

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
Monday, June 9, 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, Nancy Gorski, Eileen Blewett, Richard Mulhall (Resident State Trooper), Dennis Rich (Killingworth Historical Society), Alan Wodatch (Killingworth Historical Society), Suzanne Sack (RSD17 Board of Education Chair), Regina Regolo (Director of Finance/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 Nunes ***Moved*** and Selectman D’Angelo ***Seconded*** a motion to approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen that was held on Tuesday, May 27, 2025 as presented.

*Discussion - Selectman Nunes noted that written in the Minutes, specifically under Budget 24/25, First Page, Second Paragraph, it states that “the Town Charter requires all budgets to be finalized beforehand.” Nunes clarified that this is not actually specified in the Charter, rather, finalizing all budgets before setting the mill rate is a common practice, not a legal requirement.*

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

**Refunds/Transfers:**

First Selectman Couture reported that there are no refunds this period. Couture further noted there are few Transfers, however no action was required by the Board at this time.

## Department Reports:

First Selectman Couture will forward the Department Reports along to the Board for their review.

### A. Board of Education -

Board of Education Chair Suzanne Sack presented the Summary for May 2025.

Chair Sack updated the Board on the following:

- 1) Cougar Pride at HKMS
- 2) Student Representative Report: Michael Perry reported to the Board on the following items:
  - AAPPL Language Testing for the Seal of Biliteracy
  - Senior Outing at Holiday Hill May 23rd
  - HKHS Streetfest May 28th
  - Senior Prom at St. Clements Castle May 30th
  - Scholarship Awards June 2nd
  - HKHS graduation is June 11th, and Michael Perry is the 2025 Class Valedictorian
- 3) Superintendent's Report: a) The Student Services SPDG completed their last training for the first year of the grant; b) HKHS has received recognition as a Project Lead the Way Distinguished School for 2024-25
- 4) Feasibility Team Update
- 5) CES Contract for Executive Search for a Superintendent of Schools

RSD17 Board of Education information and past updates may be found at:

<https://www.rsd17.org/district/board-of-education>.

Information on the HKHS Feasibility Study may be found at:

<https://sites.google.com/view/hkhsproject>.

Information on the RSD17 2025-26 Budget may be found at:

<https://www.rsd17.org/district/board-of-education/boe-budget-and-updates>

First Selectman Couture shared resident feedback that Friday is not an ideal day for holding a budget referendum. While turnout was consistent with the first vote, operational challenges such as staffing and incurred overtime, made the day less efficient. It was suggested that Tuesday or Thursday would be preferable moving forward. Chair Sack acknowledged the concerns, noting that the Friday date was selected in order to meet the statutory deadline for setting the mill rate and also confirmed the future referendum will be scheduled on a Tuesday or Thursday.

D'Angelo suggested holding a workshop or joint meeting in the coming weeks, either with the full Board of Education or a subset. The goal would be to directly exchange information, ask questions, and align on facts to help with consistent public communication. Chair Sack offered an option for the five Killingworth representatives on the Board of Education to caucus and meet with the Board of Selectmen. This smaller group could be more practical to schedule during a busy time of year and still provide a strong cross section of perspectives. The Board stated they can hold a special meeting if needed and also stressed the importance of hearing from the community and understanding whether the referendum failed due to the overall budget size or

concerns about how it is being managed. Chair Sack stated that they would provide detailed explanations about the budget, including salary structures, cost drivers, and enrollment trends, in an effort to address misinformation and improve transparency.

**Appointments:** None.

**Budget Report:**

Director of Finance Regolo presented the current fiscal year’s Budget update and noted that all ARPA funded projects are either under contract or already completed. Regolo noted updates included the completion of the Barn, progress on the Pavilion, and anticipated completion of remaining projects by the end of summer.

The Board confirmed that the Town is on track to close out the Fiscal Year 24 Budget cleanly, with only a few expected overage, specifically in Town Counsel and snow removal, which had been previously discussed. These will be addressed before the audit is finalized at an upcoming town meeting. There were no budget surprises, and everything remains consistent with prior projections. For Fiscal Year 2025, the mill rate was officially set the previous morning, reflecting an increase of two mills.

**Old Business:**

**A. KES Poet System**

First Selectman Couture provided an update on the POET filtration system project at Killingworth Elementary School (KES). A pre-construction meeting was held with Snyder Civil Construction, and work is set to begin on June 16th. A detailed project timeline will be finalized soon. The Board discussed key aspects such as installation logistics, piping locations, cost reduction, and scheduling. Couture noted that the project may impact access and parking during the July referendum. Completion is required before the start of the 2025–2026 school year. A primary concern is the delivery timeline for the granulated activated carbon filtration tanks. There are many moving parts to this project, and the school administration is aware of the various components involved in planning and installation.

**B. NAA Reminder**

First Selectman Couture reminded all town organizations interested in applying for the Neighborhood Assistance Act to submit their applications by the June 23rd deadline, ahead of the public hearing scheduled for 6:45 PM and prior to the regular Board of Selectmen meeting.

**C. Paving Update**

First Selectman Couture reported on the paving projects in town, specifically, Route 81 paving is underway, with some traffic control issues noted. There is no end date for when the mill date is supposed to be completed. DOT has been contacted to improve coordination, especially near Town Hall, and to ensure emergency access for the ambulance association and fire company making sure if something happens there is means for them to get into where they need to go.

Couture reported that Town road paving is expected to begin within the next couple of weeks, pending weather conditions. Pickleball Court construction will begin this summer, though no exact start date has been confirmed further noting that the Parks & Rec Commission is coordinating with the contractor. Parking concerns were raised, particularly by the Historical Society, and “No Parking” signs will be added as needed to manage traffic flow. The Board acknowledged the parking challenges around the Pickleball Courts. Couture reported that Elizabeth Disbrow brought up a suggestion about a possible future capital project: a walking trail from Town Hall to the pickleball courts, crossing mostly town-owned property.

#### **D. Legislative Update**

First Selectman Couture reported that The Connecticut Legislature passed the State budget before midnight last Wednesday. The Town of Killingworth will receive approximately \$120,000 in additional funding, primarily through Education Cost Sharing (ECS), with smaller increases in Local Capital Improvement Program Funding and Town Aid Road Funding.

Couture also reported that Governor Lamont is currently holding HB 5002, citing concerns and requesting that the Legislature either amend the bill or address the issues in a special session. The Governor has indicated he may veto the bill if his concerns are not resolved. Couture noted that the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) will hold its post-session legislative roundup the following day and referenced The CT Mirror as a useful resource for summaries of legislation that passed or failed.

Additionally, Couture shared that SB6, a bill with potential implications for municipal parks, was raised by Robyne Brennan from HK Park & Recreation. Both the Senate and House versions of SB6 failed to pass, meaning new requirements anticipated for municipal park operations will not be implemented at this time. However, Couture cautioned that similar proposals could return in future legislative sessions and should be closely monitored.

#### **New Business:**

##### **A. RFP Sports Turf Maintenance Bids**

The Board reviewed two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for Sports Turf Maintenance: one covering Sheldon, Rocco, and Bethke Parks, and the other specific to Eric Auer Park. Maintenance services include aerating, watering, mowing, and other related tasks.

Motion #2 - Selectman D'Angelo **Moved** and Selectman Nunes **Seconded** a motion to send the Sports Turf Maintenance RFPs out to bid.

*Discussion - The Board discussed the current arrangement of having two separate contractors maintaining town fields: one assigned to Eric Auer Park, and another responsible for the remaining three fields: Rocco, Sheldon, and Bethke Park. Selectman D'Angelo proposed exploring the option of combining the contracts into a single agreement to potentially simplify operations. He also recommended reaching out to the Parks and Recreation Commission to*

*understand the reasoning behind the current setup and determine whether consolidation could be beneficial.*

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

**B. Town Office Building Emergency Repairs:**

First Selectman Couture reported that the ramp at the Town Office Building has been closed due to structural failure during the May referendum. The issue occurred when Public Works moved “Big Blue,” a large 800-pound metal ballot box, over the ramp, something typically done during elections. The ramp began sinking on the side nearest the building, prompting immediate closure. Emergency repairs began last Monday and are expected to wrap up by early next week. The failure was attributed to long-term wear and poor ventilation under the ramp decking, which led to rusted-out nails. The new ramp design will address these issues by shortening the support beam span and improving airflow beneath the decking.

Couture reported that the repair costs are expected to cost under \$25,000 and since the work was unanticipated, the Town will need to seek retroactive approval at a town meeting to reallocate existing Capital Funds. The Board also discussed whether continued use of the ramp for moving "Big Blue" should be reconsidered to avoid future damage. Couture noted that the ramp must remain ADA-compliant and structurally sound, as it plays a key role in building accessibility.

Motion #3 - Selectman D’Angelo ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to add to the Agenda, Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026 Update.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

**Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026 Update:**

First Selectman Couture reported that RiverCOG is in the process of updating its regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, which was last initiated in 2021. A meeting held last Thursday reviewed whether local hazard risks have changed. It was determined that the primary threats, such as heavy rain, hurricanes, and occasional small earthquakes, remain consistent. Couture noted that PFAS contamination is not included in this plan. Couture stated that the Town will submit a Letter of Intent to RiverCOG confirming Killingworth’s continued participation in the planning process. This includes commitments to attend and advertise public meetings and to provide representatives, as the Town did last Thursday.

The plan focuses on proactive mitigation measures such as tree trimming, storm preparedness, and equipment upgrades. Couture highlighted collaboration with Emergency Management, particularly Brian Walsh, to prepare for flash rain events and ensure appropriate evacuation planning. Couture gave other examples to the Board like how the previous plan included the fire department’s request for an off-road vehicle. Another example was the addition of a drone for emergency response and land monitoring.

The Board gave its consensus to proceed with sending the Letter of Intent to RiverCOG.

### **C. RST Trooper Contract**

First Selectman Couture reported to the Board that he raised a concern about Section IF2 of the Resident State Trooper contract, which states that failure to notify the State before purchasing equipment or technology that could impact State Police operations may be considered a breach of contract, particularly if the technology proves incompatible with State systems. Couture noted that even when the town purchases equipment recommended by the State Police, such as Flock cameras, this clause could technically apply if formal notice is not given. After consulting with the attorney who drafted the contract language, Couture was advised to send a letter to the Commissioner clarifying the town's intent. Couture noted that this language is standard across all towns participating in the Resident State Trooper program and is not specific to Killingworth.

Motion #4 - Selectman D'Angelo **Moved** and Selectman Nunes **Seconded** a motion to approve the Resident State Trooper's Contract as presented.

*Discussion - The Board briefly discussed whether flock cameras were included in the Resident State Trooper's Contract.*

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

### **Public Comment:**

- Nancy Gorski addressed the Board about three items: Nancy inquired about the status of the Ethics Committee, noting that their last meeting was cancelled and it is unclear when they will present a report;
- Nancy had budget concerns, specifically noting a two-mill rate increase alongside a three mill deficit, with uncertainty about the source of the remaining one-mill and stated that she will get clarification once she reviews the meeting minutes from Director of Finance Regolo;
- Nancy suggested that instead of using Capital Funds for the Town Hall ramp repairs, the Town Hall Maintenance Fund should be used, even if it results in an overage. Nancy expressed her concern that reallocating Capital Funds might falsely imply that a formal assessment of Town Hall's condition has already been completed, when it has not.
  
- Eileen Blewett raised concerns about transparency and clarity following a Sunday Zoom meeting related to the budget. Eileen also suggested that more advanced notice to the public would have been helpful, especially since the minutes lacked details such as calculations or budget rationale;
- Eileen raised her concerns about the reasoning behind the two-mill rate and whether it related to policies on the general fund balance, though the specifics remain unclear. It was suggested that the community would benefit from more accessible documentation;
- Eileen discussed the capital project line for the Fire Department Assessment, originally funded with \$500,000. A portion of the funds has been spent, and it appears that the project is listed in the "closeout" column. Couture clarified that the line item

remains open because further architectural or design work may still be pursued based on the assessment;

- Eileen requested a future update on the status of online permitting and budget software implementation.

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

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

- D'Angelo expressed support for holding a workshop style meeting with Killingworth Board of Education members. The goal would be to promote transparent, accurate information sharing, allow for constructive feedback, and ensure that all parties can disseminate objective information within their respective roles, helping the community make well-informed decisions.

#### **Eric Nunes -**

- Nunes encouraged residents to vote in the upcoming referendum, noting that absentee ballots are available and can be requested through the Registrars of Voters who work hard to make them for those unable to vote in person;
- Nunes brought attention to ongoing PFAS related costs, particularly the POET Systems installed to ensure safe drinking water for students. Nunes brought up the work done by the prior Administration (under Nancy Gorski) and emphasized the importance of seeking State aid or grants to help offset these expenses;
- Nunes expressed support for the continuation of the Resident State Trooper program over the next two years.

### **First Selectman's Comments:**

#### **Eric Couture -**

- Couture clarified that the Town Clerk's Office administers the Absentee Ballots not the Registrar of Voters, however, they do everything else in terms of the voting process;
- First Selectman Couture confirmed that the Town has received State approval for \$311,000 in funding for the POET system. He also shared insights from a Brownfield remediation roundtable hosted by RiverCOG. Couture noted that PFAS-related costs are expected to continue for the next three to five years and with sufficient data now available, a formal PFAS line item will likely be added to future budgets;
- Couture commented about a missed opportunity to extend a water line along Route 81. The Town had proposed a short delay to coordinate the project with ongoing paving work, but the Department of Transportation (DOT) declined due to its strict schedule. While this was a setback, Couture noted that there are other opportunities, although less efficient;
- Couture stressed the increasing administrative burden on departments like the Building and the Finance Department, due to growing State reporting requirements. Couture praised Director of Finance Regolo and Robin Zagorodny for managing these

responsibilities but acknowledged the strain of handling them as single-person departments. As a result, Couture indicated he may propose a shared staff position in the next budget cycle to support both permitting and finance functions, similar to the existing shared fuller role. Couture noted that while the system could help streamline reporting, progress has been slow due to staffing limitations, particularly when frontline staff are frequently interrupted to assist the public. Couture emphasized that the issue is not technical but rather a matter of not having enough person hours to complete the implementation.

**Adjournment:** First Selectman Couture *Moved* to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia  
Clerk