

# Town of Ashford

*Established 1714*

**REGULAR SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
MONDAY, MARCH 28, 2023 at 9:00 A.M.  
ASHFORD TOWN OFFICES  
To be held in person and via ZOOM**

## MINUTES

1. Call to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. Members present: Falletti, Phillips, Silver-Smith
3. Hear from the public: no members of the public wishing to be heard at this time
4. First Selectman's briefing
  - 2023-2024 budget public hearing notice has been sent to the Chronicle for publication
  - Falletti reported that a settlement agreement between the Town of Ashford and Sherry York has been signed by both parties and has been sent to Town Counsel for review
  - The webmaster stipend agreement between the Town of Ashford and Karen Zulick will be circulated to members of the BOS for signature
  - Additions to agenda: approval of "Ride for Gage," tax refunds and executive session to discuss personnel matters.
5. Phillips moved acceptance of the minutes of Regular Meetings of 2/21/2023. Falletti seconded the motion which passed unanimously.  
Phillips moved acceptance of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of 3/6/2023. Falletti seconded the motion which passed unanimously.  
Phillips moved acceptance of the minutes of Regular Meeting of 3/14/2023. Falletti seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
6. Hear from Boards, Commissions, Committees
7. Old Business
  - A. Status of after school childcare program as proposed by the Recreation Commission. This item will be discussed in Executive Session at the end of this meeting.
  - B. Review 2023-2024 general government and DPW budgets: The BOS discussed options that would meet the BOF's request to cut \$20,000 from the General Government budget as presented. Silver-Smith moved adoption of item #1 as presented by the First Selectmen, to meet the cut requested by the BOF. Silver-Smith moved that reductions totaling \$20,000 will be made to the following line items:
    - Contingency: \$4,000
    - Ashford Citizen stipend: \$5,200
    - Ashford Volunteer Fire Department: \$3,000
    - Animal Control Department: \$5,800
    - Department of Public Works – Sand/Salt: \$2,000Phillips seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
  - C. Review and/or act on proposed Capital Improvement budget and CNR proposed CNR allocation: The BOS briefly discussed the status of the CNR account
8. New Business
  - A. Capital Projects Committee update: The BOS discussed establishment of a quarterly meeting schedule for this committee.

- B. Discuss and/or act on Ashford Citizen administration: The BOS briefly discussed available options for continuing publication of the Ashford Citizen in light of a letter of resignation from Sherri Mutch, Editor of the Citizen. A copy of Ms. Mutch's letter is attached to these minutes.
- C. Agenda items for upcoming BOS meetings
- D. Phillips moved acceptance, with regret, of the resignation of Public Works Supervisor, Joe Kalinowski. Silver-Smith seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Falletti reported that he will be collecting job descriptions for review prior to advertising the position.
- E. Silver-Smith moved addition to the agenda of approval of tax refunds as submitted by the tax collector. Phillips seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Phillips moved approval of tax refunds to Sarah Lucas in the amount of \$463.36 and Michael or Lisa Kelly in the amount of \$180.04 citing CGS, SEC. 12-129. Silver-Smith seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
- F. Silver-Smith moved addition to the agenda of approval of "Ride for Gage" motorcycle run. Phillips seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Silver-Smith moved approval for the use of Town of Ashford roadways in connection with the "Ride for Gage" motorcycle run in September. Phillips seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
- G. Phillips moved addition to the agenda of an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Silver-Smith seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Falletti moved the BOS into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 9:48 a.m. Phillips seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The BOS exited Executive Session at 11:05 a.m. Present during Executive Session were Falletti, Phillips, Silver-Smith.
- H. Adjournment at 11:07 a.m.

Ashford Board of Selectmen – Regular Meeting  
Monday, March 28, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81172771660?pwd=aW12b11xQ3BNT2t6MmtKSX14ak1VQT09>

Meeting ID: 811 7277 1660

Passcode: 06278

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US

+1 309 205 3325 US

+1 312 626 6799 US

Meeting ID: 811 7277 1660

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81172771660>

# Letter of Retirement

**From Joseph Kalinowski, Supervisor Publicworks**

**Date 3/09/2023**

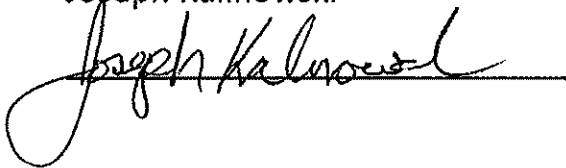
This letter represents my official notice of retirement from my position of supervisor of Public Works with the Town of Ashford, be made final on the tenth day of July 2023.

It has been with great pleasure to work with the individuals at the Town of Ashford and I will always appreciate the experience and knowledge I gained during my time here.

I hope the notice-period is enough for you to find a replacement. Furthermore, please let me know of any help that I could be to train or assist the person that will take over my position.

Sincerely,

Joseph Kalinowski

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Kalinowski". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned below the printed name. A horizontal line is drawn across the signature.

March 24, 2023

Ashford Board of Selectmen:

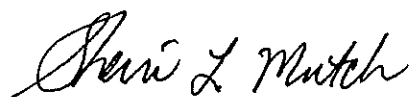
As a follow-up to my conversation with the First Selectman earlier this week , I am regretfully resigning from my position as the editor of *The Ashford Citizen*. The April 2023 issue will be the last produced by the Town Clerk's office, inclusive of all production aspects (layout, editing, advertising, billing, etc.).

The first issue that brought me to seriously consider this decision was when Mr. Falletti and I were threatened with legal action in February by a local church if certain letters of religious testimony (posed as advertisements) were not published. In seventy years, we have *never* had to deal with such a direct and hostile challenge to our rather old-fashioned and naive little newsletter. This has caused me to reflect on the current social climate of our town. I was shocked to have my intentions questioned, and I realized that we are dealing with a new mentality that I had best pay attention to.

More importantly, however, in light of recent events involving our Planning and Zoning Commission, I feel forced to take this action to insulate this office from any accusations of wrong-doing related to publishing our town newsletter. I cannot knowingly continue to put the Town Clerk's office in a position where our integrity may be questioned for performing a function that lies outside of the normal responsibilities of our office. Because our office is heavily involved in elections, and particularly with absentee ballots, the trust of our residents is all-important, and we cannot risk losing that trust because some disgruntled resident invents a conspiracy theory about the Town using *The Ashford Citizen* to suppress information. We *must* remove it from our office.

This decision has not been easy for me, but after much thought, I cannot think of any other way to resolve this dilemma. Should you find a person to take on the publication of a new and different newsletter, I would be happy to provide digital material, advice, and information to help guide them, should they want it.

Respectfully,



Sherri L. Mutch  
Ashford Town Clerk  
*The Ashford Citizen*, Editor