

Town of Canaan
Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 11, 2026 – 6:00 PM
Town Hall, 108 Main Street, Falls Village, Connecticut
In-person and via Zoom

Members Present

In Person: First Selectman David Barger; Selectman Christopher Kinsella

Via Zoom: None

Absent: Selectman Judy Jacobs

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:00 PM by First Selectman David Barger.

2. Additions to the Agenda

- 7H – \$5,000 Active Transportation Microgrant
- 7I – Memorial Day Parade; service and volunteer awards
- 7J – Transfer Station Report
- 10B – Restoration of funds to Non-Recurring Capital Fund – \$50,000
- 5C & 5D – February Treasurer’s Report and March Tax Collector’s Report

Motion to add the above items to the agenda: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

3. Public Comment

Residents raised concerns regarding personnel policy, specifically inconsistent application of insurance and benefits eligibility, and the legal risk of adopting a budget without a clear policy. The First Selectman acknowledged the issue and stated that a full policy rewrite is underway with counsel.

4. Approval of Minutes

a. April 13, 2026 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to table: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

b. April 20, 2026 – Special Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

c. April 27, 2026 – Special Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

d. April 30, 2026 – Special Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

5. Treasurer and Tax Collector Reports

(Reports attached to the Board of Finance.)

a. March 2026 Treasurer’s Report

b. April 2026 Tax Collector’s Report

Motion to table items a & b: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

c. February 2026 Treasurer’s Report

Motion to receive: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

d. March 2026 Tax Collector’s Report

Motion to receive: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

6. Communications

a. Written

- **Upper Housatonic Valley Heritage Area:** July 11 bicycle ride; request expected for Warren Turnpike use.
- **Town Clerk Johanna Mann:** Formal request for family plan health insurance.
- **Falls Village Housing Trust:** Update on River Road Homes; site clearing to begin (5 acres; 7 AM–5 PM; Monday–Saturday; 12-week schedule).
- **Residents’ Letter (Rule/Anderson et al.):** Request to pause River Road project citing title questions, bidding compliance, traffic study, working hours, and fiscal impact.

b. Oral

None.

7. First Selectman's Report

- a. **STEAP Grant:** RFP work continues for Senior Center, trash compactor, pool house, pavilion redesign; allied engineers working on salt shed.
- b. **CT DOT – Cobble Road Bridge:** DOT report indicates structural buckling requiring closure; geotechnical testing underway. Report available at Town Hall.
- c. **Eversource Reliability Report:** Falls Village experienced more frequent and longer outages than state averages.
- d. **Building Official:** Jim Clark has retired; interim coverage arranged with Sharon's building inspector/fire marshal Stan McMillan. Position to be advertised this week.
- e. **National Day of Prayer:** Held May 7 on the Green; approximately 20 attendees.
- f. **Richard H. Stone Memorial Account:** Approximately \$100,000 available for Town Green and Main Street improvements; includes historic drawings.
- g. **Town Meeting:** Scheduled for Friday, May 22, 2026 at 7 PM, Emergency Services Center, 188 Route 7 South, Falls Village.
- h. **\$5,000 Active Transportation Microgrant:** Award received; to be used for bicycle safety programming with the school.
- i. **Memorial Day Parade:** Monday, May 25 at 9:30 am. Parade and ceremony planned; service and volunteer awards; community gathering with Recreation Commission providing treats and lemonade.
- j. **Transfer Station Report:** MSW 97.51 tons; recycling 18.57 tons; bulky waste income \$2,135; net profit \$1,394.82.

8. Selectmen's Reports

The Board approved \$2,000 for Cardinal Engineering to submit a TRIP grant for Cobble Road culvert replacement (80/20 match).
Discussion held regarding temporary bridge repair depending on grant outcome.

9. Old Business

- **35 Railroad Street:** No updates.
- **Affordable Housing Plan Task Force:** Meeting being scheduled.

- **Cobble Road Culvert & Bridge:** Addressed earlier in meeting.

10. New Business

a. Tax Rebates and Suspension List

None presented.

b. Restoration of Funds to Non-Recurring Capital Fund – \$50,000

Motion to restore \$50,000 to the Non-Recurring Capital Fund from future proceeds of the sale of 35 Railroad Street (old firehouse):

Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

Motion to recommend the same to the Board of Finance:

Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

11. Other Business

None.

12. Public Comment

Suggestion made to deposit all firehouse sale proceeds into the Non-Recurring Capital Fund.

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:38 PM: Kinsella; Second: Barger; Vote: Unanimous.

Attachments:

- Western New England Greenway
- Town Clerk Johanna Mann
- Falls Village Housing Trust
- Residents' Letter (Rule/Anderson et al.)
- Transfer Station Report

Motion/Action Chart

Item	Motion	Made By	Second	Vote	Action / Notes
2. Additions to the Agenda	To add items 7H, 7I, 7J; 10B; and 5C & 5D to the agenda	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	Items added
4a. April 13, 2026 Minutes	To table	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	—
4b. April 20, 2026 Minutes	To approve	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	Approved
4c. April 27, 2026 Minutes	To approve	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	Approved
4d. April 30, 2026 Minutes	To approve	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	Approved
5a & 5b. March Treasurer's Report & April Tax Collector's Report	To table	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	—
5c. February Treasurer's Report	To receive	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	Received
5d. March Tax Collector's Report	To receive	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	Received
10b. Restoration of Funds to Non-Recurring Capital Fund	To restore \$50,000 to the NRCF from future proceeds of the sale of 35 Railroad Street	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	—
10b. Recommendation to Board of Finance	To recommend the above restoration to the Board of Finance	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	Recommendation forwarded
13. Adjournment	To adjourn at 6:38 PM	Kinsella Barger		Unanimous	Meeting adjourned

Follow- up Items

Topic	Required Action	Responsible Party	Status / Notes
Personnel Policy / Benefits Eligibility	Complete rewrite of personnel policy with counsel	First Selectman; Town Counsel	In progress
River Road Homes Project	Review residents' concerns (title, bidding, traffic, hours, fiscal impact)	BOS; Falls Village Housing Trust	Letter received
Building Official Vacancy	Advertise position; maintain interim coverage	First Selectman	Interim coverage arranged; posting this week
STEAP Grant Projects	Continue RFP development (Senior Center, compactor, pool house, pavilion redesign)	First Selectman; Engineers	Ongoing
Richard H. Stone Memorial Account	Consider use of approx. \$100,000 for Town Green/Main Street improvements	BOS	Includes historic drawings

Tabled Items

Item	Description	Motion / Action	Made By	Second	Vote	Status / Notes
4a. April 13, 2026 Minutes	Approval of minutes	To table	Kinsella	Barger	Unanimous	Tabled
5a. March 2026 Treasurer's Report	Monthly financial report	To table	Kinsella	Barger	Unanimous	Tabled
5b. April 2026 Tax Collector's Report	Monthly tax collection report	To table	Kinsella	Barger	Unanimous	Tabled

Upcoming Meetings/Events

Date	Time	Event / Meeting	Location	Notes
May 22, 2026	7:00 PM	Town Meeting	Emergency Services Center, 188 Route 7 South	Municipal Budget
May 27, 2026*	—	River Road Homes – Site Clearing (ongoing)	River Road	12-week schedule; Mon–Sat; 7 AM–5 PM
May 25, 2026	9:30— AM	Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony	Falls Village	Includes service & volunteer awards; Recreation Commission providing treats & lemonade
July 11, 2026	—	Upper Housatonic Valley Heritage Area Bicycle Ride	Warren Turnpike (request expected)	Written communication received

Respectfully Submitted,
Patti Fife, Recording Secretary



Upcoming Event:

**Organized Ride:
Western New England Greenway**

FALLS VILLAGE TO PITTSFIELD AND BACK

The ride will be mostly on the Western New England Greenway, US Bicycle Route 7, which links Norwalk Ct with the Route Verte at the Canadian border.

Details –

Where: Falls Village, CT starting point

When: Saturday, July 11, 2026 – 9:00 AM kickoff

Route: Falls Village to Pittsfield, MA (approximately 42 miles, plus overnight)

Return: Sunday, July 12, 2026

Route details: www.WNEGreenway.org

The ride is being organized by the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area's Bike Committee in cooperation with the Berkshire Bike Path Council. There is no fee to participate in the ride. Riders will be responsible for making their own hotel reservations in Pittsfield and for their own meals. Riders will be expected to go at their own pace and enjoy the scenery and the experience.

A sag wagon will be available to assist riders who run into difficulties and to carry personal luggage. Riders, however, are encouraged to carry their own luggage in panniers.

Virtually all of the route is on road but there are a few gravel sections. **Wider tires** are, therefore, advisable.

On-street overnight parking for vehicles is available in Falls Village.

If you are interested in participating in this ride, please email _____.

A list of hotels in Pittsfield's downtown area is shown below. There are a number of other hotels further out from Pittsfield downtown.

Hotel List

The abbreviations under comments are as follows: TA – Tripadvisor rating, TA 2/4 means it is rated the 2nd best out of 4, , the “h” is for hotels, and “m” is for motel. The “K” rating is from the Kayak website. The cost per night is an estimate based on Kayak, Tripadvisor and, when available, the accommodation’s website for June.

HOTEL	ADDRESS	PHONE	COMMENTS
Holiday Inn & Suites Pittsfield	One West Street, Pittsfield	877-859-5095	TA 7/8h, K7.6, \$336
Berkshire Inn	150 West Housatonic Street, Pittsfield	413-443-3000	TA 1/2m, K 7.3, \$250
Central Downtown Inn	20 West Housatonic Street, Pittsfield	413-629-2100	TA 5/8h, K7.7, \$279
Hotel on North	297 North Street, Pittsfield	413-358-4741	TA 1/8h, K9.1, \$440

Johanna M. Mann, CCTC
Town Clerk of Canaan
108 Main Street
P.O. Box 47
Falls Village, CT 06031

May 11, 2026

Re: Family Health Insurance

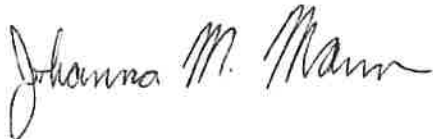
Mr. David Barger, First Selectman
108 Main Street
P.O. Box 47
Falls Village, CT 06031

Dear Dave,

There appears to be some confusion about whether I made a request for family health insurance. This is a formal request. If you need additional justification for my request, please let me know.

I very much appreciate your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Johanna M. Mann".

Johanna M. Mann, CCTC
Town Clerk of Canaan



April 30, 2026

Dear Neighbors,

We want to keep you informed about the status of the River Road Homes workforce affordable housing project:

- FVHT has successfully completed the purchase of ten-plus acres from Habitat for Humanity.
- FVHT is ready to proceed with the infrastructure phase of the construction.
- Starting soon, our contractor, SRC Construction Services, LLC, will begin clearing the five designated acres.
- The work will include tree removal, chip haul-away, and stump grinding, as well as road-bed construction.
- Work will take place between 7:00am and 5:00pm Mondays through Saturdays and is anticipated to last approximately 12 weeks.
- Next steps of site preparation will follow.

FVHT will endeavor to keep you advised as River Road Homes progresses. The work will lead to 16 beautiful rental units for workforce families and seniors. If you have any questions, please contact us at fallsvillagehousingtrust.org.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

J R Hanna, on behalf of the
Board of Directors
Falls Village Housing Trust, Inc.



On River Road...Please Read and Respond...IMPORTANT

1 message

Colter Rule <colterrul@gmail.com>

Mon, May 11, 2026 at 12:31 PM

To: First Selectman <FirstSelectman@canaanfallsvillage.org>, Zoning Officer <planningandzoning@canaanfallsvillage.org>, "FallsVillageHousingTrust@gmail.com" <FallsVillageHousingTrust@gmail.com>

Cc: Laura Wernitz <laurawernitz@gmail.com>, "Rivera, Miguel" <rivera.miguel@ct.gov>, Denise Cohn <denisemcohn@gmail.com>, attorney.general@ct.gov, Jeff Bauman <jeffbauman77@gmail.com>, Lesley Janzen <lesleyjanzen@gmail.com>, Daly Reville <daly.reville@gmail.com>

May 11, 2026

Falls Village Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of Falls Village
Falls Village, CT

First Selectman, Town of Falls Village
Falls Village, CT

Falls Village Housing Trust
Falls Village, CT

RE: Immediate Concerns Regarding River Road Affordable Housing Development — Request to Pause Work

Dear Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, First Selectman, and Falls Village Housing Trust Board:

We, the undersigned residents of Falls Village living in close proximity to the proposed affordable housing development on River Road, write to you with serious and urgent concerns regarding the project currently underway. We are not opposed to affordable housing in principle. However, we believe that a number of critical legal, safety, and procedural questions remain unresolved, and we are formally requesting that all ground-clearing and construction activity be paused until these matters are addressed in full and in writing.

We are addressing this letter jointly to the Planning and Zoning Commission, the First Selectman, and the Falls Village Housing Trust because our concerns touch on the responsibilities of each body. We would like these points acknowledged and addressed.

1. Property and Lot Line Disputes — Can Work Legally Proceed?

It is our understanding that the lot lines for this property have not been definitively established. To our knowledge, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Falls Village Housing Trust and Habitat for Humanity have been working to resolve this matter for several years without resolution. We are also uncertain whether the Falls Village Housing Trust has formally acquired the property — we have been told that the Trust purchased 10 acres from Habitat for Humanity, but this has never been confirmed to us officially.

We ask directly: How can ground-clearing and site work on 5 acres legally commence when the lot lines are not established and ownership may not be fully settled? We request documentation confirming chain of title and a copy of the current surveyed lot boundaries before any further work proceeds.

2. Competitive Bidding Requirements — Federal and State Funds

It is our understanding that this project is being funded in whole or in part by federal and/or state money. Such funding typically triggers mandatory competitive bidding requirements to ensure public accountability and prevent the misuse of taxpayer dollars. We are not aware that this project — and specifically the civil engineering work being contracted by Civil One, owned by David Berto — was ever put out to public bid. Were local contractors ever contacted and given a chance to bid as FVHT has stated would be the case?

We formally request:

- Confirmation of all federal and state funding sources for this project
- Documentation showing whether competitive bidding was conducted for the civil engineering work
- If no competitive bid was conducted, a legal justification for that decision

If applicable procurement laws were not followed, work must stop immediately until this is remedied.

3. Traffic Safety — No Licensed Traffic Study Conducted

The proposed development at River Road sits at the base of a steep hill the top of which exists a very blind corner. Cars come roaring around that corner and accelerate downhill and would need to brake hard to successfully stop for cars or school buses when the development is built. This intersection is known to become more dangerous in winter conditions, including ice and snow. The addition of a 14-unit development — with the associated vehicle traffic from residents, visitors, deliveries, contractors, and school buses — raises serious and foreseeable safety concerns.

The hazards in this stretch of roadway are numerous and compounding:

- There are no sidewalks along this section of River Road, meaning pedestrians — including children who may reside in the new units — will walk in the road itself
- There is no painted center line on the road, leaving drivers without clear lane guidance, particularly dangerous on the curve at the base of the hill
- Approximately 70 yards from the development, at the base of the hill, there is a railroad crossing with minimal signage — an additional and serious hazard for vehicles accelerating or decelerating in this area

We have informed Civil One and the project team on multiple occasions that we believe there will be accidents at this location in the years ahead. Those concerns have gone unacknowledged.

Regarding the traffic study: Civil One did arrange for a traffic study to be conducted, but it was performed by one of their own associates — not an independent, licensed traffic engineer approved by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. We formally protested at the time that this individual was not properly licensed, and our objection was noted but never resolved. A new, independent, properly licensed traffic study was never conducted. This is an unacceptable gap in the project's due diligence, and we do not consider the prior study to be valid. We request:

- Confirmation that the prior traffic study has been set aside given the licensing objection raised
- A new, independent traffic study conducted by a licensed Connecticut DOT-approved traffic engineer
- That study to be completed and made available for public review before any further work proceeds.
- **WE WANT IT ON RECORD: that we have raised these concerns formally and in writing on numerous occasions. Should accidents occur at this location in the future, this letter will stand as documentation that the hazard was identified and reported to all responsible parties prior to construction.**

4. Working Hours — Repeated Requests Ignored—other concerns

A letter was recently placed in a neighboring mailbox — without postage, raising questions about whether it constitutes proper legal notice — announcing that construction work would proceed from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Saturday for 12 weeks. Over the years, we have made repeated requests that these hours be reduced, and those requests have not been honored or even acknowledged.

We ask the Planning and Zoning Commission and the First Selectman to review whether these hours comply with Falls Village ordinances and any applicable state guidelines, and to take action to reduce them to reasonable daytime weekday hours. The proposed schedule represents a significant and ongoing disruption to the quality of life of neighboring residents, six days per week. We have been dealing with the stress of this imminent development for 7 years now, since the original application was filed in May 2019. Now that the parties involved have gotten all THEY want, why not consider the Immediate Neighbors needs to some degree? We have other requests we have mentioned over the years. Curious what they are? No Dogs Allowed. A decent setback and Line of Trees to muffle and hide the Development to lessen sound and light pollution.

5. Fiscal Impact — Effect on Mill Rate and School Costs

We wish to raise for the record the potential fiscal impact of this development on the Town of Falls Village. Our region's high school costs are substantial — by our estimation, the per-pupil cost to send a student to the regional high school is approximately \$60,000 annually. If a number of the 14 units in this development are occupied by families with school-age children, the resulting increase in the town's education expenditures could have a meaningful and lasting impact on the already high mil rate for all Falls Village property taxpayers.

Beyond school costs, we question whether the full fiscal impact on town services has been explored at all. The addition of residents in a 14-unit development will place increased demands on a range of municipal services that Falls Village already funds on a tight budget, including:

- The transfer station — increased usage by new residents will accelerate wear and raise operating costs
- The town maintenance crew — additional roadwork and plowing obligations on and around River Road, a stretch already presenting seasonal challenges

- Emergency services — additional calls for the ambulance service and fire department, both of which depend on volunteer and limited paid staff
- Social services — potential increased demand depending on the needs of incoming residents

We ask that the Selectman's office, the Planning and Zoning Commission or Board of Finance to undertake or commission a comprehensive fiscal impact analysis that accounts for school enrollment costs and the full range of municipal service demands before the project moves further forward.

Our Request

In summary, we respectfully but firmly request the following:

- All ground-clearing and construction work on the River Road site be paused immediately, pending resolution of the issues described in this letter
- Written confirmation of clear title and established lot lines before any work resumes
- Documentation that federal and state competitive bidding requirements were satisfied
- A licensed traffic impact study be conducted and shared publicly
- A review of working hours for compliance with local ordinances and consideration of neighbors quality of life.
- A fiscal impact analysis examining the potential effect on school enrollment costs and town services on the mil rate.

Please address our concerns. We trust that the town's elected and appointed officials, as well as the Falls Village Housing Trust and Habitat for Humanity take their obligations to existing residents seriously alongside their commitment to new housing.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Colter and Katy Rule, Bob Anderson and Immediate Neighbors of Lime Rock Station

cc: Office of the Connecticut Attorney General — Affordable Housing Division cc: Connecticut Department of Housing