

**SALEM BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2016, 7:00 P.M.
SALEM TOWN OFFICE BUILDING**

PRESENT

Kevin Lyden, First Selectman
Edward Chmielewski
Stuart Gadbois

ABSENT

David Kennedy
Robert Ross

1. CALL TO ORDER:

First Selectman Lyden called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 5, 2016, Regular Meeting

M/S/C: Gadbois/Chmielewski, to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 5, 2016 with the following amendments:

item 5E, page 3, first sentence:

First Selectman Lyden stated that...and ~~some the~~ Townspeople....

item 5E, page 4, Appointment of citation hearing officer., first sentence:

The First Selectman of the Town shall appoint...provided by *CT General Statutes* §124-9C ~~of this ordinance~~.

page 4, last paragraph, last sentence, begin new paragraph:

It was noted *during discussion* that such avenues tend to be....

page 5, Appointment of citation hearing officer., first sentence:

The ~~First Selectman~~ Board of Selectmen of the Town shall appoint...provided by *CT General Statutes* §124-9C.

page 5, 3rd paragraph, second sentence:

The First Selectman, as the hiring authority for the Town, ~~should~~ *would* appoint the Blight Enforcement Officer. ~~and~~ *The position* would be assigned to an existing employee;...

item 6A(2), 2nd sentence:

The numbers are not yet finalized and may be affected by the additional appropriation for the Resident State Trooper ~~State~~.

Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

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Sue Spang, Chairperson, Recreation Commission, reported that a great article was published in Sunday's edition of *The Day* newspaper regarding the Recreation Program Coordinator Vanessa Bunnell. She expressed her appreciation and commended Coordinator Bunnell on a great job during the short time she has been with the Department. She also thanked and recognized Diane Weston, who not only started the program, but also held the position for six years. She also announced that the construction of the bridge has begun. The project has been assigned to a local contractor who resides in the Town of Salem. The bridge is slated for completion within a few months and will provide the public with a safe and efficient crossing of Harris Brook.

Selectman Chmielewski thanked Ms. Spang for all of her hard work. First Selectman Lyden thanked Ms. Weston for her work in both the Building and Recreation Departments, adding that it was difficult to replace her. He also thanked her for acting as the interim Recreation Program Coordinator during the transitional period(s). Selectman Chmielewski concurred and commended her for building a wonderful recreation program.

Carl Nawrocki, President, Friends of Salem Library, stated that the Library has been in the process of introducing technology to the public over the past two years and, with the help of Head Librarian Rachel Gaither, who worked at the CT Library Consortium, they were able to secure the purchase of a 3D printer at a reasonable cost. In an effort to encourage young students to utilize this technology, they have contacted Salem School Principal Joan Phillips. While the school has the capability to create 3D designs, they are not equipped with the capability to print a finished product. As such, they are working with the school to enable the students to electronically send their documents to the Library for printing. The Library staff has been trained and the software has been installed on to the computers. They are hoping to hold classes in September for the public. While the Library will not be able to create their designs, the public will be able to print their files for a modest cost. As an example, the printed Seal of the Town of Salem was circulated.

Donald Bourdeau, Director, Public Works Department, spoke with regards to Agenda Item A and questioned the status of the membership for the Emergency Management Committee and whether they would abide by or opt to revise the Town Charter.

Correspondence: First Selectman Lyden reported that a Members' Equity Check for \$5,195.00 was received by CIRMA (Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency), a member-owned and governed agency. The funds will be deposited into the Town's General Fund under Miscellaneous Income. He also reported that the Town's deductible has been raised from \$1,000.00 to \$5,000.00; any claims below the deductible will be paid out of the Town's line item for Insurance.

5. AGENDA:

- A. Appoint George Householder to Emergency Management Committee (Discuss & Action Item)
The Town Charter states that the Emergency Preparedness Agency is to be made up of four (4) members. Mr. Householder, who is recently retired, has completed the online courses necessary to serve on the Committee and would be readily available during emergencies. He invited the Committee members who were present to an open discussion regarding the appointment.

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In response to Emergency Management Committee Member Chip Weston, First Selectman Lyden proposed the Committee maintain their membership of four (4) individuals, as stated in the Town Charter, and be comprised of one member each from Gardner Lake and Salem Volunteer Fire Companies, Jim Miller, who is currently serving on the Committee, and George Householder. Discussion ensued regarding the number of voting members being odd rather than even so as to avoid the possibility of any tie votes. In order to avoid opening the Charter, First Selectman Lyden proposed the possibility of forming a Board of Selectmen-appointed Sub-Committee made up of residents of the Town. Committee Member Weston stated his concerns with ensuring that the Committee continues to work and function as they have been doing, adding that they have a good group of members who work well together and accomplish their tasks. Selectman Chiemelwski agreed that, because of the Charter, the number of members must remain the same for the time being and a Selectmen-appointed Sub-Committee may be formed. He was also interested in hearing the Committee's suggestions and receiving some guidance as to what and how the Board can help the Committee. The Committee will place the item on their next meeting agenda for discussion and formulate their suggestions for the Board. Mr. Householder agreed to attend the Committee's next meeting. No action was taken on the item.

B. Appoint Will Evanson to Board of Finance Alternate (Discuss & Action Item)

M/S/C: Chmielewski/Gadbois. Discussion: First Selectman Lyden recited a letter received by Democratic Town Committee Chairperson Kristina Len regarding the unanimous nomination of William Evanson as an Alternate Member of the Board of Finance. He stated that the legality of fulfilling a vacancy left by a resigning Board/Commission member of one party with that of another was investigated. Approximately two (2) years ago, the Town received a letter from the Secretary of the State stating that the replacement of a retiring/resigning member of a Board/Commission must be replaced by a member of the same party. More recently, a letter was received by Staff Attorney Ted Bromley from the CT Secretary of the State's office stating that the only time a vacancy would need to be filled by a member of the same party is if one party is at the maximum and a member of the minority party resigns, unless there is a provision in the Charter stating the contrary. The Town Attorney and Democratic Registrar of Voters (ROV) John Butts also reviewed the issue. A letter was received by the latter stating that, because neither the Republican nor Democratic Town Committees have expressed a strong preference(s) as to the appointment of a partisan successor, the vacancy may be filled by a member of a different party. Selectman Chmielewski stated that, after speaking with John Houchin, Kristina Len, and Sue Spang, among others, he is confident that Mr. Evanson is a fine choice and felt that it would not be necessary to seek out a member of the Republican Party to fill the vacancy. He added that the Republican Town Committee did reach out for any interested candidates and received no response and that, while the Town does have a long tradition and agreement to meet the will of the people and fill a vacancy with a member of the same party, they were

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unable to do so at this time. Mr. Evanson introduced himself to the Board and stated that he was interested in getting more involved with the Town, having run for the Planning & Zoning Commission during the previous election cycle. He has reviewed the activities of the Board of Finance and, after attending a recent meeting, expressed his interest in contributing to the Board as an Alternate Member to the Board of Finance. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

First Selectman Lyden commented that the issue arose when the Board of Education (BOE) sought to fulfill the vacancy left by the recent resignation of Chairman Stephen Buck (R) with a Democrat. He explained that all Boards and Commissions, with the exception of the BOE, are required to fulfill a vacancy within 30 days. Should the vacancy not be filled within 30 days, the Board of Selectman shall fill the vacancy with whomever they feel is best qualified for the position. It is the Town's informal, unwritten policy that, should a vacancy arise as the result of a resignation, the party from which the individual belongs is requested to provide a recommendation for an individual to fulfill that vacancy. Should the Committee be unable to provide a recommendation and, as CT Secretary of the State's Staff Attorney Bromley stated, there is no issue regarding minority representation, the vacancy may be filled by a member of a different party. Selectman Chmielewski concurred and confirmed that there was no candidate willing or able to serve on the Board of Finance from the Republican Party to fulfill the vacancy and the Town's political committees were able to work together in an effort to do what is best for the Town.

C. Tax Refunds

M/S/C: Chmielewski/Gadbois, to direct the Town Treasurer to issue refunds, recommended and certified by the Tax Collector, as presented to the Board of Selectmen in the amount of \$1,153.35 (one thousand one hundred fifty-three dollars and thirty-five cents) on the 2nd day of August 2016. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

6. **REPORTS:**

A. First Selectman

First Selectman Lyden announced that Vicky Coffin has been selected as the new Head Librarian. Armed with many years of library experience, she will be joining the staff in the beginning of September. He expressed his appreciation to current Head Librarian Rachel Gaither, under whose leadership many needed procedures were implemented, circulation materials updated, and many resources re-aligned. He wished her the best in all of her future endeavors. Ms. Coffin will be working in the Library for four to eight hours per week this month with Head Librarian Gaither to help her transition into her new position.

As the Town closes its books for Fiscal-Year 2015-2016, preliminary audit figures for the General Government reflect that the Town is projected to be underspent by approximately \$200,000.00. He thanked all of the Departments for their fiscal responsibility.

The Senior Luncheon, sponsored by the Salem Volunteer Fire Company, was held at Witch Meadow Campground. Senior Liaison Pam Henry arranged for a guest speaker from the

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Eastern Connecticut Transportation Consortium (ECTC) to present a new program offering seniors, age 60 and over, with 36 one-way passes for \$24.00. The Program provides door-to-door transportation to their medical appointments located within the local and surrounding areas. The Salem Seniors voted to provide half of the costs for any members wishing to take part in the program.

The Multi-Purpose Path Committee awarded the bridge project for crossing number three to Cunningham Construction. Nathan L. Jacobson & Associates, Inc. and Recreation Commission Chairperson Spang ensured that all of the necessary paperwork, e.g., bonds and insurance, was in order and the project has begun. The contingency for the project is currently at 8% and very few change orders are expected. The Committee has been re-activated and, though some of the members are no longer active, no resignations have been received. Any members of the public who are interested in serving on the Committee are invited to contact the First Selectman.

1. Board of Education (BOE)

First Selectman Lyden thanked Former BOE Chairman Buck, who expressed his pride in finalizing the 20-year agreement with East Lyme, for his work on the Board. While the Board has elected a new member, they have not yet elected a new Chairperson.

2. Board of Finance

The Town is in the middle of the audit process and the BOE will be finalizing their materials over the next two weeks. The Auditor is expected to return at the end of the month.

B. Economic Development

The Commission is continuing to work on a survey, contacting the current business owners, and determining the available business-zoned properties. An announcement regarding the opening of a new business located in the plaza located at 24 Hartford Road was made.

C. Library Board

An unexpected cut of \$150.00/month for the Library's internet services was made by the State. First Selectman Lyden will be investigating the possibility of including the Library in the School and Town's broadband services, currently funded by a Broadband Grant, to help mitigate the costs. He is expecting more such cuts next year. He commended the Board of Finance in projecting the cuts and keeping the Unassigned Fund Balance healthy to help them through these difficult years.

D. Planning & Zoning Commission

The Commission will be holding a hearing regarding the relocation and construction of offices for Colchester Construction to be located behind R&W Heating Energy Solutions, Inc. In addition, Anytime Fitness will be moving next to the Salem Health Mart Pharmacy. He commended owner Ted Zito for his patience in waiting for the right tenants to fill the available space(s). The Pharmacy is currently considering expanding their business to fill the remaining 1,000 SF space in the front of the building. With the exception of Dynamic Enterprise Solutions, the rear of the building remains unoccupied and Mr. Zito is currently in discussions with interested parties.

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Selectman Chiemelwski thanked former Planning & Zoning Commission Chairperson Gloria Fogarty for her countless years of service to the Town and Commission, adding that she is sure to be missed and that it will be difficult to fill her shoes. First Selectman Lyden concurred, adding that Joe Duncan was elected as Chairperson and has invited him to come in to review the budget and answer any questions he might have.

E. Recreation Commission

Chairperson Spang was proud to announce that the 12U Baseball Team won the District State Championship and, again, commended the new Recreation Program Coordinator Buñuel. Selectman Chmielewski commended the Recreation Program and thanked former Recreation Program Coordinator Weston for starting the Program and helping with the transition. First Selectman Lyden concurred and also thanked her for helping with the transition in the Building Department.

F. Inland Wetlands & Conservation Commission

The Commission is in the process of reviewing the Spring 2016 edition of *The Habitat*, which discusses “The Green Plan”, the State’s 2016-2020 Comprehensive Open Space Acquisition Plan.

8. ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C: Chmielewski/Gadbois, to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem