**TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING**

**April 12, 2016**

1. **ROLL CALL**

Town Council Members Present:

Kristine S. Trocki, President

Mary E. Meagher, Vice President

Blake A. Dickinson

Michael G. White

Thomas P. Tighe

Also in attendance:

Andrew E. Nota, Town Administrator

Edward A. Mello, Police Chief

Peter D. Ruggiero, Town Solicitor

Chris Costa, Building Official

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, Town Clerk

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The special meeting was called to order by President Trocki in the Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers of the Jamestown Town Hall at 93 Narragansett Avenue at 6:06 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilor Dickinson.

1. **PUBLIC HEARINGS, LICENSES AND PERMITS**
2. Public Hearing
3. Proposed Amendment of the Jamestown Code of Ordinances, Chapter 38 Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions, Article V. Weapons, Sec. 38-112 Definitions (new); Sec. 38-113 Shooting Prohibited (new); Sec. 38-114 Use of Weapons in Self Defense (new); and Sec. 38-115 Enforcement (new); duly advertised in the *Jamestown Press* March 31st edition; review and discussion and/or potential action and/or vote

President Trocki welcomed all those present and stated the meeting is being recorded. Rules and procedure for this evening’s public hearing were reviewed as follows:

* An hour and a half is allotted for Open Forum
* Each person who wishes to speak requested to come to the podium, use the microphone, and identify themselves and their address
* Public comments will be limited to five minutes or less to give everyone a chance to speak
* Only one person is to speak at a time
* Refrain from repeat comments
* No repeat speakers until all those who wish to comment have been heard
* After Open Forum is complete, the Council will deliberate

President Trocki noted this is the first time the full Council has addressed the proposed ordinance. Requests to use the public WiFi for presentations have been granted.

Town Administrator Nota gave an overview of the Ordinance Review Committee and their efforts to date. The core members are President Trocki, Vice President Meagher, Police Chief Mello, and Town Administrator Nota, with participation by Town staff as needed. Discussion began in early 2015 to review needed updates to the Code of Ordinances, with the Target Shooting Ordinance the first ordinance for review. RI General Laws were reviewed as well as the ordinances and regulations in other communities, and Jamestown has no regulations for target shooting in place other than State law. The two prior public sessions with healthy dialogue were noted, and review of available information, public comment, and research revealed that regulation would be appropriate. The town is not looking for an overly complex ordinance but one that is in the best interest of all parties.

A PowerPoint presentation proceeded. Setbacks for other communities were noted and a map of Jamestown with 500 ft. buffers was displayed. The proposed 500 ft. buffer from structures for target shooting would eliminate the activity in densely populated areas. Discussion ensued of the difference between hunting and target shooting and that no commercial ranges exist in Jamestown. The seven existing private ranges were noted, and target shooting has been a long-standing activity in the community.

The Council noted public safety concerns raised and the need to develop an ordinance that works. Discussion ensued of the 500 ft. buffer and the 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. time restriction, Monday through Saturday. The ordinance limitations, setbacks, discharge limits, conditions pertinent to Jamestown, and weighing all issues were reviewed. The committee developed the ordinance standards based on past information gathered and reviewed with compromise, and all items were vetted. Information gathered through the public hearing will be reviewed and applied as needed.

Town Administrator Nota reviewed the Ordinance.

Sec. 38-111 Use of rifled firearm while hunting. This was already part of the ordinance.

New sections added:

Sec. 38-112 Definitions. Discussion ensued of the pertinent definitions – Firearm, Discharge, Dwelling, Building, Accessory Building and Principal Building.

Sec. 38-113 Shooting Prohibited. Reflects the legal hunting activity, time limitations, target shooting on private property, safety measures, point of discharge and prohibition of shooting across a roadways, sidewalks, and trails, and access ways.

Sec. 38-114 Use of weapons in self-defense. To ensure that none of the provisions have any bearing on one’s right to defend themselves.

Sec. 38-115 Enforcement. The provisions clarify enforcement.

This is the complete context of the Ordinance as drafted by the Ordinance Review Committee to address the major concerns. The ORC and Council will revise as needed as a result of the discussion this evening.

1. **OPEN FORUM**
2. Scheduled to Address

John Murphy of Hamilton Avenue and Christian Infantolino of Reservoir Circle. Attorney Murphy stated his office represents Chris Cannon, who placed the advertisement in the *Jamestown Press*. The object of the ordinance is safety to protect the citizens of Jamestown. The most important part of the ordinance is the setback provision. They have a presentation to demonstrate to Council the range of target shooting, obtained from the internet. (There is technical difficulty with the equipment causing delay of the presentation)

The floor is opened to other presenters/speakers until the difficulties are cleared.

1. Non-Scheduled to Address

Billy Westall of Pemberton Avenue asked if Sec. 38-111 is part of the new ordinance. He was informed this has always been part of the ordinance. He asked if “discharge” was new, and was informed it is a new definition. The definition includes “. . . as to cause the ignition of the powder charge with or without the expulsion of a projectile from the firearm.” Mr. Westall stated the “firearms” described under definitions are not powder driven projectiles.

Rob Roach of Green Lane stated he doesn’t target shoot in Jamestown, he hunts, and is familiar with all types of firearms and shooting. The last thing we need is more ordinances or laws. We need to come to an agreement as gentlemen rather than write a new law. There is a big issue in Jamestown with guns. Jamestown was always considered rural, and now there is encroachment by houses. As there have always been shooting ranges in Jamestown there is a precedent and this ordinance would break that precedent. As we desire a compromise, an ordinance is not needed. Who will police it – the Police Department and RIDEM? We don’t need an ordinance for an issue that has never caused damage to homes, property or a person. This takes away the 5th amendment right under the Constitution. If the right is taken away the citizens must be compensated, perhaps by a public range at the dump. If you take it away, you must give people something in return.

Chris Cannon of East Shore Road thanked the Council for this public hearing. His concerns are not for gun ownership or hunting, but based on safety, protection of citizens, and target shooting which is not regulated. Other communities do not allow target shooting unless it is regulated by the municipality. He does not feel the 500 ft. buffer is enough, hiding in your house is not enough, and rifles can shoot longer than 500 ft. Target shooting is different from hunting, such regulations cannot be applied to target shooting, and target shooting weapons are different from hunting weapons. The ordinance should consider misdirected bullets or ricochet. People used to learn to shoot in their backyards; now they need to learn to shoot indoors, qualify, and then move outdoors. Hunters may fire several times an hour at short range; a target shooter may shoot 30 or more times per hour at 500 ft. or more. Hunting season is limited to 55 days a year, target shooting would be 300 days a year; target shooting is more rounds shot than hunting. Some rifles can shoot up to 1500 ft. and beyond, putting residents at risk, and he feels the buffer should be revised to 1500 ft. He cannot understand why people should be put at risk when walking on land trust property as there is no dwelling on it. The requirement “all prudent safety measures shall be exercised to protect the public health” is difficult to define. What does it mean? The NRA recommendations should be followed; this would be difficult for the police department to enforce. What about lead levels in our drinking water from ammunition? Would Jamestown built its own safe shooting range on town-owned land and operate it like the Newport Rifle Club? He would not be opposed to that. (Mr. Cannon was reminded of the 5 minute time limit). Jamestown has a campground and a golf course and this might work. He doesn’t want to take anything away from anyone, he just wants to be safe. RIDEM has 28 places to shoot within 30 miles of Jamestown.

Walter May of Middletown, retired police officer, is here to speak on this subject. He realizes what Mr. Cannon is up against. Police officers have to qualify two times per year with guidance by a certified range instructor following safety protocols. In his over 21 years as a police officer, he was an expert shot, and has done so at seven different ranges. Now retired he is no longer an expert shot. An officer shot during a training activity was referenced. Mr. Cannon is not trying to take away people’s rights, he is trying to keep his property and residents of Jamestown safe, and there are three target shooting areas near his residence. All ranges should meet certain criteria to be allowed to continue, rules placed in the ordinance should be enforced, and if a house can be seen in the distance it becomes a public safety issue. The Police Chief should monitor ranges for all required safety protocols, and the ordinance should be written so that the Police Chief can enforce it. He expressed concern for shooting ranges on private property due to human error.

(an audience member requests the President hold the discussion to the 5 minute time limit)

Sandy Kane of North Main Road stated he has been shooting his entire life, and referenced weapons he has shot in his lifetime. A 50 caliber bullet has more powder than a hand grenade. He disagrees with some of the statements made previously concerning distance and ricochet. The time limit for shooting should be from 10:00 a.m. to a half hour prior to sunset, and in the winter 15 minutes prior to sunset, just like hunting, not 4:00 p.m. The busiest day for target shooting is Sunday, as many people work on Saturday. The point of discharge should be 300 ft. as target shooters are shooting at fixed targets in one safe direction; hunters are not shooting straight ahead, they shoot in the direction of travel of the deer. The ordinance should read property owner and guest, as few people like to shoot alone. Target shooting is for accuracy at the point of aim. We should remember there have been no target shooting deaths in RI, but there have been hunting accidents and shootings in RI. Target shooting is all safe.

Nick Robertson of Carr Lane stated he has been a resident of Jamestown for over 50 years, a tour of duty in the military, and made this his home. He has participated in target shooting for over 50 years and has never had an accident. Target shooters are the minority, and should not be discriminated against. If rules and regulations for target shooting are to be developed, those who target shoot should be part of the process. He disagrees a 9 mm can shoot over 1000 yds. He believes an adequate backstop is proper and should be a requirement, and 10:00 p.m. is not an appropriate hour for shooting. The Council should consider including target shooters who are qualified and practice the sport, in addition to the police, if they proceed with the development of rules and regulations for target shooting.

President Trocki noted suggestions, input, and information was solicited at the other open public sessions from all in attendance, and no one has been excluded from this process.

Mr. Robertson stated he feels a target shooter should be on the Committee and he will attend in the future.

Rob Roach commented he cannot access the town website and the *Jamestown Press* printed the wrong times for meetings.

Mike deAngeli of Court Street presented a mark-up of the draft Ordinance for the Council to clear up grammar and inconsistencies. He feels there should be a setback for the shooting area and target area. The target area is more dangerous as that is where the bullets land. He provided a target area definition and that “All target areas shall be constructed in accordance with standards for safe target shooting ranges, for example, as promulgated by the National Shooting Sports Foundation. The Chief of Police shall be informed of the prospect of use of any such target areas for target shooting and shall have the authority to require modifications in the interest of public safety.” We can’t leave this to chance, this is a public safety issue, there are rules for this practice, and the Police Department should have enforcement. He feels the setback should be 1500 ft. He lives near a private shooting range and it is noisy, scary, and may decrease the value of his property. He does not feel there is an absolute right to shoot on one’s property and it is time the Town develops regulations that allow reasonable use of one’s property. He is glad no one has been hurt to date, glad we are having this discussion, and hopes we can reach an agreement that leaves everyone satisfied.

Paul Sprague of Mast Street noted the established private ranges in town that have been in existence for over 40 years, without injury, which sets precedence. He advised being careful when establising setbacks such as 1500 ft., as the ranges predate the homes and some of them may have to move as they are encroaching on the established shooting ranges, and they should have known the ranges were there before they built their homes.

Quentin Anthony of Bay View Drive noted his association with the Land Trust and stated he is in attendance to speak on his own behalf, not the Land Trust, and expressed concern regarding shooting ranges. The Land Trust has over 550 acres and almost 60 properties under their control that allow and welcome public access. No activities are currently prohibited and all who have access have been respectful. There are 60 to 75 walkers on weekdays and over 100 walkers on the weekend. He expressed concern for unregulated shooting ranges next to one of the properties in the Land Trust. The proposed ordinance does not properly regulate the activity. As our community has changed and the population has grown, we need to regulate the shooting ranges. He doesn’t feel the ordinance is enforceable, and he has been shooting his whole life. Mr. Anthony referenced the shooting range at the Camp Yawgoo and its safety measures, including berm and extended stockade fence in the middle of thousands of acres of woods. He asks the Council to think about enforceable standards to make a range safe so that those invited to the Land Trust property and others will not risk being shot by a stray bullet. There needs to be standards and everyone needs to know what they are.

Mary Wright of Highland Drive stated she doesn’t think there is any target shooting around her. What regulations are there for a parent taking their child to learn to shoot? Is there an age limit? Can they restrict the activity? Nick Robertson suggested she contact the NRA for more information; Vice President Meagher noted RIDEM provides safety courses; Councilor Dickinson recommended visiting the Boy Scout Camp shooting range for its high standards; and the Newport Rifle Club has a youth program. President Trocki is unaware of the age of any children who may be shooting at local private ranges.

Randy White of Westwood Road referenced RIGL Chapter 11-47 Weapons that prohibits anyone under the age of 18 from owning or using a firearm without a permit, which must be approved by the State Police or municipal Chief of Police. He is not a shooter, but as a prosecutor for 32 years he has prosecuted homicides, many with guns, it is time we have regulations, and he applauds the Council for their actions. Anyone can go on the internet and put in the caliber of a weapon, Google information and the distance of the shot at the point it becomes lethal, and see a convincing video. This brings to light what can happen to a person with a stray shot. Even skilled individuals can make mistakes; he prosecuted a police officer and swat team member for manslaughter, who shot his captain accidentally. We need to enact something and the greater the distance the greater the safety. If the Council is going to allow private shooting ranges, he recommends 1000 ft. setbacks; take the safest route. It is difficult to prosecute statutes that are not well crafted. It makes sense to set a 4:00 p.m. time limit; defining what is prudent makes sense.

Suzy Leach of Whitter Road noted she has been a resident since 2012, has a child, and has concerns. If a target range is not registered, how do we know as prospective home buyers it exists and whether it is safe? She believes in individual property rights, but if there are shooting ranges, there should be regulations so that prospective buyers know there is a range in the area, it is safe, and she can then make an informed decisions that works for their family.

Doc Clark of Ledge Road commented this is his first meeting. Sec. 38-112 takes care of the 5th amendment and doesn’t restrict the weapons that can be used in target shooting. Sec. 113 Sub 2) (ii) “The point of discharge of any firearm shall be a minimum distance of 500 ft. from any dwelling. . .” doesn’t make sense. The first sentence is an attempt to get rid of the nuisance value and noise aspect but does not address it seriously. The second section should be rethought to address safety and containment beyond a nominal setback as the Island is too small. The Town should consider establishing a public shooting range that would meet everyone’s standards and control the activity.

Melody Drnach of Union Street stated she is very interested in the data presented this evening regarding weapons and ballistics. Whatever the Council decides, she would expect law enforcement, Council, and Town Administration to present the public with a detailed map with graphics and data showing exactly where the targets are and where various calibers of ammunition would hit and if the target is missed where it would land, so she has a visual that lets her know what land she wants to access or recommend access to others.

Steven Sparhawk of Dumpling Drive, NRA Certified Range Safety Officer, commented the discussion is bullets being shot at a dirt berm, which will stop at impact into the berm, and we are getting off track. He referenced RIGL §11-47-2 and stated he mostly shoots BB guns and pellet guns on the Island and higher caliber weapons at other shooting ranges. He would feel bad that young people wouldn’t have the same opportunities he had to shoot a BB gun on the Island and suggested taking BB guns and pellet guns out of the ordinance. He feels it is more about noise and nuisance, and he understands the safety concerns.

Merrill Sherman of Walnut Street stated times and circumstances have changed on the Island, we have more people, and are less rural. The rules have to reflect that growth. You can’t yell fire in a crowded theater and when you speak about rights it is a balancing act. It is an issue of public safety, as a bullet can travel far distances and don’t always go in the direction intended. We all like simple but maybe this ordinance is too simple. The distance should be increased in the ordinance. Perhaps this could be done in stages - adopt an ordinance, accept more public testimony, and amend it.

Carol Hopkins of East Shore Road stated she has been here for 50 years and went to the rod and gun club with her father. She proposes there not be limits from property to property but provide a safe place for people who want to target shoot. Perhaps revenues could be used for a public, safe shooting range. As a real estate agent, she never knew there was shooting nearby. We have no way of knowing this takes place and disagrees with the comment we should have known.

Jim Campagnone of Schooner Avenue commented that a previous speaker who commented he was a member of a rod and gun club was actually thrown out of a club for reckless acts, and his word is not very good.

John Murphy of Hamilton Avenue referenced the NRA Target Shooting Manual. It is an absurd notion that our society cannot add and revise regulations to activities as they evolve. Sometimes such laws are enacted after accidents. The Newport Rifle Club did not always have an outdoor range with 8 ft. high steel barriers and baffles. They recognized in order to make the use of the facility safe for their neighbors they had to adopt those provisions. You need wide open spaces or contain the shots in order to operate. Per the NRA manual, a 9 mm shot is measured in miles, and further states that the shooter will be held responsible for the damage or injury cause by any bullet or shot that escapes the shooting range. Bullets can go more than the width of the Island.

Nancy Bennett of Bonnet View Drive stated she is not a great gun fan and apologies to those who are. After the testimony this evening, she is leaning towards a public shooting range with supervision instead of individual private ranges. She wonders if all should be registered, inspected by the police, with safety standards established, that would make her more comfortable.

Bill Westall of Pemberton Avenue would like the Council to strike out air rifle, air pistol, blank gun, and BB gun from the ordinance for the kids. We were brought up with them and to register them would be too much.

Peter Coble of Narragansett Avenue stated he has lived here over 50 years. When he grew up here there were two clubs – a motorcycle and a gun club. Target shooting has been going on for a long time and they shoot into dirt banks. Registration is a good thing, most of the ranges are safe, people need to practice and learn, and the community should get involved.

Phil Willis of North Road commented the hours should be restricted. He is working with his sons teaching the grandchildren how to shoot properly and safely, the same way his children were taught. He doesn’t want the grandchildren denied the activities they were brought up with. He has been shooting for 40 years and no police chief has ever had to visit their property for any reason or violation. They have a proper backstop, do things properly, and he doesn’t want to have the right taken away. It would be better to have a grandchild know how to deal with a firearm to avoid any action that could occur when coming across one by accident.

William Maclean of Stern Street asked if given the 500 ft. setback from a dwelling for the seven established ranges, how many would be eliminated. The Council answered perhaps one.

Cheryl LaFazia of Wildflower Lane stated there is a shooting range at her property where she has lived for 28 years, long before Mr. deAngeli and Mr. Cannon moved there. She doesn’t feel the north end is a compact area and the activity has gone on for many years. The neighbors make it sound like it is the Wild West, when the activity is infrequent and not even monthly, as everyone who uses it works full time and serve as members of the Fire Department. It does not scare animals, they previously had livestock in the location, and she is uncomfortable with the picture painted. She asked the Council when reviewing this to look at it respectfully with open and objective eyes, not just following the remarks of a few selective neighbors making the most noise.

Jonathan Caito of Wildflower Lane stated his mother was the previous speaker. He learned to shoot with his father where he shoots today, and the last time he shot he was called to the Police Chief’s Office and they talked for an hour. He agreed to refrain from shooting until the issue was resolved. The backstop was small, and he brought in 120 yds. of material to make it bigger. He agrees there should be regulations for target shooting. There isn’t any shooting in the shores area where it is too compact and no ranges in the downtown area for the same reasons, and if there were, they would be in violation of state law. He doesn’t feel his area is compact. When shooting it is controlled, one person at a time, one loading at a time, and shooting is at the target only. 500 ft. is not a good idea as it is somewhat excessive. Where he target shoots they fire in the same direction repeatedly at a distance of 25 yds. He has tried to join a Rifle Club, but they have a waiting list and are expensive. His activity is safe, all who participate know how to shoot or are taught all the safety and shooting basics, and their activities are much the same as those of a rifle club. Police have been to the property when target shooting is underway and it was cordial and they have done whatever was asked of them. He doesn’t consider this a safety concern, but this is what it has turned into. He will do what it takes to make the backstop safer, but the 500 ft. is too much.

Dick Trask of Beavertail Road stated he grew up with .22 rifles and shotguns and considers himself familiar with guns. He suggests getting rid of the BB guns and kids stuff, as we all grew up with them and no one got hurt. Sundays should be allowed as people work on Saturdays. He thinks it would be better to have one central safe place for target shooting. A regulated town facility would be a better option.

President Trocki asked if anyone would give up their private range for a public range. Nick Robertson stated he would do so and it might solve the issues, but how do we pay for it? Where would it be located? He noted the inconvenience to travel to off-island shooting range locations.

Mr. Trask stated it is good that this is being discussed prior to an unfortunate incident.

Mr. Robertson referenced areas where target shooting took place in the past. The Council is on the right track and there is a way of teaching safety. He further noted accidents that can happen and the importance of gun safety.

Peter Coble commented those who are interested in a range could collect money to establish one.

Paul Balzer of Watson Avenue stated he is a life-long resident and one of three Range Safety Officers for the Fish and Wildlife Division of DEM. He referenced his efforts in establishing the Skate Park. There are numerous target shooters in RI and he asked please do not stifle this sport. Many kids shoot with a parent at the RIDEM ranges, with a permit, there is also a women’s program, and this is how the safety is passed down. If you want to make it larger and have a public range that is okay, just don’t kill what we have.

Randy White of Westwood Road asked what properties would be candidates for a public range, which would resolve the control and safety issues and he would support. Discussion ensued of the issues that would be involved.

Peter Coble of Narragansett Avenue suggested the Transfer Station.

Rob Roach referenced Skatefest and teaching archery and gun safety at the Jamestown School, which are very important. He asks the Council not to kill the sport – we don’t need a massive change for the opinion of a few.

Jonathan Caito of Wildflower Lane stated the Town has spent considerable funds to cap the landfill at the Transfer Station, and he doesn’t believe the town would be allowed to build anything on that property due to the cap. The Transfer Station hours are Thursday through Monday, 8:30 am – 3:30 pm, which doesn’t leave a lot of time for shooting.

Walter May of Middletown commented on the responsible individuals who spoke this evening and commented there are also many who are not responsible. He referenced the shooting range at the Little Compton transfer station, located in a safe remote area. It would not be expensive to develop one and perhaps there could be sponsors. There are waiting lists for the Newport Rifle Club and there is interest in private ranges.

Christian Infantolino of Reservoir Circle stated he learned to shoot at 8 years old with his grandfather in Little Compton, who taught him gun safety. He has no problem with guns, or gun ownership. It is a safety issue, and there are lots of issues, with regulations that are there and not there. The shooters who spoke this evening state they run their ranges safely, so there is no problem with putting in safety regulations and registering the ranges. There are multiple weapons used for shooting, he used to hear gunshots in the north end late at night, and he shot previously in Colorado. It comes down to safety, and there is a difference between hunting and target shooting. Hunting is regulated but target shooting is not, there are layers, and there must be a safety component with standards and the ability to hold someone accountable. It is not trying to take away or stifle the activity it just makes it safe for all when standards are followed.

Mike D’Allessio of Elm Street noted everyone is concerned with safety, he is not opposed to shooting, but he is opposed to denying the right to shoot where it has taken place for a long time. The ordinance should not restrict existing ranges or the times for shooting. His children learn to shoot through the Newport Rifle Club beginning at age 8, it is an Olympic sport, it is a tradition. He referenced the dangers and distance of a stray golf ball. Do not take away the right to shoot on one’s property that has existed for years.

Public comment ends at 8:30 p.m.

Council comment.

Councilor Dickinson stated he is a shooter, and his concerns are oriented towards process. No one knows where the target ranges are, which is significant. Chief Mello provided incident data last fall and there were no injuries with hunting going back to 2007. Chief Mello agreed. Councilor Dickinson commented on the writing of the ordinance by the Ordinance Review Committee and asked how many range owners participated in the process. Town Administrator Nota stated based on participation at the public sessions, five of six. Councilor Dickinson noted the Council established the ORC in March 2015, and read the highlights of the Resolution adopted. The intention was to get all together to vet out the issues. He attended the first ORC meeting, but did not attend others, and he is here to participate as this is an important issue and that stakeholders should be part of the process. His problem is the ORC meetings are difficult to attend due to scheduling, the participation expected that did not take place, and the membership not as expected.

President Trocki noted yes, one meeting was at 10:00 a.m. due to scheduling, which was posted. All are invited to the meetings and work sessions, and the only attendees are often the members. Councilor Dickinson referred to process and the process being followed. Councilor Dickinson asked if the Solicitor reviewed the document, and was informed yes.

Vice President Meagher commented on the make-up of the ORC that included the President, Vice President, Police Chief and Town Administrator with Town staff as needed. Town staff has been in attendance in reviewing numerous ordinances as required. Minutes were approved but no ordinances were approved. Lengthy discussion ensued.

President Trocki stated there has been no deviation from the sub-committee format for the ORC. The draft ordinance is before the public hearing with no deviation from how other committees and sub-committees operate. Lengthy discussion ensued.

Councilor Dickinson commented hunting and target shooting have existed safely in Jamestown, and he feels the target shooters should have been involved.

Nick Robertson of Carr Lane stated he didn’t believe that those not involved with target shooting should be making the decisions on rules governing it. He realizes the police are qualified, and he does believe the target shooters should be involved.

President Trocki noted their input has been solicited and that is why we are here this evening. There are varying issues she does not have knowledge of, but the ORC gathers information, performs research, drafts ordinances, reviews ordinances, and develops what it considers appropriate to bring before the citizens for their input as part of the process.

Councilor White inquired about State target regulations. Solicitor Ruggiero noted there are for State ranges, but not for others. Councilor White commented this is the first step and he appreciates the work of the ORC. To date the shooters and shooting ranges in Jamestown have been responsible and practiced safety. But to develop a public range would require funding. He doesn’t want to take away the rights for private ranges, but they must be shooting safely following a process with inspection for verifying and certification by the town or police department. The operating times must be established, and perhaps a Sunday afternoon would be appropriate, due to people’s work schedules. The next step should be to include some of the range owners working with the police and Town Administrator to give input what they do to make the ranges safe. Lengthy discussion ensued.

Councilor Tighe agrees with Councilor White. There is too much information to digest to vote on this tonight. He would like to see this go back to the ORC and those in attendance who would like to be involved to sign up to participate, and this would facilitate the development of an ordinance that would work.

Vice President Meagher commented the February meeting time was not optimum, but was scheduled after two open successful public sessions. The objective was to make a minimal ordinance, which was achieved. Tonight’s session has been a terrific meeting, was most successful, and she thanked everyone for coming and stated your concerns matter. The intent of the ORC was to facilitate the creation of ordinances, which is difficult to do as a Council. A lot of information came forward this evening, and the draft ordinance is a good beginning. The Solicitor would let us know if he had concerns with the Ordinance and is part of this process. She believes the committee worked hard and did what it was intended to do and it was public and open and we did our job. Lengthy discussion ensued.

Councilor Dickinson stated he is committed to the sub committee process and truly believes the stakeholders should be brought in. We are all concerned and want to feel safe. The common ground here is very wide. Council members agree, to find common ground, and that is what we are tasked with.

Town Administrator Nota announced that anyone who wants advance notice of meetings should contact the Town Clerk so that notices can be sent directly to them in addition to the public notice process.

Solicitor Ruggiero commented on liability and insurance issues that need to be addressed for additional discussions. Town Administrator Nota stated the ordinance was written so that the Town would not be directly involved with the liability associated with the activity on private property. The Committee vetted all information provided in order to draft an ordinance that would keep the town on the fringe of responsibility. Discussion ensued. The 500 ft. buffer eliminates two-thirds of the properties in town and gives those who live in densely populated neighborhoods peace of mind.

President Trocki noted there is more work to be done and the efforts of all are deeply appreciated. Discussion ensued of next steps and work that needs to proceed. It was suggested this issue be turned over to the Town Administrator for further review, with public input, and public open sessions, then back before the Council.

Councilor Dickinson stated we now have something to work with and will have input.

**A motion was made by Vice President Meagher with second by Councilor White to close the public hearing. President Trocki, Aye; Vice President Meagher, Aye; Councilor Dickinson, Aye; Councilor, White, Aye; Councilor Tighe, Aye.**

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Vice President Meagher with second by Councilor White to adjourn the special meeting. President Trocki, Aye; Vice President Meagher, Aye; Councilor Dickinson, Aye; Councilor, White, Aye; Councilor Tighe, Aye.**

The special meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Attest:

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council

 Town Administrator

 Town Solicitor

 Finance Director