

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING – REMOTE/CHAPLIN TOWN HALL
Chaplin, Connecticut
Thursday, February 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; Irene Schein, Chair/Senior Center Board of Directors; Sandra Horning, Library Director.

Remote: Dick Weingart, Chairman/Board of Finance; Diana Alvarez, Treasurer; Ann Lewis, Municipal Agent for the Elderly; Bob Grindle, Cook/Senior Center; Residents Mary Landeck and Adele Swart.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm.
2. **First Audience of Citizens:**

Ann Lewis stated she was dismayed to find out that an internal candidate was overlooked for the senior center director job. Assistant Lisa Kegler would be an excellent candidate for this position. She has done a lot in the last year, has spearheaded pandemic programs, is creative and has a lot of energy and enthusiasm and is also well acquainted with the seniors.

Adele Swart stated she attended the Senior Center Board meeting the other day and that when the Chair was asked what they were looking for in a director she said experience. Ms. Swart feels residents should be considered and also those experienced with the senior center and whose family has generations of members committed to the town.

Bob Grindle stated he has worked with Lisa Kegler and concurred that after working with her the past 2 years she is enthusiastic, puts in more than her share and whenever she is involved in a project it is fun. As the assistant she is trained, experienced with this senior center and we were all surprised when it was suggested she wasn't a candidate. If no offer has yet been extended to anyone, Lisa should be top choice.

Mary Landeck stated she agrees with Bob, she knows and worked with Lisa. She is enthusiastic, brings joy, and is very active with mobile meals. In this time, it is important for the seniors to have a familiar face when it does open again, and she recommends Lisa be considered for the position.

Sandra Horning stated that the library patrons are the same that use the senior center and was also dismayed that the hiring process didn't include senior input

or have a representative on the hiring committee. Due the pandemic it is important to have a familiar person in this position.

Irene Schein read a letter signed by some members of the Senior Center Board of Directors (Ann Lewis, Ellen Gillon, Catharine Dietrichsen, Walter Zlotnick, Jeanette Haines, and Dawn Gilbert) that was sent to the Board of Selectmen. The letter requests a special meeting to discuss the hiring process and why the board was not involved in selecting a representative. They ask that the hiring process be put on hold until this special meeting is held. She wants the Senior Ctr board of directors to create a criterion that is needed at the center and therefore determine if the candidates fit this criterion. We need a second round of interviews with the candidates with at least two chosen members from the Senior Ctr Board of Directors then come back to discuss in executive session, then make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.

3. **Discussion regarding the vacant Senior Center Director position:** Mr. Fortier stated that the Board of Selectmen didn't recommend anyone to be hired, but the Interview Committee recommended a first person and second person. He was on the subcommittee interviewing and has a unique perspective of not knowing any candidate, so he evaluated on the best person for the job, on the information he had. Mr. Fortier read letters from Dave Stone, DPW Supervisor and Ray Nurme supporting the hiring of Lisa Kegler as the new Senior Center director. There are many other letters.
4. **Personnel Matter: CONFIDENTIAL discussion regarding candidates for the vacant Senior Center Director position; subject to be discussed in Executive Session per General Statutes section 1-200(6)(A), upon motion and vote of the Board of Selectmen.**

Mr. Fortier asked that Suzanne Krodel go into executive session with the Interview Committee. Ms. Krodel agreed.

Mr. Pinto made a **MOTION** for the Interview Committee to go into Executive session at 7:22pm. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. No discussion. 2 - YES votes and Mr. Rose abstained. **MOTION** passed. Mr. Fortier, Mr. Pinto, and Ms. Krodel entered executive session.

Executive session ended at 7:41pm.

The regular meeting resumed at 7:41pm.

**B. Possible action on items discussed in Executive Session;
discussion and possible action regarding hiring a Senior Center
Director**

Mr. Fortier made a **MOTION** that the committee consider the new information that came to light and to forward the resumes of the two final candidates to the Senior Center Board to review and submit a letter of recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. First the Senior Center Board will need to select a representative to conduct the second interviews with the Interview Committee. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. No discussion. 2 – YES votes. Mr. Rose abstained. **MOTION** passed.

5. Approve minutes of the Board of Selectmen regular meeting on December 3, 2020 and special meeting minutes on January 5, 2021 and January 26, 2021.

Mr. Pinto made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen regular meeting on December 3, 2020 and special meeting minutes on January 5, 2021 and January 26, 2021. Mr. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

6. Communications and Reports

A. Trooper Report: No report

B. Board Members Reports: Mr Rose received a response from the Department of Public Safety to approve electronic sign at the fire house.

C. Board of Finance Discussion: Mr. Weingart reported on next year's budget and asked that the Board of Selectmen attend the March 8th meeting to present their budget. The Board of Education will be presenting on March 22nd.

The Governor's Executive orders are good through April so they are planning on the normal process for budget approval unless the Executive orders get extended again.

Sue Krodell/Val Garrison/IT are working on posting budget files online to share.

Our auditor is out but the draft audit was reviewed and he stated that the material weakness on policies and procedures are remediated and we are all set, no new issues.

We currently have an unallocated fund balance north of two million dollars and not a surprise, this stems from huge delay of the State approving their budget 2 years ago and we didn't lower the mill rate and in the end we are ahead. This may give us flexibility with capital needs.

CIP committee met a couple weeks ago, reworked the plan and rescheduled projects. Right now, project requests are about \$75,000 less for the upcoming year. But, two years beyond that requests are considerably higher.

Tax collection rate for 2019 and 2020 were compared and percentages are almost identical. Grand list for October 2020 was reviewed. Personal property is down about six million dollars due to Algonquin gas station depreciation which is \$140,000 about 2/3 mill loss in tax collection.

Mr. Rose stated that March 8th for the BOS presentation is good. We received additional expenses for the Mansfield/Chaplin border study and need \$300 transferred from undesignated fund into the assessor's budget. Mr. Rose will fill out paperwork for the BOF to approve the transfer.

D. Correspondence: None

E. Building/Infrastructure: Mr. Rose reviewed a map showing a proposed plan to make a new road so the South Bear Hill Bridge can be permanently closed instead of doing expensive repairs. Probably No survey needed, but he will need to apply to CONNDOT to make a road cut and a planning and zoning 824 review might be needed. This will also help parking off 198 for funerals near cemetery. Mr. Rose will need to confirm if a section of South Bear was closed at a previous town meeting or not. Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to apply to ConnDOT for a road cut and for the Board of Selectmen to accept this preliminary new road plan. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

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

7. New Business

A. Tax Collector Refunds: None

B. Resignations/Appointments: To reiterate the members of the Recreation Commission whose terms expired will have until the next Board of Selectmen meeting to decide if they want to continue on the commission. If not, then there will be vacant terms open for new appointments.

C. Discuss and possible action on the Treasurer's phone stipend: Mr. Rose stated there are two Department of Public Works staff and the Administrative Assistant, Sue Krodel, that are receiving phone stipends. Ms. Krodel is now receiving an 18% municipal employee discount and no longer wants to receive the stipend. The employees currently receiving a stipend was approved by the previous First Selectman and was never budgeted or presented to the Board for approval. Mr. Rose feels that there should be no ****further phone stipends**. It doesn't cost anyone extra money to use their phones. Mr. Rose made a **MOTION** to not allow any ****further phone stipends**. Mr. Pinto seconded the **MOTION**. Discussion: Verizon offers the 18% discount and other carriers may offer it too. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

D. Discuss and possible action regarding a new HVAC system for the Town Clerk vault and Senior Center Community Room: Mr. Rose explained that there is a significant savings with an EnergizeCT program and distressed towns to upgrade the HVAC system in the Senior Center community room and in the Town Clerk's vault. The clerk's vault hasn't had heat/air-conditioning for years and the community room system is insufficient. Also, he would like to look into upgrading the lighting systems at the Senior Center/Library building. He presented a quote from Earthlight to the board and stated the matching funds will be approximately \$31,000 if used with incentives and the program ends in April 2020. Mr. Pinto also suggested doing the two heating units at fire department. Mr. Weingart stated they can look at adding a CIP project for 2020.

8. Old Business

A. Discussion regarding the sale of Tutko Road: Resident Rory Smith submitted a letter regarding purchasing Tutko Road. He could make a contribution to the Bicentennial Committee, but a value needs to be determined first. Chandler Rose, Chaplin Assessor, can take a look at this road and try to assess some monetary value to it. Next step is to get an appraisal on it and have information for the Town meeting so it can be discussed.

B. Discussion regarding COVID-19: Nothing has changed with the municipal buildings, mostly by appointment. The Board discussed the issues with vaccinations for eligible residents – many issues with elderly having difficulty making appointments and some issues with vaccines not available for the second shot. Some CVS facilities are also offering the vaccines now. Mr. Rose feels that essential workers should include DPW staff – if we are short staffed then we will not be able to get the plowing done.

C. Discussion regarding undeclaring the State of Emergency for the Town of Chaplin: Tabled

D. Discussion regarding England Road Bridge Project: No update

E. Discussion regarding North Bear Hill Drainage Project: Project is finished, remove from agenda.

F. Discussion regarding Bedlam Road Bridge Project: Waiting on grant funds

G. Discuss tentative plans to celebrate Chaplin Bicentennial in 2022: The committee continues to develop plans for the celebration.

- H. **Discuss All Pending and New FOI Requests:** Request dated 1/24/21 via email from Josh Kelley. Please inquire at the First Selectman's office for details of request.
 - I. **Discussion regarding the Department of Public Works:** Machinery and equipment running well, no major issues to report.
 - J. **Discussion regarding the move of the Emergency Command Center:** Project is complete, registered with DEHMS we can now remove from agenda.
 - K. **Discussion regarding shared and contracted services:** No update
 - L. **Human Resources:** DPW contract will be negotiated this year.
 - M. **Discuss and possible action regarding the Affordable Housing Plan Grant:** They want us to form a steering committee, Mr. Rose will reach out to potential candidates.
 - N. **Discuss and possible action regarding a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Eastern CT Conservation District and the Town of Chaplin – Natchaug Watershed Protection Plan:** Mr. Rose to follow up with existing plans.
 - O. **Discuss cleaning quotes for Benjamin and Mary Chaplin's headstones:** On hold until budget is done.
9. **Second Audience of Citizens - Note: Comments are limited to agenda items and subject to Chair discretion.** Mr. Weingart asked about the offer from Rory Smith regarding Tutko road if he wants to purchase the entire road. Mr. Rose stated that Mr. Smith submitted a map and he will send to Mr. Weingart.
10. **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 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

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 the Affordable Housing Plan Grant

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

Discuss cleaning quotes for Benjamin and Mary Chaplin's headstones.

Discussion regarding the preparation for listing the William Ross Library for sale.

Discussion and possible action regarding a change to the intersection at N. Bear Hill Road and Route 198.

Discuss and possible action regarding a new HVAC system for the Town Clerk vault and Senior Center Community Room.

11. Date, time, and place of next meeting (March 4, 2021 at 7:00pm, REMOTE MEETING).

12. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:48pm.

*Respectfully submitted by,
Suzanne Krodel
Administrative Assistant*