

Town of Seymour ~ Board of Selectmen
MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Thursday, November 17, 2020 at 7:00pm
Zoom Teleconference - Call #646-558-8656 – ID# 870 1248 4638

Members Present: Trisha Danka, Robert Findley, Annmarie Drugonis, Al Bruno, Robert VanEgghen, and Chris Bowen, Patrick Lombardi

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Richard Buturla, Rory Burke, Monica Dimon, Jean Falbo-Sosnovich, Tim Connors, Chris Pelosi, and Don Smith

Item #1 – Call Meeting to order

Deputy First Selectwoman Annmarie Drugonis called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Item #2 – Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone saluted the Flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item #3 – Public Comment

None

Item #4 – Approve Minutes from October 22, 2020 Special Meeting

Motion to approve Minutes from October 22, 2020 Special Meeting

Motion: Robert Findley

Second: Al Bruno

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Yes

Item #5 – First Selectwoman's Report

- Community Center is closed for classes (drive through and virtual classes only); Rec is closed to the public; Library is curbside pickup only
- Seymour Schools are now closed until 01/21/2021
- COVID #'s are rising. We are asking everyone to continue wearing masks and social distancing, continue to wash your hands for 20 seconds. Use common sense with the holidays coming up (Thanksgiving, Christmas).
- We are cleaning the Fire Departments, Police Department and Ambulance again. We are going back to our Public Safety Meetings every Thursday. We are taking this very seriously and want everyone to stay safe during this time.
- Road Projects are coming to an end as the asphalt plants are closing down. The Holbrook Road Project we are just waiting on the easements from the Town of Oxford and the DEEP. The Route 67 Project is a spot improvement project; Route 67 from Klarides Plaza all the way down to River Street. Construction will start in about 18 months. The Government is paying about

80% of that and the State will pay the remaining 20% - no cost to the Town of Seymour. They will be widening the road. They will come and do a presentation to our Board next spring once the construction gets closer.

- The Ordinance Committee has been very busy; met last night. There are some committees that we feel we don't need; some we can combine with other committees. We don't need a Safety Committee in our Charter because OSHA covers that. At the next meeting we will be discussing the EDC, Strategic Planning, and Municipal Erosion sections of the Ordinance.

Item #6 - Discussion with Facilities Director

Facilities Director Tim Connors gave an update of projects: past, present, & future.....

- Past Project – Nosal Project – we had a 3rd party commissioning company (SCG) come in and do a review. They came up with about 100 items (small) that were corrected. They were small items with a big impact. They will come back with a report on how to bring the system up so it is running as efficient as possible.
- Current Project – JCI Project – about a month ago we put the roof items back in the scope. Bungay is almost done – wrapping up now; working on the High School and Middle School. They sent someone on a walkthrough to make sure the work is being done to specs. I should have that report in the next two weeks.
- Community Center – we do need a new roof; we have many leaks. Right now, we are just patching it. The elevator is on its last leg; replacement parts are hard to find. Boys & Girls Club were not able to go back into their space because they couldn't meet the standards for COVID 19. The 3rd floor hasn't been touched.

DISCUSSION:

- Al Bruno commented that regarding the solar work being done at the schools – we should get some communication out regarding the projects and the progress made out to the public. Maybe sharing updates on social media. It sounds like there is some misinformation out there and we should clear that up by posting updates on these projects. Tim said he would check with Rory about getting something posted.
- Chris Bowen asked how bad the elevator is – is it borderline dangerous? How long before it becomes an actual danger to people using it? Tim said that the elevator was inspected and received their certificate. The main issue with it is that if it does break down, we may not be able to get parts to fix it. Chris asked at what point would we need to have it condemned (non-usable)? Tim said that for now, it is ok for what we use it for.

Item #7 - Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Non-Union Employee Pay Plan

HR Director Chris Pelosi discussed the Non-Union Employee Pay Plan:

- We recently reviewed the Performance Plan – this is the second part of that Pay Plan. We have a few new people. Here is a summary: we have a 10-Year Strategic Plan for each department. For the HR Department, one thing was to Standardize, Professionalize and Implement Recruitment Practices across Town. The Union contracts have salaries/recruitment practices defined. We were lacking these in our non-union positions. The Pay Plan aims to establish salary ranges, starting point for these positions. This is for about 5 or 6 positions currently. Need to compare job descriptions with other Towns in the area when comparing salary. I have come up with an Incentive Based Compensation Model. Some members of the Board expressed concern that there was an automatic 2% increase like the union positions. This is an INCENTIVE BASED model. The complete Plan is in your packets.

DISCUSSION:

- Trisha Danka asked if Chris has reached out to the current Strategic Planning Committee to find out detailed and in what direction they are looking to have you go? Chris said he has not. Trisha said she would recommend starting there. They came up with the plan that the Town is currently using. They would be able to have a more detailed discussion with you and it would benefit them. Both parties can get onboard with how detailed you want to get. Trisha said that Kathy Vrlik is now the Chair. Chris said he would reach out to her.
- Robert Findley (is on the Strategic Planning Committee) said that he believes that the Plan that the Committee was looking for was the one that Chris has produced. At this point, I would recommend that the Board of Selectmen should approve. Chris has done his job.

Chris Pelosi will meet with the Strategic Planning Committee to see if there is any input to what he has come up with to this point. If we want to go to Performance Based Pay, if we want to standardize our Recruitment Procedures, this would be the best way to go. This is just a suggestion for your consideration.

Item #8 – Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding #31, #39, and #47 Silvermine Road

The below Resolution was in your packets:

RESOLUTION

Regarding the Merger of 31, 39 and 47 Silvermine Road

WHEREAS, on or about May 3, 1983, the Town of Seymour acting in concert with the Seymour Economic Development Commission created the Silvermine Industrial Park ("Industrial Park"); and

WHEREAS, 36 Sargent Drive, LLC (the owner) is the owner of 31, 39 and 47 Silvermine Road, Silvermine Industrial park, Seymour, Connecticut (the "Property"); and

WHEREAS, the Property is subject to that certain Development Agreement dated May 3, 1983 by and between the Town of Seymour (the "Town"), the Seymour Economic Development Commission (the "Commission"), the said Town's duly authorized Development Agency (hereinafter, jointly called the "Agency") and TIE/communications, Inc., which Development Agreement is recorded in the Seymour Town Clerk's Office at Volume 126, Page 454 (the "Agreement"); and

WHEREAS, the Owner has requested that the Town and the Agency approve the merger of 31, 39 and 47 Silvermine Road; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Agency does hereby approve and consent to the merger of 31, 39 and 47 Silvermine Road; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Ann Marie Dragonis, First Selectman of the Town

Resolution for Town of Seymour to acquire a permanent right-of-way and easement for roadway, slope and drainage purposes over certain land located on Holbrook Road, Seymour and Oxford, Connecticut

Where as... In accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-148(e)6(B) and (C) *et seq.*, the Town has the power and authority to construct, reconstruct, repair, maintain, operate, and extend highway and drainage systems.

Where as... the provision of highway and drainage systems and services is necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Town of Seymour.

Where as... The existing highway and drainage system along Holbrook Road are inadequate to provide these necessary services and there is a need to improve the infrastructure of the existing highway and drainage system along Holbrook Road.

Where as... The acquisition of a permanent right of way and easement for roadway, slope and drainage purposed on, under, over and across certain real property owned by the Town of Oxford and other property owners along Holbrook Road in Seymour and Oxford, Connecticut (the "Roadway, Slope and Drainage Easements") is required in order to improve the infrastructure of the existing highway and drainage system.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

The Town of Seymour shall immediately acquire a permanent right-of-way and easement for i) roadway easements and appurtenances thereto; ii) slope easements and appurtenances thereto; and iii) drainage easements and appurtenances thereto, on and over those certain portions or parcels of land owned by the Town of Oxford and other property owners located along Holbrook Road, in the Towns of Seymour and the Town of Oxford, Connecticut for the municipal purpose of the construction and/or expansion of the Town of Seymour's highway and drainage systems.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

Ann Marie Drugonis, the First Selectwoman of Seymour is hereby authorized to enter into and execute those certain Permanent Easement and Right of Way agreements with the Town of Oxford and any other property owner to acquire the Roadway, Slope and Drainage Easements and to execute such further documents as are necessary to effectuate and acquire the Roadway, Slope and Drainage Easements.

The above is a Resolution for the Town of Seymour to acquire a permanent right-of-way and easement for roadway, slope and drainage purposes over certain land located on Holbrook Road, Seymour & Oxford, CT.

We have spoken about this previously. Karen Stanek was always asking about this. Hopefully we can get this done in the spring. This will allow us to move forward with getting these easements.

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Al Bruno

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Yes

- Trisha Danka agreed with Al. We can monitor how much extra costs this incurs and add that to the Public Works budget.

Motion to authorize Town Counsel to work with the Union Cemetery Association to put together an agreement and documents to effectuate a transfer of ownership of the Union Cemetery

Motion: Robert Findley

Second: Rob VanEgghen

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Yes

Item #11 – Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Future of Community Center

- Rob VanEgghen said that the question was on the ballot last November regarding allowing us to spend up to \$15 million for a Community Center. The residents voted NO on this. Kurt Miller formed a Community Center Building Committee which has not met yet. At this point, we should get together and at least start discussions. I would like to hear Tim Connors’ opinion on this.
- Tim Connors said that we need to start looking at what our best options are. We did start looking at some numbers back in November. To renovate the Community Center where it is would be between \$4 and \$7 million. We did look at a brand-new building in Newtown that cost about \$15 million. That building had a lot of wasted space and had things we wouldn’t necessarily need: an indoor water park, indoor pool. Public/Private or Lease-to-buy may also be options for us to consider. Not sure how much COVID will affect building requirements at this point. There is a lot to look into, but we should get the ball rolling.
- Annmarie Drugonis said there is a committee in place. We have been waiting due to COVID and the uncertainty of regulations and requirements. I believe the committee should get together in January. We did good in July because we had the stimulus check & unemployment checks. In January we won’t have these. Rob VanEgghen said that we should have a meeting the second week in December, have a Zoom meeting. Rory will look at the schedule and let use know.

Motion to Add to the Agenda - Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Dates for 2021

Motion: Robert Findley

Second: Rob Van Egghen

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Yes

DISCUSSION:

- Rory said that the only deviations from our regular 1st & 3rd Tuesdays are the first Wednesday in November (after election day) and the second Wednesday in December (due to the Great Hill Christmas Party).
- Chris Bowen asked if we should have a meeting the day after municipal elections. Rory said that we do usually set the date, but many times it is cancelled.

**Board of Selectmen
2021 Meeting Schedule**

All meetings are held via Zoom teleconference at 7 PM. If The Governor's executive orders are rescinded, meetings will be held in the Norma Drummer Room at Seymour Town Hall at 1 First Street.

Wednesday, January 5th
Tuesday, January 19th
Tuesday, February 2nd
Tuesday, February 16th
Tuesday, March 2nd
Tuesday March 16th
Tuesday, April 6th
Tuesday, April 20th
Tuesday, May 4th
Tuesday, May 18th
Tuesday, June 1st
Tuesday, June 15th
Tuesday, July 6th
Tuesday, July 20th
Tuesday, August 3rd
Tuesday, August 17th
Tuesday, September 7th
Tuesday, September 21st
Tuesday, October 5th
Tuesday, October 19th
Wednesday, November 3rd
Tuesday, November 16th
Tuesday, December 7th
Wednesday, December 22nd

Motion to approve these meeting dates as presented above

Motion: Patrick Lombardi

Second: Trisha Danka

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Yes

Item #12 - Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Economic Development Director

Annmarie Drugonis said that the Board had received a request a few months back from the EDC to interview Sheila O'Malley for the position of Economic Development Director. This was before COVID hit. We need to make a decision as to whether to interview her. The longer we wait, more businesses are going to pass us by. Rory has received at least four people looking for space and asking what's available. Rory said that he doesn't have this information.

- Bob Findley asked if this isn't something that the members of the Economic Development Commission can handle.
- Patrick Lombardi said that when Fred left, all of those connections went to Christine. I have met Sheila O'Malley and she does seem knowledgeable.
- Rob VanEgghen said that when Fred was there, the EDC didn't feel they had the power to interact with anyone. After Fred left, we didn't have that CERC connection. There was never that chain established – no phone # for people to call. It was left to Kurt and he did the best he could. The EDC was never given

the direction. We need to have an Economic Development Director who reports to the EDC who then reports to the Board of Selectmen. We need to make a decision on Sheila. An interview does not mean we will hire her.

- Trisha Danka said that when we first considered going in this direction, I received a number of calls from individuals not happy with going in this direction with this individual. I can't recall specifics because some time has gone by. I wouldn't necessarily be opposed to an interview because that's all it is at this point. I believe we talked about this in a meeting previously.
- Annmarie Drugonis said that yes, we did talk about this. Sheila O'Malley's name was put forth by the EDC Committee. Then Kurt did some work for Ansonia, so we decided that we did not want her because of that. Now Kurt went to work for Ansonia. We are not Ansonia, we do not offer the same things as Ansonia, we are Seymour. We have different directions that we want to go.
- Trisha Danka said that she doesn't have a history with Sheila, but if memory serves her correctly these calls had to do with some unfinished projects and not being able to answer specifically how certain money was used. Being vague on how money was handled. I ask that whomever interviews her gets some references and speak to people from the town and get very specific answers about budgets, projects, and see where things lie. Those were the concerns of the residents who called me upset that we were considering her. I don't know her, so I don't have a personal opinion one way or the other. I'm just hesitant to move forward taking into consideration these concerns. At this point it's just an interview.
- Annmarie Drugonis said that anyone we hire/interview will be interviewed before this Board.
- Chris Bowen said he has been on the EDC – there were 4 of us here on that Commission. I was on the Commission when we hired CERC. Their contract changed and they are out. Since then, the EDC put forth Sheila O'Malley's name. When I was on the Commission, I made it known that I believe the position should be a full-time position. A few of the other members of the Commission have a very good professional relationship with Sheila. Christine and I did ask her to present to our Commission and she came in and spent a couple of hours with us. She was very knowledgeable. The budget for the EDC Director salary was moved to Contingency so this needs to go before the Board of Finance before releasing the funds. When COVID hit, I spoke to Chris Pelosi and Kurt Miller about merging some other duties with the duties for the EDC Director. While I think we do need an Economic Development Director, a point person, I think we are going about this improperly. Hiring someone else's Economic Development Director, regardless of the other concerns people have about Sheila, is not the way to go. Instead of having a salary of \$35,000 for a part-time position, we need a full job description, see what other duties we can merge into that to justify a higher salary. Let's get somebody in here who can really take those calls and take that off Rory's plate. Annmarie said she disagrees with this but will talk to Chris Bowen privately.
- Bob Findley said he would ask of whomever interviews with us for a 30-60-90 from them so we understood what their intention was when they walked in the door. If they can bring that to us and let us know what direction they are going in. The EDC has put forth Sheila, I would ask them to get this from her, so we have a plan, a framework or strategy so we know what's going to be done.
- Rob VanEgghen said that he agreed with Chris – we are doing this out of order. The EDC should present us with the actual job description that they want to fill before we start interviewing people. That needs to happen very soon. Chris Bowen said that much of this description has already been done.
- Bob Findley asked if there is anything we can do to help Rory in the meantime to facilitate getting some help with those calls.
- Rob VanEgghen said the EDC needs to make a NEW list of available properties. There is a list that has been started. Chris Bowen said that the partial list we have is useless. Rob said that we need to have a list of OWNED LAND with vacancies.

- Chris Bowen asked if we can write some grants to get help with remediation efforts for the land that needs help. Annmarie said there are only 3 properties. Chris Bowen said they are prominent and getting them cleaned up would be a pretty big step. Annmarie said that Selectman Paul Roy did get money for one of the owners and they didn't clean it up. Unless the owner wants to clean it up, it won't happen. Chris Bowen asked Richard Buturla about Kelo vs. New London. Richard Buturla said the was condemnation for the purpose of economic development and municipalities have come out on both ends of this. Some have formed a redevelopment corp., after countless times of trying to move 4 or 5 contaminated properties, to take those properties and market them and clean them as relatively clean, stable properties after using government money for the purposes of cleanup. There are lots of economic tools, some federal dollars, some state dollars, if we wanted to go down a particular road. We would need someone knowledgeable in this in the job description.
- Rory Burke said that the EDC currently meets once a month. In the interim at least, maybe they could move it up to every two weeks. The issue is if we get a call the day after their meeting, do they need to discuss it as a Board, is the chair empowered to speak on behalf of the Board without discussing it with the other Committee members – these are some issues we have run into.
- Chris Bowen said that only one person on that Board does not have a full-time job, she is retired. This is a volunteer Board. This is why we want a point-person who can come and speak to people with questions anytime. Rory said that now these people are calling looking for updates and I have no knowledge of real estate. The longer we wait, we may miss out on some opportunities. Annmarie said that maybe she should handle in the interim period, like Kurt did. She and Rory are meeting with the EDC tomorrow. I will make sure that we have a job description for this person. Then any person that we bring in applying for this position will come before this Board. You will know ahead of time so you can have questions ready. Richard Buturla said that we should designate the Board of Selectmen as an Executive Level Personnel Search Committee (identity is not given up to your current employer) and then set up a subcommittee to interview Sheila. Chris Bowen said that we already did that – set this Committee with Annmarie as the chairperson.

Motion to name the current members of the Board of Selectmen as an Executive Level Personnel Search Committee for the position of Economic Development Director for the Town of Seymour

Motion: Chris Bowen

Second: Robert Findley

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Yes

Item #13 – Appointments

Appointments November 17, 2020 Board of Selectmen Meeting

Name	Board	Type	Term	Expiration Date
Matt Calzone	Fire Commissioner	Appointment	3 years	11/17/2023

Motion to approve the Appointment dated 11/17/2020 as presented

Motion: Robert Findley

Second: Trisha Danka

Motion to approve the above Transfer as presented

Motion: Robert Findley

Second: Rob VanEgghen

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Abstain

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Yes

DISCUSSION:

- Rob VanEgghen asked how this budget compares with the budget of Christmas Parades past. Trisha & Alex said that it is lower than previous parades cost by a few hundred.
- Trisha Danka said that the first 15 people (to encourage participation) would have a \$15 donation made to the food bank in their name. It is free (on-line) registration. You register your address and they will assign you a # to put on your property. There will be categories (Martha Stewart, Clark Griswold, etc.) and prizes will be awarded in each category.

Item #16 – Correspondence

- Letter from Patrick Lombardi resigning his position on the Board of Finance
- Letter from the Citizen’s Engine Co. #2 recommending the nomination of Matt Calzone to the position of Fire Commissioner
- Check Registers

Item #17 – Public Comment

None

Item #18 – Selectmen’s Public Comment

- Trisha Danka – Happy Thanksgiving!
- Robert Findley – I was honored to attend the ceremony on Veterans Day at the Veterans Memorial at Broad Street Park. They had a very good turnout from the Mayors, First Selectmen from area Towns. A very nice event!
- Chris Bowen – Be safe. Wear your mask. Cases are spiking.
- Patrick Lombardi – Wanted to give a big shout out to Katie Belco. She is a 2005 Seymour High School graduate and has just finished her third book. These books help children deal with anxieties such as going to the dentist, etc. There was an article on her in the Valley Independent. I was inspired by this article. She has done a fantastic job taking the initiative to helping kids with these anxieties. Happy Thanksgiving! Wear your masks!
- Al Bruno – Congratulations to the Seymour High School teams that were able to play this fall season! Kudos to the Board of Education and our coaches for permitting this to go forward. Cases are spiking, we are going to have a rough winter. Be safe, wear a mask, social distance, and take COVID seriously! Happy Thanksgiving.
- Rob VanEgghen – I was able to take my WWII veteran grandfather to lunch on Veterans Day! Thank you to all the veterans who have served. Regarding the Holiday Season – it has been so tough on so many levels for our kids who have missed out on many “firsts” this year. TEAM has Toys 4 Kids – not the same thing as Toys 4 Tots. With TEAM the toys stay for the Valley families. I implore everyone to go to TEAMInc.org. We have made deals with some toy manufacturers to get toys at cost. We weren’t able

to do the big pancake breakfast at Tom Baklik's this year. Please support this on social media. Please wear your mask and be safe!

- Annmarie Drugonis – I wanted to acknowledge all the Seymour Middle School and Seymour High School students who pursued academic excellence this year during this pandemic. They are continuing to strive to do their best. Everything is so different now. I am so proud of all the teachers and parents who are standing behind them. Also, the Town will put on our website the TEAM Toys 4 Kids. Everyone please, please, please wear your masks, wash your hands and social distance. I am ending my 2-week quarantine this Friday so I will be back at Town Hall on Monday.
- Richard Buturla – Stay safe, be well, Happy Thanksgiving, and Blessings to everyone!

Item #19 – Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:03pm

Motion: Chris Bowen

Second: Trisha Danka

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Yes

Submitted by:

Monica Dimon
Monica Dimon
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by:

Annmarie Drugonis
Annmarie Drugonis
First Selectwoman

