

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES
Coventry Town Council Meeting
January 5, 2026 7:00 PM
Town Hall Annex

1. Call To Order, Roll Call:

The Meeting was called to order by Council Chairwoman Lisa Thomas at 7:00 PM

Members Present: Lisa Thomas-Chairwoman, Peter Larson-Vice Chairman, Matthew Kyer-Secretary, Jon Hand, Robyn Gallagher, Mark Wheaton, and Julie Blanchard.

Also Present: James Drumm-Town Manager, Cherie Trahan-Finance Director, and Alex Taylor-Special Projects Coordinator.

2. Pledge of Allegiance:

Town Council members stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Audience Of Citizens: (30 Minutes - 5 minutes maximum per citizen):

Chris Kuhn, 70 Riley Mountain Road:

Kuhn shared that he is speaking in opposition of proposed Firearms Safety Ordinance drafted by the Firearms Safety Home Shooting Range Study Committee, as there are too many flaws in the ordinance. He felt the Firearms Committee was biased and had no true representation for average citizens of the Town of Coventry. Additionally, there is no grandfather clause for ranges already approved by Chief of Police, which should strongly be considered.

Kuhn also shared that the ordinance is too vague, quotes hunting regulations that have nothing to do with practice ranges and does not clearly identify a structure containing flammable materials. The ordinance also does not identify sufficient specifications for a backstop.

Kuhn questioned who the responsible party will be for inspecting the ranges, as the Police Chief has stated he would defer to the ordinance. He continued that a Range Safety Officer, unaffiliated with Town Staff, is a more appropriate person to do so.

Kuhn also felt it unfair that restrictions are put on homeowners for a limited time frame to practice shooting, when the same restrictions do not apply to gun clubs and hunting.

Kuhn expressed that this ordinance makes it easier for those who don't want shooting next to their house to prevent it from happening, infringing on 2nd Amendment Rights.

Cheryl Kuhn, 70 Riley Mountain Road:

Kuhn commented that she would like to reiterate everything Chris Kuhn stated and strongly agreed with the statement that there has been no average citizen representation on the Committee.

Kuhn continued that she had been told that her existing berm was safe, then was told it was unsafe and moved it back per request from Chief Peterson. Then noise issues arose, and it became less about safety. Kuhn explained a demonstration was held when firing took place, and officers were at the neighboring property. At that time, Kuhn shared that Chief Peterson stated that the neighbors could live with the noise. For this reason, she believes

she should be allowed a grandfather clause and not being given one infringes on her rights. She continued that both time and money have been wasted by her and the town from this situation.

Kuhn stated that Chief Peterson commented that any existing range would have to comply with an adopted ordinance. She stressed that this is concerning considering her neighbor has built a structure in the middle of the woods to prevent her and her family from shooting.

Kuhn also questioned who would be determining whether or not a backstop is adequate. She felt that if Chief Peterson is the one inspecting the ranges, it makes both him and the town liable.

She also reiterated previous statements that giving home ranges time restrictions when gun clubs do not have to comply with the same restrictions is very hypocritical and encourages neighbors to do policing on time restrictions. She disagreed with this as she claims her neighbor has lied every time they have called Coventry PD to report her shooting.

Kuhn stated this ordinance rewrites CT State Laws that are on the books for hunting, and applies them to home shooting ranges, with the exception of a 250-foot distance requirement. She stressed that the State of CT allows people to conceal carry with a permit, but the Town of Coventry is trying to stop people from practicing safe shooting on their own property.

Jen Beausoleil, 1040 Cedar Swamp Road:

Beausoleil spoke in support of the draft ordinance regarding recreational shooting of firearms going to public hearing.

Beausoleil thanked the volunteers who served on the Committee and felt there was a good combination of people representing experts in the field and interest groups related to recreational firearm use. She also shared gratitude for their genuine interest in a solution to balance community safety and the right to bear arms, the various resources they used during their study, and their patience during the entire process and public comment portions.

Beausoleil reminded that in 1998, there was a fatal shooting of a man walking his dog in her neighborhood. During this time, her neighborhood learned a lot about hunting regulations and gun laws. She explained that she was unaware that the state laws regarding gun safety for hunting do not apply to the discharge of a gun for non-hunting uses.

Beausoleil stated that she supports the right of people to own guns and to bear arms.

Beausoleil explained that she provided feedback to the Firearms Safety Committee that comes from her experience and knowledge stemming from the situation back in 1998, as well as includes a preference for mirroring established hunting laws. She stated appreciation for the distance setbacks as well as the time restrictions.

She encouraged those who find this ordinance unnecessary to look up Cody Adams, from Comanche, OK, who was arrested on Christmas day for the manslaughter death of a neighbor who was simply sitting on her porch, after firing a new handgun at an inadequate backstop.

She stressed that finding a balance between the right to bear arms and common-sense safety guidelines is valuable to the community and reiterated her appreciation for the Committee's work in doing so.

Thomas closed the Audience of Citizens portion of the meeting. Thomas also shared the next steps of the process which include full Town Council discussion of the ordinance tonight, a vote to move it forward to public hearing following a legal review, then the public hearing will be held (date TBD), and then a final Town Council vote to adopt the ordinance after comments made at public hearing. She reminded that after discussion tonight, or after a public hearing, further changes could be suggested and made to the ordinance that requires additional review.

4. Acceptance Of Minutes, December 15, 2025:

Motion: I move to accept the December 15, 2025, Town Council Meeting Minutes:

By: Hand

Second: Kyer

Discussion/Edits:

- Pg. 9, last paragraph, last sentence, change "their debt" to "debt service".
- Pg. 10, 1st paragraph, 1st and 4th sentences, add "service" in-between "debt profile".
- Pg. 7, Under 6.C., 3rd paragraph, starting with "Larson noted...", last sentence change "BOR" to "BOE".
- Pg. 8, 8th bullet down, 1st sentence, change "meet" to "met".
- Pg. 8, last paragraph, 2nd line up from the bottom, change "a" to "are".
- Pg. 9, last bullet under 8.A., and 1st sentence under "Questions and Comments", change "cabin chassis" to "cab and chassis".
- Pg. 9, Under 8.A., 3rd paragraph under "Questions and Comments", 1st line, change "intercoms" to "intercom".
- Pg. 14, Under 8.C., under "Discussion", strike the 2nd paragraph that states, "Drumm explained that he has spoken to the attorney, who informed that the Town Council still has the authority to change the Deputy Town Manager should they feel the Town Manager's appointment is not fit for the job."

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard.

Against:

Abstain:

5. Consent Agenda:

All items listed with an asterisk (*) will be acted on by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Council member so requests, in which case, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

Motion: I move to accept the consent agenda.

By: Hand

Second: Gallagher

Discussion: None.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

6. Reports:

6.A. Council Chairwoman: Lisa Thomas:

Thomas read the following report:

- Happy New Year to our community! I look forward to shining a bright light on our town and working to build on all that makes it a wonderful place to live.
- I attended the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) quarterly meeting of chief elected municipal leaders. Hartford's Mayor Arulampalam hosted us at Hartford Stage. Our discussion focused for the most part of transit systems and how we can support expansion east of the river. This is one of the CRCOG legislative priorities this session. We also discussed the role of the arts in bringing vitality to our cities and towns. Part of the discussion was around the possibility of creating an arts trail throughout the CRCOG region and tying it into public transit.
- My office hours this month will be on Thursday, January 22. Come chat with me at the Senior Center from 11-12 or at the Booth and Dimock Library from 6:30-7:30.
- For my fellow Councilors, please note that Vice Chair Peter Larson and I have a standing meeting with the Town Manager on the fourth Thursday of the month. Please let me know if there are ever items you would like brought to the Town Manager during those meetings. Please remember as well that you can always send suggestions to me for regular agenda items.

6.B. Council Members: None

6.C. Steering Committee: Jonathan Hand, Chairperson:

Hand reported that many of the items from the last Steering Committee Meeting will be discussed later on tonight's agenda.

6.C.1. Steering Committee Recommended Appointments:

6.C.1.a. Conservation Commission: Coss:

Motion: I move to appoint Brian Coss to the Conservation Commission for a term to expire 1/1/2030, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Kyer

Discussion: It was noted that Coss currently serves as Chair.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

6.C.1.b. Human Rights Commission: Bauch:

Motion: I move to appoint Elizabeth Bauch to the Human Rights Commission for a term to expire 1/1/2028, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Kyer

Discussion: Hand commented her efforts and enthusiasm are welcome.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

6.C.1.c. Human Rights Commission: Conant:

Motion: I move to appoint Lisa Conant to the Human Rights Commission for a term to expire 1/1/2028, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Kyer

Discussion: Hand thanked Conant for her continued service and noted she currently serves as Chair.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

6.C.1.d. Human Rights Commission: Martin:

Motion: I move to appoint Richard Martin to the Human Rights Commission for a term to expire 1/1/2028, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Kyer

Discussion: Blanchard asked about political party balance, as all 3 are from the same party. Hand noted this was reviewed and confirmed to be OK and reminded all 3 candidates were previously serving. Hand thanked Martin for his continued service.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

6.C.1.e. Pension & Retirement Committee: Belsito:

Motion: I move to appoint Sam Belsito to the Pension and Retirement Committee for a term to expire 1/1/2029, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Kyer

Discussion: Hand noted that Belsito is currently serving as Chair and thanked him for his continued service. Hand also noted that this Committee was able to begin meeting again today, as it finally had enough members for a quorum.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

6.C.1.f. Veterans Memorial & Events Commission: DePaola, Jamie:

Motion: I move to appoint Jamie DePaola to the Veterans Memorial and Events Commission for a term to expire 1/1/2028, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Blanchard

Discussion: Hand thanked her for her continued service.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain: Thomas

6.C.1.g. Veterans Memorial & Events Commission: DePaola, Peter:

Motion: I move to appoint Peter DePaola to the Veterans Memorial and Events Commission for a term to expire 1/1/2028, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Blanchard

Discussion: Hand thanked him for his continued service, and for continuing as Chair.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain: Thomas

6.C.1.h. Veterans Memorial & Events Commission: Glenney:

Motion: I move to appoint William Glenney to the Veterans Memorial and Events Commission for a term to expire 1/1/2028, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Kyer

Discussion: Hand thanked him for his continued service.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

6.C.1.i. Veterans Memorial & events Commission: Nowsch:

Motion: I move to appoint Rick Nowsch to the Veterans Memorial and Events Commission for a term to expire 1/1/2028, as recommended by Steering.

By: Hand

Second: Kyer

Discussion: Hand thanked him for his continued service.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

6.D. *Finance Committee: Robyn Gallagher, Chairperson:

6.D.1. * 12-8-2025 Finance Committee Minutes: [18801](#)

6.E. *COVRRRA

6.F. Town Manager: James D. Drumm:

6.F.1. Projects/Issues Update:

Town Manager Drumm shared the following highlights:

- LOTCIP (Local Transportation Capital Improvement Project)- Provides grant funding through CRCOG and allows municipalities to have 2 active projects at 1 time. Coventry currently has 2 underway, both in the engineering stage. However, the South Street project appears to be ready to go to construction in the near future. A presentation from town staff will be given to the Town Council in early February in order to request Town Council approval to move forward in seeking funding. Drumm explained there is a deadline for the end of February to get funding applications in.
- Charter Revision Commission- The Commission continues to meet, and has meetings scheduled for January 7th and January 15th. At the next meeting, they plan to have discussions with the Registrars of Voters and the Town Clerk.
- Committee/Commission Reviews- The 1st review and report was on the Parks and Recreation Commission. The proposed ordinance was presented to the Steering Committee, who reviewed suggestions from the Parks and Rec Commission as well as completed an in-depth review themselves. The amended draft ordinance recommended by the Steering Committee is later on tonight's agenda.
- Plains Road/Salt Impacted Wells- The town is still waiting for the project to be cleared by DPH, in order to go to bid. Drumm expects to go to bid in January, in order to stay on track with the amended schedule.

- Aquatic Invasive Species Grant- This opened in December, and Coventry submitted an application for funding for the upcoming year. The hope is to receive \$75,000 to put towards hydrilla treatments for Coventry Lake.
- Road Resurfacing- The 2025 Road Resurfacing Program has ended, and the DPW Director is actively reviewing road conditions, and will continue to do so through the winter to put together the 2026 Road Resurfacing Program and have a list for potential road bond projects in the future.

Questions/Comments:

LOTICIP- Gallagher wanted to share, for public knowledge, that in order to get LOTICIP funding, roads need to meet certain criteria. She wanted to clarify this so that Coventry residents don't feel as though the town is overlooking other roads in town in need of repairs.

Wheaton asked when the Charter Revision Commission is supposed to put forth their recommendations. Drumm informed that they will be bringing a final draft to the Town Council in May. Thomas reminded all Councilors that there is a dedicated portion of the Town's website that has all the related documents and statutory requirements for the Charter Revision.

7. Unfinished Business:

7.A. 25/26-27: Consideration/possible action: Town Council goals for 2025-2027:

Thomas reminded this was discussed at the last meeting. Some minor tweaks were made, and a final draft brought back to the Town Council. All requested edits were confirmed to be made.

Additional Town Council Edits:

- 1st bullet, 2nd line, change "Town Manager-Town Council Government" to "Town Council-Town Manager Government".

Motion: I move to adopt the Town Council goals for 2025-2027.

By: Larson

Second: Wheaton

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

8. New Business:

8.A. 25/26-29: Consideration/Possible Action to Call for a Public Hearing: Amendment and Update of Parks and Rec Commission Ordinance:

Motion: I move to approve the wording of the proposed updated Parks and Recreation Ordinance and to call for a public hearing on this Ordinance for February 2, 2026, at 7:00 PM to be held in the Town Hall Annex.

By: Larson

Second: Kyer

Discussion: Thomas suggested moving the public hearing to the February 17th meeting, as the ordinance still needs to be reviewed by legal counsel, and there are other large priority items on the February 2nd agenda, and she does not want to over crowd it.

Gallagher commented that it appears that the revised ordinance takes the obligations of day-to-day operations off of the Parks and Rec Commission and places the responsibility with the Parks and Rec Director, which she feels makes perfect sense.

Gallagher questioned Section 70-70, which states, “The Director may choose to consult with the Commission on proposed regulations.” and was curious why that language was used. She felt using the “may” does not bind the Parks and Rec Director to do so and felt that regulations should always be brought forward for a consultation process. Drumm explained that the regulations discussed were more day-to-day administrative regulations that don’t need to wait 30 days for the Commission to meet. He added that this does not necessarily include statutory regulations, and why the “may” language was used. He reminded that important items are suggested to be brought to the Commission and stated that it is always in the benefit of the town to ask Committees and Commissions for their advice on anything that will have a community impact.

Blanchard agreed with Gallagher’s comments and felt that if there were regulation changes, that there should be Town Council input. Thomas noted that the use of the word regulation seems to be throwing people off, as it is typically used with a law or ordinance, but that is not the intention of the word “regulation” in this context. She suggested using “rules” but was unsure if that is legally accurate.

Blanchard also suggested that there are certain matters that the Town Council should be aware of. Thomas agreed but reminded that the Parks and Rec Director should not have to come to the Town Council or Parks and Rec Commission to put up “No Parking” signs and things of the like.

Gallagher agreed and stated having smaller items go before the Commission could become burdensome and can slow town operations. However, she feels the definition is somewhat loose and shared concerns that things could happen outside of the public view. Gallagher suggested changing the sentence to say, “The Director shall apprise the Commission on proposed or new regulations.” She explained that way, a memo can be presented to the Commission on what is happening, and if they chose to discuss, it can be added to their agenda, but the action does not need to wait for the Commission to have the discussion. It also allows the information to become available to the public.

Blanchard asked to discuss Section 70-31, as the language was changed quite a bit from the original version. The Council discussed that this section lays out the responsibilities and involvement of the Commission and does so in a cleaner format. Thomas stated that she feels that how it is currently written spells out more than was originally included. She added that the Commission having responsibility over day-to-day operations existed prior to their being a Parks and Recreation Director.

Gallagher suggested that in Section 70-34 that the word “proposed” be added before “department”, so the Section reads, “The Commission shall annually review the proposed Department operating budget and recommend capital improvements to the Director during the regular budgetary process.”, to clarify that the Commission will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposal. She reminded that the Commission does not have the final say in setting the budget and never did.

Blanchard commented that she did not like how the whole Commission review went down, and how the Commission was made to feel. She added that she feels the process should have been more inclusive with them. She suggested that when it is time to review another Committee or Commission that Steering has more input, have more discussions with the Town Manager and town staff, and be more inclusive with whatever Commission or Committee is under review.

Thomas agreed that this process was adversarial from the beginning, but Special Project Coordinator Alex Taylor worked with the Commission in depth, and the Steering Chair requested that the Commission members submit their own comments about the process and their thoughts. Unfortunately, due to some miscommunications at the beginning, this led to negative comments all around. Taylor added that the Parks and Rec Director Lesley Munshower met with the Commission on multiple occasions and spoke with them regularly throughout the process.

Hand agreed that things got started off on the wrong foot and hopes that things were learned from this process. However, he commented that throughout the process there was ample communication between the Steering Committee, town staff, Parks and Recreation Commission members. He hopes Parks and Rec Commission members feel they have had sufficient opportunity to get their point across.

Blanchard reminded that she understands the role of town staff but commented that the Parks and Rec Commission members are those who live in the community and use the parks and participate in the programs. She continued that not all town staff live in town and may not truly understand how Coventry citizens like things. Blanchard shared that she fears the town could lose a little bit of the community, and citizens may lose faith in the Town Council or town staff.

Thomas understood Blanchard's point, but felt that town staff, teachers, police officers, etc., who work in Coventry but don't live in Coventry, still have interest in what is best for Coventry.

Thomas also reminded that the responsibility of the Town Council is to look past the people currently in Board Member seats, or those currently employed as that is not going to be the person serving that position forever, and actions need to be carried into the future beyond the current moment. She reminded that it needed to be reviewed to see who should be handling daily operations, legal decisions, and policy decisions. Additionally, there were items in the original ordinance that contradicted current state statutes.

Thomas added appreciation for the many hours that went into reviewing and discussing the ordinance by all those involved.

Blanchard discussed Section 70-87, subsection (d), and wanted to confirm that the Parks and Recreation Commission was the correct authority to give permission, or if it was an oversight. Drumm confirmed that off-trail use needs the written permission of the Parks and Recreation Commission, as it is not an emergency situation.

Gallagher agreed with Blanchard's point and stated that there seem to be some areas where the written permission of the Town Manager or Parks and Rec Director is required, and others where permission of the Parks and Rec Commission is needed. She was curious as to how that distinction was made. Thomas discussed that there may be a time where a person is seeking permission outside policy, and the Parks and Rec Commission is not meeting for 2 maybe 4 weeks, and it is best to have authority for permission to be granted in

a shorter time frame, which is why the Town Manager or Parks and Rec Director have that authority in many places. Certain matters where time isn't necessarily that important, the Commission was thought to have authority so that they can still have a say and be involved. For consistency, it was suggested that the written permission be given from the Town Manager and/or Parks and Rec Director. However, the Commission can still be involved in requests that are not time sensitive. Thomas reminded that the Town Manager and Parks and Rec Director are adhering to policies set into place by the Commission and as listed in the ordinance.

To make the ordinance consistent, it was recommended that if the Commission designates the use, then the Parks and Rec Director would give the exception.

Additional Town Council Edits Summary:

- Change the Public Hearing date to February 17th, 2026.
- Section 70-70, Change "The Director may choose to consult with the Commission on proposed regulations." to "The Director shall apprise the Commission on proposed or new regulations."
- Section 70-34, add the "proposed" before "department", so the Section reads, "The Commission shall annually review the proposed Department operating budget and recommend capital improvements to the Director during the regular budgetary process."
- Section 70-87, subsection (d), change "specifically designated by the Parks and Recreation Department for that purpose without the express written permission of the Commission or its designated representative" to "specifically designated by the Parks and Recreation Commission for that purpose without the express written permission of the Town Manager or the Director."
- Section 70-87, subsection (d), add a comma after "ski" and "walkways".

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

8.B. 25/26-30: Consideration/Possible Action to Call for a Public Hearing: Adoption of Firearms Safety Ordinance Recommended by Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee:

Motion: I move to approve the wording of the proposed Firearms Safety Ordinance and to call for a public hearing on this Ordinance for March 2, 2026, at 7:00 PM to be held in the Town Hall Annex.

By: Larson

Second: Hand

Discussion: Hand read from Drumm's summary sheet to give background on the proposed ordinance. Hand asked if any Councilors had questions or comments regarding the proposed ordinance.

Gallagher thanked the Firearms Committee, and those who attended the meetings to comment. She shared that firearms concerns are not ones that she is familiar with based on the location of her residence in town. For that reason, she explained that she defers to the experienced individuals who are on the committee and have come in to speak about their background and experiences. She encouraged interested individuals to attend the public hearing on March 2nd to hear feedback from the community.

Gallagher did note that in Section 66-78, subsection (b), she felt that it was not clear in how it related to subsection (a). Gallagher suggested that subsection (b) read, “Persons wishing to discharge Firearms shall select a four (4) hour window per calendar day in accordance with subsection (a) in which to do so.” The other Councilors felt this was clarifying and agreed with this change.

Thomas shared, based on comments brought up during Audience of Citizens, that people who buy their homes near a gun club are expected to have done their research and have reasonable expectations about the noise and frequency of gunfire they hear. However, someone buying a home in a residential area, not near a gun club, is likely not expecting to hear gunfire regularly. If a home range is built on a property next to them, it could become disruptive to their quality of life, depending on usage. She added that this is an important distinction and stressed the importance of both firearms safety along with the quality-of-life aspects in these situations.

Thomas stated that the next step is to vote to approve having this ordinance reviewed by Town Attorneys in preparation to go to a public hearing on March 2nd, 2026.

Blanchard asked Gallagher if she felt this ordinance was an infringement on rights. Gallagher explained that this is not her area of expertise. Gallagher did state that the only other issue she saw related to the definition of Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club. She was curious if there is already a clear definition of this somewhere, like CT General State Statutes, rather than the town staff creating their own definition, which could be conflicting.

Taylor explained that he did look for a standardized definition or term and was unable to find one. He continued that this definition was constructed during discussions with the members of the Firearms Committee who have experience apart of shooting ranges and gun clubs.

Taylor responded to Blanchard's concerns about infringement of rights, and explained that upon primary review of the ordinance, his understanding of the attorney's response is that there is nothing within the ordinance that seems out of line or unusual compared to other types of regulations used by other municipalities in the State of CT. He added that nothing is truly known unless the ordinance was brought before a court of law. It was clarified that the attorney will issue a new letter following their next review of the final draft. Drumm added that changes were made from the primary review that made the ordinance less restrictive and feels that it is in good shape. Once an updated letter is received from the attorney, it will be attached to the meeting agenda when the public hearing for this ordinance is scheduled.

Blanchard shared that she is not in favor of being restricted on her private property and stated that there are CT General State Statutes and laws that cover homeowners firing a firearm in a manner to cause bodily injury or death. She expressed that she is not concerned about responsible gun owners in town exercising their rights on their private property.

Additional Town Council Edits Summary:

- Section 66-78, subsection (b) be edited to read, “Persons wishing to discharge Firearms shall select a four (4) hour window per calendar day in accordance with subsection (a) in which to do so.”

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, and Larson.

Against: Wheaton and Blanchard

Abstain:

Thomas explained that following the edits suggested tonight, the final draft ordinance will go to town attorneys for review. Then the process will be followed to advertise a public hearing to be held on March 2nd.

8.C. 25/26-31: Consideration/Possible Action: Modification to Senior Center Van/Bus Driver Job

Description:

Motion: I move to approve the wording of the proposed job description for Senior Center Van/Bus Driver.

By: Larson

Second: Wheaton

Discussion: Drumm explained that the job description was outdated from a time when there was 1 bus driver. Since that time, the Senior Center has added a Transportation Coordinator, and multiple van/bus drivers. The original job description had higher requirements for licensing, higher than a commercial CDL, and it had been difficult to find a candidate with that required license. He explained that people have applied who have lower-level licenses that allow them to drive the van (primarily used), but not the bus, which hinders the hiring process.

It was suggested to amend the job description to have lower-level license requirements. During the description amendments, it allowed Taylor the opportunity to bring this job description up to date with the current formatting.

Drumm continued that at the last Steering meeting, the Steering members found that the job description included outdated responsibilities and abilities for this position that existed prior to the town having a transportation coordinator. These responsibilities and desired abilities were removed.

Hand commented that with these changes, it should expand the pool of applicants and make it easier for the town to provide this service.

Drumm clarified that the van and bus drivers are a small network of part-time employees who take seniors to appointments, shopping, etc. He added that the van/bus driver position is fully grant funded, and no Coventry tax dollars are used for these positions.

Larson questioned how long grant funding will allow the town to have these positions. Drumm explained that the grant funding is periodically reviewed. He stated that there have been concerns with the potential of losing federal funding that could impact this, but the grant has been consistently received for more than 10 years and seems like solid funding. He added that the amount received has increased over time. This has allowed the funds to be built up. In the case that federal funding was lost, there are enough funds built up to continue this service for about a year.

Blanchard commented that Drumm mentioned the van/bus driver takes Seniors to medical appointments and shopping, but that is not listed in the Position Purpose of the job description. It only specifically lists transportation to and from the Senior Center and enrichment activities. Taylor expressed that he could edit to purpose to be more inclusive. Drumm felt it should be more general. Thomas suggested that the purpose state, "Provides comprehensive, efficient, and safe transportation for the Town's elderly and individuals with

disabilities to and from such places as the Coventry Senior Center, enrichment activities, medical appointments, or other department approved activities.”

Blanchard commented that the 1st bullet under Essential Duties and Responsibilities list transporting up to 14 passengers, but the vans and buses do not have that type of capacity. Drumm agreed that the vehicles can transport 12, and that number could be changed. Thomas suggested leaving it to allow for flexibility. Blanchard questioned the 5th bullet, as she felt the duty requirements are well above the pay grade. These duties were reviewed and agreed that these responsibilities would be required of the transportation coordinator. The Town Council had consensus to strike the 5th bullet of the Essential Duties and Responsibilities section.

Additional Town Council Edits Summary:

- Change Position Purpose to read, “Provides comprehensive, efficient, and safe transportation for the Town’s elderly and individuals with disabilities to and from such places as the Coventry Senior Center, enrichment activities, medical appointments, or other department approved activities.”
- Under Essential Duties and Responsibilities, strike the 5th bullet.

Voting:

For: Kyer, Hand, Gallagher, Thomas, Larson, Wheaton, and Blanchard

Against:

Abstain:

9. Miscellaneous/Correspondence:

9.A. * Board of Education: Minutes 12/11/25

10. Executive Session:

- Personnel:

Motion: I move that the Town Council enter into Executive Session pursuant to the Connecticut General State Statutes 1-200 (6)(A): discussion concerning the employment, appointment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee with the following in attendance, all members of the Town Councilors (Jon Hand, Matthew Kyer, Robyn Gallagher, Lisa Thomas, Peter Larson, Julie Blanchard, and Mark Wheaton), Town Manager James Drumm, and Finance Director Cherie Trahan.

By: Gallagher

Second: Blanchard

The Town Council entered Executive Session by unanimous vote at 9:09 PM.

The Town Council exited Executive Session at 9:49 PM.

11. Adjournment:

Motion: I move that the Town Council adjourn the meeting at 9:49 PM.

By: Kyer

Second: Wheaton

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 PM by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Archambault

Nicole Archambault, Minutes Clerk

PLEASE NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Coventry Town Council at the next Town Council meeting. Please see the next Town Council meeting minutes for approval or changes to these minutes.