

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
Chaplin, Connecticut  
Thursday, September 2, 2021  
\*\*AMENDED MINUTES**

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

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Richard Weingart, Chairman/Board of Finance; A. Daniels, Treasurer/Fire Department; Suzanne Krodell, Administrative Assistant. Juan Roman, Resident.

**1. Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm

**2. First Audience of Citizens:**

Mr. Weingart asked the board if they had an opportunity to read the letter submitted by the Weingarts regarding the sale of Tutko Road. The Board confirmed and B. Rose stated that it will be presented to the legislative body at a special town meeting in October. D. Weingart stated that the statute that allows people access to their property has been reviewed by the attorneys. The Weingarts are requesting the Town grant an easement so they may access their property that runs alongside Tutko Road, regardless if it sells or not. This will protect it in the future if it comes up for sale again. B. Rose informed the Board that he sent the request to town attorney, Dennis O'Brien for an opinion.

D. Weingart read a letter on behalf of the Ad Hoc Bicentennial Committee (see attached), regarding items for sale at the Republican Town Committee event announcing the Bicentennial celebration in 2022. B. Rose stated that he didn't believe there was a set policy regarding sales of items it is more of a courtesy to talk to the other committee, and it really was an oversight.

**3. Additions to the Agenda:** J. Pinto asked Andrew Daniels about the status of his burning official certification. A. Daniels informed the board that he is expecting it in the next few days. B. Rose stated that permits issued from the prior burning official are valid.

**4. Approve minutes of the Board of Selectmen regular meeting on July 1, 2021, and special meeting minutes on July 8, 2021; July 27, 2021 and August 24, 2021.** J. Pinto made a **MOTION** to approve the July 1, 2021 regular meeting minutes, and special meeting minutes on July 8, 2021; July 27, 2021 and August 24, 2021 with a correction to the August 24, 2021 minutes of item #4 from "\$91,4000" to "\$91,400". K. Fortier seconded the **MOTION**. All in favor. **MOTION** passed.

**5. Communications and Reports**

**A. Trooper Report:** The statistics have been consistent in the past 2 months. B. Rose reported that there is a strong mildew smell in the trooper's office and it

is getting tested today by Mystic Air. A couple of years ago the second floor was closed off and this may have contributed to the problem.

- B. Board Members Reports:** B. Rose reported that at a special BOS meeting it was approved to purchase a sweeper via online bid but right before the bids began it was pulled off the website. He also reported on the last storm and that we only had one tree down on Miller Road and that three residents were out of power. North Bear flooded again with water on both sides and the town dirt roads fared well due to the 2" stone that was put on top.
- C. Board of Finance Discussion:** D. Weingart informed the board that there was a pre-audit conference on 8/17 and no issues identified at this time. At the end of September items will be posted in the portal for the auditors to review. One year there was a delay in getting calculations for post-employment benefits from teachers' retirement and this year they requested it ahead of time for the auditors. The Board of Finance approved year end transfers and are now drafting policies for the board. The policies will address getting more timely notification from boards and commissions on budget requests/changes. D. Weingart also reported on donations for the bicentennial celebration and after consulting with the auditors, it was not recommended to mix donations with CIP funds and suggested a special revenue or restricted account and to spend these funds first and leave town funds last. He also invited treasurer, Diana Alvarez, to join the next BOF meeting to discuss the current banking transfer going on.

He also asked B. Rose about the issue discussed at a prior Board of Selectman meeting regarding a tax sale on a property in town. B. Rose said that the current owners want to sell but can't because the title won't clear. A previous town tax collector did the sale improperly. According to Attorney Adam Cohen we can have the taxpayer not pay taxes, let it go into foreclosure then the Town deed's it back to the owners with a clean title. He did talk to the town's insurance company about this issue to cover costs and we also have to look at the bond for that tax collector to submit reimbursement.

- D. Correspondence:** B. Rose read a letter from resident Ann Chuk regarding her concerns with the new electronic sign to be installed in front of the fire department. She recommended an area like Rte. 6 where there would be more residential traffic, but B. Rose said they have no power for the sign on Rte. 6. The Board discussed the location and felt the fire department made the most sense and that it would not ruin the scenery.
- E. Building/Infrastructure:** B. Rose reported that there is a leak in the library roof and appears to be due to the solar panels, so he reached out to the contractor who installed them. Also, it was determined that some panels were not plugged in and our staff would not have unplugged them so he is checking with the contractor. Apparently, we lost the cost savings benefit from these panels due to this issue.

**F. Chaplin Elementary School and Regional District #11 Quarterly Budget Report:** None

**6. New Business**

**A. Tax Collector Refunds:** None

**B. Resignations/Appointments:** Neil Muckenhoupt resigned from the Senior Center Board of Directors effective 8/23/21. Virginia Siege resigned from the Economic and Development Commission effective 7/13/21.

**C. Discussion and possible action regarding the Senior Center Assistant Director position:** B. Rose read the minutes from the 8/3 Senior Center Board of Directors meeting regarding the position. He explained they cannot do the hiring but can make recommendations. He read the email from the Chair of the Senior Center Board recommending Lynn Grindle and he would like to see this recommendation in the minutes and not via an email. The Board of Selectmen agreed that there is no need to advertise for a 3 hour a week position.

**D. Discussion regarding the Economic Development Commission:** B. Rose reviewed the correspondence from the commission and addressed these items:

- Sidewalk on Lynch Rd – this would need to be a CIP project and also DOT Clearance due to Rte. 6 being a state road.
- Speed limit sign at Lynch Rd/Rte. 6 – DOT will need to be contacted
- Potholes on Lynch Road – these have been ongoing repairs
- Chaplin Street/caution sign and benches – it should be a pedestrian sign and the benches are not a problem \*\*as long as they are not on private property.
- Cross walk from Chaplin Street to Garrison Park – he asked DPW to mow a path and we would need a DOT right away, the Route 198 shoulder is dangerous
- Path around Senior Center – they would need to ask for a CIP project to fund this

J. Pinto stated that it was his understanding that the committees charge is to get business into the town, and this is not what they are doing. All other towns try to attract new business. Maybe the mission statement and/or by-laws need to change for the EDC. For example, the CT Casket building should be marketed by EDC to bring business in. J. Pinto will bring to the next meeting a description of economic development commissions from other towns so the board can discuss further.

**7. Old Business**

**A. Discussion regarding the sale of Tutko Road:** Discussed earlier and will be addressed at the October town meeting.

- B. Discussion regarding the Chaplin Museum:** No new updates but still being discussed about moving the museum.
- C. Discussion regarding American Rescue Plan Funds – COVID19:** B. Rose reported that broadband expansion in remote areas is one item discussed from other towns. We received a request from Windham County 4-H asking for donations to fix dam/bridge. Also discussed was giving money to Eastern Highlands Health District to help costs due to the pandemic. We need to wait until NECCOG gets the ARPF program going, we have a meeting in September and all the participating towns will get together to discuss. Fees to NECCOG to have this administrative staff will be \$2261 for 2021-2022. The list is vague as to what falls under these funds, but one is health department assistance.
- D. Discussion regarding COVID-19:** B. Rose reported that masks are required for all municipal buildings regardless of vaccination status. The Board discussed hybrid meetings again but agreed to wait and see what happens, it is a lot of work administratively when doing these remote meetings.
- E. Discussion regarding undeclaring the State of Emergency for the Town of Chaplin:** No changes and will wait until the State is no longer under a state of emergency.
- F. Discussion regarding England Road Bridge Project:** B. Rose stated this is still in process and he hopes to get a design soon. Once we get a budget figure and design then we will have public hearing for the town.
- G. Discussion regarding Bedlam Road Bridge Project:** B. Rose reported that this is on hold until we find our match of funds, they will hold the grant funds for the town.
- H. Discuss tentative plans to celebrate Chaplin Bicentennial in 2022:** B. Rose reported that we received correspondence from Homeland Security to report any mass gatherings, but the deadline has already passed. It was unclear why the deadline was so soon for events for next year.
- I. Discuss the status of the drone purchased by the Emergency Management Director:** To date no permitting has been completed, only training of pilots discussed from Jim Randall, Emergency Management Director.
- J. Discuss All Pending and New FOI Requests:** None
- K. Discussion regarding the Department of Public Works:** B. Rose reported that employee Tad Stimson resigned, and they have been in the

process of interviewing. We received applications from a couple of Chaplin residents.

- L. **Discussion regarding shared and contracted services:** No update
  - M. **Human Resources:** No update
  - N. **Discuss and possible action regarding the Affordable Housing Plan Grant:** B. Rose reported that a steering committee has been formed and Jim Larkin from NECCOG is scheduling a meeting the week of the 27<sup>th</sup>. There were no volunteers from the Board of Education and Historic District Commission.
  - O. **STEAP Grant – Electronic Programmable Sign:** B. Rose toured the contractors shop and went over the final design. We want a Maltese design with number 9. According to zoning regulations the sign is too big and to reduce the size, a part of the sign might have to be displayed on the front of the building. J. Pinto thought it seemed too big and asked if we can get the demo trailer in the same spot to see how big it really is. B. Rose stated we may have to work with zoning on a variance or special permit due to the size.
  - P. **USDA Grant:** This is for the new firetruck and the grant money is ours, all the paperwork is done. The committee should have information at the end of September for a final price.
  - Q. **Discussion regarding the William Ross Library:** Attorney Dennis O'Brien drafted a contract which was sent to the buyer.
  - R. **Discussion regarding the new road at South Chaplin Cemetery/Route 198:** We received a quote to have a survey done and we are now waiting on DOT permit.
  - S. **Discussion regarding intersection at North Bear Hill Road and Route 198:** This will come out of our regular budget and once we get the specs it will be put out to bid.
  - T. **Discussion regarding Chaplin Street flags:** B. Rose talked to the Ad Hoc Bicentennial committee about purchasing flags but did not get a commitment. We will need to figure out who owns the utility poles where the flags will be hung.
8. **Second Audience of Citizens - Note: Comments are limited to agenda items and subject to Chair discretion.** A. Daniels asked about why the fire department was over budget; did it have to do with the solar panels? B. Rose explained we didn't receive some bills from over a year ago, so they were paid last budget year.

D. Weingart asked if Tutko Road sale will be on the agenda for the October town meeting and was concerned about the motion and if it would be clear. B. Rose stated that he would just present the option regarding sell or not sell and easement option. He will check with Town attorney to see if the easement would be voted on at town meeting or if the Board of Selectmen can do it with an 824 review like other easements that were done. He would also have the attorney drafts motions for them.

Andrew Daniels stated that he too agrees the Economic Development Commission should be bringing more business into town.

**9. 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 American Rescue Plan Funds – COVID19
  - 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
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- Discuss tentative plans to celebrate Chaplin Bicentennial in 2022
  - Discuss the status of the drone purchased 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
  - STEAP Grant – Electronic Programmable Sign

- USDA Grant – Purchase of a new firetruck
- Discussion regarding the William Ross Library.
- Discussion regarding the new road at South Chaplin Cemetery/Route 198.
- Discussion regarding intersection at North Bear Hill Road and Route 198.
- Discussion regarding Chaplin Street flags.
- Discussion and possible action regarding the Senior Center Assistant Director position.
- Discussion regarding the Economic Development Commission.

**10.** Date, time, and place of next meeting (October 7, 2021, at 7:00pm, Chaplin Town Hall).

**11.** Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:52pm