

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Killingworth Town Hall/Remote Access Available**

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

BOS Members Absent: None.

Staff in Attendance: Regina Regolo (Director of Finance/Via Remote), Elizabeth Disbrow (Executive Assistant to First Selectman), Annie Stirna (Chair, Board of Finance), Shauna Ham (Assessor/Via Remote), and Jamie Sciascia (Clerk/Via Remote)

Visitors: Ben Sodergren (Director of The Killingworth Library), Chris Larson (Board of Directors for The Killingworth Library), John Bryne, Eileen Blewett (Via Remote), Nancy Gorski (Via Remote), and Laurel Poletti

Called to Order: First Selectman Couture called this meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion #1 - Selectman Nunes *Moved* and First Selectman Couture *Seconded* a motion to approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of the Selectmen that was held on Monday, September 22, 2025 as presented.

Motion unanimously passed [2-0-1].

Couture/Nunes - Yes

D'Angelo - Abstain

*Selectman D'Angelo **Abstained** due to not being in attendance at the September 22, 2025 Board of Selectmen's meeting.*

Refunds, Abatements, Transfers:

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. Brencher, Linda	464 Route 148	\$211.97	Overpayment COC#50694
2. Charles, Lynskey	27 Firetower	\$54.54	Overpayment COC#54122
3. Charles, Lynskey	27 Firetower	\$22.81	Overpayment COC#54121
4. Nissan Motor	P.O. Box 22059	\$201.37	Overpayment COC #54884
5. Stephen Reeps	24 Saddlebrook Dr	\$10.17	Overpayment COC#55581
6. Toyota Lease	525 Fellowship	\$356.59	Overpayment#COC#56838

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

Department Reports:

First Selectman Couture reported that the September Department Reports were included in the Board's packet, consisting of the monthly Transfers, Town Clerk's Report, Health Department Report, and Building Permit Log. Couture noted that any questions may be directed to the Departments or to Elizabeth Disbrow.

Appointments:

First Selectman Couture reported on the list of Appointments for individuals whose terms expire and will be brought back up in December. Letters will be sent to confirm each member's interest in continuing to serve.

Couture further reported that one individual volunteered to serve on the Committee on Aging; however, the Committee currently has its full membership of five, with no alternate positions available. Couture stated that he will notify both the referring party and the Committee Chair that there is no vacancy at this time. Selectman D'Angelo inquired about the possibility of increasing the Committee's size, and Couture clarified that any such changes fall under the authority of the Board of Selectmen or the provisions of the Town Charter.

Budget Report:

First Selectman Couture reported that the Budget Reports were distributed via email. Couture noted that Director of Finance Regolo is available to address any questions regarding the reports and acknowledged that the reports reflect the Town's financial status approximately 3 ½ months into the fiscal year.

Old Business:

A. Library Volunteers:

First Selectman Couture introduced Ben Sodergren and Chris Larson to speak about the topic of the Library’s volunteers. Couture emphasized how important volunteers are to the community and how they help make Killingworth unique. He also noted the importance of continuing to create opportunities for residents to stay involved, even when certain committees or roles are full.

Mr. Sodergren and Mr. Larson reported that, following a recommendation from the Library Board’s February meeting, the Library will transition to using paid staff exclusively at the circulation desk while continuing to involve volunteers in other areas. They explained that circulation duties have become increasingly technical, and most libraries now rely on trained staff for these responsibilities. Paid staff provide greater consistency, are well-versed in established procedures, and can assist with reference questions. Despite extensive training efforts, including after-hours sessions, newsletters, and a written handbook, the growing complexity of circulation services requires trained staff to ensure accuracy and efficiency.

Mr. Sodergren confirmed that this change is fully supported within the approved Library budget and will not significantly impact future budgets beyond normal annual increases for salaries and benefits. The new part-time staff member will work nine hours per week without benefits. Volunteers will continue to play an important role in book sales, fundraising, and program support. Two current volunteers will also remain involved in children’s programming, displays, and relabeling projects. The Library Board expressed its support for maintaining strong volunteer participation through the Friends of the Library group, which has been in development since last summer to coordinate volunteer activities, strengthen community engagement, and provide social and collaborative opportunities for those wishing to remain active in Library programs.

First Selectman Couture noted that the Board of Finance would like both Mr. Sodergren and Mr. Larson to present this information at a future scheduled meeting, where they can expect additional questions and discussion, particularly regarding the financial aspects.

B. Open Bids: Reval, Eric Auer Park Turf Maintenance

First Selectman Couture reported that the Town of Killingworth reissued the RFP for Turf Maintenance Services at Eric Auer Park. Couture opened and reviewed the bids received with the Board, noting that they will be referred to the Park and Recreation Commission for further review. The bids are available online for public viewing.

Ballfield Only	01/02/26-6/20/26	07/01/26-06/30/27	01/01/26-6/30/26
1. Tru Green: Angelo Marchetti	19,880	19,880	11,080
2. WB Landscaping		86,200	20,920
3. Drainscapes, LLC	17,175	45,800	18,851

First Selectman Couture opened the Revaluation Bids that were received. The following bids were received and are available online for public viewing.

1. E Quality Valuation Services – \$62,500
2. Municipal Valuation Services – \$65,000

New Business:

A. Historic Structure Abatement Application

First Selectman Couture introduced the Town’s first Historic Structure Abatement Application, concerning the property located at 243 Route 80.

Selectman Nunes acknowledged the Historic Review Committee for their work and due diligence in reviewing the tax abatement application. Nunes spoke about properties like Ms. Poletti’s that make Killingworth special, with its historical value and beauty noting that the Board appreciates all the information Ms. Poletti provided, including the improvements she made, noting the roof. The Board reviewed a request for \$4,175 tax abatement aimed at supporting the preservation of her historic property noting that the purpose of the program is to help maintain historic structures, preventing loss of both the property and associated tax revenue. Nunes inquired how Ms. Poletti would use the abatement funds over the next year to preserve the property and acknowledged its significance, expressing interest in how this support would assist her ongoing preservation efforts.

Laurel Poletti spoke and advised that, based on the photos and documents she submitted, the property’s taxes have always influenced the ability to preserve and maintain more historic structure than nearly any other property on the tax rolls. Ms. Poletti noted that the roofs required an initial investment of \$39,020.58 to address the most urgent needs. Her primary concern now is the cottage, which has a structural defect likely caused by mice and will require careful electrical work and added that the abatement would help fund this next critical repair, as resources are limited after the roof work.

Selectman D’Angelo stated that, based on the extensive information, photos, and documentation provided, it is clear the property owner is deeply committed to preserving the historic structures. He noted that the abatement would help address her urgent needs. D’Angelo suggested granting a one year abatement with the contingency that the town would follow up afterward to review the specific improvements made from the abatement funds, ensuring those funds were used

effectively to maintain and preserve the property's historic value.

Couture agreed with Selectmen Nunes and D'Angelo, stating that proceeding on a one year basis allows the Board to clearly review the plan, the improvements made, and how the property retains its historic character, while still contributing some tax revenue, since this abatement does not cover the full taxes. The Board discussed the process and timing of the abatement, noting that a status update on the condition of the property should be received by May 15, 2026, allowing adequate time for review and coordination with the annual tax billing schedule. It was noted that while the Ms. Poletti intends to complete exterior work before the deadline, weather delays may be considered valid reasons for extension, provided a contractor is secured within the fiscal year.

Motion #3 - First Selectman Couture ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to approve an Abatement totaling \$4,175.54 on the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 tax bill for the property located at 243 Route 80, in Killingworth, on the condition that the property owner provide a status update on repair work by May 15, 2026.

Discussion - Shauna Ham requested the specific dollar amount for data entry. Couture confirmed it would be included in the motion, with a written version to follow in the minutes, and noted that, as per the ordinance, applying the provision to the land records would be a challenge. He added that he would discuss the matter with Shauna when she returns to the office.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

B. Call to Town Meeting- Overs and Unders

First Selectman Couture reported that the Legal Notice, Notice of Special Town Meeting, was included in the Board's packet, and an updated version was distributed at the meeting.

Motion #4 - Selectman D'Angelo ***Moved*** and Selectman Nunes ***Seconded*** a motion to approve the Legal Notice as read into the record:

LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF KILLINGWORTH

NOTICE OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

The Electors of the Town of Killingworth and all those qualified to vote in meetings of said Town are hereby notified and warned that a Special Town Meeting will be held at the Killingworth Elementary School, 340 Route 81, Killingworth, CT on Monday November 10, 2025 at 7 p.m. to consider and act upon the following items of business:

1. To fund, from the General Fund, overexpenditures in excess of \$20,000 for the

following lines items:

· Town Counsel	\$83,393
· Town Engineer	\$51,401
· Building & Grounds	\$27,409
· Snow Removal	\$23,360
· Misc Grants - PFAS Related Expenses	\$195,058

2. To authorize the close out of the following Capital Accounts as of June 30, 2025:

· KVFC – Knox Box/Apparatus Key Boxes	\$353
· KVFC – Station 1 Reno	\$458,450
· KVFC – Facilities Video Security System	\$4
· TOB – Modular roof repair & HVAC system	\$130,100
· TOB – Assessment to determine repair or replace	\$25,000
· Transfer Station – Roll off containers (2)	\$3,713

These balances revert to the Assigned Fund Balance of the Reserve Fund for Capital and Nonrecurring Expenses.

3. To fund, from the Assigned Fund Balance of the Reserve Fund for Capital and Nonrecurring Expenses, overexpenditures in FY 2024-25 for the following capital line item:

· KVFC – Heavy Rescue 89 (1994)	\$921
---------------------------------	-------

4. To approve additional funding for the KVFC Storage Building in the amount of \$34,830. This funding is covered by an Urban Act Grant from the State of Connecticut.

Dated at Killingworth, Connecticut this 14th day of October, 2025.

Eric Donavon Couture
First Selectman

Joel A. D'Angelo
Selectman

Eric J. Nunes
Selectman

Discussion - The Board discussed the following: station renovation plan costs; snow removal, which includes preventative treatment even when no snow occurs and may increase with weekend or overnight timing; Wolf Hollow Street testing, involving multiple samples per home; engineering costs for culvert repairs and permit work; and additional work on Abner Lane and related site preparations. The Board agreed these items should be included as budgeted amounts for the next fiscal year.

Motion unanimously passed [3-0-0].

C. 2026 Schedule of Meetings

First Selectman Couture presented a draft 2026 Meeting Schedule for the Board's review and discussion. Couture noted that the schedule typically comes before the Board in December of each year just in case there were any potential conflicts with holidays. No formal action was taken by the Board.

Public Comment:

- Nancy Gorski of 18 Wolf Hollow Lane commended the Library volunteers, noting their remarkable service over the years. Gorski raised a question regarding the future sustainability of the Library as more paid employees are added, specifically regarding the demand for those positions and how expenses will be managed in future budgets.
- Ms. Gorski also expressed appreciation for the Park and Recreation Department, noting the high usage of the newly installed pickleball courts despite recent poor weather. She remarked that the courts are a valuable community asset and thanked the Park and Rec Commission for their efforts.

- Eileen Blewett of 22 Clarkson Lane expressed gratitude to the Library volunteers for their service. She also voiced concern and disappointment regarding the shift to paid staff at the Library circulation desk, questioning whether the current budget allows for this change and what tasks the paid staff were performing prior to this reassignment. Ms. Blewett emphasized that having volunteers present at the desk is important to the community.

- John Byrne spoke regarding the Library and its volunteers. He expressed strong appreciation for the many dedicated volunteers over the past decades, highlighting their significant contributions, including the creation of the Library's first automated card catalog, which saved the town substantial funds. Mr. Byrne voiced frustration and disappointment with recent management decisions affecting volunteers, particularly the reassignment of tasks to paid staff, and cited instances of neglect toward long-serving volunteers. Mr. Byrne further raised concerns about fiscal responsibility and Library fundraising, requesting clarification on actual fundraising results over the past six years, as well as information regarding the Library's endowment fund. He noted that endowment funds are generally restricted to special projects, not operating expenses or salaries, and questioned how current staffing and operational costs are being funded. Mr. Byrne emphasized that the Library's financial oversight and volunteer management remain ongoing concerns and indicated he would follow up by attending the Board of Finance meeting.

- Annie Stirna, of Bar Gate Trail and Chair of the Board of Finance, spoke in support of the Library and its recent changes. She acknowledged that change can be difficult, particularly in the community, but noted significant improvements over the past decade, including enhanced children's programming and increased community engagement. In addition, Ms. Stirna recognized the value of volunteers and praised the Library's

approach to utilizing them effectively. She also commended the leadership and experience of the Library director, emphasizing the positive impact on the town and the Library. She thanked the library staff and volunteers for their efforts and contributions.

- Laurel Poletti commented that many community members appear to be discouraged, about the low number of volunteers stepping forward. Ms. Poletti expressed hope for healing and renewed collaboration within the Library community.

Selectmen's Comments:

Eric Nunes -

- Nunes reflected on the completion of another town meeting and reminded residents that municipal elections and early voting begin soon, encouraging participation.
- Nunes thanked the Library for providing an update.
- Nunes thanked Ms. Poletti for sharing information on the Country Squire, expressing hope that the recent abatement might help revitalize it.

Joel D'Angelo -

- D'Angelo commented that while differing opinions had been expressed during the Library discussion, it was encouraging to see the level of passion and engagement surrounding the town Library. He acknowledged the Library as a valued community resource that his own family has relied upon for many years, emphasizing its importance to the town. D'Angelo noted that such passion can serve as a foundation for finding common ground between staff and volunteers. He further recognized that the town depends heavily on volunteerism and expressed respect and appreciation for those who give their time and effort in service to the community.

First Selectman's Comments:

Eric Couture -

- Couture commented on upcoming early voting, noting that hours will run from October 20th through November 2nd, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., except for October 28th and 30th, when hours will extend from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Town Hall.
- Couture echoed both Selectmen's comments regarding the Library, observing that the town is in a period of transition where change can be challenging. Couture reflected on the town's history of growth, the vital role of volunteers, and the need to balance appreciation for their contributions with the evolving needs of the community. Couture noted that while change is constant, the goal is to adapt while preserving what makes the town a unique and special part of Connecticut.

Adjournment: First Selectman Couture adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk