



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND  
INCORPORATED 1786

# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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LORI L. SPIELMAN  
First Selectman

DAVID E. STAVENS  
Deputy First Selectman

JAMISON J. BOUCHER  
MARY B. CARDIN  
JAMES M. PRICHARD  
RONALD F. STOMBERG  
JOHN W. TURNER

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Monday, March 11, 2024

Nicholas J. DiCorleto, Jr. Meeting Hall  
and via ZOOM Conferencing

## MINUTES

### I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting was called to order at 6:42 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### II. ROLL CALL

Selectmen Present: Lori Spielman, David Stavens, Mary Cardin, James Prichard, John Turner, Ronald Stomberg, Jamison Boucher

Town Staff Present: Matthew Reed, Town Administrator; \*Tiffany Pignataro, Finance Officer/Treasurer; Tom Modzelewski, Director, Perry Dikeman, Mechanic II, Department of Public Works (DPW); \*Susan Phillips, Director, Cheryl Chamberlin, Library Technical Assistant; \*Walter Lee, Emergency & Risk Management Director; \*Rebecca Stack, Human Services Director

Emergency Service Agency Representatives Present: Peter Hany, Sr., President, Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps (EVAC); Bob Smith, Ellington Volunteer Fire Department (EVFD)

Other Elected Officials Present: State Representative Jaime Foster; Marcia Kupferschmid, Board of Education

*\*Attended via ZOOM*

### III. PUBLIC COMMENT [*this portion shall not exceed 30 minutes unless extended by majority vote of the Board*]: There was no public comment.

### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### A. February 12, 2024 Public Hearing

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 12, 2024 PUBLIC HEARING.

#### B. February 12, 2024 Town Meeting

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 12, 2024 TOWN MEETING.

#### C. February 12, 2024 Regular Meeting

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 12, 2024 REGULAR MEETING.

## V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

## A. Discussion and Possible Resolution Regarding Collection of PILOT for Snipsic Village

Mr. Reed shared some background on this item that had been discussed at the February meeting. Mr. Sandberg, Chairman and Michael Swanson, Vice Chair of the Ellington Housing Authority (EHA) were present to answer any questions that the BOS had. Mr. Sandberg stated that Snipsic Village has 42 one-bedroom units with 75 individuals on the active waitlist, with 18 additional individuals who are in the application process. He provided a Profit & Loss Statement for the period of January 2019-December 2023 and explained a few highlighted items. He stated that if the Town chooses to collect PILOT, there would be a significant impact on the EHA's operating income, as rent is income-based individually by tenant. Mr. Sandberg expressed that the facility is very fortunate to receive services from the Town and he thanked DPW for aiding the EHA over the years; however, there is not much of a capital improvements budget and management is working with old facilities and equipment without much financial flexibility to cover shortfalls. Mr. Swanson added that there have been cutbacks to certain services, as well. Moving forward, if the Town does decide to collect PILOT, further cuts will be necessary to continue regular operations at Snipsic Village.

Ms. Cardin asked for clarification on whether a recent audit has occurred. Mr. Swanson stated that an audit did take place but that it was not certified yet, although it will be. She also asked for clarification on the staffing line items. Mr. Swanson shared that there are day-to-day management staff, as well as more specialized staff to handle certain services. Mr. Sandberg shared some background on Millennium, the current management company. Ms. Cardin asked if the EHA had investigated how other comparable towns run their operations. Mr. Sandberg shared that Millennium runs other facilities and has experience with how other municipalities run things; Mr. Swanson added that the EHA has contacted other towns asking about their procedures. Mr. Turner asked if the rent was adjusted accordingly as inflation occurs; Mr. Swanson stated that rent would only increase if the individual's income rose for any reason. Mr. Sandberg shared that EHA does receive grants occasionally but that the daily operating budget faces serious constraints.

Mr. Turner stated that he is of the opinion that a three-to-five-year period would be a good starting point for the waiver of PILOT, at which time this topic could be re-evaluated. Mr. Reed agreed with this approach and added that it should be made clear whether the Town will retroactively seek PILOT from prior years. Mr. Boucher questioned if there would be a way to amend this waiver if the EHA income drastically increases. Mr. Reed shared that the BOS could make changes if circumstances do change. Mr. Stavens shared that he would be comfortable with a five-year period but wanted to clarify what the starting date of this waiver would be based upon.

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (BOUCHER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO WAIVE THE COLLECTION OF PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES, PILOT, BY THE ELLINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR ALL PRIOR YEARS THROUGH JANUARY 1, 2024.

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STOMBERG) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO WAIVE THE COLLECTION OF PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES, PILOT, BY THE ELLINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS, PURSUANT TO CGS SECTION 8-58, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024.

B. Draft Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual

Mr. Stavens asked for clarification between the various thresholds listed in the manual and those in the Town Charter. Ms. Pignataro stated that the Town Charter refers to the competitive bidding process and that the internal purchasing policy aligns with State Statute. Mr. Stavens also noted that there is no language included in the *Payment Bonds* section for if a cash bond method is to be utilized. Ms. Pignataro commented that this detail is something that can be disclosed in individual bid documents moving forward.

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT THE PURCHASING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADD TO THE AGENDA UNDER NEW BUSINESS, ITEM VI.H: EXPENDITURE REQUEST – OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS.

A. Tax Refunds/Abatements

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE TAX REFUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$155.87 AS RECOMMENDED BY THE TAX & REVENUE COLLECTOR AND AS SPECIFIED IN THE REFUNDS/ABATEMENTS STATEMENT DATED MARCH 2024 [ATTACHED].

B. Legislative Update – State Representative Jaime Foster

Representative Foster shared that she was pleased to see plans underway on projects that have received bond awards over the past few years. She shared some highlights [ATTACHED] of recent local legislation. She mentioned a fund pot that had been created last year to assist farmers affected by extreme weather events, noting that this ended up taking a different turn than was originally intended. A new bill has been introduced to create a captive insurance program for farms, and there is an increased ceiling of funding that states can utilize for farmland preservation.

Representative Foster mentioned that individuals have expressed concern with underfunding by the state for local schools and car taxes. She shared that the school funding item is a part of a proposed budget and that nothing is finalized at this time; she also commented that Ellington has been minimally impacted by the state law change regarding motor vehicle taxes.

Discussion was held on recent solar project proposals, and Representative Foster started by saying that farmland owners have the right to do what they want with their property, including selling to developers. Currently, all solar decisions are made by the CT Siting Council, and as Ellington has open land and grid capacity, it has become a popular location for these solar proposals.

Representative Foster shared that a bill introduced last year would offer municipal CEOs the opportunity to gain local control over these projects if certain location and power thresholds were met. Mr. Swanson asked why the CT Siting Council has so much power, and a brief history of the Council and its policies was shared. Representative Foster encouraged anyone with questions or concerns on any local issues to send her an email.

Ms. Cardin thanked Representative Foster for her presentation and asked about a lack of cell coverage in certain areas of the schools that could be problematic during emergencies.

Representative Foster shared that one of her goals is to acquire bond funding to identify dead zones and increase police radio coverage for these situations, and that if specific needs were identified she would be happy to work towards solutions.

### C. Pinney House

#### 1. Update on Progress and Plans for Preservation of the Pinney House

Mr. McGrath provided the BOS with an update on current preservation efforts.

#### 2. Identify Liaison

Mr. McGrath shared that it would be extremely helpful for the BOS to identify a liaison to ensure that communication efforts between the Committee for the Preservation of the Pinney House (the Committee) and the BOS are clear and efficient.

#### 3. Update on 501(c)(3) Status

Mr. McGrath shared that the state and federal documentation is in order and the 501(c)(3) status was reinstated, backdated to when it originally lapsed.

#### 4. Proposal to Place Shed on Property for CL Food Pantry

Mr. McGrath presented the idea of a shed, donated by Kloter Farms and owned by the Friends of the Pinney House, being set up on the property to offer a convenient food donation site for the Crystal Lake food pantry. Mr. Turner stated that before other tasks are pursued, he would like to see an engineering report on the structural integrity of the current condition of the building, and that such a report should be the prioritized first step of the Committee. Mr. McGrath said that the most recent engineering survey was done in 2016; dialogue has begun to get this document updated to reflect current conditions. However, the cost will be in the neighborhood of \$10,000, which the Committee does not have. First Selectman Spielman shared that during her time on the Permanent Building Committee, reinforced beams were added as roof supports within the building. Mr. Turner asked for a report outlining the status of what has been done and what needs to be done moving forward.

Elaine Anderson, a member of the Friends of the Pinney House, shared that this donation shed would bring people to the Pinney House property and raise awareness, which may better enable the group to raise funds, though caution was urged for individuals pulling into and out of the area.

Ms. Cardin supports the raising of funds for the structural engineering report. Mr. Stomberg added that building and zoning regulations and requirements may be relatively light for a small outbuilding. It was shared that Eric Santini has been very cooperative and supportive of the Committee's efforts. Mr. Boucher said that he is not against the shed but shared his concern that the group is working on ancillary components when the main concern should be the big picture expectations for the house. Mr. McGrath noted that until funding sources materialize, the bigger work can't be done, and that since the end goal of the house is its use as a community resource, a good way to get the community involved is to have them drop off food, helping their community.

#### 5. Discussion of Crosswalk Installation

It was acknowledged that such a project would involve a state road, and the main question of the Committee is if the State would ever allow such installation in the future, as this would be helpful to know in advance. Ms. Cardin expressed her opinion that the Committee is approaching their efforts in a smart way by assessing parking and accessibility needs first and would be in favor of the Local Traffic Authority approaching the State with this question. If a crosswalk was approved, it would need to be ADA accessible, and as the House is a considerable distance from the existing parking at the Pinney Fields, a sidewalk and lighting would be needed as well. Before the Town could consider

recommending such an undertaking to the State, a complete plan covering all of these items would need to be in place.

#### 6. Other Discussion

Mr. Turner reiterated that the main focus should be on the restoration and use of the building. Mr. McGrath shared that they are reaching out to fundraising organizations and would like to have a presence at the Ellington Farmers Market. Mr. Reed brought up the overall support level of this item and questioned if both groups [Ad Hoc Committee for the Preservation of the Pinney House and the Friends of the Pinney House 501(c)(3)] need to be active. Mr. Turner noted that the Town is entering a very difficult budget year with proposed tax increases, and he encouraged higher visibility of the Committee/Friends groups, promoting their goals and increasing awareness.

It was noted that there was a request made to the American Rescue Plan Task Force regarding drainage issues on the property. Debby Wallace, 110 Main Street, stated that she believes this stems from a problem by the step near the side door.

With regards to the liaison appointment and continued operations of multiple committees, it was agreed that the Town Administrator and First Selectman will discuss this further and will bring forth a recommendation in the near future to streamline the process.

#### D. Bid Awards

##### 1. Solar Carport and EV Charging Stations

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO AWARD THE BID FOR SOLAR CARPORT AND EV CHARGING STATIONS TO EARTHLIGHT TECHNOLOGIES, LLC OF ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT NOT TO EXCEED THE TOTAL DEEP GRANT AMOUNT OF \$288,796, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND THE FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER.

##### 2. Maple Street Landscape and HML Library Garden

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO AWARD THE BID FOR MAPLE STREET LANDSCAPE AND HALL MEMORIAL LIBRARY GARDEN TO S + S LANDSCAPING OF WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$48,694, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND THE FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER.

##### 3. HML Parking Lot and Sidewalk Improvements

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STOMBERG) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO AWARD THE BID FOR HALL MEMORIAL LIBRARY PARKING LOT AND SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS TO GERBER CONSTRUCTION OF ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$498,615, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND THE FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER.

#### E. Appointment of Board of Finance Representative to Permanent Building Committee

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (BOUCHER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT LIZ NORD AS BOARD OF FINANCE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE PERMANENT BUILDING COMMITTEE TO FILL THE VACANCY CREATED BY THE RESIGNATION OF JAMES FAY.

#### F. HML Library Page – Approval of Job Description

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STOMBERG) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE REVISED LIBRARY PAGE JOB DESCRIPTION, AS APPROVED BY THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

#### G. Building Permit Fee Waiver Agreement with Town of Vernon

Brief discussion on the two involved building projects was held.

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE THE FIRST SELECTMAN TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNS OF ELLINGTON AND VERNON REGARDING THE MUTUAL WAIVER OF BUILDING PERMIT FEES AS FOLLOWS:

1. THE TOWN OF VERNON AGREES TO WAIVE ELLINGTON'S BUILDING PERMIT FEES IN THE AMOUNT OF APPROXIMATELY \$20,369.12 ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY.
2. THE TOWN OF ELLINGTON AGREES TO WAIVE VERNON'S BUILDING PERMIT FEES IN THE AMOUNT OF APPROXIMATELY \$19,500.00 ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CONCESSION AND RESTROOM STRUCTURE.

#### H. Expenditure Request – Opioid Settlement Funds

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STOMBERG) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE THE HUMAN SERVICES DIRECTOR TO EXPEND \$5,544.00 FROM THE OPIOID SETTLEMENT SPECIAL REVENUE FUND FOR COSTS RELATED TO A PRESENTATION ON ADDICTION AND RECOVERY AT ELLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL.

#### VII. ADMINISTRATIVE/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Mr. Turner noted that the library report mentioned a problem with the elevator; Mr. Modzelewski shared that the backordered part that is needed will be in on March 18.

#### VIII. SELECTMEN COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

##### A. Personnel Committee:

1. Resignations – None
2. Appointments

MOVED (PRICHARD), SECONDED (STOMBERG) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT SHARON MCLAUGHLIN TO THE SHARED SERVICES COMMISSION TO COMPLETE AN UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2024.

MOVED (PRICHARD), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT RAJEE ASSUDANI TO THE HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION TO COMPLETE AN UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING JANUARY 31, 2028, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE ELLINGTON DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE.

MOVED (PRICHARD), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT CYNTHIA SOTO TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION TO COMPLETE AN UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING JULY 31, 2026, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE ELLINGTON DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE.

MOVED (PRICHARD), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT JAIMEE DELPIANO TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TO COMPLETE AN UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2024.

MOVED (PRICHARD), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO REAPPOINT LAURIE BURSTEIN TO THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION TO SERVE A FOUR-YEAR TERM THROUGH MARCH 31, 2028.

MOVED (PRICHARD), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO REAPPOINT DUSTIN HUGUENIN, TOM MODZELEWSKI, LISA HOULIHAN, CYNDI COSTANZO, KAREN DWYER, AND GREG

HURLBURT TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE COMPREHENSIVE ATHLETIC FACILITIES LIGHTING PROJECT TO SERVE ONE-YEAR TERMS THROUGH MARCH 31, 2025.

B. Personnel Policies Committee

1. Personnel Rules & Regulations – Update

Mr. Reed shared that this continues to be a work in progress, as he works with Town staff on the proposed changes.

C. Liaison Reports

Ms. Cardin brought up the Auditing Committee, which has not met in 20+ years. As a member, she would like to better understand the charge of that group. Mr. Turner guessed, and Mr. Stomberg agreed, that the Committee's existence may be a carryover from many years past, and as the Town has grown, some responsibilities and functions previously handled by the Committee have been distributed across other Town Departments. If it is determined that the Auditing Committee is no longer functional or necessary, this could be addressed by the future Charter Revision Commission.

IX. FIRST SELECTMAN/TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

First Selectman Spielman shared that DPW did a lot of work on the recent kitchen renovation. There is a staff meeting tomorrow, and her TV show this month will feature the Ellington Farmers Market and its new location on Maple Street. She is working on getting estimates for redoing Arbor Park, as work needs to be done on the grass and trees on the property.

Mr. Reed expressed his appreciation for Ms. Cardin's work in reviewing the purchasing policy approved earlier in the meeting; she offered a lot of ideas regarding style and wording, adding quality to the document. He shared that the Town is working on the purchase of open space off of Kibbe Road, and that after receiving a favorable 8-24 report from the Planning and Zoning Commission, he is in touch with the Town Attorney to draft this agreement; this item will come back to the BOS for final approval before moving on to the required Public Hearing and Town Meeting steps. It was noted that CT DEEP authorized the use of previously granted funds for this purchase. Mr. Reed recently shared a Freedom of Information presentation with the BOE, noting the importance of ensuring that everyone is on the same page with these guidelines. Mr. Reed attended the recent Veterans Coffeehouse in February, where Mr. Rainaldi presented tax assistance offerings. Budget Hearings take place this week, with the BOE presenting on Wednesday and the BOS/Other Boards and Commissions on Thursday. He also shared that the CMERS litigation is ongoing.

X. CORRESPONDENCE/OTHER COMMUNICATION FROM THE BOS: No correspondence was shared.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (CARDIN), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN AT 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Julia Connor*

Julia Connor, Recording Secretary

*Lori Spielman*

Lori Spielman, First Selectman

**TOWN OF ELLINGTON**  
**TAX AND REVENUE COLLECTOR'S REFUND REPORT**  
**March 2024**

VI.A

<b>Amount</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Tax</b>	<b>GL Year</b>	<b>Requesting Dept.</b>	<b>Reason</b>
\$ 27.00	Briggs Preston T + Margaret C (23 Overhill Rd)	RE	2022	Tax	Overpayment
\$ 24.26	Dio Arthur A + Evelyn R (34 Windsor Walk)	RE	2022	Tax	Overpayment
\$ 59.78	Fernandez Susan Trustee of Susan Fernandez Rev Trust (3 Heather Rd)	RE	2022	Tax	Overpayment
\$ 5.23	Hoyt Eileen K + Bradley M (75 Pinnacle Rd)	RE	2022	Tax	Overpayment
\$ 6.00	Presson Linda Lee + Richard Duane (1 Abbott Rd 62)	RE	2022	Tax	Overpayment
\$ 13.60	Rotunno Arthur A + Peggy A	MV	2022	Assessor	Junked July 2023
\$ 20.00	Yost Barbara E (17 Sunset Rd)	RE	2022	Tax	Overpayment
<b>\$ 155.87</b>	<b>REFUND TOTAL FOR MARCH 2024</b>				



- Funding and Money
  - More than \$135k in ARPA funds to improve our senior centers
  - \$3.7m for Ellington Schools to improve school air quality
  - More than 750k in state grant funding for School Mental Health Specialists across the district
  - Froze tax increases on diesel fuel (\$37.2m)
- Public Safety
  - Expanded GPS monitoring of domestic violence offenders (PA 23-106)
  - Expanded speed enforcement on rural roads (HB 6941)
  - Improved data collection on crimes involving firearms (PA 23-69)
  - Formed a special police task force to deal with online child abuse (HB 6941)
  - Decreased the number of officers needed to go to court for ERPO hearings
  - Created a task force on road takeovers
- Savings
  - Provided additional funding to towns to deal with harmful chemicals like PFAS (PA 23-74)
  - Boosted funding for vocational agricultural programs (\$7.2m)