

**TOWN OF SALEM
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.
SALEM TOWN HALL – CONFERENCE ROOM 1**

PRESENT

William “Skip” Dickson, Chairman
Marshall Collins, Clerk
Corinne (Cory) Bourgeois
Deborah Cadwell
Janet Griggs
Matt Rucci
Kate Belleville, Alternate
John Bernier, Alternate
Maryann Casciano, Alternate

ABSENT

none

ALSO PRESENT

First Selectman Ed Chmielewski
Selectman Kevin Lyden

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dickson called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:

Salem Volunteer Fire Company (SVFCO) Chief Chip Weston

SEAT ALTERNATE IF NEEDED: *none*

COMMUNICATIONS:

- a. Copy of an e-mail forwarded by Board Member Rucci regarding school safety and security

AGENDA:

M/S/C: Cadwell/Griggs, to add the following item to the Agenda:

1. Salem Volunteer Fire Company (SVFCO) FY2021/22 Budget Update

Discussion: The item numbers will be renumbered accordingly. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor.

1. Salem Volunteer Fire Company (SVFCO) FY2021/22 Budget Update

SVFCO Chief Chip Weston reported that, after receiving additional estimates for the Tanker Truck lights, he was able to reduce the cost from approximately \$10,000.00 to approximately \$5,400.00. He also informed the Board that he will be requesting the Board of Selectmen to approve a supplemental appropriation of \$961.21 due to an unexpected expense of \$3,532.00 for a leak in the Ladder Tanker Truck waterway.

Selectman Lyden stated that, after reviewing the budget with the First Selectman, there are sufficient funds in the budget to cover the overage and a line-item transfer will be requested, avoiding the request for a supplemental appropriation.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a. MAY 12, 2022 BOARD OF FINANCE SPECIAL MEETING

M/S/C: Griggs/Bourgeois, to approve the May 12, 2022 Board of Finance Special Meeting Minutes, with the following amendments:

Page 3, Item 7, Referendum – Discussion – Set Mil Rate:

M/S/C: ~~Collins~~ Griggs/Cadwell, to allocate \$379,080.00 from the Supplemental Capital Fund for a resulting mil rate of 28.8....

Page 2, Item 4, Selectman's Report:

Selectman Lyden stated....it is difficult to make any clear decisions
regarding the public's feelings about the budget.

Discussion: Clerk Collins requested that the case name or parties involved in the Town Counsel issues be revealed (Item 5, First Selectman Transfer Requests). He also noted that the ECS Grant Formula is based on more than larger towns, including the number of students and household incomes (Item 7, Referendum Discussion). Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

- A. REVENUE SUMMARY**
- B. TRIAL BALANCE**
- C. FUND BALANCE**
- D. OTHER**

The Board reviewed the *Balance Sheets* and *Budget vs. Actual* Reports for April and May. Treasurer Pam Henry reported that the Auditors will be at Town Hall and Salem School to conduct the preliminary interim audit.

LoCIP (Local Capital Improvement) and Munic Projects Grants (Line Items 420000-011 and 012) (Board Member Casciano) – The LoCIP Grant must be applied for by the Town for a specific project and may accrue over time. Treasurer Henry will investigate when the Munic Grant was received in prior years.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS – none

5. SELECTMAN'S REPORT

First Selectman Chmielewski reported on the following Departments:

Finance Department – As earlier noted, they are in the process of preparing for the Auditors who will be conducting their preliminary work for the short-term interim audit. The Fiscal Year-end purchases are due by June 30 and expenditure reports are being generated.

Human Resources – They have begun the hiring process to fill the open Library Assistant and First Selectman’s Administrative Assistant positions; individuals within the Town Hall have been provided with professional development opportunities.

Tax Collector – As of today, the tax collection rate is 99.22% — the third highest collection rate for the Town over the last 11 (eleven) years. The Suspense List, which is comparably low, is attributed to the hard work and efforts of the past Tax Collectors.

Tax Assessor – The Tax Assessor is currently conducting courses at the Annual Assessor School, UConn. The Assistant Tax Assessor is in the process of receiving certification training. Tax bills are being finalized.

Town Clerk – Dog License reminders have been mailed. She is in the process of applying for the Historic Documentation Preservation Program Grant and has been busy issuing numerous marriage licenses.

Public Works – The Public Works department is busy maintaining the Town’s buildings, fields, and vehicles. A volleyball court and pet waste disposal bag dispensers have been installed at the Salem Community Park Pavilion. He thanked the Public Works crew for preparing for and cleaning up after the Memorial Day event.

Town Planner – The Planning & Zoning Commission continued their Public Hearing regarding the proposed multi-family residence and has scheduled a Public Hearing for a proposed Zoning Change. The Commission continues to work on the Plan of Conservation & Development. New Public Hearing signs were ordered.

Recreation – Two Summer Concerts, with food trucks, will be held on Wednesday, June 22, and Thursday, August 25 at the Salem Community Park Pavilion. Summer sports, art, L.E.G.O., and photography camps, virtual classes, and discount tickets to venues are available.

Salem Seniors – The Salem Seniors will be meeting next Tuesday with newly-elected President Gary Closius. An AARP Smart Driver Class will be offered this summer.

Building – To date, a total of 341 permits have been issued, with \$71,892.92 in total fees collected with a total construction value of \$5,372,387.91.

Emergency Services/Emergency Management – A meeting was held with the Resident State Troopers, full-time Firefighter/EMTs, and Salem School Administrators to discuss the School’s safety measures and organize a Salem School Evacuation Drill. The meetings utilized the new SmartBoards.

Disc Golf Course Status (Clerk Collins) – Meetings have been held with the relevant Department Heads, CIRMA (Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency), a Disc Golf Consulting Group, and members of the Recreation Commission to identify and discuss the safety risks of the course. Selectman Butcher, an avid disc golf player, was recently appointed to act as the liaison to the Recreation Commission’s Disc Golf Course Committee.

Round Hill Road Fields, a.k.a., Lou Ulffer's Sports Complex (Clerk Collins) – Clerk Collins expressed his appreciation for the immediate response to the enforcement of the “No Parking” signs at the parking lot entrance. First Selectman Chmielewski commended the Troopers who are very responsive to the Town's needs.

Public Works (Board Member Casciano) – The Public Works Department, who immediately repaired a pothole on Morgan Road, was commended for their maintenance of the roads. First Selectman Chmielewski concurred, adding that the Public Works crew is also in the process of partnering with the State to obtain permission to lower the berm and maintain the vegetation to improve the sight line at Route 82 and Music Vale Road.

6. FIRST SELECTMAN TRANSFER REQUESTS: *none*

7. TAX COLLECTOR SUSPENSE LIST

M/S/C: Cadwell/Griggs, to approve the Suspense List in the amount of \$3,020.52 (three thousand twenty dollars and fifty-two cents), as submitted by the Tax Collector.
Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor.

8. LIAISON REPORTS

a. EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency Services Liaison Bourgeois will be requesting that Emergency Management Director/Emergency Services Coordinator Mike Bednarz provide the Board with a brief demonstration of the new SmartBoards. She also hopes to schedule a meeting with Board Member Rucci for a more in-depth discussion of its capabilities. First Selectman Chmielewski added that the goal is for the SmartBoards to be available to all of the Town's Boards, Commissions, and Departments.

b. BOE

BOE (Board of Education) Liaison Griggs provided a summary of the BOE's June Regular Meeting. Board Member Casciano recommended she indicate the date and author of the report, for the record.

Class Size Policy (Clerk Collins) – The class sizes indicated in the Teachers' Contract assumes that all of the students are agreeable. The Policy may be adjusted, as necessary. The revised Policy includes both a minimum and a maximum number of students for each age/grade group. The resulting number of students in one classroom is dependent upon the types of students and the physical size of the classroom. It is unknown whether the numbers were reduced from the previous policy. Its lack of correspondence with the Teachers' Contract was stated.

9. UNSUNG HERO NOMINATION

Nominations for the Unsung Heroes, recognizing those who have provided exceptional volunteer services to the Town, are being accepted. One may nominate more than one individual and the nominee(s) need not be a resident. Past recipients may not be nominated. The deadline for

nominations is July 31; a banquet to honor the recipients will be held in November. First Selectman Chmielewski provided a brief background of the Unsung Heroes, clarifying that nominations may be made by either an individual, a board, a commission, or an organization.

OTHER BUSINESS

FY2023/24 Budget Preparations

Board Member Bourgeois volunteered to draft a communication to request:

- A full inventory of the Town's infrastructure, including all equipment, facilities, vehicles
- Department budget updates/status reports (Clerk Collins)

She would also like to organize a Planning Session to provide training regarding the budget process, including a timeline of deadlines and best practices. The communication will be sent in September in preparation for the next budget season.

Approved/Unapproved Minutes

Extensive discussion ensued regarding the posting of Unapproved Minutes. Clerk Collins will inquire with the Town Clerk regarding the possibility of posting Minutes that are noted as "Unapproved" or "Draft" for clarity.

School Safety and Security

Clerk Collins expressed his support for an SRO (School Resource Officer) Program. Such Officers not only serve as an early warning system, but also become familiar with the children. He looks forward to the BOE's discussions regarding the matter. Board Member Rucci also looks forward to the BOE's discussions and other possible support mechanisms, including nurses and counselors, that could be coupled with the Program. Board Member Griggs stated the importance of recognizing the confidentiality of any security information.

First Selectman Chmielewski stated that he has expressed the Town's support for instituting safety and security measures with the Superintendent, BOE, and BOE Chairman. He concurred with Clerk Collins and shared an experience he once had as a School Resource Officer and D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Officer in New London to deflect a potential incident. Once finalized, he aims to share the updated Plan that the Town's Safety and Emergency Team, in partnership with the BOE, has devised to ensure the safety of the students and staff.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of engaging in a multi-board retreat. A working group comprised of select members of both Boards that would not be subject to FOI (Freedom of Information) Act requirements has proved most productive.

OLD BUSINESS: *none*

ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C: Bourgeois/Collins, to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by: Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem