

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Chaplin, Connecticut
October 7, 2020
Special Meeting
Minutes**

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Suzanne Krodel, Administrative Assistant.

Remote Dial-in: Richard Weingart, Chairman/Board of Finance.

1. **Call to Order:** Mr. Rose called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.
2. **First Audience of Citizens:** None
3. **Approve minutes of:** Board of Selectmen regular meeting on September 3, 2020. Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** to approve the Board of Selectmen regular meeting minutes from September 3, 2020. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in Favor. **MOTION** passed.
4. **Communications and Reports**
 - A. **Trooper Report:** The Board reviewed the Trooper statistics. There were two armed robberies, both occurred at the Chaplin Package Store. Mr. Rose stated he is pleased with Trooper Tucker's interaction with the community. He was present at the Senior Center when the meals were handed out and has been seen often on patrol. Trooper Tucker asked what roads were recommended he patrol.
 - B. **Board Members Reports:** Mr. Rose stated that there were issues with the copiers at Town hall and the leasing company is dropping off new copiers on loan until the permanent leased machines arrive.

Mr. Rose stated that the First Selectman in Hampton received a request for funds that were set aside in their CIP budget for the Chaplin/Hampton Ambulance. Chaplin did not receive a letter like this. Mr. Pinto reported that the Hampton/Chaplin Ambulance Corp. disbanded according to a letter sent out to its members.

Mr. Rose stated that they needed to assign a Drought Coordinator to represent the town and he volunteered to take on that role. We are in an extreme drought right now and he will continue to monitor the situation.

Mr. Rose read the opinion submitted by the Town Attorney, Dennis O'Brien regarding Ross Library. The next step is to do a survey to finalize the borders and then approach the abutting neighbor regarding a possible easement which would need to go to Town meeting.

- C. **Board of Finance Discussion:** Mr. Weingart reported that the Fiscal Year 19-20 audit is underway. A letter went out to the Boards/Commissions/staff regarding the Annual Report. The Board of Finance appropriated \$15,000 from the General Fund to CIP for the ROW (Right of Way) England Road Bridge. Mr. Weingart also discussed the status of the Board of Finance Draft Policies that are currently under review. He also expressed his concerns regarding the State deficit of approximately 2 billion dollars and he advised the Board of Selectmen to ask for zero increase in budgets. He anticipates the State funding to be cut at some level. Also, the revenue from the gas lines decrease yearly about .5 mills. The Board reviewed the school budget report and Mr. Weingart stated that the school has about \$100,000 remaining for excess funds. Mr. Rose agreed that the town needs to minimize increases in the budgets due to the State deficit. Mr. Pinto reported that the generator at the fire department needs to be replaced and should be able to get one under \$15,000.
- D. **Correspondence:** None
- E. **Building/Infrastructure:** Mr. Pinto reported that the Door repair is under \$400 for the fire department. The track needs to be replaced and to purchase switches. This will come out of the budget, not through insurance.
- F. **Chaplin Elementary School and Regional District #11 Quarterly Budget Report:** Discussed under Board of Finance agenda item

5. New Business

- A. **Tax Collector Refunds:** None
- B. **Resignations/Appointments:** Mr. Rose read a letter from the Library Board of Trustees requesting the Board of Selectmen to establish the position of Chaplin Poet Laureate. Mr. Pinto made a **MOTION** for the Board of Selectmen to establish the position of Chaplin Poet Laureate and to allow the Library Board of Trustees to proceed in locating a candidate. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

Mr. Rose stated that the Ad Hoc Bicentennial Committee is requesting from the Board to appoint a Town Historian. He will send out a message via Google Groups to recruit candidates.

- C. **Transfer Station Schedule:** It was requested that the transfer station be open an additional day if closed on Saturday due to a holiday. Mr. Rose stated that it is rarely closed on Saturdays and to open during the week when most people are working may not be worth it. Also, they would have to check with the transfer station attendant's schedule if he is available. The Board will revisit this next year.
- D. **Discuss and possible action regarding the Affordable Housing Plan Grant:** Mr. Rose reported that there is some opposition to

accepting grant funds. If accepted it may be on the radar to have our zoning influenced by the State. The other side is they could force us to have a housing plan before we get the funds like we do with the POCD and STEAP grants. Mr. Rose suggested the town accept the funds before this becomes a criteria of the State. NECCOG will do it in conjunction with our POCD; the Board members agreed. Affordable housing could be for seniors, but low-income housing will be hard to accommodate in our rural areas. Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** to accept the Affordable Housing Plan Grant and to put a plan together to use with the POCD. Mr. Rose seconded the **MOTION**. Mr. Pinto abstained. **MOTION** passed.

- E. Discuss and possible action regarding a MOA with Eastern CT Conservation District and the Town of Chaplin – Natchaug Watershed Protection Plan:** The Board reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding and discussed the Natchaug river overlay zone and that this MOU is to protect watershed. Mr. Fortier stated that he believes this may already be in the current POCD for Chaplin. The Board would like to get a copy of the Natchaug Healthy Watershed Protection plan for Jean Pillo, Watershed Conservation Project Manager/Eastern CT Conservation.
- F. Lock Boxes/Keys for town buildings:** The key code for the Fire Department will be changed to match the Senior Center and Town Hall buildings. There are also master keys that will be distributed to the Fire Department so they can get access inside the buildings if needed.

6. Old Business

- A. Discussion regarding COVID-19** – Mr. Rose discussed a tentative plan for opening to the public when the weather gets colder. We will restrict one person per department at a time in the building. The library is operating on a maximum of 10 people at a time but would like up to 15. The maximum is up to 50% capacity for the new law but that is excessive in some buildings.

Trunk a Treat was cancelled this year and no candy will be handed out at the library. The Recreation Commission wants to do a Halloween drive through using the CDC guidelines. Mr. Pinto mentioned that the tree lighting this year still needs to be discussed. The Senior center is still doing curbside meals and offering Zoom sit and stretch classes. Mr. Rose mentioned the remote conference he attended, and that Norwich/New London Counties are seeing high spikes of cases. Free COVID-19 testing started today through the 11th at Generations and Windham Hospital. The Town will need to develop a policy if a staff member tests positive. Mr. Rose also reported that the first round of vaccinations will be restricted to members of the fire department, municipal staff, and teachers. Maybe including essential workers, i.e. grocery store employees. The Governor's Executive Orders are extended until February 9th.

- B. Discussion regarding undeclaring the State of Emergency for the Town of Chaplin.** Tabled
 - C. Discussion regarding England Road Bridge Project** –The Board of Finance transferred \$15,000 to cover 20% share of the grant.
 - D. Discussion regarding North Bear Hill Drainage Project** – This project is closed out, but we need to finalize the retainage. There were complaints grass isn't growing but this is due to the drought.
 - E. Discussion regarding Bedlam Road Bridge Project:** On hold at this time, no funding yet.
 - F. Discuss tentative plans to celebrate Chaplin Bicentennial in 2022**
The Committee is continuing to come up with new ideas for the celebration.
 - G. Discuss All Pending and New FOI Requests** - None
 - H. Discussion regarding the Department of Public Works:** The DPW crews are making the best of the rented bucket trucks, trees are their focus right now. They have it for three more weeks and may extend it another month.
 - I. Discussion regarding the move of the Emergency Command Center:** The radios were moved from the Town Hall to the fire house today. DEHMS needs to be notified of the move and Mr. Rose will follow up. Mr. Rose also thanked Joe Pinto for all the work he did for the move.
 - J. Discussion regarding shared and contracted services:** No updates
 - K. Human Resources:** No updates
 - L. STEAP – Electronic Message Board at the Fire Department:**
Tentative award date around 10/15/20.
 - M. Discuss and possible action on the Emergency Medical Service plan:** Plan is 90% complete and should be done next week.
- 7. Second Audience of Citizens - Note: Comments are limited to agenda items and subject to Chair discretion.** None
- 8. Agenda Suggestions for next meeting:**

Communications 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 COVID-19

- Discussion regarding undeclaring the State of Emergency for the Town of Chaplin
- Discuss and possible action regarding the Affordable Housing Plan Grant
- Discuss and possible action regarding a Memorandum of Understanding with Eastern CT Conservation District and the Town of Chaplin – Natchaug Watershed Protection Plan
- Discussion regarding England Road Bridge Project
- Discussion regarding North Bear Hill Drainage Project
- Discussion regarding Bedlam Road Bridge Project
- Discuss tentative plans to celebrate Chaplin Bicentennial in 2022.
- Discuss All Pending and New FOI Requests
- Discussion regarding the Department of Public Works
- Discussion regarding the move of the Emergency Command Center
- Discussion regarding shared and contracted services.
- Human Resources
- STEAP – Electronic Message Board at the Fire Department.
- Discuss and possible action on the Emergency Medical Service plan

9. Date, time, and place of next meeting (November 5, 2020 at 7:00pm, REMOTE MEETING).

10. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:23pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Krodel
Administrative Assistant*