

TOWN OF SCOTLAND

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Scotland Town Hall - 9 Devotion Road, P.O. Box 288 Scotland, CT 06264
(860) 456-7797 ext.1



BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

August 18th, 2026 - 7:00pm

**Location: Scotland Volunteer Community Hall
47 Brook Road**

Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by First Selectman Dana Barrow Jr. Present: Selectman John Aldrich; Selectman Michael Gurnack; Treasurer David Zito; Executive Administrator Wendy O'Connor and members of the audience.

2. Additions to Agenda: None

3. Audience with Citizens:

- Resident Russ Perry addressed the Board regarding the prolonged closure of the town's bridges. He stated that he had spoken with state inspectors, bridge inspectors, and numerous Scotland residents and was advised to bring his concerns directly to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Perry expressed his concern that the Board of Selectmen should be taking stronger action to expedite the bridge projects, stating that he did not believe the Board was pushing hard enough to move the projects forward.

Perry noted that the bridge closures have now continued for more than two years and questioned what the town is doing to address the situation. He emphasized that there are three bridges currently out, particularly expressing concern about the Brook Road bridge.

He stated that the Brook Road bridge is especially important because of its impact on access and questioned whether the town should take additional steps to restrict or block the affected end of Brook Road. He also raised concerns about how residents are expected to get in and out of the area while the bridge remains closed.

- First Selectman Barrow responded that the Board has been actively working to move the bridge projects forward. He explained that he has had numerous conversations with the CT DOT Commissioner, Representative Joe Courtney, USDA, and other officials regarding the required approvals and funding. He stated that extensive correspondence and follow-up were necessary because of delays in obtaining federal and state approvals.

First Selectman Barrow emphasized the life-safety concerns associated with the bridge closures, noting that emergency medical responses to the north end of town have been delayed by approximately 5 to 8 minutes. He referenced recent heart attacks in the north end of town,

including one fatality, and stated that he had raised these concerns directly with state and federal officials.

He stated that he had personally offered to deliver paperwork between offices to expedite the required signatures and approvals. He explained that the town could not proceed until the necessary state and federal approvals were received.

First Selectman Barrow confirmed that construction on both Brook Road bridges is scheduled to begin the first week of September. He stated that the town received the final authorization from CT DOT to enter into the construction contract and that he had spoken with the contractor that day, who confirmed the September start date. Arborio Construction of Cromwell was identified as the contractor for the bridge projects.

First Selectman Barrow also explained that the town chose to pursue state and federal funding rather than requiring Scotland taxpayers to fund the entire bridge replacement projects. He stated that replacing the bridges entirely with local funds could have cost approximately \$3 million per bridge, which the town could not afford.

He further noted that the bridge projects and their progress have been discussed at previous Board of Selectmen meetings and information has been made available on the town website. He encouraged residents who want additional information to attend Board of Selectmen meetings.

4. Approval of July 21st, 2026 BOS Meeting Minutes
 - **MOTION: Motion made by Selectman John Aldrich to approve the minutes of the July 21st, 2026 Board of Selectmen meetings, seconded by Selectman Mike Gurnack. Motion carried.**
5. Treasurer's Report: Treasurer David Zito presented the Treasurer's Report (attached to minutes)
6. Budget Transfer Requests: Treasurer David Zito presented a request for \$223 in FY26 budget transfers to cover three accounts that exceeded their budgeted amounts:
 - Public Safety – Ambulance Transport: \$1 transfer due to overtime costs, resulting in the account being \$1 over budget.
 - Culture & Recreation – Bowers Park Maintenance: \$72 transfer due to increased costs for the portable toilet.
 - Public Safety Complex – Electricity: \$150 transfer due to actual electricity costs exceeding the budgeted amount.
 - The \$223 in transfers will come from the RD11 account, which has excess funds available.
 - **MOTION: Motion made by Selectman Mike Gurnack to approve the Budget Transfer Requests in the amount of \$223 for Public Safety Ambulance Transport, Culture & Recreation and the Public Safety Complex, seconded by Selectman John Aldrich. Motion carried.**
7. Discussion on Town Hall Parking Lot
 - The Board discussed options for addressing the Town Hall parking lot and ADA ramp as part of the ongoing Town Hall renovation project. It was noted that the overall Town Hall project is significantly over budget, with estimates for completing the parking lot ranging from approximately \$250,000 to \$400,000.
 - To keep the project moving while controlling costs, the Board discussed constructing a gravel parking lot rather than paving the area at this time. The proposed work would include:

- Removing approximately two feet of existing material because the existing subsoil contains topsoil and does not meet the required specifications.
 - Renting an excavator and trucks to remove and relocate the existing material.
 - Bringing in approved bank-run gravel for the lower 18 inches and approximately six inches of processed gravel on top.
 - Completing the necessary work around the ADA ramp.
 - Removing two trees that affect the sight line and parking lot work.
 - Allowing the gravel area to settle before considering any future paving.
 - The estimated cost discussed was approximately \$5,000 for the excavator and trucking and \$6,240 for gravel and processed material, for a total estimate of approximately \$11,000–\$12,000.
- The Board also discussed the potential environmental and drainage requirements that would apply if the parking lot were paved, including an oil/water separator and drainage improvements. It was determined that leaving the parking lot as gravel would avoid those additional paving-related costs at this time.
 - The Board discussed the possibility of using Town Aid Road, CNR, or other available funds to help cover the work. The project could be paved later if funding becomes available.
 - It was also noted that the town is awaiting a decision on an additional CIF grant of approximately \$1 million, expected in October. If awarded, additional funding could allow the town to proceed with more of the planned Town Hall improvements.
 - ***MOTION: Motion made by Selectman John Aldrich to approve up to \$12,000 for the Town Hall gravel parking lot renovation, seconded by Selectman Mike Gurnack. Motion carried.***

8. Discussion on moving BOS meetings to fourth Wednesday of the month:

- The Board discussed changing its regular meeting night from Tuesday back to Wednesday evening. The change was considered appropriate now that the scheduling conflict that had previously required Tuesday meetings has been resolved.
- ***MOTION: A motion was made by Selectman Mike Gurnack to move the Board of Selectmen meetings back to the fourth Wednesday of each month, seconded by Selectman John Aldrich. Motion carried.***
- The change will begin with the September 23rd, 2026 BOS meeting.

9. Audience with Citizens

- Bill Adams addressed the Board regarding traffic safety concerns near the General Store and Post Office. Mr. Adams expressed concern about the speed limits and traffic conditions on the hill near the General Store. He noted that the posted speed limit changes from approximately 40–45 mph at the top of the hill to 35 mph farther down, and he questioned how drivers can safely reduce their speed over such a short distance. He reported observing vehicles traveling at excessive speeds through the area, including one vehicle traveling a minimum of 60 mph and a tractor-trailer traveling approximately 50 mph.
- Mr. Adams requested that the State consider installing additional warning measures, such as a flashing light, near the top of the hill because he believes the current conditions present a significant safety hazard. He also raised concerns about limited visibility when exiting the Post Office, stating that trees and signage obstruct the view of approaching traffic traveling up the hill. He expressed concern that the combination of speeding and limited visibility could result in a serious accident.
- First Selectman Barrow responded that he had previously contacted the State regarding the speed limit on Hanover Road and requested that it be reduced to 35 mph.

- He explained that he also requested that the State install a flashing caution/warning sign for motorists traveling down the hill. However, the State indicated that it would not install the sign because its policy requires a 10-mph reduction in the speed limit before such a warning sign is installed. Since the speed limit changes from 40 mph to 35 mph, the reduction is only 5 mph.
- First Selectman Barrow noted that the road and the signage are under State jurisdiction, so the town cannot independently install the requested sign. He stated that he had originally made the request approximately two years ago and would follow up with the State again regarding the matter.
- Bill Adams questioned whether the town should proceed with the extensive renovation of the existing Town Hall. He stated that, although the building is considered historic, in his opinion its primary distinction is its age and that it does not have significant historical importance.
- Mr. Adams suggested that the town consider utilizing space at the school, noting that portions of the building are not currently being used. He stated that the school could potentially accommodate municipal functions.
- He also questioned whether the significant cost of bringing the existing Town Hall up to modern building codes is justified, particularly given that Scotland has a part-time Town Hall. He stated that the renovated building could potentially be used for other purposes and generate revenue for the town but questioned whether the level of investment and effort required is worthwhile.
- Mr. Adams stated that he had heard similar concerns from other residents and expressed his opinion that the town should carefully consider whether continuing to invest substantial amounts in the existing Town Hall is the best use of municipal funds.
- First Selectman Barrow explained that the Town Hall Renovation Committee was established to help evaluate the project and its costs. He stated that the committee had agreed that the town should not spend additional local funds beyond the amount already authorized and that the project should move forward only as additional grant funding becomes available.
- He clarified that the town was not abandoning the Town Hall renovation project but rather was seeking outside funding to avoid placing the cost of additional work on local taxpayers. He noted that the approximately \$11,000 parking lot expense was not considered a significant increase in the overall project cost.
- First Selectman Barrow also discussed the possibility of using the school for municipal functions and raised concerns about security and access to school property if residents needed to visit municipal offices there. He noted that the issue would involve the broader school community and School Board, not simply the Superintendent, and expressed concern about allowing members of the public onto school grounds for municipal services.
- He acknowledged that security measures such as fencing and cameras could be considered but questioned whether they would completely address the concerns associated with having municipal services located on school property.
- Bill Adams stated that he understands somebody suggested putting an addition on the fire station and moving the Town Hall there.
- First Selectman Barrow stated that the town has considered alternatives to the current Town Hall renovation, including the possibility of constructing or acquiring a new municipal facility that could house town offices under one roof. He noted that an earlier estimate for the building itself was approximately \$500,000, with additional costs for other necessary improvements. He also stated that funding for a new facility would likely be more difficult to obtain through grants.

- First Selectman Barrow explained that the Town Hall renovation is currently being pursued primarily through grant funding. The town has approximately \$160,000 that had been set aside previously, which could potentially be used toward renovation if additional grant funding is not received.
- He emphasized that the town does not intend to return to taxpayers to request hundreds of thousands of dollars to complete the renovation. The town has been reviewing potential reductions to the project in an effort to bring the costs within available funding.
- The town is currently awaiting a decision, expected in October, on an additional approximately \$1.1 million CIF grant. First Selectman Barrow stated that if the additional grant is not awarded, the project may have to be substantially reduced or placed on hold.
- He explained that the town has requested extensions on existing grants. One grant, originally awarded in 2023 and scheduled to expire in July 2026, was extended for an additional two to three years. The grant has been increased to approximately \$2 million through the Connecticut Community Development Block Grant program, but the funds are restricted primarily to ADA-related improvements.
- First Selectman Barrow also explained that the various grants come with specific requirements and restrictions. For example:
 - Certain funds must be used for ADA improvements.
 - Some work, such as addressing radon gas, must be funded through a different grant.
 - Historic-preservation funding requires the town to comply with requirements regarding the restoration of historic windows.
 - Because historic-preservation funds were received, certain insulation methods, such as spray-foam insulation in the walls, may not be permitted.
 - The grants therefore cannot simply be used interchangeably for any portion of the renovation.
- Regarding construction of a new municipal building, First Selectman Barrow explained that the town's existing grant opportunities are largely based on the building's historic and ADA characteristics. A newly constructed, ground-level ADA-compliant building would not necessarily qualify for the same funding because it would not require the same ADA improvements or have the historic characteristics of the existing Town Hall.
- He noted that the town will continue evaluating its options but emphasized that no major additional spending will be undertaken unless sufficient grant funding is available.
- John Beck stated that he understood the concerns surrounding the Town Hall renovation and supported continuing to pursue available grant funding. He noted that grant funding allows the cost of the renovation to be shared more broadly among taxpayers throughout the state rather than placing the full financial burden on Scotland's approximately 1,500 residents.
- Mr. Beck expressed his view that constructing a new Town Hall entirely at the expense of local taxpayers would not be practical. He encouraged the town to continue pursuing grants and work toward completing the renovation so that Town Hall employees have a comfortable and functional workplace and residents have a welcoming environment when conducting business at Town Hall.
- He concluded that building a new Town Hall solely at the expense of the town's approximately 1,500 residents "won't fly."

10. Selectmen's Report

- Budget: No new items except for the Appropriations. Transfers spoken about by the Treasurer
- State Mandates: No new mandates this month.
- Zip Code Issues: New York Times reporter and photographer visited the Town and are planning on doing an article about such a small town with so many zip codes.
- NECCOG: NECCOG will be working with the towns Planning and Zoning Commission on the 2027-2037 Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD). The Town will be charged next July (2027). The Town was awarded \$738,000.00 in TRIP funding with the help of NECCOG, Kim Martin and Gary Giroux of Cardinal Engineering.
- Scotland – Replacement of Bridge No. 123003, Kemp Road over Kimball Pond Brook (\$738,000): This project will replace the existing Kemp Road bridge over Kimball Pond Brook (Merrick Brook) with a precast concrete rigid frame and reconstruct approximately 0.20 miles of roadway.
- NECCOG Planning Services: A core function of NECCOG is the provision of planning services, including engineering services, to our member municipalities. These services include:
 - Regulation review and drafting for zoning, wetland, and subdivision regulations
 - Text amendments
 - Plan of Conservation and Development updates or revisions
 - Brand development
 - Marketing planning
 - Economic development planning
 - Housing planning
 - Open space protection planning
 - Town engineering services
 - Town planner services
 - Regional planning
- Council of Small Towns [COST]. I will be attending the fall conference in October.
- Connecticut Conference of Municipalities [CCM]: I will be attending the fall conference.
- Scotland Recreational Trails application: Nothing reportable
- The Town Hall Renovation Project: We do not have enough funds at this point to move forward with the project. We have put in for additional money from CIF Round 9 but we won't hear until October if we will get any. The Town may move forward on the Parking lot to save a substantial amount of money on the project. We have bids coming in for Gravel removal and transfer, will be getting bids on tree removal and asphaltting the ramp. It will be good to have a parking lot even if the renovation project doesn't move forward. We have been warned by CT DOT that the existing parking lot with vehicles backing out onto Rt. 97 is illegal and if there is a serious accident the town could be liable because we now know it's illegal.
- Public Works. Public: Conn OSHA visited the Town Hall, Library and the Public Works Garage. Most of the Violations were from the Public Works Department. All the Physical changes that were needed have been completed. We still have some additional training to be completed. I met with the Conn OSHA Director John Rosa and we were able to reduce the fines to just over a thousand dollars. Paving of Kemp Road is completed. Pothole patching on Pinch Steet is now underway. Clearing of trees and bushes is also being done at Toleration Road.
- Bridges: The right of way for Bridges on Brook Road was finally approved by DEEP. Northern Brook Road Bridge will be the first one replaced. We had a pre-construction meeting on August 4th on this Bridge. Construction should start in the first week of September. The Bass Road Bridge was delayed again due to USDA not giving approval for the right of way. I was able to get Commissioner Garrett T. Eucalitto involved again, and he was able to get Representative Joe Courtney to put pressure on USDA approval on the 10 foot right of way on the neighboring

cornfield dirt access Road. The approval was received last week and the final financial awarded letters from the State were received last Friday authorizing the Town to enter in the Contract with Arborio Construction of Cromwell. Construction on Bass Road Bridge should also start the first week of September also. Arborio Construction was the low bidder on both the Bass Road and the two Brook Road Bridges.

- Fire Department: The Town would like to thank the Volunteer Fire Department for their work, especially in inclement weather conditions. When the weather is the worst, it seems that's when the call for help comes in.
 - Community Center: To rent the Community Center Hall, please contact Wendy O'Conner at the Town Hall during normal work hours. Please note: The Community Center is still run by a group of Volunteers that manage the Center for the use of the Town residents. Thank you goes out to those volunteers.
 - STEAP Grant: The work has been completed at the Public Safety Building. Looking for the announcements of when the next round of Grants will be out.
 - Grange Hall: Farmers' Market is open on Wednesday afternoon and is very active. Lots of locally grown and made items for sale.
 - Solar Project: The project has started with a few roads into the field. We did have issues with the delivery trucks receiving the wrong address, but we believe this is straightened out now.
 - Cemetery: The new Cemetery Committee has been meeting regularly and will be making recommendations to the BOS who oversees the Cemetery's. The BOS is hoping the Committee will be able to find avenues of revenue to improve the Cemetery and prevent any additional damage done to the Headstones. We also were able to get ground penetrating radar surveys done at the Palmer Town Cemetery. The area at the top where there are no Headstone apparently has people buried in that area. We will be making sure that area will not go up for sale.
 - Memorial Day: Nothing Reportable
 - Landfill Permit: Sticker are available for purchase at a cost of \$ 25.00 per household from the Town Clerk Monday and Thursday from 9-3 PM and Wednesday from 1-7 PM.
 - *Scotland residents: My door is always open to discuss anything, and the BOS meets on the 3^{road} Tuesdays, I encourage all residents to come to the meetings.*
11. Motion to adjourn at 8:20pm made by Selectman Mike Gurnack, seconded by Selectman Aldrich. Motion carried.

Town of Scotland, Treasurer's Report
August 18, 2026, Board of Selectmen Meeting

July 2026 Financials

- The month end close is not complete for the period ending July 31, 2026. Tax collections for July have not been fully recorded as of this meeting and none of the reconciliations are incomplete due to work on closing the FY 26 fiscal year. The July financial statements presented for tonight's meeting are draft only and have not been issued as of this time.
- Total Current Year Tax Revenue Collections through July 31, 2026, totaled \$1.45M, which is 29.2% of the full year's budget. Back tax collections total \$20.8k. Interest on taxes totaled \$14.2K. Total tax revenues are \$1.49M which is 29.3 of the full year's budget.
- General Revenues totaled \$1.7K, 3.2% of the full year's budget. Departmental revenues totaled \$4.3K, 7.6% of the full year's budget.
- State Grant revenues totaled \$0, 0% of the full year budget.
- Total Revenues total \$1.5M, 22.4% of the full year's budget.
- General Government expenditures totaled \$236K, 10.7% of the full year's budget. This includes FY 27 CNR contributions for the year.
- Scotland Elementary School expenses totaled \$155K, 6.1% of the full year budget. RD11 District School expenses totaled \$0, 0% of the full year budget (0 of 11 payments are reflected).
- General Fund cash on July 31, 2026 totaled \$1.9M of which \$440K was held in the STIF investment account. There was another \$727K held in a STIF account for the investment and other funds (including CNR funds). Between the two STIF accounts and the Line of Credit Checking, the Town earned interest totaling \$3.6K in FY 2027.

FY27 Capital Expenditures

FY 26 Capital Expenditures have been incurred through June 30, 2026, as follows:

- Kemp Road Bridge Fund - \$450 (Engineering Costs).
- Town Hall Renovation Fund – \$0 (FY 27). Through July 31, 2026, we have incurred \$329K in costs from the start of the project and \$261K has been received in reimbursements.
- Town Aid Road - \$54K (Chip Sealing Kemp Road)
- STEAP Public Safety Complex - \$897 (\$298K since start of project)
- CNR Public Works - \$0
- CNR Fire - \$2.5K (Storage Container)
- CNR Town - \$0
- There is \$303K available to spend in CNR funds as of July 31, 2026.

Other Items:

- Field audit work will continue with Mahoney Sabol in September. Still awaiting info from BOE and LoCIP funds still needs to be completed before the Draft FY 26 financial statements are submitted.
- The transition is complete for the tax collections from Windham to Canterbury. Though reports have been received for July, not all of the tax collections have yet been recorded, Things are expected to go much more smoothly going forward.
- BOE expenses have been reconciled through May 31. Awaiting additional information to complete the closing for the fiscal year. It is expected that BOE will have a surplus of less than 2% of its budget for FY 26.

- The fraud attempts on our bank accounts has slowed down over the past month. All attempts to access funds have been unsuccessful. Our security measures on our banking seem to be working as intended. Beacon Bank has reported that ACH fraud has been increasing.
- The Town has completed and filed it Town Aid Road report for FY 26 with DOT.
- Based on preliminary numbers in the FY 26 financial statements, it is projected that the Town will end FY 26 with a budget surplus of approximately \$200K. This is good news since our FY 27 revenues may have been overestimated. The increase in the fund balance should prepare us for the shortfall.