

Town of Coventry
Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee
Regular Meeting
Thursday August 21, 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, June 19, 2025

Documents:

[FSHRSC MEETING MINUTES, JUNE 19.PDF](#)

3. Extension Resolution

Documents:

[EXTENSION RESOLUTION DRAFT V3.PDF](#)

4. Draft Of Firearms Ordinance

Documents:

[FIREARMS ORDINANCE DRAFT LANGUAGE 5 WITH CHANGES.PDF](#)
[FIREARMS ORDINANCE DRAFT LANGUAGE 5.PDF](#)

5. Public Feedback Planning

6. Public Presentation

Documents:

[COVENTRY_FIREARMS_SAFETY_COMMITTEE_UPDATE_07282025.PDF](#)

7. Other Business

8. Adjournment

Topic: Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee Meeting

Time: Aug 21, 2025 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86058684078?pwd=tWJMbtbbMb6M8OECSCvPwaciq4fjPs.1>

Meeting ID: 860 5868 4078

Passcode: 656193

One tap mobile

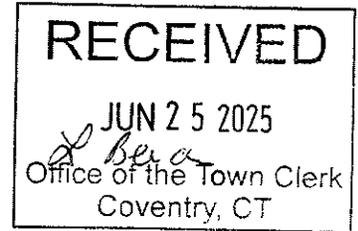
+13017158592,,86058684078#,,,,*656193# US (Washington DC)

+13052241968,,86058684078#,,,,*656193# US

Join instructions

https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/86058684078/invitations?signature=X_QC60pQ-DZ5NQC8lQiFhecZVGMpHiQfr00tiDNgZrk

Town of Coventry
Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday June 19, 2025



1. Call To Order, Roll Call:

By: Murray Time: 6:34 p.m. Place: Conference Room B & Zoom

		PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	Brian Murray, Chairperson	X	
	Kenneth Stein, Vice Chairperson	X	
	Dudley Brand	X	
	Mike Mangiafico-Joined at 6:53 PM	X	
	Carolyn Batz		X
STAFF:	Jana Roberson, Director of Planning & Dev't.		X
	Chief of Police Eric Peterson-left at 7:04 PM	X	

Also present: Special Projects Coordinator Alex Taylor, and Town Manager James Drumm.

2. Approval Of Minutes:

A. Minutes, May 15, 2025:

Motion: I move to accept the May 15, 2025, Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee Meeting Minutes.

By: Stein Second: Brand

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimously in favor

3. Draft of Firearms Ordinance:

Taylor explained that the draft ordinance has had only 1 change from the previous meeting, as suggested by the committee. In Section 66-77, Subsection C, the distance was changed from 250 ft. to 350 ft. As a restriction for shooting near occupied structures, unless given authorization from the neighbor(s) to be within a lesser

distance. Also, it was added that this distance should apply when firing near a structure/area that serves as storage for flammable materials.

Murray questioned if there was any sense of how this distance change would impact existing ranges. Chief Peterson was unsure.

Different factors were noted that could impact each situation in terms of noise, including distance, gun caliber, lay of the land.

Mangiafico commented that there was some conversation on Facebook regarding the distance requirement of 250 ft. There were concerns that this would lead to pushback, but it also seemed like the concerns were baseless. Taylor reminded that if any citizens want to see any of the meeting recordings, they can be requested and distributed.

The start time of 9:00 AM was discussed, to be able to field questions should they arise, on why this time was selected. It was noted both gun clubs in town have a self-imposed 10:00 AM start time and this is an hour earlier. Shooting is likely to occur on weekends, and it is thought that if there was this noise before 9:00 AM, it could be disruptive. It was clarified that this time restriction is only in place for home shooting ranges and does not apply to hunting. Additionally, Murray wanted to clarify why the committee settled on the distance of 350ft over 250 ft or 500 ft. It was reminded that 500 ft would be too restrictive for a home range. It applies for hunting, as there are no backstops when shooting at a live target. Having 250 ft as the distance might not address the noise concerns. 350 ft is in the middle and preferred by Chief Peterson. It was reminded that residents are allowed to shoot at a distance closer than 350 ft, with written permission from neighbors, and as long as there are no additional safety concerns.

It was felt that the ordinance was a good thing for the community to have, and it is relatively cut and dry. Residents are encouraged to read it all the way through, to realize that this is not to restrict anyone's rights, but to establish safety and peace in the community.

4. Discussion of Ability to Redact Shooter Names:

Chief Peterson explained that he reached out to get information about FOIA requests. He shared that if anyone comes into the Police Department requesting records, they must be made available. However, if a resident calls in as a courtesy to notify that they will be shooting on their property, there is no electronic record made, or case number assigned. Case numbers are only assigned when an officer needs to be dispatched to a call.

Chief Peterson suggested that the requirement of calling the Police Department remain in the ordinance, as it will be more likely to avoid a problem, and people's information has a higher chance of being protected. He reminded that officers are only dispatched if there is a concern or problem. If there is knowledge ahead of time that firing will occur in a particular area, it saves department resources by not having to send an officer out, and there will be no case number pulled for the "heads up" call. The dispatcher will make note on their pad, which is disposed of at the end of the night. Additionally, the call will start the resident's time window for their shooting.

Chief Peterson expressed that if the requirement to call the department to notify of shooting activity is left out of the ordinance, he felt there would be more calls with concerns that would require an officer's response. He

added that the calls received for this activity are sporadic, and they don't typically get a lot at one time. However, there is usually an increase of calls with concerns in the fall.

It was discussed that there is no need to log the courtesy calls, as they are only good for the day the call was received. A resident giving notice of their shooting activity does not pose any public safety concerns and there are no benefits from having those specific calls logged.

Chief Peterson also mentioned that he spoke with the Police Chief of Newtown, that has a similar ordinance, and their Chief informed they have not received any FOIA requests for information regarding home ranges. It seems the process is working, and the Newtown Police Chief has no concerns or complaints. It was discussed that both Chiefs were in agreement that the ordinance gives them something to use to address calls, giving cops and the community some relief.

5. Draft Committee Presentation:

Murray shared his draft presentation that will be used to present to the Town Council.

Taylor shared that this is good to show the highlights, and it does not need to be too in depth since the ordinance will be presented as well. Any questions from the Town Council can be answered by the Committee during the presentation.

Edits/Suggestions for the PowerPoint:

- Add to the “Current Regulatory Framework” page that the Town has reached out to the Attorney for legal opinion, and it was reported back that there are no known conflicts with how the ordinance is currently written and is well within the ability of local government.
- Add a “Members” page, to show who served on the Committee.
- Add to “Committee Recommendations” slide:
 - Proposed ordinance
 - Request an extension of the life of the committee, to 3 months max.
 - Hold public comment, prior to finalizing the ordinance.

It was agreed that August would be a good time to hold the public comment meeting. The committee requested that once the Town Council gives them the go ahead, that this meeting be advertised as soon as possible.

6. Discussion of Presenting Proposed Ordinance to Council:

The next steps would be to give the Town Council a report and presentation from the Committee. The committee will be added to the Council’s first meeting in July. The current plan is to submit a report from the committee, with a status update and the draft ordinance, by July 3rd, to then be put on the Council’s July 7th agenda. During the Committee’s report to the Town Council, an extension of their charge will be requested, to a maximum of 3 more months.

At the meeting the Committee Chair, and any members who want to attend, will give a presentation of their study, in terms of what they studied and why they have made the decisions they have made.

Should the Town Council choose to adopt this ordinance, the Home Shooting Range Committee will suggest that public comment meeting be held (by the Committee or Town Council) to get feedback from the

community before finalizing the ordinance. A separate public hearing will also be held prior to adoption. The committee has expressed interest in being involved in the public comment, to answer questions and give a briefing to the community on the purpose of ordinance and what it means.

Drumm suggested that the Committee can hold the public comment at their July 17th meeting, or that meeting could be used to plan the public comment, which could then be held in August or later. August was noted as a better time, since families might be away for the summer.

Motion: I move to present the draft ordinance to the Town Council for their review.

By: Stein

Second: Mangiafico

Discussion: None

Voting: Unanimously in favor

7. Volunteer Handbook Update:

Taylor distributed copies of the updated volunteer handbook, and an acknowledgement receipt form for committee members to sign and return.

He explained that the Town Council updated the handbook with some changes to the handbook. Most notable is the addition of an attendance policy and inclusion of the Town's Ethics Ordinance.

Drumm explained the attendance policy and noted that these changes don't really impact this committee since it has a limited lifespan.

8. Other Business:

It was noted that at the July 7th Town Council meeting, all members are welcome and encouraged to attend for the committee's presentation.

9. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:48 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.

TOWN OF COVENTRY
Resolution 2025-09

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF COVENTRY, CONNECTICUT, EXTENDING THE TERM OF THE “FIREARMS SAFETY/HOME SHOOTING RANGE STUDY COMMITTEE”.

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Coventry passed a resolution on July 1st 2024 titled “A Resolution of the Town of Coventry, Connecticut, establishing a study committee, known as the ‘Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee’; Establishing purpose; Charge; Membership; Representation; Officers; Meetings; Reports; Staff; Minutes; and Providing an effective date”; and

WHEREAS, The “Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee” has thus far fulfilled their charge to the satisfaction of the Town Council and has now formally requested an extension to their term in the furtherance of their duties as established by the aforementioned resolution; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Town Council of the Town of Coventry to allow for the “Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee” sufficient time to adequately solicit and collect public feedback on the subject of their charge such that it may be included in any recommendations made to the Town Council for its consideration.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF COVENTRY, CONNECTICUT THAT: The term of the “Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee” shall be extended by four months from their initial planned end date in July of 2025, to now expire on December 1st 2025. Within this time the Committee may hold regular publicly noticed open meetings at least monthly and may hold additional special meetings as needed. The Committee Chair and/or Vice Chair shall report to the Town Council at a Town Council Meeting the Committee’s research process, findings and recommendations. If an Ordinance is to be recommended, the Chair and/or Vice Chair is to present the draft Ordinance to the Town Council.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Town Council of the Town of Coventry, Connecticut on this 4th day of August 2025.

TOWN OF COVENTRY
TOWN COUNCIL

Lisa Thomas, Chairperson

Attest:

Lori Tollmann, Town Clerk

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 in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws;
- c) Individuals discharging firearms are adequately trained in firearms safety; 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 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. The same requirements apply for the location of the backstop at which projectiles are being directed.

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

- 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~~ 350ft from any structure or enclosed outdoor space occupied by people or domestic animals, or used for the storage of flammable materials 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 an inanimate 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 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 9:00 AM to sunset as 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 The Manchester Sportsmen’s Association, Manchester Coon and Fox Club, or a Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club duly organized in accordance with Town zoning requirements;
- 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.

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

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.

Secs. 66-81 – 66-96 Reserved

DRAFT

Chapter 66 – OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

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DRAFT

Coventry Firearms Safety Committee

Steering Committee Update

Date: July 28, 2025

Presented by:

Brian Murray, Chair

Ken Stein, Vice Chair

Committee Focus

Studied firearms use in Coventry—not just ordinance drafting

Research and understand firearm use in Coventry and the State of Connecticut

Evaluate safe use of firearms in Coventry

Responsibility rests with Coventry Police Department for consistent enforcement

Committee Approach

Reviewed federal, state, and local firearm laws

Studied regulations in other Connecticut municipalities

Collected incident data from Coventry police

Considered solutions for identified issues



Research: Peer Municipalities

Studied practices in:

Towns: Newtown, Tolland, Avon, Cromwell, South Windsor

Cities: Norwalk, Stratford, Middletown, Hartford



Key Issues Identified

Safety risks to users and neighbors

No enforceable local safety guidelines:

- Bullet containment
- Minimum distance from homes

Frequent noise complaints (duration and frequency)

Limited enforcement tools for police

Legal Framework & Gaps

State Law:

- Prohibits unlawful discharge
- 500-foot restriction near dwellings/livestock

Local Gaps:

- No local rules on recreational or backyard firearm use
- Enforcement challenges due to regulatory gaps

Draft Ordinance Overview

Developed with police department input

Reviewed by the Town Attorney

Complies with Connecticut law

Key provisions:

- Minimum safe distances
- Limits on time of day and duration
- Required backstops for bullet containment

Next Steps

Seek Town Council approval to continue

Solicit feedback on public comment process

Present final proposal to the Council for consideration