

**MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 21, 2026
7:00 P.M.**

**911 Mountain Road, Suffield CT
Hybrid Meeting**

Selectmen present: Colin Moll, Klaire Bielonko, Kathy Dunai and Kathleen Harrington

Selectmen absent: Pete Hill

Also in attendance: Bill Hawkins – Director of Planning & Development, Derek Donnelly – Town Attorney, Kevin Goff – Permanent Building Commission Chairman and Glen Neilson – Permanent Building Commission Vice-Chairman

First Selectman Moll called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

None.

Discussion and approval of the minutes from the October 7, 2026 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the minutes from the October 7, 2026 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen as drafted, with one change as follows:

- 1) On page two under the Phelps Road discussion to change “Fist Selectman Moll” to “First Selectman Moll.”

Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and action to call the performance bond for the Kings Meadow Subdivision (Hamlet Homes, LLC)

Director of Planning and Development Bill Hawkins provided an update on the Kings Meadow subdivision and the status of its \$416,000 performance bond. The subdivision improvements remain incomplete more than a year after the August 15, 2025, deadline established by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Although portions of the deficient road base were replaced and sidewalks were installed in September and October 2025, the Town has not accepted the improvements as complete. The performance bond remains in effect through September 2027.

Mr. Hawkins reviewed the outstanding deficiencies, which include completion of the binder and final pavement courses, correction of deficient curbing, repair of damaged sidewalk panels and unfinished restoration, completion of driveway aprons, cleaning and inspection of the drainage system, submission of final as-built plans for streetlights, and restoration of road shoulders and landscaping. The developer has

agreed to address most of these items, although a disagreement remains regarding responsibility for sidewalk damage.

The primary dispute involved the condition of the existing binder pavement. The developer and paving contractor considered approximately 95% suitable for final paving, while the Town's consulting engineer, Dana Steele, cited widespread cracking, loose aggregate, uneven surfaces, and inadequate pavement width. Mr. Steele recommended removing or reclaiming and repaving the binder course, a position supported by Public Works Director Lee Corbert. The developer referenced prior testing but had not provided the results to the Town. Mr. Hawkins explained that the Board could either call the performance bond based on the missed deadline and outstanding deficiencies or establish a firm final deadline requiring the developer to complete the improvements at its own expense.

First Selectman Moll supported calling the bond, citing the prolonged delays and the developer's failure to meet previous commitments. He noted that recovering the bond proceeds could take a year or longer if contested, potentially delaying completion of the remaining work beyond the winter. The Board also discussed a potential mechanic's lien reportedly filed by the sidewalk contractor and the possible implications for the Town. Town Attorney Derek Donnelly advised that the lien's status and legal implications would need to be verified and explained that clear title would ultimately be required before the subdivision roads could be transferred to the Town.

Selectmen Dunai, Harrington, and Bielonko also supported calling the bond, emphasizing the importance of completing the road improvements to the Town's standards and avoiding further delays. Attorney Donnelly clarified that the notice of intent to call the bond issued in August 2025 was provided as a courtesy and was not a legal requirement. He further noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission had referred the matter to the Board of Selectmen in September 2025.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to call the performance bond for the Kings Meadow subdivision, Hamlet Homes, LLC. The motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

Discussion of facility recommendations by the Permanent Building Commission in regards to the Middle School and Fire House 1

First Selectman Moll opened discussion of the Permanent Building Commission's (PBC) recommendations, presented at the October 15 tri-board meeting, to pursue new construction for the Middle School and Firehouse No. 1. He thanked the PBC for its work and emphasized the need to evaluate affordability, potential tax impacts, and next steps before determining whether to proceed to a referendum.

The Board discussed estimated project costs of approximately \$46.7 million for the Middle School after anticipated reimbursements and \$18 million for the firehouse. Potential reimbursements, including a space waiver, special education reimbursement, and a possible 5% benefit through the Connecticut Municipal Development Authority, were reviewed. Members noted that reimbursement eligibility, projected tax impacts, and assumptions regarding other capital projects required further analysis.

Selectman Dunai expressed concern about the tax burden on residents and requested a comparison of new construction and renovation options for both facilities. She questioned the proposed school community center, the potential loss of the recently refurbished tennis courts, and whether previous firehouse improvement funding had been fully utilized. Selectman Bielonko acknowledged the financial concerns but emphasized the deficiencies identified by the PBC, particularly firefighter safety, decontamination facilities, and potential improvements to emergency response times. Selectman Harrington suggested

considering whether the school project could proceed first, with the firehouse replacement phased in several years later, and recommended reviewing potential operating-budget savings and the long-term costs of operating a new school.

PBC Chairman Kevin Goff, and PBC Vice-Chairman Glen Neilson, provided additional information about the proposed school campus configuration, its benefits, and the cost and feasibility of acquiring alternative property. The Board discussed whether changes to the building layout could preserve the refurbished tennis courts. Members also discussed possible future uses for the existing firehouse, including Town storage and vehicle or equipment storage, although its condition and the improvements needed would require further evaluation.

The Board agreed that further collaboration with the Board of Education, Fire Commission, Board of Finance, and PBC was needed to identify essential improvements and potential cost reductions. First Selectman Moll indicated he would work with the Board of Finance to review the financial projections and proposed inviting the Board of Education to an upcoming meeting, with discussions with the Fire Commission to follow. Extending the Tecton and Colliers contracts to revise the projects was also discussed, subject to confirming available funds and any additional costs.

The Board supported continued evaluation of the PBC recommendations but made no final decision regarding the projects or a referendum. Members agreed that additional financial analysis, consideration of alternatives, and coordination with the relevant boards and commissions were necessary to determine a financially feasible path forward.

Public Comment

Tom Frenaye – 489 Warnertown Road

Selectman Updates

Railroad Crossings

The Connecticut Department of Transportation has completed work at the Suffield Street railroad crossing, which reopened on October 21. The East Street crossing is expected to remain closed for one additional day, with reopening anticipated on October 22. First Selectman Moll thanked the State for completing the work.

Copper Hill Road and Suffield Street Culverts

First Selectman Moll reported that Copper Hill Road had been closed after the culvert collapsed and an engineering assessment determined that the roadway was impassable. The Town is working to finalize engineering plans for both the Copper Hill Road and Suffield Street culvert projects, with the goal of issuing bids by early November and beginning construction as soon as possible. He explained that the process had included engineering studies, coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, permitting, and securing project funding. First Selectman Moll thanked Public Works Director Lee Corbert for his work on the projects.

Phelps Road

Work on Phelps Road began approximately one week ago. Due to the Copper Hill Road closure, the Town plans to suspend work at Newgate Road and resume the remaining work in the spring or summer.

This adjustment will help maintain access through the area while the culvert replacement projects progress.

Halloween Trick-or-Treating

First Selectman Moll announced that the Town's Halloween trick-or-treating event will take place at Town Hall on Thursday, October 29, 2026 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Local businesses are also participating, and residents are encouraged to attend.

Adjournment

Selectman Dunai MOTIONED to adjourn at 7:51 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary