of $1,650 for Sugaring Equipment Replacement, $8,000 for Six Picnic Tables, and $1,000 for Shared Harvest Lumber for Raised Beds. Motion unanimously passed [6-0-0].

Additions to Agenda: Marcel Couture announced that work on the FY 2026–2027 Annual Town Report would begin and that requests for departmental submissions would be sent out.

Motion #3 - Chair Stirna ***Moved*** and John Mancini ***Seconded*** a motion to add to the Agenda, Discussion Regarding Transparency in Board of Finance Meetings. Motion unanimously passed [6-0-0].

Discussion Regarding Transparency in Board of Finance Meetings:
The Board discussed ways to improve transparency and public access by exploring options for recording meetings, offering hybrid participation, and making Board discussions more accessible to residents. The Board considered moving meetings to a larger room with recording and hybrid capabilities and preserving meetings through platforms such as YouTube. Steve Reeps presented a proof-of-concept project that uses artificial intelligence to convert meeting recordings into speaker-specific transcripts and plain-language summaries. He explained that the project is intended to supplement, not replace, the Town's official meeting minutes by providing residents with an easier way to understand meeting discussions, topics, motions, votes, and follow-up items. He also described the potential for a searchable resource and a question-and-answer feature to improve public understanding and engagement.

The Board discussed the benefits of increased transparency while expressing concerns about the accuracy of AI-generated content, the need for human review, and the potential for unofficial summaries to be confused with official Town records. The Board also discussed obtaining legal guidance regarding Freedom of Information Act requirements, ownership and maintenance of any informational website, responsibility for published content, and potential liability. The Board agreed that additional review is needed before moving forward and discussed beginning with a simpler approach, such as recording meetings and evaluating the effectiveness of posting recordings online. The concept was viewed as a possible pilot project that could be refined over time while ensuring accuracy, compliance, and clear distinction from official Town records. The Board also discussed opportunities to improve public participation, including allowing residents to submit questions in advance while maintaining orderly meetings. Mr. Reeps noted that the demonstration website was created using a free hosting platform and personal AI accounts solely for Board review and was not intended for public distribution. The Board agreed to continue evaluating the concept before determining future transparency and recording initiatives.

Motion #4 - Chair Stirna ***Moved*** and Steve Reeps ***Seconded*** a motion to add to the Agenda, Discussion Regarding Rules and Procedures for Agency Budget Submissions. Motion unanimously passed [6-0-0].

Discussion Regarding Rules and Procedures for Agency Budget Submissions:
The Board discussed establishing guidelines and timelines for agencies to submit budget information. The Board expressed concern that the current budget process is compressed, leaving limited time for review when information is received late in the cycle. A proposal was made to develop a working draft of budget submission procedures for discussion at the September meeting, with the goal of having agencies submit and present their budgets earlier, between October and January, rather than waiting until February. The Board discussed involving the Board of Selectmen in the process to ensure both boards are reviewing consistent information. The Board also discussed utilizing the new budget software to require standardized narratives and supporting details for each budget line item, which would improve transparency, reduce follow-up questions, and provide better documentation for budget decisions. The Board agreed that creating a consistent process with clear expectations and timelines would benefit agencies, the Board of Selectmen, and the Board of Finance.

Motion #5 - Steve Reeps ***Moved*** and Marcel Couture ***Seconded*** a motion to add to the end of the Agenda, Public Comment. Motion unanimously passed [6-0-0].

Public Comment:
-Richard Pleines commented on the use of AI meeting software, stating that documents created by Board members become public records and raising concerns about the accuracy of AI-generated meeting documents.

-Nancy Gorski commented that the Board of Finance has become more transparent through the Board Clerk's more detailed meeting minutes. She stated that recording meetings would help the Clerk review motions and verify the accuracy and completeness of the minutes.

-Eileen Blewett thanked the Board for its efforts and expressed support for the initiative, stating it was a great start.

-Tim Gannon expressed appreciation for the Board's efforts, stating that improved communication with the community promotes transparency, keeps the public informed, and is a positive step in the right direction.

Jamie's Invoice - June:
Motion #6 - John Mancini ***Moved*** and Chair Stirna ***Seconded*** a motion to approve the Clerk's Invoice in the amount of $75.00 as presented. Motion unanimously passed [6-0-0].

Adjournment: Chair Stirna adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk