

COPY RECEIVED  
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TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Town of Seymour ~ Board of Selectmen  
MINUTES  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, December 1, 2020 at 7:00pm  
Zoom Teleconference - Call #646-558-8656 – ID# 854 0099 1700

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

**Members Absent:** Robert VanEgghen

**Others Present:** Bryan LeClerc, Rory Burke, Monica Dimon, Jean Falbo-Sosnovich, Stephan Behuniak, Kathie Vrlik, Tom Eighme, and Don Smith

**Item #1 – Call Meeting to order**

Deputy First Selectwoman Annmarie Drugonis called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

**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 November 17, 2020 Regular Meeting**

Motion to approve Minutes from November 17, 2020 Regular Meeting

Motion: Pat Lombardi

Second: Robert Findley

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – N/A

Chris Bowen – Yes

**Item #5 – First Selectwoman's Report**

- Police Union contract has been signed and dropped off in my office
- Ordinance Committee is constantly meeting and once a month will be updating the Board of Selectmen regularly. We have some in our packet to go over today.
- The Winter Parking Ban is in effect.

The winter parking ban will be in effect DECEMBER 1, 2020 thru March 31, 2021.

Parking will be allowed on the EVEN side of the street for entire winter season  
(December 2020, January 2021, February 2021, and March 2021)

The ban is in effect daily from 12:00 Midnight until 6:00 AM regardless of weather conditions  
and during any active storm regardless of the time of day

**Vehicles must be legally parked without impeding the normal flow of traffic**

Below is a list of streets that are exceptions to the EVEN side of street parking  
If your street is not listed below you must park on the EVEN side of the street

**Off-street parking is highly encouraged whenever possible**

**EXCEPTIONS TO THE PARKING BAN**

BUNGAY COURT	*Parking only on the NORTH side
CAPRICORN DRIVE	*Odd side parking only from Skokorat Street to North Star Drive
FARRELL STREET	*Odd side parking only
GRAND STREET	*Odd side parking (Across from Wood Street in the parking area)
HUMPHREY STREET	*Odd side parking from Washington Avenue to James Street
NEW STREET	*Exempt parking on BOTH sides of street
SECOND AVENUE	*Odd side parking only
SMITH STREET	*Odd side parking only
WASHINGTON AVENUE	*From Grand Street north to Rt 67(Parking on odd side only)
WEST STREET	*Odd side parking only between #63 to #77
WOODSIDE AVENUE	*Odd side parking only

**Violation of the Winter Parking Ban is a \$30.00 fine**

- There has been an increase in break-ins in the Nicklemine Road area. Police are advising residents to call the police department should they see anything. Please be advised that in Connecticut there is a second chance law whereby they cannot chase people in cars or on foot with dogs. They are doing the best they can but in some situations their hands are tied.

**Item #6 - Annual Report from the Strategic Planning Committee**

Chairwoman Kathie Vrlik gave a presentation of the Strategic Planning Committee. The Committee members are: Kathie Vrlik (chair), Don Smith, Stephan Behuniak, Rory Burke, and Bob Findley.

- **COVID-19 Impact on the Strategic Planning Process** – Rory Burke said that last year’s plan had a 1-year plan of deliverables that were taken from the existing 10-year plan. Those were solidified in January and presented at the February (monthly) Senior Staff Meeting. The expectations were laid out that these deliverables were explained to the senior staff and they were expected to execute them over the course of the year and to provide progress updates along the way. Unfortunately, the March Senior Staff Meeting was at the beginning of the COVID shutdown in Town. Over the next several months we were focused almost entirely on COVID as the situation was still new and changing rapidly. In the early Fall, we reinstated the Strategic Plan Updates during the Senior Staff Meetings. Unfortunately, the progress is not what we had anticipated, and understandably so. Although not all of the goals were accomplished, several of the deliverables were completed. Almost all of them saw pretty significant progress. But for COVID, the one-year plan would have been accomplished.
- **Results of the 2020 Planning Cycle** – Kathie Vrlik said that unfortunately, more than half of the goals were not finished. A few were taken out because they were no longer relevant or completable. 48% of those goals were completed or expect to be completed by the end of the year. This is something to be proud of. We learned a lot. We need to change the way we are thinking about this process as a

Committee and as a Town. Rory Burke said that one of the things we have wrestled with the entire time that we have been working on this Strategic Plan since its inception is the feeling that things were more difficult than they should have been. The process that we followed was that the seven members of the Committee (now five) conducted stakeholder interviews with every department, committee, commission, board. We did a public input session. We spent a lot of hours gathering data and developing a Plan. I think it was an impressive undertaking; but now that we have hit the five-year mark and look to recommence the process, it is pretty daunting for a largely volunteer board to do all of that work. The classic Strategic Planning Process is usually driven by the members of the organization. What was happening was the volunteers were interviewing the staff, taking their words, reorganizing their words and giving them back to the staff. When the staff received them, sometimes they required clarifications as to what we were looking for despite the basis of the objectives being their own words. The transition that we realized we need to make is from a Board-driven development process to a Staff-driven process. We would like to see the Senior Staff developing objectives for themselves and then the Strategic Planning Committee serving as an Oversight Board, assisting the process, making sure that the Staff's objectives are rigorous enough and are in line with the overall objectives of the Town. This is what we are hoping to see moving forward.

- **Evolution of the SPC** -

- Kathie Vrlik said that the Committee felt that moving to this type of model would be a more **efficient and effective usage of resources**. It took us three years to complete the first set of interviews. To think that moving into the next cycle would take another three years (and that was with a larger group than we have now), this model makes a lot more sense.
- We also feel that the internal teams have a better grasp of what is going on with their own teams. It's important to have that **internal voice** that takes the lead on things that they see as important. They know their jobs better than anyone else.
- When we move to this kind of a model, we are really **empowering the internal staff** to own their responsibility, to take on this role. We will be here to support and oversee, to help them however they need the help.
- This model can help **identify skills and opportunities**; can help with management.
- Summarizing, the updated role of the Strategic Planning Committee will be:
  - Training & On-boarding
  - Supporting the stakeholders in their goal creation
  - Providing on-going support
  - Will continue to provide updates to the First Selectwoman & Board of Selectmen
  - Will troubleshoot and course correct as needed
  - Will continue to provide yearly updates to let you know how we do
- **Keeping Everyone on Task – An Agile Approach** - Stephan Behuniak & Bob Findley are both existing Agile Wizards. Stephan will take us through how everyone will be coached using Agile as a methodology. Stephan Behuniak said we were struggling with a way to make this plan actionable; make it something that we could use in the future in a serious way. Bob, myself, and several members have experienced working in an agile environment, and we have seen firsthand the benefits it provides. What we had was a document outlining dozens of goals that we wanted to accomplish over a 10-year span. There is so much information. We decided to — break it down into smaller actionable chunks. In the Agile World these are sprints. We need to prioritize everything in the plan and then choose a chunk of work to be in the first iteration. 1-year increments were appropriate when dealing with a volunteer board and municipal government. Everything brought in was determined to be actionable within a 12-month period. Anything that sounds big, we would need to break down. We have seen some success. The

groundwork has been laid. The next step is the most important. The teams responsible for getting this stuff done, they need to embrace it and take full ownership of these tasks. The Strategic Plan exists as a living document. It will continue to exist as a guide, and we will continue to be here to help and serve as consultants, and help people add things to the plan. The Agile Approach allows a team to set a goal for a year (or whatever time period you choose). We have regular touchpoints to track the progress. Ultimately, you will review the body of work that's been accomplished at the end of the year or time period. The list of items for each team should be regularly prioritized with the most valuable and actionable items on top. Our success in implementing this Plan will ultimately be at the mercy of the First Selectwoman and this Board and the department heads to promote the Agility and not lose sight of the Plan. In our capacity as a volunteer board we are more than willing to assist with training.

- We have created this simple Dashboard that might be useful in helping to track completion of tasks.

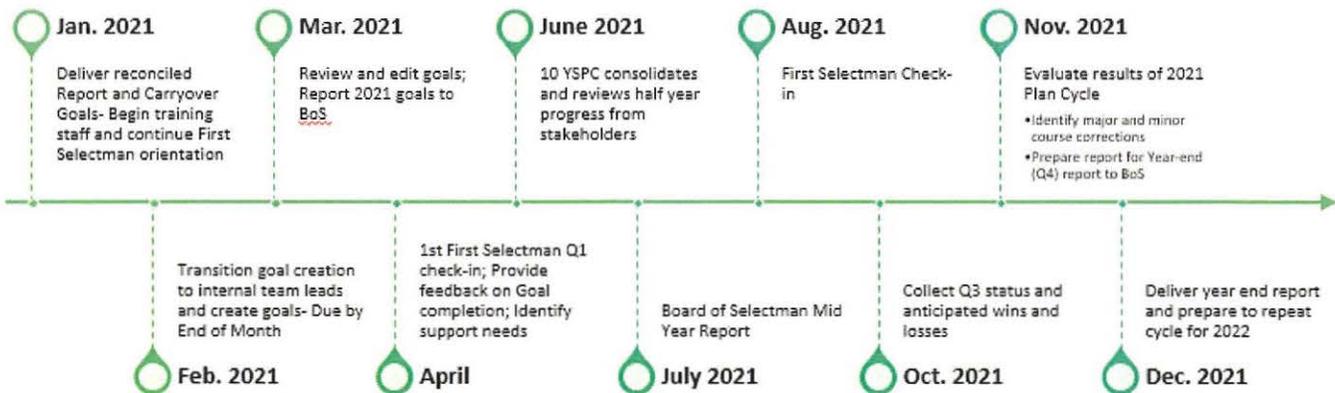
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12
Total active tasks in compliance plan	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
Total tasks completed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total tasks in progress	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total tasks not started	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
Total tasks on hold	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total tasks on report	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Action	Report To	Start Date	Completion Date	Comments on Action, Status, Comments on Completed Items, and Action Taken to Correctly. None was more important activity number, or website?
we update and events information to be placed onto Community Services website	2020			Community Services and Parks info added into website. Individualized promotional materials added to website to improve overall Community education
update(s) with creating and maintaining the Volunteer Database system and deliver same	2020			Full volunteer program via website and placed with Community Center program requests not received
and deliver Library benchmarking protocol for services and atmosphere for library and a center to ensure Department facilities and programming are competitive	2020			Programs are researched in other communities before they're implemented. Full benchmarking protocol
not deliver a year-end report on status of new Compliance Code consistently with its implementation or developing activities, services and programs	2020	2021 F3		No year-end report generated. Shared with Oxford Rac for only submitted due to
not deliver a digital welcome packet for new residents	2020			In progress. 100 require coordination with Selectman's office
zoning regulations for property along Route 36 and deliver permit use for in order to encourage appropriate development	Revised			Coming along Route 36 was changed in 2019
year heavy equipment inventory (SIS 105+); develop and deliver equipment replacement	2020	2021 F6		Spoke to EMS. He was unclear. He has been added to select staff meetings to
year light equipment inventory; develop and deliver equipment replacement plan	2020	2021 F6		Same
director to place Municipal to calculate and deliver 5-year averages through 2021 to committees for 2021-2022 budget year planning	Revised			Municipal no longer used
year heavy equipment inventory (SIS 105+); develop and deliver equipment replacement	2020	2021 F6		FD not closed in. Monthly round table re-established with Fire Commissioners & C use to measure progress
year light equipment inventory; develop and deliver equipment replacement plan	2020	2021 F6		FD not closed in
non-union professional staff; each team; contribute and commitment to develop a regional compact; govern on the basis and responsibilities of their group in addition to FSA, Select a Role, Tour Charter, salaries and resolutions as they arise	2020			Have these letters been handed to A. Orsogna. Since FCI prior and busy

This is a place to measure progress of completed goals, discuss challenges & successes in implementation.

- **2021 Timeline**

# 2021 Timeline



**DISCUSSION:**

- Robert Findley – I am so proud of the Strategic Planning Board. It's tremendous where they've gotten to at this point. They are on the right track towards making this a part of the Town culture. They will see the results every year. The Dashboard will keep track of the progress. I am happy to be part of that.
- Annmarie Drugonis thanked Kathie Vrluk and team for an excellent presentation. This Board has come such a long way. Trisha, you must be so proud of what you have started! Trisha Danka said she is excited to see them reaching this step; this is what she envisioned – she left because she doesn't have background and specialty to continue with it. She let others who do take over. Thank you everybody. Annmarie said she can't wait till the spring to see where we are.
- Stephan Behuniak said that it's very important that Annmarie will need to step up and be the steward as we transition this Plan to the Town.
- Don Smith said that this Plan needs to be brought up in the Senior Staff Meetings.
- Kathy Vrluk said that the SPC is a resource for the internal staff and also for you, Annmarie. Moving to this mindset is something that not everyone has had exposure to.
- Pat Lombardi said that he was very impressed with the presentation. Thank you and keep up the good work.

**Item #7 - Discussion with the Communications Commission Chair**

Communications Commission Chair Tom Eighme gave an update:

- With regard to the \$1.4 million bond issue for the Communication Equipment we are about \$32,000 shy. With the mobile & portable radios: the Fire Department is 85% complete, OEM is 50% complete, Fire Marshall is 50% complete, and EMS is 65% complete. DPW is completed.
- Main frame work is currently being staged with a start to install timeline of late January/early February.
- NextGen (CAD dispatch system) is up and running for the Police Department. Fire & EMS to be started in January.
- Police Department Console upgrade is scheduled in February.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Pat Lombardi said he is a member of the Fire Department and has received one of these radios and although over the past four years the reception was horrible. These radios are a VAST improvement and very badly needed. Thanks to the Board of Fire Chiefs and Commissioners.

**Item #8 – Set Public Hearing to Discuss Proposed Ordinance Changes for Wednesday, December 16, 2020 @**

**6:45pm via Zoom Teleconference**

- a. Fire Abatements and**
- b. Fire Abatements (65+)**

Annmarie Drugonis said that we have always had an abatement for our volunteer firefighters. The amount would depend on how many meetings, events, trainings, etc. that they attended. This amount ranged from \$500 to \$1,000). The Captains would hand over to the Chiefs the call sheets and information then this would go to the Fire Commissioners and then to the Board of Selectmen for approval. This would be approved at the January meeting. This abatement was supposed to be going toward their taxes. (Car & Property) What happened in about 2018, Doug Thomas said that we need to cut them a check instead of the abatements. According to Connecticut State Statutes, there is allowed to be an ABATEMENT set in place for emergency personnel. It needs to be an abatement, not a check. Now, they get an abatement towards property taxes (unless delinquent taxes are involved, in which case they get nothing). We discovered that the State of Connecticut upped the maximum abatement to

\$2,000. We will be setting the maximum for Seymour at \$1,500. This would go towards their property taxes. They need to be current with their taxes. Bryan LeClerc said that per the State Statute, we can also offer this abatement to members who have retired after 25 years of service (IN SEYMOUR) and are still actively volunteering.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Al Bruno said that the original intent of the abatement was to encourage volunteers to participate in the emergency responders as a “thank you”.
- Annmarie Drugonis said this is well deserved. These volunteers are taken away from their families on holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.), in the middle of the night, during the day. A \$1,500 tax abatement to those who qualify is much cheaper than having a paid Fire Department. Also, remember that not every member earns this amount. They must be active in the Community.
- Pat Lombardi said that this is an excellent recruiting tool.

Motion to push this forward to the Public Hearing on Wednesday, December 16, 2020 @ 6:45pm via Zoom Teleconference

Motion: Chris Bowen

Second: Al Bruno

Vote: 5 – Yes

0 – No

1 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Abstain

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – N/A

Chris Bowen – Yes

**c. Chapter 2 – Article II**

- Rory Burke said that the Ordinance Committee is going through the Code of Ordinances section by section. This is the section that was reviewed this month.
- For the Committee on Aging, the Board of Ethics, and the Culture & Arts Commission – these just contained very small changes just to bring them up to code and make minor clarifications and to bring them in line with the Charter.
- For the rest – the Safety Commission, Welfare Advisory Board, Beautification Commission, and Friends of the Broad Street Park Commission – will be removed from the Code of Ordinances. The reason for this is that they are committees/commissions that could be formed through the Board of Selectmen without mandating it through an Ordinance – thus requiring 5 more volunteers for these Boards.
- The Employee Safety Commission – there are OSHA requirements for this Committee to exist that were more stringent than was in the Ordinance. Therefore, changes will be made to this Commission.
- Pat Lombardi asked about the Culture & Arts Commission – one of the proposed changes was to reduce the number of members from 7 to 5. This was to keep it in line with the change to the Charter. But I believe that a few years ago, this was discussed in depth and we had removed it from the Charter. One of the Board members had sent me a detailed listing of what that Commission had done during the year. It was felt at that time, that we would leave that Commission at 7 members.
- Annmarie Drugonis said that she remembers the discussion – that they would leave it at 5 and then if they needed extra people, they could do that.
- Chris Bowen asked if further work could be done to put some of the things that the removed committees had done to include in the duties of other commissions? Annmarie Drugonis said that they are doing that. For example, OSHA is more stringent than the Employee Safety Commission. We will remove any duplicates. The EDC Ordinance wordings were so outdated. We are bringing things in line with the Charter. If the Culture & Arts Commission feels they need 7 people, we can

do that. Rory Burke said that he remembers that the Culture & Arts Commission was exempt from the cap because they are no longer in the Charter.

- Annmarie Drugonis said that we will leave the Culture & Arts Commission membership at 7, not 5.
- Bryan LeClerc said there was one additional item that we discussed in the Ordinance Committee Meeting. Section 2-160.121, Division 13 Municipal Aquifer Protection Agency – just clarified that it should not be the DEP, but the DEEP.

Motion to accept Chapter 2, Article II, Sections 1 through 8 with the changes

Motion: Pat Lombardi

Second: Robert Findley

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – N/A

Chris Bowen – Yes

**Item #9 – Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Economic Development Director**

- Annmarie Drugonis said that included in your packet was some information sent by Caron from the Economic Development Committee. First is an EDC Recommendation for the Economic Development section of the Strategic Plan (from December of 2019 – second draft). Annmarie asked Bob Findley if this was sent to the SPC – Bob said no. Annmarie said Karen also sent a task list for the Economic Development Director. Also included was a Job Description for the Economic Development Director.
- Chris Bowen said that some of the items on that list such as the below highlighted does not seem

Goal	Deliverable	Priority
Explore ways to promote desirable types of development in Seymour.	Ensure that the Planning & Zoning Commission continually updates the zoning regulations to facilitate appropriate development.	1
	Explore the feasibility of establishing or engaging with an economic development corporation (ED corp.). This includes creating a cost-benefit analysis of starting an ED corp. for Seymour or partnering with an existing ED corp. to accomplish land acquisition and development goals as well as determining a funding plan for such efforts.	2

to be an appropriate role – that an appointed commission determine how an elected board does their job. The ultimate goal I agree with. This is also completely different what is in the Strategic Plan.

- Rory Burke asked if – 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft 12/17/19 – was this given to someone on 12/17/19 or was this given to you as something that they had done in the past or is this what they are proposing? Annmarie said that this is something that they are proposing. I would like everyone to review it and then have a meeting with them. Chris Bowen said that he was at that 12/2019 meeting and they did not decide to put forth anything at that meeting.
- Rory Burke said that this is what Caron Robinson had sent to Annmarie when they met. If you recall, last year EDC’s recommendation was to move forward with Sheila O’Malley. This Board said we would like to see a more specific list of tasks that the Economic Development Director would be doing and so I believe that is what this list of tasks is. As far as I know, the job description was from back when Fred Mesore was Director.
- Bob Findley just wanted to clarify that this is the Job Description for the DIRECTOR, not the COMMITTEE. Rory said yes. That is what was asked for. They haven’t touched it since last year.



Motion to approve the above Appointments dated 12/01/2020 as presented

Motion: Robert Findley

Second: Pat Lombardi

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Abstain

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – N/A

Chris Bowen – Yes

**Item #11 – Tax Refunds/Abatements**

None

**Item #12 – Transfers**

None

**Item #13 – Correspondence**

- Check Registers

**Item #14 – Public Comment**

None

**Item #15 – Selectmen’s Public Comment**

- Pat Lombardi – Happy Birthday Trisha!
- Trisha Danka – Hope everyone had a good Thanksgiving. The Parade Committee has got about 25 signups for the Lights Competition which is great. Hope everyone continues to stay safe.
- Bob Findley – Happy Birthday Trisha! Thanks to the Parade Committee – glad that’s going well. Stay safe everyone!
- Chris Bowen – Congratulations to Trisha Danka on behalf of myself and Rob VanEgghen who couldn’t be here today! Happy Birthday! The virus does not know it’s a holiday. Stay home if you can, be safe, wash your hands, wear your masks, don’t take chances.
- Al Bruno – Happy Birthday, Trisha! Hope that you all had a relaxing Thanksgiving. Echoing the comments – I know that we are being very vigilant as a Town with COVID and the pandemic. Hope that there is a vaccine on the horizon. They are saying it will be a very difficult winter. It looks like people are taking things a little more seriously which is good. We have to encourage people to do the right thing and lead by example.
- Annmarie Drugonis – I wanted to say Happy Birthday, Trisha! Hope that you have a wonderful weekend! COVID-19 – we don’t know where it’s going to go. Stay vigilant, wear your mask, stay safe. I am looking forward to seeing all the Light Displays. Hope that you all had a good Thanksgiving. Trisha said that Jean Sosnovich’s house was great – she will receive an Honorable Mention she is Seymour in the heart!

**Item #16 – Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 8:33pm

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Chris Bowen

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – N/A

Chris Bowen – Yes

Submitted by:

*Monica Dimon*

**Monica Dimon**  
**Recording Secretary**

Reviewed by:

*A. Drugonis*

**Annmarie Drugonis**  
**First Selectwoman**