

Town of Coventry
Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee
Regular Meeting
Thursday April 17, 2025
6:30 PM
Conference Room B, 1712 Main Street
Zoom Meeting Link Below

1. Call To Order, Roll Call

2. Approval Of Minutes

A. Minutes, March 20, 2025

Documents:

[FSHRSC MEETING MINUTES, MARCH 20.PDF](#)

3. Draft Of Firearms Ordinance

Documents:

[FIREARMS ORDINANCE DRAFT LANGUAGE 3 WITH CHANGES.PDF](#)
[FIREARMS ORDINANCE DRAFT LANGUAGE 3.PDF](#)

4. Discussion Of Shooting Range Safety Informational Presentation

Documents:

[COVENTRY COMBINED PRESENTATION.PDF](#)

5. Discussion Of Future Agendas/Citizen Feedback

6. Election Of Officers: Vice Chair

7. Other Business

8. Adjournment

Topic: Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Committee

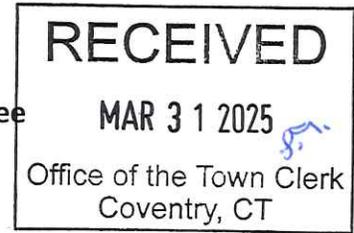
Time: Apr 17, 2025 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81648081222?pwd=zuHuJnNIK0WkYcMDKolyHKrdM6HhL8.1>

Meeting ID: 816 4808 1222

Town of Coventry
 Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee
 Meeting Minutes
 Thursday March 20, 2025



1. Call To Order, Roll Call:

By: Murray Time: 6:36 p.m. Place: Conference Room B & Zoom

		PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	Brian Murray, Chairperson	X	
	Vacant, Vice Chairperson		X
	Dudley Brand	X	
	Kenneth Stein	X	
	Carolyn Batz-remote	X	
STAFF:	Jana Roberson, Director of Planning & Dev't.	X	
	Chief of Police Eric Peterson	X	

Also present: Special Projects Coordinator Alex Taylor.

Chief Peterson left the meeting at 7:57 PM.

2. Approval Of Minutes:

A. Minutes, February 20, 2025:

Motion: I move to accept the February 20th, 2025, Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee Meeting Minutes.

By: Brand Second: Stein

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimously in favor

3. Review of Committee Questions for Police Chief:

Chief Peterson reviewed a list of questions to assess the Police Department's capability to manage suggested inclusions in the potential ordinance:

- Impacts and Capability of inspecting and/or registering home ranges.

Chief Peterson explained that this is something the department could fit in and will not impact operations. He added that he is not an expert on home ranges but will use common sense with inspections and follow guidelines included in an ordinance. He liked the idea that this will keep them registered with the town.

Roberson explained that the Land Use Department has permit management software to track, keep record, and make reports. The Police Department can simply sign off on the permits following the inspections.

- How many Home Shooting Ranges in town?

Chief Peterson explained he is familiar with about 8 but only knows of these due to problems that have been reported. He believes there are a lot more. Additionally, any existing home range would need to comply with an adopted ordinance otherwise it would no longer be allowed.

- Permit Holder list is private and confidential. Would FOIA requests for range information be allowed?

Chief Peterson will have to contact the Town's attorney to get more information. Most often information would be redacted.

- Enforcing safety and range design

Chief Peterson stated he would follow guidelines of the ordinance in terms of distance and berm set up, making sure that it is adequate to stop what is being fired as requested by the committee.

Additionally, he will need to reach out to the Town's attorney on liability of the town, if the Police Department signs off on a range being safe, and there is an issue. He also suggested that he will need to research whether or not the Police Department actually has to inspect it or can just sign off on the registration. Liability will likely be limited just from inspecting the physical layouts of the ranges to make sure they meet the ordinance guidelines. Any issues that arise will most likely be from improper behavior or negligence.

- Time of Day Complaints and Enforcement

Chief Peterson explained that he has received complaints that directly relate to time of day and duration of shooting. However, the complaints are focused to 1 specific range but come from multiple people in the neighborhood.

He added that recent complaints haven't be directly related to distance, but more with the caliber of bullet that is being shot. The bigger the caliber, the louder the noise. This makes it difficult because the caliber can't be regulated, but maybe increasing the distance would help.

- Calling before shooting

Chief Peterson agreed this would be a good idea and would help them address calls and save department resources if they knew shooting was going on at a specific time, in a specific area. He also felt that calling 15 minutes ahead of time, for a 4-hour shooting window should be sufficient in most cases.

Stein had concerns that these calls are recorded and could be made public if requested. Chief Peterson explained that information would be redacted as that are done with other requests for information.

Murray had concerns with the department missing a legitimate call, if they chose not to send an officer out if they were aware of shooting. Chief Peterson explained that it is unlikely, and they would need to balance it based on the information given.

- **Fines**

If fines are clearly defined in the ordinance, and it is adopted, the Police Department would enforce what is outlined on the ordinance. It would then go through the town's finance department to pay the fines. If the fine recipient chose to appeal, it would be up to the Town Manager or Town Hall employees to deal with the appeal process. Chief Peterson stated he would look into what the animal control officer does in terms of issuing ordinance violations.

If the fine was not paid, the Town would also handle that as well. It is possible that a lien could be placed on a person's property if they did not pay their ordinance violation fines. Additionally, the ordinance can state they could lose their range permit with the town if they fail to pay.

Roberson felt it would be helpful to have a citation process, so that individuals pay for the permits they need. The Town Manager would need to be consulted with this, further.

Chief Peterson explained that unless someone is displaying dangerous behavior, the 1st visit would result in a verbal warning.

4. Draft of Firearms Ordinance:

Chief Peterson noted that he reviewed the draft ordinance put together by Taylor and felt it was good and would be able to help the department with complaints.

Chief Peterson noted that the biggest issue with home shooting ranges/shooting firearms in town, is noise. The noise is related to distance, but geographical layout as well. If the land is an open field with no trees, the sound will carry regardless of the distance the shooting is from neighboring properties.

An ordinance will not eliminate all issues but having something will help, especially in terms of safety. Each instance or situation will have its own challenges, whether it is noise, distance, duration, etc.

Chief Peterson suggested the draft ordinance add in the animal control officer under Sec. 66-79 Exceptions, subsection a).

*Sec. 66-79 Exceptions The restrictions within this Sec. 66 Article III shall not be construed to apply in the following circumstances: a)
The use of a Firearm or Air Gun by a police officer or animal control officer acting within the scope of their official duties;*

The committee discussed the permit process for historical reenactments, which was suggested to be the same for special events. Taylor explained that this wording was included due to recommendation from the Town Manager.

Taylor read the draft ordinance, for committee review. He noted that this is just the 1st draft, and all content is subject to change based on committee suggestions and legal consult.

Edits to draft:

- Change section that includes shooting across the road, to include trails.
 - This is already illegal and would result in criminal charges.
 - This adds clarity, especially for hunting purposes.
- Clarify shooting at backstop, not above it
- Consider shooting clays
 - Police Chief Peterson explained he has not received any calls about this. However, if they did receive a call and upon inspection it was unsafe, they would have authority to have them stop.
 - Could be included as an exception
- Add nail guns or air guns used for construction purposes in exceptions.
- Change start time to 9 AM to not be too restricted. This start time is commonly accepted.
- Clarify definition of “adequately trained in firearms”, should a Range Safety Officer (RSO) be included.
- Add a subsection for definition of a Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club to have them legally recognized as an organization.
 - Include interior ranges.
- Remove stationary target, leaving inanimate target. This allows “moving” targets like spinners but excludes hunting.
- Under Sec. 66-77 Safety Requirements, item f) clarify that the instructor is to have approval from the parent or legal guardian.
- Under Sec. 66-78 Time Requirements, include a tentative 4-hour window for shooting duration.

5. Discussion of Future Agendas/Citizen Feedback:

It was discussed that there are individuals who have a desire to provide input to the committee. Input can be received in the form of emails, or in-person forum. The committee discussed having community feedback during a regularly scheduled meeting or holding a special meeting. Murray noted that their regularly scheduled meetings could have an audience of citizens as well. He also stated that this stage, it would not be a back and forth but rather receive questions, comments, and concerns.

The committee will review and refine the draft ordinance at the April 17th meeting. Then a presentation of the refined draft ordinance and public comment can happen at a future meeting. Once feedback is received, the feedback will be incorporated into a final draft of the ordinance as it applies. Once a meeting place is reserved, and date is confirmed, the meeting information can be shared on the Town Manager’s Facebook Page, town website, and the Town Manager’s monthly update.

A draft presentation will also be put together for review at the next meeting. This presentation from the committee should prelude public feedback to showcase the work the committee has done, show how they got to the draft ordinance, and set the tone for the rest of the meeting and public feedback.

It was suggested that the presentation include safety tips that the committee has discussed previously.

6. Other Business:

It was noted that consideration to appoint a new member to the committee is on the next steering agenda, and it is likely that the committee will have a replacement member by next meeting. Once a replacement member has been appointed, the committee elect a vice-chairperson.

The committee also needs to start thinking about whether the life of the committee needs to be extended prior to the Town Council's June meeting so they can act on extending the committee if needed. This will be added to the next agenda.

7. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 9:05 PM.

Submitted by,

Nicole Archambault

Nicole Archambault

Minutes Clerk

PLEASE NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Committee at the next meeting. Please see the next Committee meeting minutes for approval or changes.

Chapter 66 – OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

ARTICLE III. – HOME SHOOTING RANGES

Sec. 66-75 Purpose

The purpose of this article is to establish regulations surrounding the discharge of firearms for target-shooting purposes on private property to provide for the safety and well-being of the residents of the Town of Coventry

Sec. 66-76 Definitions

Firearm

Any shotgun, pistol, rifle, revolver, muzzle-loading device or other such weapon which uses chemical propellant to expel a projectile capable of killing, injuring, or inflicting physical damage

Air gun

Any device which uses springs, air, compressed gas, or other non-explosive force to expel a projectile capable of killing, injuring, or inflicting physical damage

Backstop

A device, structure, or terrain designed to stop and contain projectiles fired on a range.

Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club

An organization of individuals which meets the following criteria:

- a) Maintains in good condition a shooting range in a fixed location with an adequate design to contain fired projectiles;
- b) Said shooting range is approved by the Chief of Police and in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws;
- c) ~~Has individuals~~ **Individuals discharging firearms are** adequately trained in firearms safety ~~present at all times when shooting will occur~~; and
- d) Has criteria for members or other range users to ensure the safe discharge of firearms.

Recreational Shooting

For the purposes of this chapter, recreational shooting is understood to be shooting a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** at ~~a stationary, an~~ inanimate target

Sec. 66-77 Safety Requirements

The following restrictions apply within the Town of Coventry:

- a) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must be the owner of the property on which the discharge is to occur, be the spouse or lineal descendant of the owner of the property, have on their person the written permission from the owner of the property, or be an invited guest with the owner of the property present.

Commented [AT1]: This ordinance is a draft based on preferences expressed by the FS/HRSC. This is not finalized, and all language present within may be subject to change.

Commented [AT2]: A separate definition was given for the sake of clarity, and Air Guns were specifically included on restrictions based on safety but excluded from those where noise may be the central concern

The same requirements apply for the location of the backstop at which projectiles are being directed.

- b) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must do so only with an adequate backstop capable of stopping all projectiles intended to be used. The backstop must be of sufficient depth and strength to contain any projectiles fired or intended to be fired at a range and must be of a sufficient height or size to stop projectiles at any position the shooter intends to use.
- c) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must do so at a distance of greater than 250ft from any structure or enclosed outdoor space occupied by people or domestic animals unless they are the owner of such property, the spouse or lineal descendant of the owner of the property, or have on their person the written permission from the owner of the property to do so. A building is considered to be occupied for the purposes of this ordinance unless it appears from a reasonable inspection of the structure to be unoccupied.
- d) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must not shoot across any public roads or public trails.
- e) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must do so at a stationary target which does not possess any secondary reaction upon being hit by a projectile, including explosions, incineration, or expelling projectiles or shrapnel.
- f) Minors under 18 years of age wishing to shoot **Firearms** must be properly supervised by a parent or legal guardian of such minor, or ~~an instructor adequately trained in firearms safety~~ another adult with the approval of their parent or legal guardian.

Sec. 66-78 Time Requirements

The following restrictions apply within the Town of Coventry:

- a) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must do so between the hours of ~~10~~9:00 AM to sunset; as ~~outlined~~ defined in the current Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide.
- b) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must call the Coventry Police Department and give notice fifteen (15) minutes before the intended start of shooting. Once shooting begins, persons engaging in recreational shooting shall have a four (4) hour window in which to do so. One such window shall be granted per calendar day.

Sec. 66-79 Exceptions

The restrictions within this Sec. 66 Article III shall not be construed to apply in the following circumstances:

- a) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** by a police officer or animal control officer acting within the scope of their official duties;
- b) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** for the purposes of hunting as defined by the Connecticut General Statutes, Sec. 26-1;
- c) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** for the purposes of defending oneself or other persons from physical force in accordance with all federal, state and local laws;

- d) The use of a *Firearm* or *Air Gun* for the purposes of shooting wildlife actively causing property damage or posing an active threat to public safety in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes;
- e) The use of a *Firearm* or *Air Gun* at a range on the property of a recognized Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club;
- f) The use of a device designed and operated solely for the purposes of construction, such as a nail or staple gun, which by its design might otherwise fall under the definition of a *Firearm* or *Air Gun*:
- g) The use of a *Firearm* or *Air Gun* as a part of a memorial ceremony or parade by police officers, active duty members in military service of the United States or Connecticut National Guard, or by a nationally recognized veteran's organization; and
- h) The use of a *Firearm* or *Air Gun* as a part of an authorized historical reenactment which has obtained an event permit from the Town.

Sec. 66-80 Penalty for violation of article

Any person who violates the regulations set out in this article shall be subject to a fine for such a violation pursuant to Sec. 1-10 of the Coventry Code of Ordinances

Secs. 66-81 – 66-96 Reserved

Commented [AT3]: Sec. 1-10 indicates fines shall be at most \$100 if not otherwise specified. Each day a violation continues may be counted as a separate offense.

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Secs. 66-81 – 66-96 Reserved

DRAFT

PUBLIC ACT 23-53
TRAINING ON SAFE
STORAGE OF
FIREARMS, LAWFUL
USE OF FIREARMS
AND LAWFUL
CARRYING OF
FIREARMS



Updated 11/25/2024

BASIC INFORMATION

- This PowerPoint has been developed to be taught in conjunction with your instructor's current curriculum in order to satisfy the training requirements set forth in Connecticut General Statutes § 29-28, as amended by Public Act 23-53
- You must submit to your local issuing authority BOTH the certificate of completion for the Public Act 23-53 training and a certificate of completion for the balance of the course



SAFE STORAGE IN THE HOME OR PLACE OF BUSINESS

Connecticut General Statutes § 29-37i

- No person shall store or keep any firearm, on any premises under such person's control unless the person:
 - (1) Keeps the firearm in a securely locked box or other container or in a manner which a reasonable person would believe to be secure **OR**
 - (2) Carries the firearm on his/her person **OR**
 - (3) Keeps the firearm within such close proximity to his/herself that such person can readily retrieve and use the firearm
(as if such person was carrying the firearm on his/her person)



SAFE STORAGE IN A VEHICLE

Connecticut General Statutes § 29-38g

- All pistols or revolvers stored in an unattended motor vehicle must be kept in the trunk (area not accessible from the passenger compartment), locked glove box, or locked safe.
 - “[A] motor vehicle is unattended if no person who is at least twenty-one years of age and who is the owner or operator or a passenger of such motor vehicle is inside the motor vehicle or is within close enough proximity to the motor vehicle to prevent unauthorized access to the motor vehicle”

Connecticut General Statutes § 53-205

- No person shall carry or possess in any vehicle or snowmobile any firearm, other than a pistol or revolver (for which they have a valid CT Permit to Carry, or is legally secured above), while such firearm contains in the barrel, chamber, or magazine any loaded shell or cartridge capable of being discharged.



LAWFUL USE OF FIREARMS IN DEFENSE OF SELF OR OTHERS

Connecticut General Statutes § 53a-19

- If you reasonably believe that a person is using or about to use deadly physical force against you or a third person, or that a person is inflicting or about to inflict great bodily harm against you or a third person, you may use deadly force.
 - However, prior to using such deadly force, you have a duty to retreat if the avenue of retreat is reasonable.
 - NOTE: You do not have a duty to retreat if:
 - You are in your own dwelling; or
 - You are in your place of work and not the initial aggressor



LAWFUL USE OF FIREARMS

Connecticut General Statutes § 53-203

- No person shall intentionally, negligently or carelessly discharge any firearm in such a manner as to be likely to cause bodily injury or death to persons or domestic animals, or the wanton destruction of property.

Connecticut General Statutes § 53-204; Conn. Agencies Reg. § 26-66-1 (e)

- No person shall hunt or discharge any firearm from or across the traveled portion of any public highway.

Conn. Agencies Reg. § 26-66-1(d)

- No person shall hunt or shoot a firearm within 500 feet of any building occupied by people or domestic animals.



LAWFUL CARRYING OF FIREARMS IN PUBLIC

Connecticut General Statutes § 29-35

- No person shall carry any pistol or revolver on their person WITHOUT A PERMIT except when such person is within their home, on land leased or owned by that person, or within the place of business of that person.
- No person shall knowingly carry a firearm WITHOUT A PERMIT and with intent to display (open carry) except within their home, on land leased or owned, or within the place of business, or engaged in firearm training or bonafide hunting activity.
- A reasonable measure to conceal said firearm when carrying must be taken. Neither a fleeting glimpse of a firearm nor an imprint of a firearm through such person's clothing is a violation.



LAWFUL CARRYING OF FIREARMS IN PUBLIC (continued)

Connecticut General Statutes § 29-28(e)

- The issuance of a permit to carry does **NOT** authorize the possession or carrying of a pistol or revolver in any premises where the possession or carrying is otherwise prohibited by law or is prohibited by the person who owns or exercises control over such premises.

Examples: Schools (Federal & State Law), courthouses, anywhere “NO FIREARMS” is posted.



LEGAL UPDATES

- Firearms laws are often very in depth. If you have ANY questions, please seek legal advice.
- State and Federal firearms laws are often changing and evolving. It is important that you are up to date on firearms laws, not only as a permitted individual, but also as a firearm owner.
- You must follow all State and Federal laws and regulations as they pertain to the purchasing, carrying, storage and use of firearms.





Basics of
Pistol Shooting

NRA RULES FOR SAFE GUN HANDLING

Introduction

Lesson I

Lesson II

Lesson III

Lesson IV

Lesson V

ALWAYS Keep The Gun Pointed In A Safe
Direction

ALWAYS Keep Your Finger Off The Trigger
Until Ready To Shoot

ALWAYS Keep The Gun Unloaded Until
Ready To Use





Basics of
Pistol Shooting

NRA RULES FOR USING AND STORING A GUN

- **Know your target and what is beyond.**
- **Be sure the gun is safe to operate.**
- **Know how to use the gun safely.**
- **Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.**
- **Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.**
- **Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.**
- **Store guns so that they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.**
- **Be aware that certain types of guns and many shooting activities require additional safety precautions**

Introduction

Lesson I

Lesson II

Lesson III

Lesson IV

Lesson V





Basics of
Pistol Shooting

Introduction

Lesson I

Lesson II

Lesson III

Lesson IV

Lesson V

RANGE LAYOUT AND LIMITS

**FOR THE RANGE BEING USED, IDENTIFY
AND KNOW THE SIGNIFICANCE OF:**

- **Ready line**
- **Firing line**
- **Target area**
- **Backstop/impact area**
- **Left/right range limits**
- **Firing points**
- **Target and firing point numbers**
- **Downrange area**
- **Safety berms**





Basics of
Pistol Shooting

Introduction

Lesson I

Lesson II

Lesson III

Lesson IV

Lesson V

RANGE LAYOUT AND LIMITS (CONT...)

**FOR THE RANGE BEING USED, IDENTIFY
AND KNOW THE SIGNIFICANCE OF:**

- **Entry/exit routes**
- **Range flags**
- **Warning markers and other safety features**
- **First-aid kit**
- **Phone (know procedure for dialing 911)**
- **Fire extinguishers**
- **Rest rooms**
- **Any other applicable equipment/features**

