

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING – REMOTE
Chaplin, Connecticut
Thursday, November 5, 2020
Minutes**

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Leslie Ricklin, Chairman Ad Hoc Bicentennial Committee; Dick Weingart, Chairman Board of Finance; Rory Smith, resident/Tutko Road

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm
2. **First Audience of Citizens:** Leslie Ricklin is preparing the agenda for the bicentennial committee next week and would like to discuss the status of the old museum. Can the town begin process to hold virtual town meeting to get a feeling from the residents about moving the museum? Mr. Rose stated he hopes it would be a regular town meeting and they can have a question on the referendum about moving it. If approved, it would give them a year to plan. Ms. Ricklin stated that they hope as part of the 200-year celebration they can showcase the reopening of the museum.
3. **Approve minutes of the Board of Selectmen regular meeting on October 7, 2020:** Mr. Pinto made a **MOTION** to approve the Board of Selectmen regular meeting minutes on 10/7/2020. Mr. Rose seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.
4. **Communications and Reports**
 - A. **Trooper Report:** Mr. Rose reviewed email from Trooper Tucker and stats from the State police. A total of 63 calls were handled by Troop D and 20 handled by the resident trooper. Trooper Tucker was out of town for a portion of the month and teaching D.A.R.E. classes at elementary school every Friday morning. Town's radar unit has been calibrated. There were campers/RV issues in commuter parking lot which was resolved. Mr. Rose stated that this is a very informative report for the Board.
 - B. **Board Members Reports:** Annual Report are due; Mr. Rose will submit it. Farm to Families food box program - 470 boxes handed out at the firehouse parking lot and the remaining 30 went to the food pantry at the Congregational church. This event was very successful, and he thanked volunteers and the Chaplin church. He also thanked Janet Stone and Sue Peifer for volunteering in the rain to help. Mr. Fortier commented on the C.E.R.T tent, it was not a part of the program, but he suggested it would be good to have them involved next time. Next week there may be another event but less meals, about 125 boxes so it might go to the

Chaplin church pantry. We might get a larger shipment Thanksgiving week.

Mr. Rose reported that the new copiers are in and working well. It will also be our fax machine and the faxes will come into specific computers so we can print what we need and avoid the junk faxes.

Mr. Pinto reported that the new scout packs came in. Training tomorrow on the new packs and next Friday meeting with the highway commission regarding accidents and preventive measures. Also, there will not be an official tree lighting this year due to COVID-19.

C. Board of Finance Discussion: Mr. Weingart reported that the next Board of Finance meeting is 11/9 and they will be discussing FY19-20 audit. It is in progress but waiting on dates from auditors when they will be coming onsite. Annual Report request letters went out. Also working on letters for 2021-2022 budget and hopefully get out by Thanksgiving. Business Manager, Dave Solin, did a lot of work for budgeting and he left his position. There is a legislature meeting in January regarding 2+ billion-dollar state deficit, expecting to have reductions in town aid for education reimbursement or state grants. He will ask the Board of Finance to recommend flat budgets for the next year. Salary increases are ok but other spending should be conservative going forward. CIP requests cycle sent out this week and hoping to have first meeting on or about 12/10. He is asking that there are no new requests for FY 20-21, as there is already \$500,000 requested for CIP from last year and no room to add additional costs unless it is an emergency. Mr. Rose concurred there are lean times right now. Local Bridge program came out and we submitted application for Bedlam Road bridge and England Road bridge is in process. These are long term projects we may need to proceed in a timely manner. Mr. Weingart expecting when audit is completed, we will have a larger than normal unallocated fund balance and understand bridges need to be replaced. If there is a tax increase to cover the bridges, he thinks people will understand. We will do what we can with the fund balance to offset this. Mr. Rose also thought of pursuing bonds for these projects to space out the costs, he will look into it.

D. Correspondence: Mr. Rose read a letter stating Chaplin is a distressed municipality and the criteria what makes us distressed.

We received notification from DEEP regarding an extension of open burning certification for Burning Official. It has been extended 1 year.

E. Building/Infrastructure: Mr. Rose reported that State of CT is offering Library Access Grant and qualifying item is automatic touchless doors. We received about \$22,000. We have a quote to replace the front doors

touchless opening, ADA compliant of \$16,945. The balance can be used for air scrubbers, etc.

Mr. Rose stated that he sent in an application for the Local Bridge program for Bedlam Road bridge. STEAP grant is still delayed but we should hear soon. We have a couple other small bridges, one on South Bear, erosion around abutment and Goodell Road. He talked to an engineering firm and it will cost about \$3000 each bridge to do an evaluation. Goodell bridge is minor, local contractor to do the work. The South Bear is regular bridge, no box culvert allowed, etc. we can apply for local bridge program which is a 50/50 match. Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to support engineer evaluation of the South Bear Hill bridge over Buttonball Brook and to apply for the local bridge program. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

Mr. Rose discussed the septic system for William Ross library. Eastern Highlands was contacted. Arts Septic will do a perc test and we will do a survey regarding easement and present it at the town meeting. The Board discussed outdoor town meeting in the Spring if COVID-19 is still an issue.

Mr. Pinto reported that the firehouse doors are done and gave a truck repair update the shop is having trouble matching trim on the truck and they decided to do away with gold and do black and it should be back soon.

Mr. Rose consulted with the Town Attorney, Dennis O'Brien regarding the appointment of recreation commission members. This is usually done at the town meeting and some of the terms expired. Attorney O'Brien said that the BOS can appoint until the next town meeting. Dave Stone, Recreation Commission, is getting names together and we can have a special meeting to appoint them.

F. Chaplin Elementary School and Regional District #11 Quarterly Budget Report: No report

5. New Business

A. Tax Collector Refunds: Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** to approve tax refunds for Troy Anderson, \$76.70; Nissan infinity, \$34.78; William Knapp, \$5.42; and Mark Giggie, \$37.22. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

B. Resignations/Appointments: Resignation from Roxanne St. Jean, Senior Center Director, effective 12/31/2020. Resignation Marylyn Nurme, Senior Center Board. Resignation Carol Rose, Senior Center Board.

Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** for Jeannette Haines to Senior Center Board of Directors to fill Marylyn Nurme's term. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** to appoint Dawn Gilbert to Senior Center Board of Directors, end term 6/30/2020. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed. Mr. Fortier amended the **MOTION** of Dawn Gilbert to Senior Center Board of Directors as alternate member. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to appoint Julie Lindquist to Ad Hoc Bicentennial Committee. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

- C. Discussion regarding the sale of Tutko Road:** Rory Smith, Resident of RI, explained to the board that he purchased property, 220 acres on Bujak and Tower Hill cut off road. After property was purchased learned Tutko was a discontinued road but Town owns the land where the road sits on. He contacted Bill Rose to see if the Town would be interested in selling the land. Survey came out to 215 acres thinking Tutko was part of property, also he is paying taxes on it and shouldn't be. He is interested in purchasing it, approximately 3 acres. It runs through the property and would clean up boundaries of current properties. Mr. Rose concurred, and that the BOS could choose to bring to town meeting. First would be go to planning & zoning for approval then to town meeting. Board had no further questions. Dick Weingart commented as an abutting neighbor that he was contacted by Mr. Smith. Mr. Weingart would like to legally maintain the ability to have access to the back of their property. Also, long term changes for future owners should be considered. There is another abutting property on Ashford town line, Mrs. Baker. Mr. Rose stated if you have 800' of frontage on Tutko you could subdivide in the future and the road could be reactivated at town meeting to do this. He agrees decisions today could circumvent future residents. Mr. Smith stated he would be thrilled if the town opened road and then he could develop the property. He could go either way, but his understanding was it was a liability for the town if opened for development. Mr. Rose stated that the subdivision would be a cost to the town. He will have the assessor take a look at the tax adjustment now regarding the road taxes and leave this on the agenda for next month to give them time to look into it. Mr. Smith has a letter to send to the board that the survey stated Tutko road is about 3 acres. There is no dollar offer at this time but he is willing to pay fair market value. Mr. Weingart stated he has no interest to have a building lot on that road in the back of his property, but if they sold the road could he have a right of way to get access to his back field. Mr. Smith thanked the board to give him the opportunity to speak on this.

- D. Review Quote for cleaning Benjamin and Mary Chaplin's headstones:** Mr. Rose reported that Rusty Lanzit submitted a quote from Gorden's Lawncare who specializes in doing headstone cleaning. These stones are in the main street cemetery and are actually tables. Being our founders of the town, it seems appropriate to have the stones cleaned. The quote is substantial and need to be budgeted, maybe break it up. Leave on agenda for next month in the meantime look at the stones and doing some homework, get competitive quotes.
- E. Review and possible action regarding the Board of Selectmen 2021 regular meeting dates scheduled to meet the first Thursday of every month at 7:00pm, Chaplin Town Hall and via Remotely, on 1/7/2021; 2/4/2021; 3/4/2021; 4/1/2021; 5/6/2021; 6/3/2021; 7/1/2021; 8/5/2021; 9/2/2021; 10/7/2021; 11/4/2021; 12/2/2021.** Mr. Pinto made a **MOTION** to accept the meeting dates. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.
- F. Discussion and possible action to declare surplus equipment.** Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** to declare the 1988 Elgin Pelican S6644D street sweeper and 10' Good Roads locking power angle snowplow as surplus equipment. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed. The Board discussed a plan to set minimum bids on the items and tentative dates by end of day, 2:30pm 12/2 for the auction and open bids 12/3. Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to advertise next week, a couple of showings, bids by 2:30 12/2 and open bids on 12/3. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

6. Old Business

- A. Discussion regarding COVID-19:** Discussed opening Town Hall and rolling back to phase II per the Governor, one person (or 2 people, couples if appropriate) per department at a time with social distancing will be allowed in Town Hall. Currently there is not a lot of traffic, and we have been doing appointments. We will post on website and google groups to make appointment. They can call from the parking lot if need be. Tentative date of November 16th as needed. Library still maintaining their level of visitors and the senior center is still closed, but doing remote activities and serving 2 meals a week at curbside.

Reviewed Governor Lamont's roll back to Phase 2.1. Chaplin is doing good with COVID-19 cases and the Board reviewed the surrounding towns.

- B. Discussion regarding undeclaring the State of Emergency for the Town of Chaplin.** Tabled
- C. Discussion regarding England Road Bridge Project:** No updates, waiting on the Right of Way project.

- D. **Discussion regarding North Bear Hill Drainage Project:** No updates.
 - E. **Discussion regarding Bedlam Road Bridge Project:** Application submitted, and we probably won't hear anything for a while.
 - F. **Discuss tentative plans to celebrate Chaplin Bicentennial in 2022:** No report, meeting next week. They will talk about the museum status and there will need to be more discussions regarding the move.
 - G. **Discuss All Pending and New FOI Requests:** None
 - H. **Discussion regarding the Department of Public Works:** Bucket truck back at rental company for repairs and we hope to get it back next week to continue work.
 - I. **Discussion regarding the move of the Emergency Command Center:** The command center has been moved from the town hall to the fire department. DEHMS has been notified.
 - J. **Discussion regarding shared and contracted services:** None at this time.
 - K. **Human Resources:** DPW mediation next Tuesday. Mr. Rose explained that the previous selectman wrote new hire letters to employees giving them 2 years credit vacation, but letters are not clear so when they hit 3 years they get 5 year credit for vacation. This is going to mediation to discuss interpretation of offer letters.
 - L. **Discuss and possible action regarding the Affordable Housing Plan Grant:** Asked for update from NECCOG, John Filchak, about legislation of State and their control of the project if we accept this money. Mr. Filchak stated no word from DOH yet, to his knowledge the DOH has a guidance document with guidelines, not regulations.
 - 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.** Tabled. Need to follow up with Jean Pillo.
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
 - Discussion regarding the sale of Tutko Road

Review Quote for cleaning Benjamin and Mary Chaplin's headstones.
Discussion and possible action to declare surplus equipment.

Old Business

Discussion regarding COVID-19:

Discussion regarding undeclaring the State of Emergency for the Town of Chaplin

Discussion regarding England Road Bridge 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 shared and contracted services.

Human Resources

Discuss and possible action regarding a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Eastern CT Conservation District and the Town of Chaplin – Natchaug Watershed Protection Plan

9. Date, time, and place of next meeting (December 3, 2020 at 7:00pm, REMOTE MEETING).

10. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:51pm

*Respectfully submitted by,
Suzanne Krodel
Administrative Assistant*