

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING REMOTE/TOWN HALL
Chaplin, Connecticut
Thursday, March 4, 2021
MINUTES **AMENDED**

Members Present: William H. Rose IV, First Selectman; Anthony Pinto, Selectman; Kenneth Fortier, Selectman

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Suzanne Krodell, Administrative Assistant

Remote: Dick Weingart, Chairman/Board of Finance; Diana Alvarez, Treasurer

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 7:04pm
2. **First Audience of Citizens:** None
3. **Additions to the Agenda:** None
4. **Approve minutes of the Board of Selectmen regular meeting on February 4, 2021 and special meeting on February 17, 2021.** Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** to approve the regular meeting minutes from 2/4/21 and special meeting minutes from 2/17/21. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: Mr. Rose requested the 2/4/21 minutes to be amended to replace "any more phone stipends" with "any further phone stipends". Mr. Fortier changed the **MOTION** to approve the 2/4/21 and 2/17/21 minutes with the amendment to the 2/4/21 minutes. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.
5. **Communications and Reports**
 - A. **Trooper Report:** The board reviewed the December, January, and February reports from Trooper Patrick Guertin. The reports are very detailed, and the Board is impressed with the work he has been doing for the Town.
 - B. **Board Members Reports:** Mr. Pinto discussed the traffic crash study and that it will be 6 months before we hear anything. The investigation is about fatal accidents and high crash intersections on state roads in the town, one being the route 198 and route 6 intersection. Rumble sticks **strips were discussed to slow fast traffic coming down the hill on route 6 near Cross Road.
 - C. **Board of Finance Discussion:** Mr. Weingart reported that the audit review will take place at the 3/8 Board of Finance meeting. He asked the auditor to explain certain aspects of the audit to better explain the process. The Board of Selectmen will be reviewing the FY21-22 budget at this meeting. The tax collector suspense list was discussed. These are taxes that have been uncollectable for both motor vehicles and real estate. Even when it goes into suspense, they are still collectable.

One real estate property on the list. Total amount is approximately \$26,000. The Board of Finance will approve the final audit and suspense list. He would like to present a picture of revenues for next year and review projection of local revenues. State revenues were flat lined, State grants projected to be the same. Grand list down 4 million dollars and looking at mill rate for next year. Mr. Weingart discussed grants one being Federal ESSER Phase II – \$50,300 for both FY22 and FY23. These are funds the school district has been receiving under Phase I and have to be used same for both phases. This was discussed with Superintendent Ken Henrici. Another grant is awarded to distressed municipalities for \$203,812 for one year. Not much info yet at this time by may be restrictions with bonding. Mr. Rose did reach out to different entities to see what this is about. Also, the Board of Education will be presenting their budgets in a couple week. Mr. Weingart wanted to thank Ms. Krodel and Windham IT support in setting up a way for the board to share secured documents.

D. Correspondence: None

E. Building/Infrastructure: Mr. Rose reported that the new lighting and HVAC contract for the senior center/library building and town clerk vault has been submitted. Also, DPW is using a new salt treatment on the roads which activates in lower temperatures. It is a little more expensive but works better.

F. Chaplin Elementary School and Regional District #11 Quarterly Budget Report: The board reviewed the detailed budget for the school.

6. New Business

A. Tax Collector Refunds: None

B. Resignations/Appointments:

Resignations: Steven Landon resigned from the recreation commission effective 2/11/21. Lisa Kegler resigning from the Senior Center Board of Directors effective 3/1/21.

Appointments: Mr. Rose read the recommendations from the Recreation Commission dated 2/26/21. Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to recommend Christine Blair, Shannon Hammon, Josh Walmsley, and Clayton Coogan as members of the recreation commission appointed until 6/30/21. If elected at the town meeting their terms will expire 6/30/22. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: These members will be appointed in the interim until elections at town meeting. Mr. Rose stated Matt Foster sent in a request to remain on the recreation commission. Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to appoint Matt Foster as a member of the Recreation Commission until 6/30/21 if elected at town meeting the term will expire 6/30/22. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to appoint Crystal Gebhardt to the Senior Center Board of Directors as a member with a term of 7/1/2018 through 6/30/2021. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

C. Discuss and possible action regarding the resolution for STEAP:

Mr. Rose read the resolution for the STEAP grant (see attached). Mr. Pinto made a **MOTION** to approve the resolution for the STEAP grant. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: None. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

D. Discuss and possible action regarding the Tax Collector's

suspense list: Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to approve the tax collector's real estate suspense list for the Thomas Bolan property. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed. Mr. Rose stated that the town could acquire the property, although not a very appealing lot, only $\frac{3}{4}$ of it is dry acreage and it is next to the power lines. He contacted Adam Cohen who does our tax sales to see how we would acquire it. He has an outstanding bill of \$5587.20 and we would pay cost of transaction and after 6 months the deed would be recorded. Mr. Cohen will accept \$4500 as payment in full. The town would need to do an 824 **8-24 review with zoning and then go to town meeting for approval. Mr. Rose can see no reason to acquire it unless we install another message board on Rte 6. He contacted Jay Gigliotti, Planning & Zoning agent, to see what we would need to do to put up a town informational sign. Mr. Pinto mentioned power is on that side and that can be used for the sign.

Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** to approve the tax collector's suspense list of 3/3/21 from Zayne Ring, Collector of Revenue in Windham for the motor vehicles for \$21,404.41. Mr. Rose seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: This is a couple years' worth of suspense's. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

E. Discuss and possible action regarding the purchase of a drone by the Emergency Management Director.

Mr. Rose informed the board that to use the drone there is required insurance, special licensing, FAA regulations, and permits. There is a resident the emergency mgt director wants to have fly it, but they cannot handle town equipment unless they are a member of the fire department or employee, without the proper coverage in place. Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to not fly the drone until proper permits, insurance, licensing, and a qualified operator is in place first and the drone is to stay at the fire department or Town Hall. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: The Emergency Mgt Director needs to also sign paperwork that this drone is in his possession. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

F. Discussion regarding cyber insurance. Mr. Rose looked at a couple of policies and through Beasley Insurance it would be \$4000 a year but split between the Board of Education and the town. CIRMA quote was high and so was the deductible. If any personnel info was compromised or hacked and we didn't have insurance, then a fee must be paid to the state of \$20 per employee every year. The policy was sent to the IT staff to review. Our employee records are not electronic, they are stored in a filing cabinet.

G. Discuss and possible action to close out Capital Improvement Plan projects. Close the following: Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** to close the completed CIP projects listed below. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: Excess funds in each project will go to undesignated funds. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

General Government:

- # 3325.1 Handicapped Access: Library/Senior Ctr
- # 3320.1 Assessor Revaluation
- # 3320.12 Install split system HVAC unit-Town Hall

Public Works:

- # 3305.22 Town Hall Sidewalk Replacement

Public Safety

- NEW Lucas Device-automatic CPR

Board of Education:

- # 3300.1 (10) new folding Mitchell cafeteria tables
Replace all smoke detectors in school bldg & Replace security system control panel
- # 3300.11 security system control panel
- # 3300.14 Replace Gym Foam Wall Safety Panels
- # 3300.13 Install Chain Link Fence Around Entire Pre-K

Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to put \$500,000 of undesignated funds towards the England bridge project. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: these **undesignated funds are about \$2 million dollars and Mr. Weingart would like a specific dollar amount to be presented at the next CIP meeting. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

7. Old Business

- A. Discussion regarding the sale of Tutko Road:** The 824 **8-24 review with Planning and Zoning has not happened yet. Assessor Chandler Rose is working on assessment of the road. A decision to sell the road would have to go to town meeting.
- B. Discussion regarding the Chaplin museum:** Mr Rose stated that there needs to be a discussion with the historic district regarding the move of the museum. He stated it is of no use where it is located right now, and we need to create a Steering committee then do a presentation

to the historic district commission. Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to explore creating a steering committee for future use and possible move of the museum. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

- C. Discussion regarding COVID-19:** The board discussed the governor announcement of opening up indoor recreation and libraries. Mr. Rose gave permission for the library meeting room to be opened up to the Mahjong group because they are all vaccinated. He sees no reason to open Town Hall at this time, same for the senior center. The library had grant money for covid communication and we installed an extensive wifi system and patrons can also connect in the parking lot. He feels we should continue hybrid meetings and the board agreed. We get more participation in these meetings. Also discussed was updating the website because it is being used a lot more and discussed if the FEMA/State funds will cover this upgrade. It is functional but we are outgrowing it.
- D. Discussion regarding undeclaring the State of Emergency for the Town of Chaplin:** Tabled
- E. Discussion regarding England Road Bridge Project:** Still in design mode and discussed a sidewalk. They won't pay for a sidewalk if not already existing according to federal guidelines.
- F. Discussion regarding Bedlam Road Bridge Project:** Still waiting on grant funds.
- G. Discuss tentative plans to celebrate Chaplin Bicentennial in 2022.** There is an Ad Hoc Bicentennial meeting next week.
- H. Discuss All Pending and New FOI Requests:** None
- I. Discussion regarding the Department of Public Works:** Mr. Pinto said kudos to public works, we made out well with the windstorms and trees compared to other towns. Mr. Rose stated that extra funds were allocated in CIP for tree work which is really paying off.
- J. Discussion regarding shared and contracted services.** Hampton and Scotland met regarding combining the elementary schools. Mr. Rose will follow up.
- K. Human Resources:** The Senior Center Board of Directors want to fill the Assistant position. They want to look at the job description and determine the process of hiring. Mr. Rose asked Ms. Krodel, Administrative Assistant, to track her hours and she has been working approximately 44-45 hours a week. She is getting paid for 38 hours a

week. He would like to move to 40 hours but it doesn't resolve all the other hours being worked. Mr. Rose read the letter from Ms. Krodel regarding the position on how it has evolved over the last few years and how it has grown. This position is critical in the transition when a new First Selectman is elected, possibly every two years. Also discussed was the electronic cemetery software that has not been utilized due to the lack of hours. Budgetary impact for the 2 hours a week increase is \$3250 per year. Mr. Rose supports it but is concerned with the extra work that still needs to be done. These tasks can't be moved to other departments; the finance manager and town clerk are very busy and can not absorb any more work. The board discussed a float position for a few hours a week for the Administrative Assistant and Finance Manager, maybe someone who is already employed who might be looking for extra hours. This float will go into the selectman's budget. Mr. Pinto made the **MOTION** to increase the Administrative Assistant's work week to 40 hours per week. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: Mr. Rose also stated that Ms. Krodel works at the town hall at least 24 hours a week when it is open and remaining hours working from home. There is no need to commute back to town hall when most work can be done remotely. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

- L. **Discuss and possible action regarding the Affordable Housing Plan Grant:** NECCOG wanted a steering committee but this hasn't happened yet. Mr. Fortier thought it was being rolled into the POCD. Mr. Rose discussed the grant initiatives, and we are required to offer so much affordable housing in town. It is a challenge meeting the criteria in small towns. Our state reps are looking out for the small towns.
 - M. **Discuss and possible action regarding a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Eastern CT Conservation District and the Town of Chaplin – Natchaug Watershed Protection Plan:** The board agreed they want to protect the watershed but if criteria is implemented to the building department should it also go through zoning. It is in our POCD how we want to protect the watershed. They don't feel we need to be a part of it at this time.
 - N. **Discuss cleaning quotes for Benjamin and Mary Chaplin's headstones:** On hold until after the budget is passed.
 - O. **Discussion regarding the preparation for listing the William Ross Library for sale:** The septic analysis is done; surveying being done now waiting on results then hope to go to town meeting this year. Appraisal will need to be done after we determine if a driveway can be put in.
8. **Second Audience of Citizens - Note: Comments are limited to agenda items and subject to Chair discretion.** None

9. Agenda Suggestions for next meetingCommunications and Reports

- Trooper Report
- Board Members Reports
- Board of Finance Discussion
- Correspondence
- Building/Infrastructure
- Chaplin Elementary School and Regional District #11 Quarterly Budget Report

New Business

- Tax Collector Refunds
- Resignations/Appointments

Old Business

- Discussion regarding the sale of Tutko Road
- Discussion regarding the Chaplin museum.
- Discussion regarding COVID-19
- Discussion regarding undeclaring the State of Emergency for the Town of Chaplin
- Discuss and possible action regarding STEAP
- Discussion regarding England Road Bridge Project
- Discussion regarding Bedlam Road Bridge Project
- Discuss tentative plans to celebrate Chaplin Bicentennial in 2022.
- Discuss and possible action regarding the purchase of a drone by the Emergency Management Director
- Discuss All Pending and New FOI Requests
- Discussion regarding the Department of Public Works
- Discussion regarding shared and contracted services
- Human Resources
- Discuss and possible action regarding the Affordable Housing Plan Grant
- Discuss cleaning quotes for Benjamin and Mary Chaplin's headstones.
- Discussion regarding the preparation for listing the William Ross Library for sale.
- Discussion regarding cyber insurance

10. Date, time, and place of next meeting (April 1, 2021 at 7:00pm, Chaplin Town Hall and Remote via GoToMeeting).**11. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm

*Respectfully submitted by,
Suzanne Krodel, Administrative Assistant*