

Town of Canaan
Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 8, 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; Selectman Judy Jacobs

Via Zoom: None

Absent: None

Also Present: Treasurer Michelle Hanson, DPW Manager Tim Downs and members of the public

1. Call to Order

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

2. Agenda

Additions proposed and adopted as one motion:

- **7F** – Natural Burials
- **10D** – Natural Burials (action item)
- **10E** – Recreation Commission request (lifeguard & swim instructor)
- **10F** – Blue Ribbon Committee (revenue study)
- **4.** -Additional pending minutes: **March 30, 2026**, Special Meeting and **April 13, 2026**
Regular Meeting
- **5a-** Treasurer Report March 2026
- **5b-** Tax Collector Report April 2026

MOTION to add all items as listed.

Made by: Jacobs

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: All in favor

3. Public Comment-none

4. Approval of Minutes

- a) May 11, 2026 – Regular Meeting
- b) May 21, 2026 – Special Meeting
- c) May 28, 2026 – Special Meeting
- d) March 30, 2026 – Special Meeting
- e) April 13, 2026 – Regular Meeting

MOTION to approve all minutes **except May 28.**

Made by: Jacobs

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: All in favor

MOTION to approve **May 28, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes.**

Made by: Barger

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: All in favor; Jacobs abstained

5. Treasurer and Tax Collector Reports

a. April 2026 Treasurer's Report (See attachments to the Board of Finance minutes dated 06.08.26)

MOTION to receive the report.

Made by: Jacobs

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: Barger and Jacobs in favor; Kinsella opposed; motion passed

b. May 2026 Tax Collector's Report (See attachments to the Board of Finance minutes dated 06.08.26)

MOTION to receive the report.

Made by: Jacobs

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: Barger and Jacobs in favor; Kinsella opposed; motion passed

c. March 2026 Treasurer's Report

MOTION to receive.

Made by: Jacobs

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: Unanimous

d. April 2026 Tax Collector's Report

MOTION to receive.

Made by: Kinsella

Seconded by: Jacobs

VOTE: Unanimous

6. Communications

a. Written

Thank-you letter from the Torrington Area Health District for Mental Health Awareness Month outreach.

b. Oral- none

7. First Selectman's Report

a) STEAP Grant

Salt shed bids may go out mid-summer; permitting is underway.

b) National Prayer Day

A letter of appreciation to the Lewis family was read into the record.

c) NHCOG – Vialytics Program

Barger reported on discussions with the Northwest Hills COG regarding the Vialytics road-assessment program.

Key points:

- Program inventories road conditions, trees, potholes, and paving history and supports long-term capital planning.
- Cost decreases if all 21 COG towns participate.
- COG may subsidize **50% of year one**, with partial subsidies in years two and three.
- Initial data entry takes **6–8 months**; the company assists with collection.
- Canaan maintains approximately **30 miles** of road.
- The Town has expressed interest but is not yet committed.

d) Eversource Rate Amendments

A notice is available at the Town Clerk’s Office. Estimated increase: **~11%**, or **about \$25 per month** for a typical residential customer.

e) Municipal Solid Waste

Barger reported on NRRA budget work. Two meetings have been held; another is scheduled for Thursday at 8:00 AM in Goshen to finalize the budget and tipping fee.

f) Natural Burials

Sexton Tracy Wilson briefed the Board on state rules and the option to allow natural/green burials. Canaan’s cemeteries would operate as **hybrid**, permitting traditional, cremation, and natural burials.

Key points:

- No vault; no embalming; biodegradable casket or shroud
- Burial depth: **3.5–4.5 feet**
- Some settling expected; mounding standard
- Increasing public interest; recent inquiry received
- Grassy Hill Cemetery (privately operated) voted **not** to allow natural burials

Jacobs’ initial motion to allow natural burials was withdrawn.

MOTION to request written guidelines from the Sexton for BOS review prior to approval.

Made by: Barger

Seconded by: Jacobs

VOTE: Unanimous

8. Selectmen’s Reports

Kinsella: Reported STEAP progress; compost pad poured at the transfer station; pool house painting ~90% complete; trash compactors going out to bid.

Jacobs: Reported preparations for America's 250th anniversary events and encouraged residents to follow Facebook and the Town website for July 4th updates.

9. Old Business

- **35 Railroad Street:** No updates
 - **Affordable Housing Plan Task Force:** Members attended a legislative update webinar
 - **Cobble Road Culvert & Bridge:** TRIPS grant still pending; bridge design slightly ahead of schedule
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10. New Business

a. Tax Rebates and Suspension List

None presented.

b. Town Clerk Reappointment (Johanna Mann)

Kinsella's initial motion to reappoint through June 30, 2030 was withdrawn following discussion regarding ordinance-required hours.

MOTION to table the reappointment to a Special Meeting.

Made by: Kinsella

Seconded by: Jacobs

VOTE: All in favor

c. Morris Dancers – Request to Use Center of Town

MOTION to deny the request due to prior incidents and resident concerns.

Made by: Barger

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: All in favor

d. Natural Burials

Initial motion to allow natural burials was withdrawn.

MOTION to request written guidelines from the Sexton for BOS review prior to approval.

Made by: Barger

Seconded by: Jacobs

VOTE: All in favor

e. Recreation Commission – Lifeguard & Swim Instructor

- Promote **Catherine Bushey** to Swim Instructor (retains lifeguard role)
- Hire **Richie Crane** as lifeguard pending certification

MOTION to approve both actions.

Made by: Jacobs

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: All in favor

f. Blue Ribbon Committee – Revenue Study

MOTION to form a three-member Blue Ribbon Committee to study revenue sources, with Jacobs serving as BOS liaison.

Made by: Kinsella

Seconded by: Barger

VOTE: Unanimous

11. Other Business- none

12. Public Comment

Questions were raised regarding the Recreation Commission’s lifeguard budget (already budgeted) and cemetery capacity.

13. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn at **6:42 PM**.

Made by: Jacobs

Seconded by: Kinsella

VOTE: Unanimous

Attachments:

- TAHD correspondence
- Letter to the Lewis family
- Correspondence from Conkerline re: Morris Dancers

Motion/Action

Item	Motion / Action	Made By	Second	Vote	Notes
Agenda Additions	Add all listed items	Jacobs	Kinsella	All in favor	Added 7F, 10D, 10E, 10F; pending minutes
Minutes	Approve all minutes except May 28	Jacobs	Kinsella	All in favor	—
Minutes	Approve May 28 Special Meeting	Barger	Kinsella	All in favor; Jacobs abstained	—
Treasurer's Report – April 2026	Receive	Jacobs	Kinsella	Barger/Jacobs yes; Kinsella no	Passed
Tax Collector – May 2026	Receive	Jacobs	Kinsella	Barger/Jacobs yes; Kinsella no	Passed
Treasurer's Report – March 2026	Approve	Jacobs	Kinsella	Unanimous	—
Tax Collector – April 2026	Approve	Kinsella	Jacobs	Unanimous	—
Town Clerk Reappointment	Withdraw motion	Kinsella	Jacobs	All in favor	Hours ordinance discussion
Town Clerk Reappointment	Table to Special Meeting	Kinsella	Jacobs	All in favor	—
Morris Dancers Request	Deny request	Barger	Kinsella	All in favor	Prior incidents/resident concerns
Natural Burials	Withdraw motion to allow	Jacobs	—	—	—
Natural Burials	Request written guidelines	Barger	Jacobs	All in favor	Sexton to prepare
Recreation Commission	Promote Bushey; hire Crane	Jacobs	Kinsella	All in favor	Crane pending certification

Item	Motion / Action	Made By	Second	Vote	Notes
Blue Ribbon Committee	Form 3-member committee	Kinsella	Barger	Unanimous	Jacobs liaison

Appointments

Position	Action	Term	Motion	Second	Vote	Notes
Town Clerk – Johanna Mann	Reappointment tabled	Proposed through 6/30/2030	Kinsella (withdrawn)	Jacobs	All in favor (to table)	Hours ordinance requires review

Upcoming Meetings

Meeting / Event	Date / Time	Location	Notes
NRRA Budget Meeting	Thursday, 8:00 AM	Goshen Town Hall	Finalize budget & tipping fee
Special BOS Meeting	TBD	Town Hall	Town Clerk reappointment discussion
America's 250th Events	Ongoing	Town-wide	Watch website & Facebook for updates
July 4th Activities	Early July	Town Green / Café	Preparations underway

Follow-UP

Topic	Follow-Up Required	Responsible Party	Notes
Natural Burials	Prepare written guidelines for BOS review	Sexton (Tracy Wilson)	Needed before approval vote
Town Clerk Hours Ordinance	Review ordinance requirements; schedule Special Meeting	BOS	Related to reappointment

Topic	Follow-Up Required	Responsible Party	Notes
Blue Ribbon Committee	Solicit volunteers; appoint 3 members	BOS	Jacobs to serve as liaison
STEAP Salt Shed	Monitor permitting; prepare for midsummer bid	DPW / Barger	—
NRRA Budget	Attend meeting; finalize tipping fee	Barger	—
Cobble Road Culvert & Bridge	Await TRIPS grant; monitor design progress	DPW / Engineering	Design slightly ahead of schedule

Respectfully Submitted,
Patti Fife, Recording Secretary



First Selectman <firstselectman@canaanfallsvillage.org>

FW: Thank you from the Health Department

1 message

Joanna Keyes <jkeyes@tahd.org>

Wed, Jun 3, 2026 at 3:31 PM

To: "FirstSelectman@canaanfallsvillage.org" <FirstSelectman@canaanfallsvillage.org>

Dear Chief Elected Officials and Town Staff,

On behalf of the Torrington Area Health District (TAHD), thank you for partnering with us during Mental Health Awareness Month by hosting our informational outreach table at your Town Hall.

Your willingness to provide space and support for this initiative helped us connect directly with residents throughout our district, increasing awareness of mental health resources, promoting emotional wellness, and reducing the stigma surrounding mental health challenges. Through these outreach events, we were also able to distribute gun locks and pistol safes as part of our injury and suicide prevention efforts, helping to promote safe firearm storage within our communities.

We greatly appreciate your commitment to supporting the health, safety, and well-being of your residents. Partnerships like yours are essential to advancing public health and ensuring that community members have access to the resources they need.

As a follow-up to this initiative, we have attached TAHD's Postvention Plan for your reference and use should the need arise within your community. Postvention refers to the coordinated response and support provided after a suicide death. Effective postvention efforts help support those impacted by the loss, reduce the risk of additional suicides, promote healing, and provide guidance on communication, resources, and community recovery.

We encourage you to keep this resource available and share it with appropriate municipal staff and community partners. TAHD remains available to provide assistance and support should your town ever need assistance implementing postvention activities.

Thank you again for your partnership and dedication I will be in touch and we will plan to visit in September.

Sincerely,

Joanna M. Keyes, B.S. REHS/RS, CPS

Registered Sanitarian

Public Health Specialist

Torrington Area Health District

350 Main Street

Torrington, CT 06790

Email: jkeyes@tahd.org

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TOWN OF CANAAN
First Selectman's Office
103 Main Street, PO Box 47
Falls Village, CT 06031-0047



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firstselectman@canaanfallsvillage.org
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May 21, 2026

Dear Margo and Chuck,

On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, I would like to convey our sincerest appreciation for your continued coordination of and leading the services for the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 07, 2026.

The purpose of the National Day of Prayer is to unite the nation and our communities in prayer and seek God's guidance and blessings for our country and its leaders. It is a day when Americans from various faiths and backgrounds come together to pray for our nation's future seeking unity, peace and strength.

It was most gratifying to see the members of our Northwest Connecticut Community on the Town Green join with others across our country in the National Day of Prayer. We look forward to next year's observance.

Thank you once again,

David R. Barger
First Selectman

Judy Jacobs
Selectman

Chris Kinsella
Selectman

13 May 2026

Dear Dave, Judy and Chris,

For at least 40 years, the Morris Dancers visited Falls Village in June. It was always a joyous and happy event. The tradition ended with Covid, rowdy behavior and the death of John Dexter.

I have been approached by a much smaller group of Morris Dancers looking for dancing sites for their gathering in Hillsdale NY the week of August 9-15.

I am asking you if Falls Village would extend an invitation to them to dance once again in the Falls Village center after being denied access after a 'rowdy' incident in the center of town. They have promised that this will never happen again, especially as it is a smaller group and different characters. They would only be there to dance. I am hoping to offer this opportunity to other groups (the Library and the Center on Main) to join in.

We will be hosting them at our farm for a bit of dancing and tea. Dates for their schedule have not been set beyond the 9-15 dates.

Thank you so much for your consideration,

Robin Cockerline

info@WhippoorwillFarmCT.com

Whippoorwill Farm

860-672-5026

189 Salmon Kill Rd

Lakeville CT 06039

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robin". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the printed contact information.