



# TOWN OF MONROE

## TOWN COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES

Session # 2026-06

Regular Meeting – Monday, March 9, 2026 – 7:00 P.M.  
Meeting conducted in Council Chambers of Town Hall  
& Remotely via Zoom

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Jonathan Formichella  
Vice-Chairperson Dona-Lyn Wales  
Councilmember Vincent A. Duva  
Councilmember Nina Gagnon  
Councilmember Cathy Kohut  
Councilmember Enid Lipeles  
Councilmember Jason Maur  
Councilmember Sean O'Rourke

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Kevin Reid

**ALSO PRESENT:** First Selectman Terrence P. Rooney

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#### I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**Formichella** called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and led with the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### II. ROLL CALL

**Formichella** took the roll call as noted above.

#### III. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A.** Approval of the minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting held on February 9, 2026 (Session 2026-03) and from the Town Council Special Meeting held on February 26, 2026 (Session 2026-05).
- B.** Approval of the Tax Collector's Request for Refunds, dated March 4, 2026, totaling \$48,894.73
- C.** Acceptance of the donations received for the following programs:
- Community & Social Services: \$220.00
  - Edith Wheeler Memorial Library: \$1,143.00 and in-kind donations of 3 sticker books, 3 toys for the Children's Department
  - Emergency Medical Services: \$4,370.00
  - Farmers' Market: \$20.00
  - Food Pantry: \$1,452.00
  - Project Warmth: \$2,556.00
- D. RESOLUTION #26-012: RESOLVED**, that the Monroe Town Council hereby approves the First Selectman's reappointment of **Raymond Giovannini (R)** to the Economic Development Commission for a term ending January 31, 2031.
- E. RESOLUTION #26-013: RESOLVED**, that the Monroe Town Council hereby approves the First Selectman's reappointment of **David Geismar (R)** to the Board of Police Commissioners for a term ending May 16, 2028.
- F. RESOLUTION #26-014: RESOLVED**, that the Monroe Town Council hereby approves the First Selectman's reappointment of **Jason Vincent (U)** to the Water Pollution Control Authority for a term ending June 30, 2028.

- G. RESOLUTION #26-015: RESOLVED**, that Terrence P. Rooney, First Selectman of the Town of Monroe, is authorized to execute and deliver on behalf of the Town of Monroe, the FY 2026 Highway Safety Project Grant Application and any associated documents by and between the Connecticut Department of Transportation, for the Distracted Driving High Visibility Enforcement Program.

#### **IV. COMMUNICATIONS**

- A.** Memo from the Tax Collector to the Town Council Chair dated March 4, 2026 regarding a Request for Refunds.
- B.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding various donations.
- C.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding various board reappointments.
- D.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding the FY 2026 Highway Safety Project Grant Application for the Distracted Driving High Visibility Enforcement Program.
- E.** Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated March 5, 2026 regarding the FY 2026 Highway Safety Project Grant Application for the Distracted Driving High Visibility Enforcement Program.
- F.** Memo from Councilmember Maur to the Town Council Chair dated March 4, 2026 regarding budget motions.
- G.** Memo from a resident of Richmond Drive to the Town Council Chair dated February 7, 2026 regarding the Water Main Extension on Richmond Drive.
- H.** Memo from the Monroe Republican Town Committee Vacancy Chair to the Town Council Chair dated February 18, 2026 regarding an appointment to the Board of Finance.
- I.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding an appointment to the Commission for the Aging.
- J.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding an appointment to the Library Board of Trustees.
- K.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding an appointment to the Conservation & Water Resources Commission.
- L.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding the Monroe & Oxford Police Department Private Duty Assistance Compact Agreement.
- M.** Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated February 5, 2026 regarding the Monroe & Oxford Police Department Private Duty Assistance Compact Agreement.
- N.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding the Matthews Bus Alliance Sales Agreement.
- O.** Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated February 18, 2026 regarding the Matthews Bus Alliance Sales Agreement.
- P.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding the Amendment to Fiducient Advisors, LLC Investment Consulting Agreements.
- Q.** Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated March 5, 2026 regarding the Amendment to Fiducient Advisors, LLC Investment Consulting Agreements.
- R.** Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated March 5, 2026 regarding the Transfer from Contingency.

#### **V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**Formichella** asked if anyone in chambers or online wished to participate.

**Catherine Tolan** – 74 Old Castle Drive – stated that strong schools were what make Monroe, Monroe. She stated they were the cornerstone of any healthy town and with respect, the Senior Center was not. She stated that she would happily pay her taxes to support it because she believed it was an asset to the community. Ms. Tolan stated if you imagined the town as a living being, alive with a heartbeat, quality education were its legs.

She stated that strong schools support the community as a living entity. Ms. Tolan stated that when you cut funding from the education budget, you amputate the kids and the residents of the town, taking it out at its knees to spite its face. She stated that the people should decide if they would like to run or to crawl.

**Raya Pooskur** – 5 Percheron Drive – stated that this was her second year as a student representative from the Board of Education meetings, her third year as the co-historian for the Class of 2026 and that she was here today to speak on behalf of the student body, the 3,500 students whose education would be directly impacted by the budget cuts. She stated that in education, our goal should be to nurture and teach the next generation of community leaders. Ms. Pooskur stated that the town had a responsibility to ensure that the students were given the resources needed to succeed and that by following through on the budget cuts the town was choosing to hinder quality education in exchange for \$15 off your taxes. She stated that this tells the student body they are not an investment the town finds worthy and that they were not deserving of the excellent schooling the town could offer. Ms. Pooskur stated that the students were deserving of excellent schooling the town could offer and that the budget cut would only limit their opportunities for growth and development. She stated that changes like larger class sizes, fewer clubs and electives, and starting second language classes later would only hurt students. She noted that students at Monroe, when given the right opportunities, were capable of amazing things. She stated she had seen her peers first hand lead world class robotics teams, start their own businesses, and win numerous state championships. She stated that they grew into people the town should be proud of, not despite their education, but because of it. She noted that when you choose to cut funds, you would be choosing to raise the future generation with fewer tools, fewer opportunities, and a clear message that their potential was not worth protecting. Ms. Pooskur stated that like many families, her parents chose Monroe for the quality schools and that the reputation was on the line when choosing to underfund. She asked members of Council to show the student body that their education and learning were still valued in Monroe.

**Sarah Jordan** – 36 Oakwood Drive – stated that she was a homeowner and business owner in Monroe and like others moved here for the schools. She stated she was proud to have a student in them and a Kindergartener next year. She stated that the past couple of years, the budget cuts that households were facing were making her wonder if they made the right chose to move to and open a business in Monroe. Ms. Jordan stated that the proposed cuts would result in a loss of faculty and staff, larger class sizes, elimination of important programs and stipends that make our schools special. She stated that she worked in schools and it was more than just the four walls. She stated that it was the whole community and that kids needed to feel safe and supported or they were not going to learn. Ms. Jordan stated that what we could do to make the town better was by supporting the kids and giving them what they need. She stated that the Board of Education asked for a reasonable increase that was lower than most of our neighbors. She stated that costs go up every year for everything and it was something we need to manage. Ms. Jordan stated we figure out how to pay for more gas and groceries and we need to figure out how to pay more for schools and maintain what we had. She stated they were not asking for huge capital improvements, just to keep the teachers.

**Elizabeth Richer** – 3 Founders Way – stated that the First Selectman had stated that he needed to look out for residents, not just those with children in schools. She stated that while she agreed that the needs of all resident's be reflected in the budget, the quality of the schools impacted the entire town. She stated that when they pay taxes, they support programs and services for the good of all residents, not only those specific ones they planned to use. Ms. Richer stated that the financial case for fully funding schools was well established. She stated that research from the National Bureau of Economic Research showed that every dollar a community invested in public schools, it was returned at least \$20.00 in home value. She stated that strong school districts commanded home process 10-20% higher than comparable homes in average districts and that those homes sold on an average of 8 days faster. Ms. Richer stated that a study from the New York Times found that a 5% improvement in school test scores correlated with a 2.5% increase in home values. She stated that strong public schools were hedged against market volatility, and that underfunding them was a risk to every homeowner in town. She noted this was a financial matter and research clearly pointed to the importance of funding education. She

stated that she would continue to urge the First Selectman and the Board of Finance to restore the full Board of Education funding.

**Tiffany LoConte** – 334 Moose Hill Road – stated she was resident, parent and teacher at Fawn Hollow who was there to discuss a fundamental inequity in the proposed budget. She stated that overall the town's revenue was projected to rise over \$3.7 million, an increase of nearly 3.5%. She stated that the distribution of the funds suggested a startling lack of parity between municipal departments and the schools. She noted that the First Selectman's budget allowed for a 6.33% increase in town spending, yet limited the Board of Education to only a 2.68% increase. She stated it was not a numbers game, it was human cost. Ms. LoConte stated that while they all acknowledged rising costs of contractual obligations and benefits, the town's solution was lopsided. She stated that on the town side, the budget was adding 5 new full-time positions, including 2 in IT, and 2 in the Police Department, despite the fact that the police to resident ratio was already very strong and the IT positions were vague and appeared to already be in place. She noted that on the Board of Education side, the schools were being forced to cut 13 to 18 staff members, including 8 to 11 certified teachers. Ms. LoConte stated that losing 11 certified teachers was the functional equivalent of closing Monroe Elementary and that doing this in a time when enrollment had increased 10% over the last few years, and continues to climb steadily was irresponsible and short sighted. She stated that if the budget passed as it was, students would lose freshman sports, world language at the middle school, math support and essential supplies. She noted that we were asking educators to do more with significantly less while most municipal departments are shielded from that same reality. She stated that people move to Monroe for the schools, that their home values have risen 10% over the last 3 years, and they are anchored by the quality of the educational system. She noted that by underfunding the Board of Education to the point of staff layoffs, while simultaneously adding to the town headcount, you were damaging the town's greatest economic driver. She stated she was asking for two things, to restore the full budget request because if the town could afford new employees and a grant writer with unproven returns, then they could afford to keep teachers in classrooms and second to add an advisory question to the ballot so taxpayers can vote on if the budget was too high, too low or just right. She stated to leave it to the town at referendum and to support the schools with the same vigor as municipal departments.

**Mike Rubin** – 51 Longview Road – stated that he moved here 12 years ago from Shelton. He stated that his wife was a teacher and he started his career in education working for colleges as an admissions counselor. He stated the town could not hurt their children by cutting money from a budget when it was what kept the town vibrant. He stated they saw that happen in Shelton and it killed their district. He stated they moved here because it was solid, had programs and options for their children and provided greater flexibility out in the world. He asked the money to be reinstated. Mr. Rubin noted there were a lot of groups in town, PTO's, booster clubs, that do their best to supplement the schools but they could not supplement a \$1.6 million loss. He stated that the town would hurt the children in the long run and put them in less position for higher standings at colleges because they would not have the fundamentals or flexibility. He asked Council if their children's future was not worth \$15 a month on average in everyone's taxes.

**Ashley Arroyo** – 40 Chadwick Court – stated that she had a finance and accounting background and that the numbers did not make sense. She stated that a flat amount was given to a single entity or department without just cause or any kind of indication or reasoning which every other department was given the satisfaction of doing. She stated she went through every line of the budget and that for office expenses some departments were given \$1,000, some decreased by \$100. She stated unfortunately, when you are talking about 75% of your workforce being in the schools and 18-19% of your population being directly affected by this for 182 days, they are not reaping the benefit of what our town was. She stated that the town was fully funded, adding staffing, accepting all contractual insurance and pay increases, and addressing every single financial need. She noted new registrar voting machines and software but were not offering education the same support or attention. She requested the full amount be reinstated and an advisory question be added to the ballot. Ms. Arroyo stated that Mr. Rooney noted previously that the children should be the last thing affected, but that the numbers showed that they have been the first thing affected.

**David Santore** – 64 Mustang Drive – stated he was born in Connecticut, moved away and then came back to raise a family, but that him and his wife chose Monroe just for the schools and would be sending their first child to Fawn Hollow next year. He stated that frankly, some of the proposed cuts feel like a rug being pulled out from underneath them and that he would be paying an extra \$30 a month and that he would pay more to keep the funding. He stated a proverb that read “a society grows great old men and women plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in”. He noted that by supporting not to cut the budget, he too was helping to plant trees along with the other concerned people here, that he would never sit in their shade.

**Ray Renda** – 25 Sunset Hill Drive – kindly asked for the budget to be reviewed again. He stated that for \$15 a month and with the new salt deduction it would be around \$11.30 to restore funding.

**Julie Avellino** – 21 Crescent Place – stated that the comments being made about the seniors being protected, as a broker for 21 years and a 3-time homeowner in town, the first-time homebuyer age nationally was 40. She stated that that average first time parent with a 4-year education was in their 40's, which makes many of the parents in the town now and in the future seniors. She stated that the town could not separate seniors from parents anymore unless they wanted to become blind to demographic changes across the entire US. She asked that they reconsider what they were doing to the town by over-favoring seniors, which was a cover for the town hall budget. She stated that harming students and parents, who, if were seniors with kids in high school would need the best education possible because they would need scholarships if the parent's retired.

**Dustin Holt** – 30 Richmond Drive – stated he wanted to update the Town Council regarding the water main extension on Richmond Drive. He stated they were waiting for the Director of Public Works to get numbers to the First Selectman and those came in on February 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Colleen Lucas** – 31 East Maiden Lane – stated she was a parent of a third-grade student at Fawn Hollow, a paraeducator and homeowner in Monroe. She stated they moved here about 4 years ago for the highly rated schools. She stated that there would always be people who argue the budget was inflated and those who would argue that there was never enough to meet the needs of the district and that the truth was usually somewhere in the middle. Ms. Lucas stated that there were times when the stakes were higher and when it was more than just a difference of opinion and when the decisions made today would impact at the foundation of what had taken decades to build and decades to repair. She stated that when buildings are in desperate need of repair, when classrooms and teachers are at capacity and growing, and when the proposed cuts are altering the standard of education, we were off. She stated she thought this had gone passed the difference of opinion and inquired what the end goal was and how would it lead to a strong future for the children in town. Ms. Lucas stated that looking at what the town was facing reminded her of where she grew up in New York and the challenges they faced 25 years ago. She stated that investments were made at a vulnerable time and 25 years later, the district and the town flourished. She stated that she hoped the town would make the necessary investment in the right way and not turn the back on the children, teachers, and homeowners in Monroe. Ms. Lucas stated that since September she was working as a paraeducator at Monroe Elementary and had an entirely new perspective on the classroom, school environment, and the demands on the teachers to meet the needs of each students. She stated that it occurred to her after a short time at the school that every classroom should have a para or assistant. She stated that teaching is very hands-on and interactive and they were doing it while caring deeply about the needs of each child. She stated that as a homeowner, she knew taxes could hurt, especially with other expenses rising but that the beacon of light was that the property values had held, which was owed to the great reputation of the schools. She stated that she would put her money behind a good school system every time because she does not want to see her child learning in a trailer in the middle of winter, or not enjoying a school sports team until the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, or not having the same opportunities to learn another language. She stated she did not want to see kids settle for the bare minimum, not to mention the added expense they would pay out of pocket when they were not getting them in the school they pay taxes for. She stated taxes were already high and inquired what we were getting for it. She stated she moved here for the

schools and expected that the money they pay would go toward maintaining the highest standards they deserved.

**Formichella** asked if anyone in chambers or online wished to participate. Hearing none, Formichella closed public participation.

## VI. APPOINTMENTS

- A. Resolution #26-016:** To consider and act upon the resolution regarding the appointment of **Deirdre Stelmak (R)** to the Board of Finance for a term ending November 22, 2027.

**Motion by Wales** to adopt **RESOLUTION #26-016: RESOLVED**, that the Monroe Town Council hereby approves the appointment of Deirdre Stelmak (R) to the Board of Finance for a term ending November 22, 2027.

**Second: Maur**

**Discussion: Wales** stated that on behalf of the Monroe Republican Town Committee, Mrs. Stelmak and her husband have been residents of Monroe for 39 years. She stated that she held a Bachelor's degree in accounting and had been the treasurer of St. Peter's Grace Church since 1991. **Wales** stated that Mrs. Stelmak had an extended background of working in the field of accounting for various companies and was currently retired. She stated that she enjoyed a variety of activities such as walking, reading and knitting. **Wales** stated that Mrs. Stelmak also had interests in scrapbooking and spending time with her grandchildren. She noted that she was eager to serve the town as a member of the Board of Finance, where she could bring her skillset and passion of giving back to the community. **Wales** noted that this appointment fills the vacancy created by Mark O'Donnell. **Formichella** noted that Mrs. Stelmak was interviewed by the L&A committee and they asked about conflict of interest and she noted she would recuse herself and they asked if she would act in a collegial way, if she would follow the rules and regulations of the Town and State and the Constitution and she confirmed that she would. **Formichella** stated additionally, she spoke about her accounting background, her family and that she had been a long-time resident of Monroe.

**Mrs. Stelmak was in attendance and sworn in by the First Selectman.**

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

- B. Resolution #26-017:** To consider and act upon the resolution regarding the appointment of **Nancy Deaso (R)** to the Commission for the Aging for a term ending July 2, 2026.

**Motion by Wales** to adopt **RESOLUTION #26-017: RESOLVED**, that the Monroe Town Council hereby approves the appointment of Nancy Deaso (R) to the Commission for the Aging for a term ending July 2, 2026.

**Second: Duva**

**Discussion: Wales** stated that Ms. Deaso had lived in the Town of Monroe for over 60 years. She was retired and currently a volunteer and a member of the Monroe Senior Center. She noted that Nancy was also a member of the Monroe Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary where she had held various positions over the years. **Wales** stated that some of Nancy's interests include pickleball, knitting, puzzles and attending the YMCA. She stated that she also enjoyed spending time with her grandchild. **Wales** stated that Nancy was eager to serve on the Commission for the Aging and noted that her goals were to help support Monroe seniors by being of assistance in the areas of safety, transportation, health and fitness. **Wales** stated that this appointment replaces a vacancy created by Marion Callo.

**Ms. Deaso was in attendance and sworn in by the First Selectman.**

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

- C. **Resolution #26-018:** To consider and act upon the resolution regarding the appointment of **Patricia D'Amore (D)** to the Library Board of Trustees for a term ending November 30, 2027.

**Motion by Wales** to adopt **RESOLUTION #26-018: RESOLVED**, that the Monroe Town Council hereby approves the appointment of Patricia D'Amore (D) to the Library Board of Trustees for a term ending November 30, 2027.

**Second: Maur**

**Discussion: Wales** stated that Patricia had been a proud resident of Monroe for over 42 years. She stated that her two sons attended Monroe Public Schools from Kindergarten through high school graduation. **Wales** stated that Patricia was retired from the New Haven Public Schools, where she served as Supervisor of K-12 Literacy and Library Media Studies. She noted that currently, she was an Adjunct Professor in the Education Department at Sacred Heart University teaching future educators; both undergraduate and graduate students in strategies for effective instruction in reading, writing, and other literacy skills. She stated that this role allowed Patricia to share her experience and help nurture the next generation of teachers and that she firmly believes that, as a society, we have an obligation to ensure our young people are literate and inspired to be lifelong readers. **Wales** stated that Ms. D'Amore feels the Library should serve as a cornerstone resource for all ages in every community and for that reason, she would be honored to serve on the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library Board of Trustees. **Wales** stated that this appointment replaces a vacancy created by Pat Shea.

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

- D. **Resolution #26-019:** To consider and act upon the resolution regarding the appointment of **Suzanne Testani (R)** to the Conservation & Water Resources Commission for a term ending December 5, 2028.

**Motion by Wales** to adopt **RESOLUTION #26-019: RESOLVED**, that the Monroe Town Council hereby approves the appointment of Suzanne Testani (R) to the Conservation & Water Resources Commission for a term ending December 5, 2028.

**Second: Kohut**

**Discussion: Wales** stated that Ms. Testani was a resident of the Town of Monroe and that before retiring, Suzanne worked as a Program Coordinator for the Town of Greenwich. She noted that she held several elected positions while living in the Town of Trumbull, serving on Town Council for eight years as Vice-Chair. **Wales** stated that she was also elected to the Board of Education where she served for 3.5 years, two of which were as Vice-Chair. **Wales** stated that Suzanne also served for three years as Vice-Chair on Trumbull's Recreation Board and that some of Suzanne's interests are horses, of which she was an owner of, and a passion for the outdoors. She stated that she enjoys spending time with her family and volunteering in her church and community. **Wales** noted that Suzanne was also passionate about fitness and nutrition. **Wales** stated that with Suzanne's extensive background in a variety of areas, she would be a valuable member of the Conservation & Water Resources Commission. **Wales** stated that this appointment filled a vacancy on this commission.

**Mrs. Testani was in attendance and sworn in by the First Selectman.**

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

## VII. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Town Council Committee on Finance, Education, Health & Public Safety Matters – **Lipeles** noted they had not met since the last Town Council meeting.
- B. Town Council Committee on Planning & Zoning, Public Works and Park & Recreation – **Duva** stated that they had not met since the last meeting but would be meeting in the near future.

- C. Town Council Committee on Legislative & Administrative Matters – **Formichella** noted they met prior to the meeting and that all items were discussed and had reached consensus to come to Town Council.
- D. Strategic Planning Committee - **Formichella** stated they met, had interviews and Q&A with the departments regarding capital projects. He stated that he expected another meeting in the future regarding to projects as they relate to financial planning and bonding.
- E. Open Space Preservation and Acquisition Committee – **Formichella** noted he received a communication from the First Selectman’s office regarding a potential property at 3 Rowland Pond Road and that he was going to refer that to the committee so they could perform an investigation as to the suitability of that property regarding open space. He stated that he would leave that information for the committee to work with the First Selectman’s office regarding the investigation of that potential purchase. **O’Rourke** stated that they have not met since the last Council meeting.
- F. First Selectman’s Update –First Selectman Rooney provided an update as follows:

**Mr. Bernard Sippin**

- Mr. Bernard Sippin, for almost a century, was a staple in everything Monroe. His altruistic nature and ongoing philanthropy will be remembered by all who knew Mr. Sippin. Mr. Sippin, known as “Bernie”, was a man of traditional values and told stories in equivalence to a Historian. Although his condition had been deteriorating the last few years, Bernie will always be remembered by this town that he loved so very much. May he rest in peace and from the Town of Monroe, condolences to the Sippin family and friends.

**Operations:**

Controlled Air Visit

- Public Works and I met with two representatives from Controlled Air at the Mary Wade Senior Care Facility. We are looking into a Co-gen heating system for both Monroe Elementary and the Community Center Site. Co-gen systems are a gas-powered heating unit that also powers a generator that produces its own electricity, taking any structure its retro fitted into at minimum 65% off the outside electric grid, drastically reducing electric costs. Conversations will be ongoing and this council will be advised as more information is presented as this initiative unfolds.

Police Union Contract

- The Town came to a temporary agreement with the Police Contract. While negotiations with the Police Union can be complex, we value the collaborative process of working together as a team. This council will be meeting to discuss in the near future.

Aquarion/RWA Update

- Attended a press conference at the Capitol building in Hartford in regards to the sale of Aquarion to RWA. Many town Mayors and Selectmen and women gathered to speak on behalf of the impact this sale will have on their communities. Unfortunately, despite Town leaders’ efforts, PURA has officially approved the sale. This has potential to impact a large loss of tax revenue to Monroe due to RWA having tax exemption status. Much is yet to be revealed in this highly televised and controversial topic.

Annual Report

- Per charter requirement, the annual report has been released. The annual report is located on all official Town websites. All advances in each department are addressed in this annual report so please read it, as there is a lot of information in this report that our citizens commonly discuss. To view the annual report, click the link here:  
<http://monroect.gov/Home/DownloadDocument?docId=86b51d5e-21c4-43cf-b012-2ef190941705>

**Community Update:**

Stepney Volunteer Fire Department Bingo Night

- Attended and was a caller at the Stepney Volunteer Fire Department bingo night. It was extremely well attended and lots of fun was had by all.

Monroe Ninja Academy Ribbon Cutting

Very excited to announce Monroe Ninja Academy has opened. Monroe's own Joe Moravsky, who has competed on the national show, opened the gym this past weekend to kids and adults alike. This is a wonderful facility to see come to Monroe. This gym will benefit our future youth and beyond. The Town is looking forward to all this facility will do. Congratulations and good luck to Joe and his family!

**Kohut** inquired on an update for the St. Jude renovations and the costs. **Rooney** stated that not much has changed and that they were finishing the kitchen. He stated they were working off the money approved by Council as well as the Brownfield grant. He stated he was trying to complete the building without any burden, and trying to get as many grants as possible. **Rooney** stated that goal of the building was to get the gym open and the kitchen operational. He noted there was a lot of people excited to use the building. **Gagnon** inquired if operational meant department or public use. **Rooney** stated that Parks & Rec would be there eventually and they would be managing programs. He stated it would be open to the public soon and open to people out of town who would want to rent it, there would be a lot of functions that could be conducted there.

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Motion by Wales** to accept the following donations that individually exceed \$1,500.00:

Community & Social Services:

- \$6,163.90 from Rotary Club Helping Hand Fundraiser

Emergency Medical Services:

- \$2,500.00 from Camila Bovino

Food Pantry:

- \$2,500.00 from Camila Bovino

Project Warmth:

- \$2,500.00 from Camila Bovino

**Second: Maur**

**Discussion: Rooney** noted as always donations were appreciated and stated that many town departments and functions work off donations for their additional activities such as EMS and things they held. He stated the town appreciated donations and that went for any department in Town Hall and Board of Education, if people wanted to contribute, it would help departments.

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

**B. Resolution #26-020:** To consider and act upon a resolution regarding the Monroe & Oxford Police Department Private Duty Assistance Compact Agreement.

**Motion by Wales** to adopt **RESOLUTION #26-020: RESOLVED**, that Terrence P. Rooney, First Selectman of the Town of Monroe, is authorized to execute and deliver on behalf of the Town of Monroe, the Private Duty Assistance Compact Agreement and any associated documents by and between the Town of Monroe Police Department and the Oxford Police Department.

**Second: Lipeles**

**Discussion: Rooney** stated that the Chief of Police had recommended entering into a Private Duty Assistance Compact with the Town of Oxford. He stated that special duty police agreements regulate the use of off-duty law enforcement officers for private or public projects, such as road construction.

**Rooney** stated that when neighboring towns cannot supply officers for their jobs, Monroe officers are used to backfill. He stated that the agreements specify the town's responsibilities, including hourly

rates, insurance, and administrative fees and that this agreement had been reviewed by our Town Attorney, who had provided his letter of opinion.

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

- C. **Resolution #26-021:** To consider and act upon a resolution regarding the Matthews Bus Alliance Sales Agreement.

**Motion by Wales** to adopt **RESOLUTION #26-021: RESOLVED**, that Terrence P. Rooney, First Selectman of the Town of Monroe, is authorized to execute and deliver on behalf of the Town of Monroe, the Matthews Bus Alliance Sales Agreement, and any associated documents, by and between Matthews Bus Alliance, for the procurement of the vehicle to be purchased.

**Second: Kohut**

**Discussion: Rooney** stated that he was thankful this was here today, as the current bus broke down this morning. He stated it was very much needed and that as you know, the Town of Monroe was awarded the Section 5310 Grant in the amount of \$122,776 from the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) which would be used to replace our 2011 twenty (20) passenger bus at the Senior Center. He stated that the Senior Center capital budget had \$29,800 in reserve dedicated to the procurement of this bus. **Rooney** noted that the Senior Center Director and Town Mechanic attended a pre-procurement meeting with the State vendor and added several safety features to the proposal. He stated that the increased cost for these safety features were an additional \$4,205 which would be funded through the Transportation donations. **Rooney** stated that the vendor sales agreement had been reviewed by our Town Attorney who provided his letter of opinion.

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

- D. **Resolution #26-022:** To consider and act upon a resolution regarding the Amendment to Fiducient Advisors, LLC Investment Consulting Agreements.

**Motion by Wales** to adopt **RESOLUTION #26-022: RESOLVED**, that Terrence P. Rooney, First Selectman of the Town of Monroe, is authorized to execute and deliver on behalf of the Town of Monroe, the Amendments to Investment Consulting Agreements and any associated documents by and between Fiducient Advisors, LLC for the Town of Monroe Pension & OPEB trade services.

**Second: Maur**

**Discussion: Rooney** stated that the Finance Director had informed him that the Custodian of the Pension Plan Assets (Principal) would no longer be executing trades at no cost. He stated that he recommended the Town amend their agreements with Fiducient Advisors, LLC (FIA) for this service. He stated that Fiduciary Investment Advisors (FIA) had been providing investment services for our Pension & OPEB Committee for years and that this would allow efficient and accurate trades to be executed within the Pension Plan without being charged an additional fee. **Rooney** stated that this matter had been reviewed by our Town Attorney, who provided a letter of opinion.

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

- E. **Resolution #26-023:** To consider and act upon a resolution regarding the Transfer from Contingency. **Motion by Wales** to adopt **RESOLUTION #26-023: RESOLVED**, that Terrence P. Rooney, First Selectman of the Town of Monroe, is authorized to appropriate \$67,525.00 from the FY2026 Board of Finance contingency account for the implementation of the phone system replacement pursuant to Chapter VIII, Section 7(i) of the Charter for the Town of Monroe and that these funds be transferred from the Board

of Finance Contingency Budget to the Information Technology Budget to execute the desired phone system replacement.

**Second: Maur**

**Discussion: Rooney** stated that this transfer was to cover the implementation of the phone system replacement. This was approved by the Board of Finance at their February 19, 2026 meeting. **Maur** stated that some of us were able to listen to the Director of Information Technology when he presented this to the Board of Finance. He stated that this was to replace the Frontier copper phone lines with online phone lines at a lot of the buildings. He confirmed that there would be landline access at all of the buildings and schools and they would move as many away from Frontier as they could and that the company we would utilize had a third party who would maintain and service those copper lines and Frontier would continue to service the limited lines that were left. **Maur** stated that there would be no interruption.

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O' Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

**F. Fiscal Year 27 Budget**

**1. Resolution #26-024: RESOLVED**, that pursuant to Chapter VIII, § 4 of the Monroe Town Charter, the Town Council approves the total FY27 Municipal Expenditure Budget of \$35,257,112, which incorporates a reduction from the Registrar of Voters Salary Administration line, account number 1001-10-15101-0030-15001 and includes the reduction of \$77 from the HR FICA and Medicare Line, account number 1001-10-15101-0110-15065 and is hereby forwarded to the Board of Finance.

**Second: Lipeles**

**Discussion: Formichella** stated that this was related to the municipal budget including contingency and other appropriations. He stated that included in his motion were reductions that were typographical errors in the forming of the budget which resulted in a \$1,077 reduction from the Registrar of Voters salary administrative line, as well as the HR FICA and Medicare line.

**Maur** moved to amend the proposed budget downward by \$1,000 on line 1001-10-15101-0005-153385 on the First Selectman Office Expense, downward from \$4,200 to \$3,200

**Second: Kohut**

**Discussion: Maur** stated that year to date only \$477 had been spent and that in talking with the Town Clerk the \$1,500 cushion seemed to be enough.

**Formichella** called for a vote on the amendment.

Voting Yes: **Maur, Gagnon, Kohut**

Voting No: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Lipeles, O' Rourke**

Absent: Reid

**Formichella** stated the motion failed 3 to 5.

**Maur** moved to amend the proposed budget line 1001-10-15101-0040-153440, Town Clerk Printing line downward from \$2,000 to \$1,500.

**Discussion: Maur** stated that year to date the line only used \$477 and that in speaking with the Town Clerk the \$1,500 cushion seemed to be enough.

**Second: Gagnon**

**Formichella** called for a vote on the amendment.

Voting Yes: **Maur, Gagnon, Kohut**

Voting No: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Lipeles, O' Rourke**

Absent: Reid

**Formichella** stated the motion failed 3 to 5.

**Maur** moved to amend the proposed budget line 1001-10-15101-0410-153045, Stepney Volunteer Fire Department Building and Ground Maintenance line downward by \$2,894 to a total of \$9,166.

**Second: Gagnon**

**Discussion: Maur** stated that the five-year average comes in under \$5,000 but was budgeted for more than \$9,000 and now were increasing the budget an additional \$2,894 with no added reasoning for those expenses. This amount was provided by the Park and Public Work’s Department.

**Formichella** called for a vote on the amendment.

Voting Yes: **Maur, Gagnon, Kohut**

Voting No: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Lipeles, O’ Rourke**

Absent: Reid

**Formichella** stated the motion failed 3 to 5.

**Maur** moved to amend the proposed budget line 1001-10-15101-0710-153390, Social Services Operating Expenses downward by \$1,000 to a total from \$2,672 to 1,672.

**Second: Gagnon**

**Discussion: Maur** stated that the five-year average comes in around half of what it was budgeted for and had only spent \$1,217 in 24-25. To date we had only spent \$233 of the \$2,622 budget.

**Formichella** called for a vote on the amendment.

Voting Yes: **Maur, Gagnon, Kohut**

Voting No: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Lipeles, O’ Rourke**

Absent: Reid

**Formichella** stated the motion failed 3 to 5.

**Formichella** inquired if there were any other motions at this time. There were none. Formichella opened the initial motion for discussion.

**Discussion: Rooney** stated that just to be helpful, cutting \$1,000 from his office could be done. He stated that the packets the office puts together for Town Council were around \$6 each, the office puts together 11 each meeting and there were roughly 22 meetings a year giving a total cost of the packets an annual amount of \$1,452. **Rooney** stated that an officer was also taken off the road to deliver those packets to members. He stated that was a way to go paperless and save that money. **Gagnon** stated it was her recommendation to the Board of Finance that the Board of Educations proposed budget be restored to the extent required to meet the current staffing and contractual obligations with the intent of preserving the current staff to student ratio. **Lipeles** stated she would like to see the police on the roads. **Kohut** made a recommendation to the Board of Finance include an advisory question asking if the budget was too high, too low or just right. **Maur** stated there were a few things they could and could not do as a Council and one of things they could not do was adjust the Board of Education budget. He stated that purview lied with the Board of Education and the Board of Finance by law. He stated all they can do was to echo the recommendations that fellow councilmembers had stated. He stated that the Board of Finance should be reviewing the tax assumption rate, and interest, dividend and other revenues brought in and further he requested they reviewed the insurance line.

**Motion passed 8-0:**

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Wales, Duva, Gagnon, Kohut, Lipeles, Maur, O’ Rourke**

Voting No: None

Absent: Reid

**X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

**Formichella** adjourned the meeting at 8:21 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by, Kerry McAndrew, Clerk*