



TOWN OF MONROE

TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Session # 2025-10

Regular Meeting – Monday, April 28, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.

Meeting conducted in Council Chambers of Town Hall
& Remotely via Zoom

PRESENT: Chairperson Jonathan Formichella
Vice-Chairperson Enid Lipeles
Councilmember Cathy Kohut
Councilmember Jason Maur
Councilmember Sean O'Rourke
Councilmember Janice Persico
Councilmember Kevin Reid (remote)

ABSENT: Councilmember Vincent A. Duva
Councilmember Dona-Lyn Wales

ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman Terrence P. Rooney
EMS Chief Craig Rosenberg

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

II. ROLL CALL

Formichella stated every member was present in person with the exception of Councilmember Vincent Duva and Councilmember Dona-Lyn Wales who were absent.

Rooney acknowledged Margo Solanska for her achievement of Ms. President US again this year. He noted that Margo had won the award last year for her efforts to combat litter and promote recycling. **Rooney** stated this year, she won for her efforts around cybersecurity. **Rooney** presented Margo with a Town Commendation.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approval of the minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting held on April 7, 2025 (Session 2025-09).
- B. **RESOLUTION #25-049: 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 engagement letter and any associated documents by and between PKF O'Connor Davies for the Town of Monroe Audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.
- C. **RESOLUTION #25-050: 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 MetroCOG Connecticut DOT Active Transportation Microgrant Program Agreement for the Parks & Recreation Department and any associated documents by and between MetroCOG for the Connecticut DOT Active Transportation Microgrant Program.
- D. **RESOLUTION #25-051: 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 2025 Department of Agriculture's

Farmers' Market Agreement and any associated documents by and between the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, to certify the 2025 Monroe Farmer's Market as a Certified Connecticut Grown Farmers' Market.

- E. **RESOLUTION #25-052: 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 Hydrant Rig Permit Agreement, and any associated documents by and between Aquarion Water Company, for rental of hydrant connection equipment for the Wolfe Park Athletic Fields project.
- F. **RESOLUTION #25-053: 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 Contract and any associated documents by and between The Last Mile Racing, LLC for the "Mile Down the Pike" race.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated April 24, 2025 regarding the PKF O'Connor Davies Engagement Letter.
- B. Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated April 14, 2025 regarding the PKF O'Connor Davies Engagement Letter.
- C. Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated April 24, 2025 regarding the MetroCOG Connecticut DOT Active Transportation Microgrant Agreement.
- D. Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated April 15, 2025 regarding the MetroCOG Connecticut DOT Active Transportation Microgrant Agreement.
- E. Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated April 24, 2025 regarding the 2025 Department of Agriculture Farmers' Market Agreement.
- F. Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated April 15, 2025 regarding the 2025 Department of Agriculture Farmers' Market Agreement.
- G. Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated April 24, 2025 regarding the 2025 Aquarion Hydrant Rig Permit Agreement.
- H. Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated April 24, 2025 regarding the 2025 Aquarion Hydrant Rig Permit Agreement.
- I. Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated April 24, 2025 regarding the Mile Down the Pike Agreement.
- J. Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated April 24, 2025 regarding the Mile Down the Pike Agreement.
- K. Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated April 24, 2025 regarding the Progressive Benefit Solutions Administrative Services Agreement.
- L. Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated April 14, 2025 regarding the Progressive Benefit Solutions Administrative Services Agreement.
- M. Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated April 24, 2025 regarding the Transparent Language, Inc. Services Agreement.
- N. Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated April 21, 2025 regarding the Transparent Language, Inc. Services Agreement.
- O. Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated April 24, 2025 regarding the EMS Billing Services Contract.
- P. Letter of Opinion from the Town Attorney to the First Selectman dated April 24, 2025 regarding the EMS Billing Services Contract.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Formichella asked if anyone else online or in person wished to participate. Hearing none, **Formichella** closed Public Participation.

VI. APPOINTMENTS

- A. **Resolution #25-054:** To consider and act upon the resolution regarding the appointment of Kristin Pena (R) to the Economic Development Commission for a term ending January 20, 2027.

Motion by Formichella to adopt **RESOLUTION #25-054: RESOLVED**, that the Monroe Town Council hereby approves the First Selectman’s appointment of **Kristin Pena (R)** to the Economic Development Commission for a term ending January 20, 2027.

Second: Lipeles

Discussion: Formichella stated that Kristin and her family moved from New York to Monroe in 2020. He noted that her career in the fashion industry spanned over 30 years where she was designing for well-known brands such as DKNY and Calvin Klein. **Formichella** stated that her extensive background was in graphic design and that she was currently a real estate agent for Keller Williams. He noted that Kristin quickly became involved in her community, volunteering at Stepney Elementary School as well as her daughters’ dance studio and stated that she assists with backstage coordination, performances and competitions, as well as helping to organize fundraising events. **Formichella** stated that some of Kristin’s interests were gardening and landscape design as well as interior design and décor. He stated that she believes that sustainable, well-planned development was key to fostering a vibrant local economy while preserving the charm that makes Monroe special. He noted that through Kristin’s work and volunteerism, she had developed an eye for detail and an understanding of market strategy which would be beneficial to the Economic Development Commission. This appointment fills the vacancy of James Goldstein. **Maur** stated that Kristin was originally recommended to the Selectman for a different committee from the DTC and the Selectman felt that she was a better fit for the Economic Development Commission, and was told she would need to switch parties. He stated it was important to note that there were not R and D seats on commissions, that there was only provision in the Charter that allows only up to a certain number of seats to be a specific party within one commission. **Rooney** stated that yes, she was sent in as a Democrat. He stated she sat with him and had a very outgoing personality and he thought it was important to place people in areas where they would be useful. **Rooney** stated that he wanted to place volunteers where they will be happy because if they go on a board that they are not happy with, then we lose them. He noted that he mentioned he would like to see her on Economic Development because based on the conversation, that seemed to be where she wanted to be. He stated it was at that time that he called the Town Clerk to see if there was a seat available. **Rooney** stated when she first came recommended, she was not affiliated with any party, she was not affiliated at all. **Rooney** stated that she informed him if she needed to switch party affiliation she would gladly do that. He then told her that people make their party decisions based on their personal beliefs and that decision was entirely up to her. **Rooney** stated that she made a personal choice to do that. **Maur** stated that he agreed wholeheartedly that when there was a better place to put somebody, and they want to do that, then we should do that.

Motion passed 7-0:

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Lipeles, Kohut, Maur, O’Rourke, Persico, Reid**

Voting No: None

Absent: Duva, Wales

VII. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Town Council Committee on Finance, Education, Health & Public Safety Matters – **Lipeles** noted they had not met for a meeting in a while.
- B. Town Council Committee on Planning & Zoning, Public Works and Park & Recreation – **O’Rourke** stated that they had not met since the last meeting.
- C. Town Council Committee on Legislative & Administrative Matters – **Formichella** noted they met prior to the meeting and discussed eight resolutions which all passed for consensus to come before Town Council. He noted that one question was made by Councilmember Maur regarding how The Last Mile Racing, LLC was being funded and Formichella confirmed it was through generous donations made by Newtown Savings Bank, related to the Memorial Day Parade.

- D. Strategic Planning Committee - **Formichella** stated they had not met since the last meeting however, the Ad Hoc Facility Committee for the Board of Education met and it was determined that the preference of the Committee there was unanimous support for option B and it would be moved to the Board of Education for further discussion. He noted that he believed the Board of Education was currently deliberating and gathering information. **Formichella** stated that there was some support amongst committee members that wanted to apply for State assistance this calendar year to begin the building of one of the projects, or to renovate Chalk Hill School, however he believed the majority of advisement was that there was going to need to be more due diligence completed. **Formichella** stated he would also be reaching out to Karen Cardi to schedule another time to discuss the Beardsley property. **Maur** extended his thanks to the Ad Hoc Committee.
- E. Open Space Preservation and Acquisition Committee – **O’ Rourke** noted they have not met since the last Council meeting.
- F. First Selectman’s Update –First Selectman Rooney provided an update as follows:

Operations:

Referendum

- The budget referendum is next week on May 6, 2025. The polling location is at the Community Center Site, 707 Monroe Turnpike from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Grasso Project Settlement

- Thank you to this Council for unanimously voting in approval for my office to handle this matter. As there are many moving parts on this matter, a settlement has been reached and is moving forward to completion. This project, as we know had many challenges including but not limited to utility marking inconsistencies, product availability during COVID, and financial impacts such as material increases during COVID as well. I would like to state my appreciation to the Grasso Company for working with this office after I reached out requesting this situation be resolved immediately. I will update this council moving forward; however, I speak for many of us that we are very happy to be seeing closure to this project, that despite all the challenges had a positive end result on Pepper Street.

Highway Union Contract

- After many meetings and collaboration, I am happy to announce the Town and Highway Union have come to agreement and they have signed their new contract. The Department of Public Works is a vital service in Monroe and many of the Highway Department employees live in Town who have a high level of service to keep Monroe a great place to live. This new 5-year contract has the Union at higher wages compared to surrounding towns.

Emergency Services Update:

License Plate Readers

- The Police Department recently partnered with Flock Safety to install automatic plate readers to reduce crime. Many violations are committed using motor vehicle and these readers will help aid in finding stolen cars, hit and run collisions, and missing persons cases. The cameras are not for the speed of the car but for more serious offenses. This system will help reduce crime in a timelier manner.

Community Update:

Ms. President US

- Congratulations to Margo Solonska for winning Ms. President US again. She first earned the title for her outstanding ideas in recycling, and now for cyber safety. As we all know these are vital topics to focus on, we look forward to what you have planned next.

Spring Fling at the Library

- I attended the Spring Fling at the Library, with a special visit from the Easter Bunny. Fun was had by all and thank you for to the library for putting so many events together for the community.

Arbor Day

- We recognized Arbor Day today. Thank you to the Town Clerks Office for donating this year’s

tree and thank you to Parks and Recreation for hosting the event. This is the 21st year of Monroe being a Tree City USA community.

Grants:

MetroCOG Microgrant

- We received a \$5,000 Microgrant award through the CT Department of Transportation Active Transport Microgrant Program for bicycle racks and bicycles. The bicycles will be distributed at our annual Monroe Night at the Park put on by our Police Department. The Town is thrilled to have received this generous grant, it will bring even more excitement and energy to the Monroe Night at the Park.

Rooney noted that additionally, the conduit had been put in place to the Community Center building and in the next week or so the data company would be coming soon to pull everything through, at which point there would be internet access. He noted that the RFP for the wall was out and noted we received multiple bids to repair the gym wall. **Rooney** noted that the prices were a little less than anticipated, which was fantastic news.

Rooney took a moment to acknowledge the passing of Jay Piccarillo, the owner of Micalizzi's Italian Ice. He noted that Jay donated time and Italian ice to many events at our parks for years and stated that he was a large community figure in the north end of Bridgeport and here in Monroe.

Maur thanked the First Selectman for making himself available and to help when called upon even though he was on a family vacation overseas. He also thanked him for the work completed to settle the Grasso/Pepper Street Project. **Maur** stated Parks & Recreation held an egg hunt at Web Mountain and he was able to be apart of that and stated it was a great event. He gave kudos to the Parks & Recreation Department for the event.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Resolution #25-055:** To consider and act upon a resolution regarding the Progressive Benefit Solutions Administrative Services Agreement.

Motion by Lipeles to adopt **RESOLUTION #25-055: 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 Administrative Services Agreement and any associated documents by and between the Progressive Benefits Solution, for the Cafeteria 125 Administrative Services Agreement.

Second: Maur

Discussion: Rooney stated that the Human Resources department currently manages an ongoing relationship with Progressive Benefit Solutions ("PBS") for the purpose of administrating a Cafeteria Plan under Section 125 of the IRS Code. He noted that the specific benefit provided was a Health Reimbursement Arrangement ("HRA") and/or Health Savings Account ("HSA"), and/or Qualified Transportation Account ("QTA") program of benefits to eligible employees and their qualified dependents on a pre-tax basis. **Rooney** stated that PBS had provided their updated standard agreement, which was provided for your review and that the agreement was been reviewed by the Town Attorney who provided his opinion letter.

Motion passed 7-0:

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Lipeles, Kohut, Maur, O'Rourke, Persico, Reid**

Voting No: None

Absent: Duva, Wales

- B. Resolution #25-056:** To consider and act upon a resolution regarding the Transparent Language, Inc. Contract.

Motion by Lipeles to adopt **RESOLUTION #25-056: 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

Transparent Language, Inc. Contract and any associated documents by and between Transparent Language, Inc., for the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library language learning database.

Second: Maur

Discussion: Rooney stated that the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library wanted to utilize Transparent Language, Inc. for the Library's language learning services. He stated that the Library would like to change language learning databases from their current vendor Margo Languages to Transparent Language which would be a savings of \$588.00 per year. **Rooney** stated that this matter was reviewed by the Town Attorney, who provided his opinion letter.

Motion passed 7-0:

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Lipeles, Kohut, Maur, O'Rourke, Persico, Reid**

Voting No: None

Absent: Duva, Wales

- C. **Resolution #25-057:** To consider and act upon a resolution regarding the EMS Billing Services Contract. **Motion by Lipeles** to adopt **RESOLUTION #25-057: 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 EMS Billing Services Contract and any associated documents by and between Griffin Health Services Corporation for EMS Billing Services.

Second: Maur

Discussion: Rooney stated that earlier this year, the Town issued a Request for Proposals ("RFP") for the EMS Billing Services Contract. He stated that five bids were received, one of which was determined to be acceptable by our EMS Chief. **Rooney** stated that included for review and consideration was the Contract, which incorporates the RFP document and proposal as submitted. He noted that this matter had been reviewed by the Town Attorney who provided his letter of opinion. **Rooney** noted that this was a long time coming. He stated that since he was first in office, he had many meetings with the Chief about this and the concerns with the billing structure. He stated this was a strong move for the Town. **Rosenberg** stated that they felt really good with the selection because the company was a local non-profit. He stated that their goal was to sever regional EMS providers. **Rosenberg** stated the other bids received included other non-local Connecticut companies and some in Texas. He noted that the current company struggled with lack of quality and EMS was seeing billing errors and missed bills, which caused excessive hours of work for our team and the Finance Department. **Rosenberg** stated they had no concerns and the new agreement would begin July 1st.

Motion passed 7-0:

Voting Yes: **Formichella, Lipeles, Kohut, Maur, O'Rourke, Persico, Reid**

Voting No: None

Absent: Duva, Wales

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Formichella adjourned the meeting at 7:33PM.

Respectfully submitted by, Kerry McAndrew, Clerk