

Received 7/18/25
9:43 AM Jodi Moore, ATC

Town of Durham
Board of Selectmen
Monday, June 23, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
3rd floor, Town Hall, and Remote via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Recording
Passcode: Sfis7W%.

1. Call to Order
First Selectman Rea called the Board of Selectmen meeting of Monday, June 23, 2025 to order at 7:00 p.m. Selectman Chadd also present, Selectmen Hennick absent.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
First Selectman Rea led with the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Approval of Agenda
MOTION BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN CHADD, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOTE: 2 AYE
4. Public Comment (open to agenda items only)
Rick Parmelee: commented on the Treasurers resignation and felt she was not treated fairly, felt the Facilities Manager job description should have gone to the Compensation Review/Personnel Policy Commission.
5. Accept the following Resignation:
 - a. R. David Turley (R), Library Board of Trustees, Term Expiring 2027
MOTION BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN CHADD, TO ACCEPT WITH GRATITUDE THE RESIGNATION OF R. DAVID TURLEY FROM THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES. VOTE: 2 AYE
 - b. Wendy Manemeit (R), Treasurer, Effective August 1, 2025, will be filled until next municipal election November 2025
First Selectman Rea explained Wendy Manemeit has been the Town Treasurer for 25 years with deep roots in the town. Wendy will be moving to be closer to her grandchildren. She agreed to help during the transition. The board were grateful for her service to the town.

First Selectman Rea noted the resignation will be effective on August 1, 2025. The Board of Selectmen will then fill the vacancy with a Republican until the next municipal election in November 2025.

MOTION BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN CHADD, TO ACCEPT WITH GRATITUDE THE RESIGNATION OF WENDY MANEMEIT AS TREASURER, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2025. VOTE: 2 AYE

6. Accept nominations and vote to fill the following vacancies (per Charter Sec. 2.6):
 - a. Building Code of Appeals
None.
 - b. Ethics Commission, Regular, 2028
None.
 - c. Ethics Commission, Alternate, 2028
None.
 - d. Fire Company Trustees, D, 2026
None.
 - e. Historic District Commission, In District, 2025
None.
 - f. Sustainable Durham, Alternate, 2027
None.
7. Discuss and take action to enter into a Letter of Intent with Resource Lighting and Energy for energy efficient lighting upgrades at the Community Center and to enter into a Letter of Agreement with Eversource
Nick Procko, CEO of Resource Lighting & Energy (RLE), was present to discuss the project to upgrade Community Center to energy efficient lighting. RLE has done projects throughout the State and is a chosen vendor CCM.

RLE did an audit on the Community Center, 387 fluorescent lighting fixtures were identified. The total project investment is \$126,008, with an estimated Eversource incentive of \$28,464 for a total Capital Expense of \$97,544. The Eversource monthly repayment (0% INT – 60 months) with a monthly energy savings of \$1,737. It was explained that this would be a

turnkey project, with RLE ordering all materials and full installation. The project would be inspected by Eversource before and after.

RLE explained they separately looked into replacement of the chiller at the Community Center at the request of the First Selectman. RLE explained the current set up, noting it is 23 years old and uses R22 freon, which cannot be purchased anymore. If replaced like for like, it would be more costly. RLE recommends installing a true chiller setup, modernizing and financing at 0% over 60 months. The proposed cost would be \$13,700 a month/60 months. This could be compatible with the Building Maintenance System.

First Selectman Rea explained this the electric bills at the Community Center during the summer are on average \$7,000/month. He noted the chiller project is a preliminary cost. No action will be taken tonight on the chiller, additional work will be done on this. He thanked RLE for their work.

MOTION BY SELECTMAN CHADD, SECONDED BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, TO ENTER INTO A LETTER OF INTENT WITH RESOURCE LIGHTING AND ENERGY FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT LIGHTING UPGRADES AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER AND TO ENTER INTO A LETTER OF AGREEMENT WITH EVERSOURCE. VOTE: 2 AYE

8. Discuss and take action to award the Municipal Solid Waste Disposal Services bid award to Reworld Sustainable Solutions, LLC., and to enter into a 5-year contract as recommended by Durham-Middlefield Interlocal Agreement Advisory Board at their meeting of June 17, 2025 and pending Middlefield Board of Selectmen approval

First Selectman Rea explained the Durham Middlefield Interlocal Advisory Agreement Board voted to recommend entering into this contract. Middlefield Board of Selectmen will be taking a similar vote, if they have not already.

MOTION BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN CHADD, TO AWARD THE MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL SERVICES BID AWARD TO REWORLD SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS, LLC., AND TO ENTER INTO A 5-YEAR CONTRACT AS RECOMMENDED BY DURHAM-MIDDLEFIELD INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT ADVISORY BOARD AT THEIR MEETING OF JUNE 17, 2025 AND PENDING MIDDLEFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN APPROVAL. VOTE: 2 AYE

9. Public Hearing, 7:30 p.m.

- a. Proposed revisions to § 6-1. Building permit fees ordinance

First Selectman Rea explained the Building Official recommended bringing the towns building permit fees up to date with those in the surrounding towns. The proposed building permit fees would increase from \$20 to \$30 per the first \$1,000 of construction cost and from \$12 to \$16 per \$1,000 thereafter, adds any software user permitting fees and adds The fee for the State Building Education fee will be \$0.26 per \$1,000, as the same may be amended from time to time by the State Building Inspector.

First Selectman Rea asked for any Public Comment.

Rick Parmelee: the Building Official should be commended for looking into this and making recommendations, but the town needs to consider they are not exactly business friendly and lower fees could attract businesses. Added that the Building Official should be full-time.

Roger Kleeman: unsure the town should be raising the rates. If the rate increase is actually covering the Building Official and some assistance pay but felt the town will end up generating less permits. Felt the town should be very careful about raising the rates at this point and after speaking with the Building Official he believed Durham was less than Middlefield.

- b. Proposed Solar Project Tax Agreement with Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC

Dennis Hicks and Jeff Hintzke, Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC, were present to discuss the proposed solar tax agreement. Greenskies has done business with approximately 29 municipalities directly. The project in Durham is just under 3 megawatts on Middlefield Road and is in the process of closing stages to turn the system on.

The State Legislature passed a very comprehensive bill related to energy and energy costs in the State of CT, Sb. 4. An act concerning energy affordability in the State of Connecticut. Two of the clauses in the bill effect personal property taxes for solar arrays. It creates what is known as a Uniform Capacity Tax, which is a fixed rate per megawatt of solar installed. Additionally, a \$10,000 per megawatt fee was passed that is paid directly to the town every year for 20 years, basically in lieu of property taxes. The second bill might create the possibility of a complete tax exemption for large solar arrays. J. Hintzke noted this is not something Greenskies was in support of and is under the impression it may have been a drafting error in the bill.

The town and Greenskies have been in discussion for several months on a stabilization agreement. If approved, Greenskies will pay \$10,000 annually per megawatt for the 2.8-megawatt project on Middlefield road. Greenskies is hoping to have permission to operate before the end of 2025.

First Selectman Rea noted that Town Attorney, Rich Roberts participated in all discussions with Greenskies and is in attendance. R. Roberts agreed with the comments made tonight and noted this is similar to the contract the town entered into with Kearsarge for the solar panels on Johnson Lane.

First Selectman Rea asked for any Public Comment.

Rick Parmelee: asked in regard to the production of power besides the payment in lieu of taxes, where is the income from the facility going. J. Hintzke responded this is a private company leasing out the land, so some of the payments will pay the lease. He added that this project is participating in the States SCEF (Shared Clean Energy Program), which is a community solar program. The actual energy generated will be used by subscribers to the community program which is controlled by Eversource. At least 40% of the subscribers are low income.

The board thanked Greenskies for their attendance and presentation. Next steps will include the Board of Selectmen discussing feedback and voting to send both Public Hearing items to Special Town Meeting.

MOTION BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN CHADD, TO LEAVE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND RETURN TO THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING AT 7:44 P.M. VOTE: 2 AYE

10. Discuss and take action to approve a request from Closer to Free Ride for Smilow Cancer Hospital and Yale Cancer Center to use town roads on Saturday, September 6, 2025
First Selectman Rea explained this is a yearly event, they hire/pay for the Resident State Trooper. The plan was reviewed by Trooper Inglis.

MOTION BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN CHADD, TO APPROVE A REQUEST FROM CLOSER TO FREE RIDE FOR SMILOW CANCER HOSPITAL AND YALE CANCER CENTER TO USE TOWN ROADS ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2025. VOTE: 2 AYE

11. Charter Revision Update
The town has received 20 applicants to date, the deadline is July 7th. The board needs to continue working on the charge and decide on the number of members. Only 1/3 can be public officials.
12. Tax Refunds
MOTION BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN CHADD TO APPROVE (5) TAX REFUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$414.11 AS PRESETNED BY THE TAX COLLECTOR. VOTE: 2 AYE
13. Approval of Meeting Minutes:
a. May 19, 2025
b. June 4, 2025

MOTION BY FIRST SELECTMAN REA, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN CHADD TO APPROVE THE MAY 19, 2025 AND JUNE 4, 2025 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. VOTE: 2 AYE

14. Old/New Business
a. Deerfield Farm roof has been completed. All parties are very happy with the complete project.
b. MIRA Update: the MIRA Board of Directors is still in a recess having 4-5 hour Executive Session. The town did receive the termination agreement for Durham and Middlefield and all Essex towns have agreed to let the towns leave. Durham/Middlefield is hoping to get recyclables comparable. More to come.
c. Union Contract update: the Union is voting on June 30th. If approved, the board will ratify on July 2nd.
d. Correspondence regarding Whites Farm attached.
e. Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance met with Bill Lindsay to discuss potential bond projects. Additional meetings will be needed.
f. Reminder: there is a Special Town Meeting on Wed June 25th at 7:00 p.m., at Community Center
15. Selectmen Comments
None
16. Public Comment (open to non-agenda items)
Marie Wilde: asked the board to make sure boards/commissions are involved/invited to meetings and public hearings for Charter Revision. First Selectman Rea agreed that was part of the Charter Revision Commission process and noted the difficulty in finding members who are not considered public officials.

Rick Parmelee: reiterated the budget meeting was the least informational meeting he has ever attended in his entire life, felt the Building Official could act as Facilities Manager, appointments should be made based on the ability to perform the job, felt it was inappropriate the Finance Director served on Union Negotiations.

John Szweczyk: urged the board to watch the May 21st Planning and Zoning Public Hearing, suggested the town consider

finding a new contractor or a full-time Town Planner.

Rick Parmelee: disagreed with morning board meetings, employees should not be allowed to work remotely.

17. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jaclyn Lehet