

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
Chaplin, Connecticut
Thursday, June 2, 2022**

Members Present: Juan Roman III, First Selectman; Anthony Pinto, Selectman; Kenneth Fortier, Selectman

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Richard Weingart, Chairman/Board of Finance; Diana Alvarez, Town Treasurer; Jim Randall, Emergency Management Director; Therese Smith, Zoning Board of Appeals; Suzanne Krodel, Administrative Assistant

- 1. Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 7:03pm

- 2. First Audience of Citizens:**

J. Randall questioned why the new intersection construction project on North Bear Hill Road was not brought to a public hearing. J. Roman stated that this has been a safety issue and needed to be changed and should be done by the 15th of this month. We had a NECCOG engineer work on the project, and it has been in discussion for 2 years. A public bid opening was held which was published in the newspaper. J. Pinto stated that public works will not be doing the job and that it was contracted out. J. Roman stated to J. Randall that this project was discussed at the Board of Selectmen meetings which he attended and should have brought up concerns then, not now that the project is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way complete.

J. Randall asked if the Trooper was on vacation as he has not seen his vehicle. J. Roman stated that he doesn't know when he is on vacation and if the resident trooper is off, Troop D handles the calls.

D. Weingart asked about the proposal from the Economic Development Commission regrading the new entry signs. J. Roman stated the signs have been designed and paid for from the DPW budget. They will be on the right of way from the State and permits have been submitted. Planning & Zoning will be looking at it and we hope to have them done by the end of the month. Instead of the green signs it is nicer like the senior center and library. One will be on Route 6 and the other may be going into Route 198, but he has concerns about that location due to the sight line. It doesn't make sense to put one next to the firehouse because the electronic sign is there.

- 3. Additions to the Agenda:** None

- 4. Approve minutes of the Board of Selectmen regular meeting on May 5, 2022 and special meeting minutes on May 24, 2022.** *K. Fortier made a MOTION to approve the May 5, 2022 regular meeting minutes and May 24, 2022 special meeting minutes. J. Pinto seconded the MOTION. All in favor, MOTION passed.*

5. Communications and Reports

A. Trooper Report - The Board reviewed the detailed report from Trooper Shaun Tucker:

- During the month of May the Resident Trooper attended the Gas Pipeline Safety Meeting in Norwich with other Town Officials.
- He attended the Annual Town Meeting on May 9, 2022.
- On May 23, 2022 he gave a presentation to an assembly at the Parish Hill High School in conjunction with a Social Services Organization called "SERAC". The presentation was on the dangers of underage vaping, drug, and alcohol use. There were approximately 100 students in attendance.
- Conducted Enhanced Security Checks at Parish Hill High School and Chaplin Elementary School following the incident in Uvalde, TX.
- The homicide which occurred on Miller Rd. on May 1, 2022 is being investigated by the Eastern District Major Crime Squad. The suspect was located out of state and was taken into custody.
- On May 10, 2022 he was called to Yatco Convenience Store for the report of people sleeping in a pick-up truck with no license plates on the vehicle. The operator of the vehicle was taken into custody for possession of Methamphetamine, Operating Under the Influence, and Larceny.

B. Board Members Reports: J. Roman read the report from the Chair of the Bicentennial Committee, Leslie Ricklin:

- The May 21 talk by Cathy Smith about Ruth Snow Bowen was well attended at the library.
- The May 28 walk—the first in the Bicentennial series of walks—was attended by about a dozen people and Deb Field, a Chaplin resident and volunteer for Joshua's Trust, led the group on an informative nature walk of the Hubbard Parcel.
- The Committee is co-sponsoring the PTO 5K race on June 4.
- Professional photographer, Peter Polomsky, will be documenting both the July 2 play and the events on Sept. 10.
- Brian Synnott is going to be the drone operator and photographer for the town photograph and other events on Sept. 10.
- The Committee has solicited advertisements and many local businesses have been very generous during this campaign.
- The Committee discussed various strategies for publicizing our events in addition to our Facebook page: requested from governor to designate Sept.10 as "Chaplin Day in CT"; more newspaper coverage; sending out postcards; 50 lawn signs to announce the Bicentennial.

J. Roman read the report from DPW Supervisor, Dave Stone:

- Requested from the Board of Selectman to continue to pursue the option of allowing them to use part-time help when needed.
- Received our new Sweeper purchased for \$24,900
- Purchased a new plate compactor

- The 1986 boom mower is out of service due to needing \$8,000 worth of repairs. He suggests to the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance that we purchase a new unit with \$50-80,000 down, then a 2–5-year lease with \$1 buyout at the end.
 - Taken care of some tree work and brush cutting on England, Tower Hill, Chewink and Bedlam cemeteries, and Chewink Roads.
 - Upgraded aprons on Chappell Street to conform with current specs after receiving drainage complaints.
 - Tree work continues; oak and ash mortality has been increasing due to stress, insects and drought.
- C. Board of Finance Discussion: D. Weingart reported that on 5/23 the BOF met and set the mill rate at 34.5 mills for real estate and personal property and motor vehicle is capped at 32.46. Discussions were using fund balance to offset mill rate increase which may help one time but without additional revenue coming in it will just be depleted. Also discussed was possible revenue if the gas station and laboratory come into town. He also asked the BOS how it will be handled if the cost of supplies increase for the England Road bridge; do we stop the project, it could be a substantial amount. They thought it was a good point and will investigate further. The tax collector came to the BOF meeting to review the suspense list, these are properties with uncollectable taxes. He is also working on state reports with the treasurer, Val Garrison, and Jobina Miller at the school. He is working on year end closing transactions and then preparing for the audit in mid-September.
- D. Correspondence: None
- E. Building/Infrastructure: J. Roman reported that landscaping around the electronic sign to start soon. The Board discussed the request from a local business to rent the fire department hall, they are not Chaplin residents as the regulation states but do pay taxes in town. J. Pinto feels they shouldn't rent the hall at all because they do not make enough money to cover wear and tear and repairs. Also discussed there is no one to inspect the hall for damages before and after the rentals. Therese Smith asked if she could do computer classes there and she would volunteer her time. J. Pinto stated the BOS could sponsor this and wave the insurance costs. The BOS will discuss rentals further about renting that hall at a later date.

6. Treasurer Report: D. Alvarez reported she is meeting with a new representative from Berkshire Bank to discuss the investment account. Also, she talked to D. Weingart about accounts over the \$250,000 mark might not be insured and see where we fall under that. The CIP account is in an interest bearing account but regular checking and anything in excess may not be covered so she is meeting with them next Thursday. J. Roman asked if that was \$250,000 per bank or per account. She stated per account, it is FDIC insurance. With Webster we have an investment account where we have revenue collection, anything excess is put into this which is a small interest-bearing account which before COVID matched same rate as STIFF account. When asked initially the representative couldn't give an answer about moving accounts back from Webster so they are working on it because they want us to bring all money to Berkshire. The

STIFF account was discussed; D. Alvarez stated grants go into this funding. Interest rates were high but rates are low now and funds were moved into Webster because it was a little bit higher but since COVID it has bottomed out. So looking to put any excess and CIP funds into the account so in case something happens, the town will not lose that money. D. Alvarez asked the BOS to sign a letter authorizing treasurer to invest and pick banks. *J. Roman made a MOTION to accept document as is. J. Pinto seconded the MOTION. All in favor, MOTION passed.*

7. New Business

- A. Tax Collector Refunds: None
- B. Discuss and possible action regarding the paving bids for FY 22-23: The Board reviewed the tabulation sheet, three bids came in. D. Stone recommends awarding to two companies, one can do the smaller asphalt drops and the other with the triaxle can do the bigger drops. Bid prices are by day and DPW has a budget to work with. K. Fortier asked if it was ok to accept 2 bids. J. Roman stated yes because the bids were per day tonnage rates. *J. Roman made a MOTION to award the bid to P. Willis and Krukoff. K. Fortier seconded the MOTION. All in favor, MOTION passed.*

8. Old Business

- A. Chaplin Museum: J. Roman reported that they are working on a feasibility study for the museum, which is a 50/50 grant. The study will show if the museum can be moved. Sally Zimmerman is willing to pay for the half not covered by the grant. She is a grant writer and will write the grant.
- B. American Rescue Plan Funds: J. Roman reported that the Congregational Church applied for these funds for the repair to the church and he just heard from NECCOG that there may be a problem with it. He will call the State tomorrow, he read that it falls under a 501c and that the funds can be given. We are not running the church but fixing the historical building. Also last year the senior center/library rented a tent for outside events and this year would like to purchase one. We can buy one for less than what it costs to rent – it is about \$6000 which is about three months rental. The board agreed this makes sense.
- C. COVID-19: J. Roman reported that numbers are about 10% COVID cases in Chaplin.
- D. All Pending and New FOI Requests: One request reviewed (see Selectman's office for additional information).
- E. USDA Grant – Purchase of a new firetruck: J. Pinto reported that the truck is on track to leave the factory in August to go to Massachusetts to be completed. They are looking at going to the plant in July/August to do the inspection. He will check into when they can trade in the old truck and get a credit for it. Also discussed was staffing for the fire department and sooner than later it will need to be paid staff. The DPW staff are interested in joining and the thought is they could respond during the day if available. Currently they are using mutual aid during the day as often volunteers are unable to make the calls.

F. Benjamin Chaplin's cupboard update: J. Roman visited Andy Belisle who is restoring the cupboard. There are many layers of paint which he will be removing to get to the first layer which is blue, it will not be repainted.

9. Second Audience of Citizens - Note: Comments are limited to agenda items and subject to Chair discretion: J. Randall asked if the tent falls under COVID, and J. Roman stated yes.

10. Agenda Suggestions for next meeting: Keep all items but remove 7B.

11. Date, time, and place of next meeting (July 7, 2022, at 7:00pm, Chaplin Town Hall).

12. Adjourn: *J. Pinto made a MOTION to adjourn at 8:35pm. K. Fortier seconded the MOTION. All in favor, MOTION passed.*

*Respectfully submitted by,
Suzanne Krodel
Administrative Assistant*