

Town of Seymour ~ Board of Selectmen
MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 7:00pm
Zoom Teleconference - Call #646-558-8656 – ID# 861 0950 0059

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 2/8/21
TIME: 2:30pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Bryan Nesteriak, Rory Burke, Monica Dimon, Jean Falbo-Sosnovich (Valley Indy), Victoria Soltis, Richard Buturla, Jack Cavanaugh

Item #1 – Call Meeting to order

First Selectwoman Annmarie Drugonis called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

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 January 19, 2021 Regular Meeting

Motion to approve Minutes from January 19, 2021 Regular Meeting

Motion: Robert Findley

Second: Patrick Lombardi

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

1 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Patrick Lombardi – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Chris Bowen – Abstain

Item #5 – First Selectwoman's Report

* Snowstorm Sunday into Monday - thank the volunteers and town employees for all their help and dedication to the town. From the fire department on standby at the fire houses from 10AM Monday morning till Tuesday morning, escorting ambulance to hospitals to ensure our residents arrive safely, to covering our surrounding towns for mutual aid. For our Town employees started to plow from 2:00 am Monday morning till late Tuesday morning, and our police department keeping the roads clear for our plow trucks and our residents safe. Seymour Ambulance staff and volunteers thank you for taking care of our residents and attending to their needs.

* Public Works will work on cleaning up the downtown area as well as town roads later this week.

* Working with the police dept. on private duty collection process.

* Met with Dave Morgan from TEAM to discuss how we can help them and do more with them to help our residents.

* Met with Mike Kearney to discuss to plan to add names of Seymour residents to the Civil War Monument at French Park. The Historical society and American Legion are working together on this project.

* Met with Toni Cassidy in regard to the Seymour Oxford Food bank to discuss the centers growth and needs of the residents in the area.

* We are waiting on the Fire Commissioners to get back to the ordinance committee in regard to the list of names for tax abatement and the criteria for the 65 years of age and 25 years of service.

* Budget Season and workshops are taking place on Monday and Wed of each week up until March I will be presenting my budget the first Monday in March.

* The Grand list has been signed and we saw an 8 % percent increase on the residential side. The Finance Department and Board are doing deeper research. 1/3 went up 1/3 went down and 1/3 stayed the same. In regard to the assessment. The Town is required per state law. We asked if we could hold off and the State's office said no. Every town had to do this. The Governor again calls the shots not us.

* We will be posting to our website and Facebook page the steps for residents who want to file an appeal with our tax appeals board.

* Garbage is one day behind this week due to the storm. I know there are a few residents that the haulers have missed due to the residents not being plowed out, Oak Ridge will be making around to collect. Please be patient.

* Met with Tom Hyde from Naugatuck Regional Development Corp. They are brand new and their goal is to be a Regional Economic Development Entity. Just another option to consider when the time comes.

* Taxes were due on January 31 residents because it landed on a Sunday, residents had until Monday Feb 1 to pay it. Due to the storm, we were closed. The Governor is the only one who can wave interest. The governor did not shut the state down and was asked by the tax collectors if they could waive it for one day and they were told no. The State of CT controls that not the tax office. There are many ways to pay taxes; online with credit card, or checking account, over the phone with credit card and checking account, mail it in as long as the postmark date is before the date due.

Item #6 - Discussion with Town Engineer Regarding Proposed 2021 Road Work
 Bryan Nesteriak presented the anticipated 2021 roadwork:

2021 ANTICIPATED ROADWAY REHABILITATION					
Street Name	Street Length	Grade	Recommendation	Estimated Cost	NOTES
Seymour Ave	2634	D	Reclaim/Repave/Drainage	\$175,000	
Shelton St	750	C	Reclaim/Repave/Drainage	\$120,000	Sidewalks need attention, no existing drainage
Pershing Ave	500	D	Reclaim/Repave	\$50,000	
Eleanor Rd	1150	C	Reclaim/Repave/Drainage	\$145,000	
Highland Avenue	1000	D	Reclaim/Repave	\$100,000	
Buckingham	1500	C/D	Heavy Patching/Drainage	\$150,000	
Middle Benham	470	C	Mill/Repave	\$40,000	
North Benham	3600	C	Mill/Repave	\$220,000	
Spruce Brook	2000	D	Mill/Repave	\$205,000	
Great Meadow	1000	C	Mill/Repave	\$102,000	
Elm St	1050	C	Reclaim/Repave	\$200,000	Sidewalks are 50% of cost
Moss Ave	2000	C	Heavy Patching	\$275,000	
Mountain Rd	-	varies	Heavy Patching	\$29,933	Northern section near Route 67
Sidewalks	Varies	-	Remove/Replace Concrete	\$100,000	connect gaps, repair areas, etc.
Subtotal				\$1,911,933	
Police - Traffic Control (12%)				\$229,431.96	
Contingency (10%)				\$191,193.30	
Estimated Total Cost:				\$2,332,558	
Approximate remaining budget				\$3,500,000	

- Bryan said that this is a fluid list and subject to change.
- I would like to spend some money on some of the sidewalks. Address some of the bad areas, fill some of the gaps.
- We still have about a million left to do other things.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/DISCUSSION

- Robert Findley asked if all of these roads are C's and D's? Bryan said that most of them are....
- Chris Bowen said this was an excellent presentation. Is this in order of priority? Bryan said not really. This is what I believe we can get done this year. There are three different waves that need to be done: Reclaiming/Repaving, Milling/Repaving, and Heavy Repairs. It depends on the availability of the contractor as to which ones we hit first. We sit down and decide what is the most cost-efficient way to move the machinery around. Also depends on the availability of the reclaimer.
- Chris asked if the grades for the roads are based just on condition or also includes usage consideration? Bryan said that the grades are based solely on the road conditions. Last year they tackled the lower grades and some of the higher grades that are highly used. Chris said that Seymour Avenue should be the first priority. It is a very dangerous road. Pieces of the road are coming up. It is a walking pothole. Very dangerous. Buckingham Road is also very dangerous and bumpy. These two roads really need attention.
- Annmarie Drugonis said that we can vote on this list at the next meeting.
- Trisha Danka asked if we have a list of the sidewalks that need attention throughout Town? Bryan said that he does have a running list. A list of gaps, areas that need repair, and areas that need replacement. I need to know if you want me to spend any of the bond money on sidewalks. Trisha asked if they were main roads. Bryan said that they have two gaps on Skokorat Street as well as areas on Maple Street, Washington Avenue. We will start with the highly used areas. Trisha said that there are some areas on Pearl Street that need to be done. Residents have said that this needs to be done. No one should be left out. Bryan said that the resident would never be billed for the sidewalk.
- Pat Lombardi said that Maple Street is a State Road. Is there any issue with repairs being done on that? Bryan said that the State does not take any responsibility unless it is over a bridge. It is the Town's responsibility. I live on upper Derby Avenue. I have 24 running feet of sidewalk. I have some huge pieces of concrete gone due to the plows. I am concerned about where I can go to get the necessary repairs done. Bryan said that the State won't help. That is a tough road to work on. The cost would be double or triple the usual. The police costs would be 20 – 30% more. They would have to shut down a lane. We will see if we can talk to Dee and see if there is a grant we can use for this under LOTCIP. In the future, we do have the connectivity grant on Woodside. After that is done, any funds left over, we can try to use the money for some of the State roads.
- Rob VanEgghen asked if Bryan could please send the list of sidewalks he has to the Board of Selectmen. This way if any of the residents ask, we can have that information available. A citizen who does their own sidewalk can get a 1/3 cost reimbursement. I just wanted to clarify – the size of the list you have is what you feel you can accomplish this year? Can we add more roads if funds are available? Do you have a "B" list? Bryan said he does have a "B" list. It really is dependent on the contractor how much is accomplished. I don't like to get too far ahead because the bills do tend to trickle down. We don't want to be over budget.
- Annmarie asked if Bryan could update this list and send to the Board members so we can approve at our next meeting? Bryan said he would do that and send the sidewalk list and the road grade report.

Motion to go out of order and move item 9 before item 7

Motion: Trisha Danka

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 #9 - Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Skate Park Graffiti

On the Town Facebook page I had posted that I had seen some trash and graffiti at the Community Center Skate Park. One of the two young gentlemen I was speaking to that were there is with us tonight on the call, Jack Cavanaugh. This kind of led to Victoria Soltis (who works with the Valley Center for the Arts) contacting me. They work with Skate Parks in New Haven. I wanted to bring this to the Board to hear your thoughts and see where we can go from here.

- Jack said that he goes to the Skate Park every day if it is good weather – it’s like my second home. It gives me something to do – especially now with COVID and them shutting down sports. I’ve been going there for about 4-5 years. I used to go with my brother, gives me something to do and stay active. It’s not even the people who go there that do this graffiti. I don’t want the Skate Park to be taken away from me because of that.
- Victoria Soltis said that they run a non-profit based out of Seymour called Valley Center for the Arts. We are trying to Arts Lessons, Music Lessons. We are trying to reach out to the youth and give them programs and things to do. In New Haven there is a graffiti group called Hi-Crew. They maintain the Skate Park @ Edgewood Park in New Haven. They come in and paint it – graffiti style – tastefully. They will also maintain it for free – if people come in and paint over it again for free. They do need some freedom to paint what they would like, but it would be tasteful. This is called a “Free Wall”. Also, people would probably be less likely to paint over it if we had something like this. Victoria shared some examples of their work. Her non-profit would be willing to oversee them doing this. Seeing people come and do “good” graffiti could be a role model for the kids. There is a real lack of outlets for kids who want to express themselves artistically.
- Chris Bowen asked if there are any local people in the Hi-Crew or Valley Center for the Arts? Victoria said that she has not found a group to maintain this locally. We could put up the wall and give them access to paint.
- Al Bruno said this is a great idea!
- Chris Bowen said thanks to Jack and Victoria for presenting this to the Board. Chris asked what the process would be if someone does overwrite the wall. The Hi-Crew would send someone as soon as possible to take care of that and fix.
- Patrick Lombardi said this is something much needed and admirable. Would this be just for skateparks or does it apply to buildings also? Victoria said that it would also apply to a building. As an alternative, the non-profit could have students do the painting. We would need to put up a sign that this area belonged to the Valley Arts Center in that case. Less likely that it would be painted over. Patrick also asked Rich Buturla if there is any potential Town liability in doing this? Rich said not very likely.

Item #7 – Discussion with the Parade Committee

Alex Danka wanted to congratulate Rob VanEgghen on his new baby!

- There are more people that would like to get on the Committee, and we would like to diversify and do other events. We would like to change the name of the Committee to the “Seymour Events Committee”. What would be the process to do this? It is not part of the Charter or an Ordinance.
- Chris Bowen said that there should be no five-person limit. The limit is not set by the Charter.

Motion to change the name of the "Seymour Parade Committee" to the "Seymour Events Committee"

Motion: Patrick Lombardi Second: Robert 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 #8 – Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding 128 West Street Bid Award

Annmarie Drugonis said that this bid included all back taxes owed to the Town. In your packet are the bids that came in.

Motion to accept the bids that came in
Motion: Trisha Danka Second: Al Bruno

DISCUSSION:

- Annmarie Drugonis said that we received five bids. The highest was #2 from Greg Chernak for \$51,626. All bidders sent deposit checks.
- Patrick Lombardi is that now we have a piece of property back on the tax rolls. This is most important. That house is a fireman’s nightmare waiting to happen. Glad to see that we have moved forward to selling it.

Motion to award the bid to Mr. Chernak for his bid of \$51,626 and authorize the First Selectwoman to execute any and all documents to effectuate the transaction

Motion: Trisha Danka 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 #10 – Discussion & Take Possible Action on Emergency Declaration of Local Civil Preparedness

Annmarie Drugonis said she would like to extend the Emergency Declaration in case we need to write out Purchase Orders in case COVID takes a turn for the worst.

Motion to authorize the First Selectwoman to issue the Emergency Declaration of Local Civil Preparedness

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

Motion to add to the Agenda "Discussion & Tale Possible Action Regarding Tingue Dam Easement Update"

Motion: Pat Lombardi Second: Chris Bowen

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

Richard Buturla said that the State was looking for an Easement for Tingue Dam repair – we discussed at our last meeting. There was no end date on that document, so we were looking for them to propose 180 days after work starts. They came back with a date of December 31, 2021. I would recommend that we approve the Easement and authorize the First Selectwoman to enter into it. They would start as soon as possible, given the winter conditions.

Motion to authorize the First Selectwoman to enter into the Easement with the State with a Termination Date of December 31, 2021

Motion: Rob VanEgghen 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 #11 – Appointments

Appointments February 2, 2021 Board of Selectmen Meeting

Table with 5 columns: Name, Board, Type, Term, Expiration Date. Rows include Jessica Nunez (Board of Finance), Stephan Behuniak (WPCA), and Daniel Staffieri (Parade Committee).

Annmarie Drugonis said that we would not be approving Stephan Behuniak because we will be voting on the whole WPCA Board at our next meeting.

Jessica Nunez will be filling in for the remainder of the term as an alternate on the Board of Finance.

Motion to approve Jessica Nunez' appointment

Motion: Patrick Lombardi 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

- I read recently that a local businesswoman, Alyssa DeMatteo who runs Wildflour in downtown Seymour will be closing down temporarily for about a year. She is being deployed with the Connecticut National Guard. This will be a loss for downtown. We wish you well. Godspeed and come home soon.
- Rob – welcome to parenting. Wish you well.
- SHOVEL AROUND YOUR HYDRANTS!
- Robert Findley
 - I also want to echo the praises of the Public Works department – doing a great job.
 - Regarding the string of car thefts – I know the person whose car got stolen from Henny Penny. Please take steps to protect yourselves!
 - Congratulations to Rob on the new baby!
- Al Bruno – Town services did a great job! Many thanks! Stay safe & warm. Help your neighbors.
- Chris Bowen – I also would like to compliment the great job that our emergency personnel does! During the storm and during these tough times! It helps to keep our morale up. Congratulations to Rob and Audra VanEgghen on their baby! Best wishes to Alyssa – be safe and come back safe! Please all support veterans' groups.
- Rob VanEgghen – thank you for all your well wishes. I am glad that my son will grow up in this wonderful Town with wonderful folks! Stay vigilant!
- Annamarie Drugonis
 - The Board of Education has gone back to hybrid learning. We have no say on the Board of Education. I don't know why they didn't go back earlier. Al Bruno said that the debate was there. You can view the Board of Ed meetings online. Not sure when we will be back full-time. Annmarie Drugonis said that as soon as she finds anything out, she will let the Board of Selectmen know.
 - Al Bruno said that if Trisha can't access information, maybe this would be a communication issue that needs to be addressed by the Board of Education. Pat Lombardi said that we would rather hear from the Board of Education directly and not just hearsay. Chris Bowen said that he is able to view the meetings on You Tube. Trisha said it is just sometimes hard to find the time to view the meetings.
 - Annmarie Drugonis said that she believes the Chairman of the Board of Education should be keeping the First Selectwoman informed so that she and the members of the Board of Selectmen can be aware of what's going on should they be asked any questions.

Item #16 – Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:30pm

Motion: Chris Bowen

Second: Robert Findley

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annamarie 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