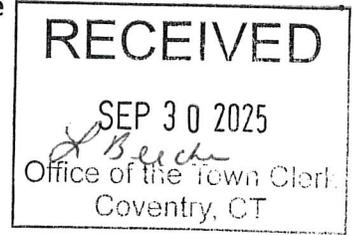


**Town of Coventry
Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 18, 2025**



1. Call To Order, Roll Call:

By: Murray Time: 6:31 p.m. Place: Town Hall Annex

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

Also present: Special Projects Coordinator Alex Taylor

2. Approval Of Minutes:

A. Minutes, August 21, 2025:

Motion: I move to accept the August 21, 2025, Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee Meeting Minutes.

By: Mangiafico

Second: Brand

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimously in favor

3. Presentation on FS/HSRSC's Process:

Murray introduced himself and explained the purpose of obtaining feedback from the community. Murray then gave a brief presentation on why the committee was formed, who serves on the committee, and what the committee is charged with.

He reminded that while hunting laws and regulations were looked at for guidelines, they are solely regulated by the state and DEEP and were not an area of focus for this committee, nor are any hunting laws or regulations impacted by their work.

Murray highlighted the committee's approach to looking at issues and areas of study. Murray also explained the point of the draft ordinance and shared a timeline from where they began, where they are, and the next steps following this meeting. He noted that the Committee received an extension from the Town Council for the main purpose of hosting this feedback session. This feedback session is strictly for the committee to receive feedback to make edits as seen fit.

He reminded that this committee will be making a recommendation to the Town Council regarding the ordinance. From that point, it will be the Town Council's decision to either dismiss or adopt the ordinance. If the Town Council chooses to adopt the ordinance, a public hearing will need to take place which will be another opportunity to share thoughts and opinions regarding the ordinance.

A copy of the Committee's presentation is attached at the end of the minutes.

Murray requested that Alex Taylor read the draft ordinance in its entirety.

Link to draft ordinance: [Microsoft Word - Firearms Ordinance Draft Language 5](#)

4. **Public Comment:** (1 Hour - 5 minutes maximum per citizen - Feedback will not be taken over Zoom):

Bill Glenney, 664 Silver Street:

Glenney thanked the members and the committee for working on what they were tasked with from the Town Council to address the potential safety and wellbeing of the town. However, he is strongly against the proposed ordinance. He felt this was an issue that started between two neighbors who were unable to get along. The matter could have been resolved in court, but the Town Council decided to take steps in order to solve the problem. The solution proposed puts the Coventry Police Department front and center in a place that they have no business being. Additionally, the proposed ordinance turns law abiding citizens exercising their 2nd amendment right, into criminals. Glenney stated that he feels multiple sections of the ordinance do nothing to protect the safety and wellbeing of residents. He feels that the ordinance also places liability on the Police Department and the town, and the requirements for a safe shooting range are ill-defined. Glenney also felt the requirement of 350 ft for a minimum distance is unrealistic as an individual would need to have at least 11 acres of land. If someone had less than 11 acres, they would need to obtain written permission from the neighbor in order to shoot recreationally on their own property. He read a quote from previous meeting minutes that indicated that 350ft was chosen, as the Police Chief was more comfortable with that distance. Glenney continued that the 9 AM start time does nothing for safety and is strictly arbitrary. As is notifying the police department prior to shooting and having a 4-hour shooting window.

Glenney felt that having shooting ranges be permitted or inspected should be avoided as the Coventry Police Officers are not experts on home shooting ranges and would have to rely on varying common sense.

Glennay stated that the proposed ordinance confuses hunting and target shooting. By CT Statutes, hunting is allowed (in season) 1-hour before sunrise and 1-hour after sunset without having to call the Police Department or limiting hunting to 4 hours or less.

Glennay shared concerns that if a law-abiding gun owner violates the ordinance, they may find themselves failing a national background check the next time shopping for firearms.

Glennay concluded thanking the members for their time and energy but urged that the proposed ordinance be stopped. He felt that the Police Department should not be so deeply involved and suggested that a zoning ordinance be considered instead.

Mark Wheaton, 1066 Grant Hill Road:

Wheaton shared that he is against the proposed ordinance. He continued that while he does not have the data the committee reviewed, he feels that this has become a big solution for a small problem. Should this ordinance be passed, the whole town will suffer because of a few individuals.

Wheaton also made a point that it seems a large part of the issues are driven by noise complaints. Wheaton added that there are many other things in town that make loud, disruptive noises, and perhaps the town should look into having a noise ordinance instead, as an alternative solution.

Wheaton felt it was unnecessary to add another ordinance on top of all the current regulations CT has for firearms.

Chris Morgan, 62 North Ayers Road:

Morgan felt that this ordinance was an example of tyranny and did not think that it should have gotten this far. He was curious if there were any crimes committed that warranted this ordinance.

Morgan continued that he feels that this ordinance violates constitutional rights and feels the Town Council is trying to tell residents what they can and can't do in their own yard. He felt that the ordinance is a wrong solution to a non-existent problem and is trying to strip residents of their rights. Especially when no crime was committed or person injured.

He felt that the Police Department should be less involved, and that neighbors should talk to each other to resolve things.

Morgan explained that there is no clear definition in the ordinance of what an adequate backstop is. He also disagreed that he should have to call the police department 15 minutes prior to shooting in his backyard.

Morgan also asked if all calls that come into the Police Department are FOIA eligible, which Chief Peterson confirmed. Morgan felt that if he were to call, they don't know who he is, or that he has guns, and now that information is accessible due to FOIA.

Morgan reminded that the 2nd amendment is in place to keep the states/government in place. Having to call the "state" by way of law enforcement is unacceptable. Additionally, he stated that a 4-hour time limit

is unacceptable, as he should be able to shoot as often as he feels he wants to. He reminded that there is a historical stone in town that stands for those who fought to protect these rights with the consequences of being hung. He felt that having this ordinance in face of that fact is completely ridiculous.

Morgan questioned if trap shooting, or turkey shooting is considered recreational, and if it is, it does not use a backstop which means it can't be done in Coventry. Brand clarified these are done at a club, which is exempt from the ordinance.

Morgan asked several questions about crime and property damage that sparked the ordinance. Chief Peterson explained that this is not the time for back-and-forth commentary, and he would be happy to answer Morgan's questions at a different time.

Michael Kowar, 78 Riley Mountain Road:

Kowar shared that he is a long-term resident and gun owner. Kowar shared information regarding the incident with his neighbors on Riley Mountain Road, where they were shooting close to his home on more than one occasion. He noted one of which was the Mother's Day holiday that he was trying to celebrate with his elderly parents, who were startled and disturbed by the gun fire that went on for an hour. He stressed that he did not move to a residential neighborhood in the country to live next to his neighbor's home gun range.

Kowar explained that when the police responded to his call to investigate the situation, there was not much they could do to stop the reckless behavior or gun fire. The neighbors continued to shoot once the police left. Kowar explained he is in support of the ordinance and requests that the distance be increased to 500 ft.

Kowar shared that his neighbors claim to be shooting over 300 ft from his home but have friends over to shoot high powered rifles that can be heard clearly through closed doors and windows. Kowar is shocked that with all the gun laws in CT, there is nothing on the books in Coventry to stop him, and others, from being harassed by his neighbor's gun fire. He requested that the ordinance be passed in order to stop those who agitate and intimidate others with their gun fire.

Kowar shared that without such, the neighbor was allowed to spread lies, fabricate stories, and slander his name all throughout social media in order to try and disguise what actually happened. Additionally, he explained that the neighbors lied to the civil courts and requested restraining orders against him for threatening. He explained that they were found dishonest in their claims, and the charges were dropped. However, this cost him his time, money to hire a lawyer, and caused stress. He added that they also tried to have his guns confiscated during this time, which shows they are not serious about 2nd amendment rights. He added that 2nd amendment rights come with responsibilities.

Kowar stressed that as a taxpaying homeowner in town, he should be able to enjoy his property in peace, without having to fear raising his family next to a homemade gun range. Without laws in place, claimed he is defenseless to protect his home and property.

Chief Peterson explained, after several interruptions, that there are more issues that the Police Department deals with that involve much more than the 2 Riley Mountain neighbors. So much so, that it was deemed in best interest to have a committee study the matters and look for a solution.

Cheryl Kuhn, 70 Riley Mountain Road:

Kuhn explained that she is a lifelong resident, who has lived down the street from the Manchester Coon and Fox Club and has heard gun shots all day, every day.

Kuhns explained that she is shocked that the Town Council and the Police Chief has allowed someone to move into town and make false statements on Police Report. She is also shocked that the Town Council would choose to develop a committee to study the issue based on lies.

Kuhn shared that she is disturbed that the Police Department used these false claims against her, along with playing her music too loud to serve an arrest warrant. Additionally, these false statements and charges were disclosed to a committee in an open forum, when the case is sealed.

Kuhn informed that she was arrested by Detective Carpenter and Sargeant Combs and wasn't told until much later that she was being charged for disorderly conduct. She requested to see the body cam footage from the arrest and asked Chief Peterson if his officers are liars. She also explained that she met with Chief Peterson to discuss the arrest and incorrect information on the statement presented to the committee. Chief Peterson explained he was misquoted in the minutes, and the statement was corrected to clarify that Kuhns was arrested for disorderly conduct and intentionally antagonizing with a firearm. Kuhns shared that she has spoken with other law enforcements who informed her that if that was truly the case, her firearms would have been taken away.

Kuhns stated that she has sent 4 emails, requesting information through FOIA, to Chief Peterson, Town Manager, the Police Captain, the records department, Laura Stone, and Lisa Thomas to get a copy of the application for the arrest warrant. She explained that she has not received a reply to this day.

Kuhn continued that Chief Peterson requested that the requirements of calling the Police Department remain in the ordinance as a way to avoid problems. She added that he also stated that people's information had a higher chance of being protected that way. Additionally, he had stated that it would save department resources if they were only dispatched if there was a problem. Kuhn explained that she disagrees with this statement, as she always called ahead of time to let the Police Department know they were shooting, and the police still came to their house every time because her neighbor was calling and spreading lies.

Kuhn stated that Chief Peterson looked into CT State Statute 29-28 which indicates not to disclose the name of a person(s) who have been issued permits to sell or carry firearms. However, he has no problem having a person's address be included in the minutes of a meeting regarding a gun range. She clarified that she does not think a person would have a home shooting range if they did not have guns.

Kuhn commented that she does not see anything in the ordinance that protects her and was curious where her 'grandfather clause' is. She also felt that the distance of 250 ft is fine, but 350 ft is excessive. The additional 100 ft will not make a substantial difference noise wise.

Kuhn also shared a photo of her range, and explained that at her home range, they have an adequate backstop of 4 tons of sand, and 6-to-8-inch logs. She emphasized that she is not shooting at or into trees.

Chris Kuhn, 70 Riley Mountain Road:

Kuhn shared that Coventry has been established for over 200 years and has never needed a gun ordinance before. Most people who shoot on their property or have a home range do so safely. He stated that it has only come to this because a resident has made false claims to the Police, the Town Council, the state, and the court.

Kuhn commented that he was under the impression the purpose of this committee was to gather information, not create a draft ordinance. He also commented that information was gathered from cities, most of which are not around Coventry.

Kuhn stated that he is a licensed gun owner, vetted by the federal government, and a member of the NRA and CCDL. He agreed that 250 ft is a good base for distance, but only as a last resort and should only be applied to a living dwelling. He stated that regardless of caliber being shot, the distance of 250 ft to 350 ft makes no difference noise wise.

Kuhn also stated that he was led to believe that this committee looked at reports of home shooting ranges in all areas of town, but his address was listed multiple times. The committee then gathered information from lies on police reports.

Kuhn continued that it was a goal of the committee to look into safety, however there is little information about a proper backstop or materials to be used.

Kuhn does not think this ordinance should be established, as it is biased on a grand scale and there are too many things included in the ordinance that restrict 2nd amendment rights. It only caters to a few residents in town and the gun clubs.

Jennifer Beausoleil, 1040 Cedar Swamp Road:

Beausoleil thanked the committee for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding recreational shooting of firearms. She appreciates the work of the volunteers.

Beausoleil shared that in 1998, there was a fatal shooting of a man walking his dog on a Sunday morning in her neighborhood. Due to this, the neighborhood and community learned a lot about hunting laws and safety recommendations. Beausoleil explained that she was unaware that the state's hunting laws did not apply to the discharge of a firearm for non-hunting uses.

Beausoleil explained that she supports the 2nd amendment rights to own guns and bear arms. However, she felt that the ordinance should mirror existing hunting laws. She thanked the committee for using similar language. Beausoleil asked for the following revisions, referencing a setback distance from public lands such as parks, fields, playgrounds, and school properties. These locations are open land that are regularly used by people, but the distance is greater than 350 ft. She also asked that it be considered that the backstop location needs to be outside the 20 ft and 50 ft setbacks currently in the zoning laws. This will prevent

accidental misunderstanding, as property lines are not always clear. Beausoleil also asked that it be a recommendation to notify the police department before recreational shooting rather than it be a requirement.

Beausoleil stressed that there needs to be a balance of protecting the 2nd amendment rights and using common sense for safety guidelines. She thanked the committee for including this in the ordinance.

Zack Veilleux, 599 Grant Hill Road:

Thanked the committee for hosting this public comment session. He shared that he is a father to a 2-year-old daughter and has a personal vested interest ensuring the community he is raising her in, is a safe one.

However, he believes that that current draft ordinance is flawed and would not pass a legal review. The ordinance does not even address the most important aspect of safety.

Veilleux felt that the ordinance goes against certain laws, and the definition of air gun is too broad. He understands the purpose of defining it this way, but it goes beyond what it should be intended to include. With the current definition, it could include projectiles like sling shots and nerf guns.

Additionally, the definition of gun club is also vague and ambiguous. The level of training should be clearly defined. Further, the definition of backstop is also flawed, as it states it should be designed to contain bullets, but does not include design features the backstop should incorporate. The language also suggests that the back stop should be an intentionally manmade structure, which will prevent someone from using naturally occurring terrain.

Veilleux also suggested that the form of written permission be clearly defined as well and standardized like hunting consent forms. He also shared that he feels the distance requirements unfairly exclude a large portion of the town's population. It would require 8 acres in a circular area, or 11 acres in a square parcel. Veilleux mentioned that secondary action targets, are prohibited per the ordinance, but there are some on the market that are safe to use and should be allowed.

He discussed the time frame of not being able to shoot after dark and commented that most self-defense incidents happen at night. It is common practice for homeowners to have a flashlight attached to their firearms for safety reasons and positive identification of a threat. The Police Department allows for training at night in order for the officers to use their firearms safely. The time-of-day limits does not allow for a homeowner the ability to practice for these situations.

Veilleux also stated that contacting the police department prior to shooting is contradictory. The Police Chief has indicated in past minutes that the call can be used as a guideline for the start of the 4-hour shooting window and can aid in saving personnel resources. Veilleux explained that it has been stated many times that the calls are not logged, and the only record would be on the dispatcher's notepad, which is thrown away at the end of the night. He claimed that this would be destruction of evidence in a court of law. He felt a lot of the points included in the ordinance is based off Chief Peterson's rhetoric and should not be used to create a law. He felt the proposed ordinance unfairly discriminates law-abiding gun owners and does not address the many other loud noise disturbances in town like barking dogs and cars with illegal mufflers that people in town deal with daily.

Veilleux concluded by requesting that Carolyn Batz be removed from the Committee as she has been absent for 50% of the meetings, which is unacceptable. He volunteered to replace her spot if necessary.

Kristine Michaud, 1049 Merrow Road:

Michaud stated that she has lived in Coventry most of her life. She was unaware that home shooting ranges were such an issue. She explained that she is against the ordinance as she feels it is unnecessary. She felt that having to call ahead affects privacy and an infringement on the 2nd amendment rights. She also stated that this ordinance is an infringement on how someone decides to use their property, or firearms.

Michaud stated that she lives between 2 gun clubs and hears gun fire all the time. Additionally, her husband is a contractor who uses a nail gun and questioned if there would be calls to the police department against that being used.

Michaud felt that ranges already established should be grandfathered in and was curious if that would be in place. She also asked for clarification if the distance of 350 ft is from a structure or property line. Roberson clarified it is from a structure.

She also questioned the definition of air gun and explained that this ordinance reads that people would not be able to use BB guns. The committee explained that is not the case, nor does the Police Department need to be called prior to BB gun use. Michaud explained that the ordinance should be clarified better. She reiterated that she does not think the ordinance is necessary.

Bob Morin, 207 North Farms Road:

Morin explained that he is an NRA Certified Pistol Instructor, which enable him to teach others the safe use of a pistol. Additionally, Morin stated that he is also an NRA Certified Range Safety Officer, which allows him to oversee the safety and operations of commercial ranges.

Morin stated from comments made tonight, there does not seem to be a lot of necessary safety elements included in the ordinance for a home shooting range, and more so focuses on restrictions of a private range. As a range safety officer, he cannot find anything wrong with Kuhn's home range. However, he has only seen it head on and is not able to view the sides from the photo.

Morin questioned what the 4-hour time window or notifying the police department ahead of time has to do with safety. Additionally, having a distance of 350 ft doesn't make the range any safer, when a bullet can travel a mile away. He stated that how far away a target is does not matter, it matters what you are shooting at. He felt that the distance is strictly for noise abatement and restricting how many ranges are allowed in town. There are not many people who have enough land to have a home shooting range that is at least 350 ft from neighboring properties.

Morin also shared that he volunteered for this committee twice, and even with his credentials, he did not get the opportunity to serve.

Mike Swetzes, 640 Broad Way:

Swetzes commented that like most people who have spoken tonight, he can hear gun fire from both the gun clubs in close proximity to his neighborhood. He also has neighbors who shoot, along with state troopers in the neighborhood who practice. He added that he is a retired Manchester Police Officer who has lived in this town for 39 years and never had a problem.

Swetzes commented that Manchester has an ordinance that prohibits shooting a firearm on a person's property for recreational purposes.

Swetzes read a quote from the May meeting minutes where Special Projects Coordinator Alex Taylor discussed the draft ordinance being reviewed by legal counsel. He also requested that the committee, and the Town Council, keep in mind that Tolland's ordinance was created due to a specific incident and has not been needed to be enforced.

Swetzes noted that it seems that people on both sides of the fence are in an uproar about this, but even if the ordinance does get passed it may not go very far and will be just another page on the books. Swetzes thanked the committee for the time they put into this. He felt that there are enough state statutes that can deal with situations that arise, which would be a more appropriate approach.

Cheryl Kuhn, 70 Riley Mountain Road: *Kuhn was granted more time to finish her statement.*

Kuhn shared that letting gun owners have the ability to practice is good for everyone, which is a direct quote from Holly Sullivan, the President of the CT Citizens Defense League.

Kuhn stated that living in Coventry and using her property the way she sees fit is very important to her. She feels she should not have to ask her neighbor for permission to do things on her property that she pays taxes on.

Kuhn closed out her statement questioning how many hours has been spent on this matter already by town staff. Kuhn also shared concern and questioned how much taxpayer money has been used to address this matter.

John French, 392 Pucker Street:

French shared that as a former Town Council member, he was thrown in the middle of looking at this issue as part of the Steering Committee's agenda. He shared that his proposal was that the town come up with a fee that residents would pay to have the police inspect their home range and back stops ensuring that there is a safe place to shoot for all those involved.

French stated that with the way the ordinance is currently drafted, he would not be able to shoot on his 3-acre property. He also shared that the definition of air gun is ridiculous, which includes the use of a nail gun. He felt that regardless of it being OK to use, the Police Department is going to be hearing about it and be running all over town.

He felt that all that needs to be done is to have safe backstops, which unfortunately did not happen. He commented that the committee is in the line of fire, and it is a tough topic they are trying to tackle. He thanked the committee for their time and work. He commented that they are doing the work they were asked to do, but this has gone way beyond what was necessary. Based on comments made tonight, this

seems to be mainly a noise issue. He requested the committee take a hard look at the ordinance before bringing it to the Town Council.

Gerry Zak, 88 Riley Mountain Road:

Zak commented that he lives next to Mr. Kowar, but does not really have a “dog in this fight”. However, he felt that it was important to share some context that may add some value.

Zak stated that when he moved into his property on Riley Mountain Road, Mr. Kowar’s property did not exist. Shooting could be heard from the gun clubs occasionally, which was no big deal. He added that he grew up around guns and shooting and feels that it is rare that someone would not have the common sense to not shoot a gun towards a house. When the lot got subdivided and Mr. Kowar’s home was built, the woods were no longer there as a noise buffer. However, Zak did not find the increase in noise particularly disturbing.

Zak noted that there have been a few occasions where it sounded like a larger caliber was being fired, or even some semi-automatic firearms, which were significantly louder. He noted that he believes that it would sound louder at 350 ft compared to 450 ft or 500 ft. Zak shared that on the days that the shooting has been overly loud, and repetitive he found it to be alarming. He stated that he has said to himself that during those occasions, that he is glad he does not live where Mr. Kowar lives. Zak made a point to say that even though the noise was alarming, whether it was unsafe or not is a separate question.

Zak concluded wishing that everyone could all get along and shared that he is empathetic to the situation.

Zack Veilleux, 599 Grant Hill Road: *Veilleux was granted a small extension of time to follow up on his previous comments.*

Veilleux wanted to quickly add 2 points that he was unable to make during his original statement.

1. The ordinance does not address if the parcel of land is owned by a trust, or a commercial business. He used Hytone Farm for example, who owns large parcels of land, but would not be able to give themselves permission to shoot on those properties according to the ordinance.
2. He felt that there should be a provision to allow shooting after dark with either allowing up to 1 to 2 hours after sunset or not past 9 or 10 PM. This allows residents adequate time to practice with a flashlight for realistic self-defense situations.

Veilleux added that he is appalled that the main topic of discussion is home shooting range ordinance, and the main concern seems to be noise, not safety. He felt there should be serious consideration to a noise ordinance that addresses other types of disruptions.

Mangiafico spoke to the audience to remind them that the ordinance presented is still a draft. The main purpose of this meeting was to get feedback from the community. The committee plans to sit back, take it all in and incorporate suggestions made.

He continued that all the committee members are Coventry residents who have a vested interest in shooting in one form or another. Every member is here to protect citizens rights and address the town’s concerns. He reminded that they are not here to take anything away from people, but there are problems that need to be addressed.

Murray closed the public comment portion of the meeting as there were no more speakers. He thanked all in attendance for their feedback, which allows them to go back and look at the ordinance and edit as necessary.

5. Review of Email Feedback:

The 4 emails received were briefly reviewed. It was noted that one of the emails was from William Glenney, who spoke tonight during public comment.

Stein noted that the positions of the emails received are 3 for the ordinance and 2 against.

With no further discussion of the email correspondence, Taylor suggested that the committee members take some time to reflect on the comments made tonight and address them in a following meeting. He noted he will have the video available for all members to view as soon as possible. The main purpose of the next meeting will be to review public feedback and incorporate suggestions into the ordinance as deemed necessary. Murray reminded that they would have to closely consider what was suggested based on misinformation, versus those that were valid points.

6. Other Business:

Taylor stated that as things are set up, the committee is scheduled to have 2 more regularly scheduled meetings but could hold a special meeting if needed. He reiterated that next meeting, the committee will go over the feedback and make changes. The changes can then be refined into a new draft, should the committee wish to still proceed with the ordinance. Stein reminded that this means that everything would need to be finalized by the November meeting, which Taylor confirmed.

Mangiafico commented that Veilleux brought up several good points, one of which is that there has been a member that has not been here. He noted that he has never met her, and has only seen her on zoom once, during which not a lot of feedback was given. He felt that if there is someone willing to step up and help them finalize the ordinance, then maybe they could replace her seat. Roberson explained that the committee does not get to choose its members, as that is directed by the Steering Committee, but they can certainly put her attendance under review. Taylor stated that this is a very fair point, and suggested that Murray contact her as Chair, to see if she is still interested in being a member on the committee. Based on her response, this can be reported to the Steering Committee for next steps. Murray explained he is going to reach out to Jon Hand to see how to enforce the new attendance policy. It was also stated that it seems a little bit late to bring in a new member, with only 2 meetings left, and bring them up to speed.

Mangiafico commented that he felt that Veilleux had some good points, and he would prefer to have someone on the committee who is willing to be here to work on this. Stein stated that he felt that some of his comments were slightly ignorant. He reminded that Veilleux stated that the ordinance would not pass legal review, but the committee had the draft reviewed by legal counsel who found no issue.

Stein commented that everything said needs to be taken with a grain of salt. He reminded that this goes for all speakers. Just because someone made a statement, does not mean it is true.

Mangiafico also stated that many of the speakers did not have many points at all, and there was a lot of complaining, arguing, and sharing personal opinions. Brand felt that there were a few good

points made that could be taken under consideration, but for the most part it was strictly personal opinions or situations that don't necessarily apply to the committee's purpose.

Roberson asked the members if there were any discussion points that sparked potential changes that they would like to see in the ordinance. Stein commented that one of the emails made him think of a minor change regarding paintball guns being considered an air gun. Paintball guns should be considered as an exemption, especially as there is a paintball facility in town and this was not the committee's intention to exclude it. Brand also felt that muzzle loading devices should be considered even though they are not technically a firearm.

Murray commented that there seemed to be a lot of opinions on calling the police department. Chief Peterson explained that this would not be a big deal for the department one way or the other. Stein also reminded that the minutes were quoted and done so out of context. Especially regarding calling the Police Department and keeping a call log. He stated if they kept reading, they would see that it prevents the Police Department from going out, as they have it noted that you called. Chief Peterson agreed and reminded that one of the speakers spoke about consequences for violating the ordinance. Chief Peterson reminded that it is just a town ordinance, and not a criminal offense. He also reminded that with these calls, the dispatcher's notepad is not significant enough to be included in evidence. If the issue is serious enough and an officer responds, there is a case file generated.

Chief Peterson explained that if he was going to respond to the questions from the audience, which wasn't appropriate for the public comment, he would have stated that currently there is nothing the department can do if they need to respond to one of these call unless someone's life is immediately in danger. Having the ordinance allows the department to rectify a situation. He added that a lot of the people were confused on this being strictly a safety issue, which it is, but it is also a quality-of-life situation as well.

Taylor agreed and reminded that noise is one of the things that is within the purview of this committee. Stein commented that the charge specifically lists the safety and wellbeing of Coventry residents.

Chief Peterson reminded that people are not always reasonable in these situations. He also reminded that the legislature leaves this type of issue up to each individual town or city to address based on need. Some towns may not need an ordinance, but he feels that it is needed in Coventry. He also reminded that this is not just about the issue on Riley Mountain Road.

Stein commented that the public comment was all about "me" and not how these situations affect the town as a whole.

Brand commented that adding hours to shoot in the dark was suggested, but in most places doing so would be considered unlawful discharge of a firearm. He felt that if people are looking to be proficient in nighttime shooting, they are not going to be practicing in their back yard.

Murray commented that a lot of the comments were just negative about the ordinance and not actually constructive. Mangiafico agreed and stated that he wishes they could have answered some of the questions asked to set things straight, but there was not enough time. Stein

commented that even if the questions were answered appropriately, they still likely would not have been happy.

Brand noted that specific guidelines for backstops were purposely not included in the ordinance. If you are going to have a home range and shoot on your property, you should be aware of what type of materials will prevent that projectile from leaving your property. Roberson agreed and reminded that it was defined this way to accommodate different right ways of making a good back stop. Stein added that someone commented that the committee was not allowing for terrain, when the word terrain is in the ordinance. He feels that this shows people did not read the ordinance carefully.

Brand also commented about the photo that was shared about the backstop on Riley Mountain Road. He clarified that 4 tons of sand, is less than a yard and half, and only fills a 3X3X4 area.

Stein commented that he was upset by the person who spoke and informed they were an NRA Certified Instructor and Range Safety Officer, but shared information that was not true. He felt that this gentleman was likely certified for a long time but never put the certification in practice. Stein added that the wording used in the ordinance is based on information provided by the NRA handbook, which is written by experts in this field., and any RSO should be familiar with.

The committee decided to discuss future meetings and felt it was best to meet sooner to discuss the feedback rather than waiting a month. It was decided to have a special meeting, and Roberson reminded that for a special meeting, the agenda cannot be amended once posted.

Agenda items for the next meeting are to:

- Review and discuss comments received
- Edit draft ordinance as needed
- Other business

It was discussed that it would be 3 weeks at the earliest to have a new member to be included in this discussion. Taylor reminded that best case scenario would be to have a new member by the next regular meeting. Roberson reiterated that it is really late to be bringing in a new member. A new member would also not be a part of the many hours, and amount of research this committee has put in to address these matters. Roberson hoped that if this ordinance continues, she hopes that the committee can share with the public through presentation all the work they did, and discussions had to get the conclusions used to draft the ordinance.

Stein added a point that once of the speakers brought up doing this as a zoning regulation, which was one of the earliest conversations the committee had, and all the reasons why it wouldn't work. Since they were not doing a back and forth, he was unable to share that information.

Mangiafico commented that moving forward, they need to try and dumb the ordinance down a bit. He added that he understands that all the bases need to be covered, but there seems to be a lot of items that don't even pertain to what the committee has been discussing. He feels that the committee tried to cover themselves, that they lost sight of the important matters of safety and noise. Roberson reminded that this is in the ordinance, and she also stated that when people are looking at something they do not agree with, they are going to be looking for something wrong with it because that's human nature.

Stein also stated that something that were stated from the public just didn't make sense. Especially regarding calls about nail guns. He clarified that the Police Department doesn't receive calls about them now, so why would they receive them in the future just because of this ordinance.

Murray also shared that he was shocked that there were only 30 people here out of a town of over 12,000 on a matter such as firearms. He added that half the commentary was about Riley Mountain Road. He stated that when Planning and Zoning has their public comment about the Walgreens being built in town, the town had to hold the meeting at the high school gym.

The committee agreed to have a Special Meeting on October 9th at 6:30 PM.

7. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 8:45 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.

Firearms Presentation:

Coventry Firearms Safety Committee

Public Comment Meeting

Date: September 18, 2025

Presented by:

Brian Murray, Chair

Ken Stein, Vice Chair

Committee Charge

Town Council put Committee together to study firearm use in Coventry

Made up of five volunteers who are

- Two Trained Firearm Instructors
- Two Members of the General Public
- One Member Planning and Zoning Commission (Chair)

Study firearm use in Coventry—not just ordinance drafting

- Do complaints about firearms near neighbors' homes exist, and do they cause friction or excessive police response time?
- Ensure safe firearm use in Coventry and understand any unsafe conditions
- Research firearm use in Coventry and surrounding towns

Note: Hunting regulations regulated by State of Connecticut DEEP still apply for all hunting activities in the Town of Coventry and no way in part of this charge.

Committee Approach

Review federal, state, and local firearm laws

Collect and analyze incident data from Coventry Police

Study regulations in:

- Towns: Newtown, Tolland, Avon, Cromwell, South Windsor
- Cities: Norwalk, Stratford, Middletown, Hartford

Consider solutions for identified issues

Gather public feedback



Draft Ordinance

- Draft ordinance created based on identified issues, reviewed by the Town Council Steering Committee with an extension for public comment and revisions
- Should establish clear guidelines for firearm use in Coventry, with the Coventry Police Department designated to address firearm related issues
- Ensure consistent responses and outcomes for residents and police when firearm discharge calls are dispatched



Timeline/Public Comment

