

**TOWN OF SALEM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2019 – 7:00 P.M.  
SALEM TOWN OFFICE BUILDING**

**PRESENT**

Kevin's Lyden  
Edward Chmielewski, Jr.  
David Kennedy  
Hugh McKenney

**ABSENT**

Ron LaBonte

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – March 5, 2019, Special Meeting.

**M/S/C: McKenney/Chmielewski, to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2019, with the following amendment:**

**Page 3, Line 8:**

**...subsequent development would be a not only benefit the town's...**

**Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

**3. CORRESPONDENCE/PUBLIC COMMENTS** – *none*

- A. Letter from Salem Historical Society Member William Schultz regarding the possibility of inviting Connecticut State Archaeologist Dr. Brian Jones and members of the Friends of the Office of State Archaeology to excavate the Harris House foundation, located along the Multi-Purpose Path.

First Selectman Lyden reported that he has referred the letter to Zoning Officer Matt Allen to obtain the necessary information, including the exact location of the excavation site, to determine/deny and approve the request. Selectman Chmielewski also requested photographs of the area and Selectman McKenney expressed his interest in the project and willingness to help.

**4. AGENDA:**

**A. SustainableCT Presentation** (*see file copy*)

SustainableCT Executive Director Lynn Stoddard thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and provided a brief presentation regarding SustainableCT, which is run by the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University. Funded by philanthropic organizations, SustainabilityCT is a program created to inspire, support and recognize sustainability by CT towns. The organization defines sustainability in broad terms; the program includes three main parts:

Roadmap of Actions – to help towns navigate how to become more sustainable and achieve a certain amount of points leading to certification. Credit and recognition may be earned for items that have already been completed.

Tools & Resources – designed to help each town achieve their goal(s)

Certification – achieved through the accumulation of points by completing the actions

Launched in 2018 in connection with the CT Conference of Municipalities (CCM), the program currently includes 78 registered towns (over 45% of the State). During their first year, 22 towns have received certifications — exceeding their expectations. Additional information, including a listing of webinars, workshops, and trainings, is available on their website. In late May, college and university interns will be working in each of the CCOGs (CT Council of Governments) to aid the towns of each region. Towns may register to be part of the program by passing a resolution and creating a committee. Project funding may be available in the near future.

First Selectman Lyden expressed his support of the program, which initially came to his attention through the SCCOG (Southeastern CT Council of Governments) and contains a very useful template of elements – much of which is included in and has been implemented through the town's POCD (Plan of Conservation and Development). In an effort to work towards sustainability, he has been investigating the possibility of organizing a community composting program at the Transfer Station and/or encouraging residents to compost, which would not only save them money by minimizing the purchase of trash bags, but also save the town funds by reducing the amount of tonnage charged for household garbage. He stated that the Board will review the information and expressed his preference for working with the current boards and commissions members to populate the committee. Selectman McKenney, who regularly composts, also expressed his support. Having visited their website, he felt that the program, which could be tied in with the town's POCD, includes a number of doable action items. He also expressed his interest and willingness to serve on the committee when it is formed and suggested that the Town Planner head the committee. He also felt that the town should review the issue of resiliency to institute preventative measures and plan for the future. Selectman Chmielewski, an Eastern Connecticut State University alumnus, thanked her for her presentation and also expressed his willingness to help the organization.

Executive Director Stoddard thanked the Board and will be sending a follow-up e-mail regarding their upcoming workshops and regional training sessions.

**B. Set Public Hearing for potential sale of 12.124 acre portion of town-owned land at 89 Norwich Road** (*discussion and action*)

First Selectman Lyden reported that he attended the recent Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to present the proposal for the potential sale of town-owned property for the purpose of constructing an age-restricted development.

**M/S/C: McKenney/Chmielewski, to set the Public Hearing date of Wednesday, April 17, 2019, 7:00 p.m., at Salem Town Hall, Room 1, 270 Hartford Road, to consider the potential sale of the 12.124 acre portion of town-owned property located at 89 Norwich Road. Discussion: Selectman McKenney stated his support of the sale, but questioned the appraisal price of the property. First Selectman Lyden stated that a current appraisal by a certified, licensed appraiser will be presented at the Public Hearing. Following the Public Hearing, the item will be returned to the Board of Selectman and Town Meeting may be scheduled. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

- C. Set Transfer Station Spring Amnesty Dates for May 18, 19 and 22** *(discussion and action)*  
Residents may bring their bulky items to the Transfer Station for free disposal on Amnesty Days, which are held in October and May of each year. Electronics, mattresses, and metal may be brought to the Transfer Station any day, free of charge.

**M/S/C: McKenney/Kennedy, to set the Transfer Station Spring Amnesty Dates for Saturday, May 18; Sunday, May 19, and; Wednesday, May 22, 2019. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

- D. Set Annual Town Meeting for Wednesday, May 1, 2019, 7:00 p.m., at Salem School, 200 Hartford Road, Salem, CT** *(discussion and action)*

**M/S/C: McKenney/Chmielewski, to set the date of Wednesday, May 1, 2019, 7:00 p.m., at Salem School, 200 Hartford Road, for the Annual Town Meeting. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

- E. Tax Collector Refunds**

**M/S/C: Kennedy/Chmielewski, 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 \$436.75 (four hundred thirty-six dollars and seventy-five cents) on the 2nd day of April 2019. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

## **6. REPORTS:**

### **A. FIRST SELECTMAN**

Faced with another difficult year, Board of Finance Chairman Skip Dickson and the Board of Finance Members have done a fine job determining the FY2019/20 budget. The Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, April 10, 7:00 p.m., at Salem School when the budget can be adjusted by the Board of Finance at their regular meeting the following evening. The budget will, then, go to a Town Meeting, at which time the budget can only be reduced or moved forward, as presented. The proposed budget will be posted online and available at the Town Clerk's office.

A letter has been sent to all Emergency Responders directing them to Fire Marshal Don Bourdeau and Deputy Fire Marshals John Cunningham, and/or Mike Bednarz for all

questions, requests, concerns, comments, and required paperwork. Together, the three individuals have over 100 years of experience and will be working together to handle all of the emergency-related needs of the town; they will be the supervising authority for all paid emergency responders and will be available to the Volunteer Chiefs for consultations. Selectman Chmielewski, impressed with their experience, expressed the importance of providing their emergency responders with positive leadership and additional support.

Though they are expecting a decrease in revenues, the Uncas Health District voted not to increase their fees for participating towns. The town of Preston is considering joining the Uncas Health District.

The First Selectman recently met with Lt. Marc Petruzzi, the newly appointed Commanding Officer for the CT State Police Troop K, and commented on the good working relationship the town currently has with the officers. Selectman Chmielewski commented on the sense of ownership and ability for the troopers to serve the town when the regular troopers are unavailable.

Approximately 30 seniors enjoyed a recent luncheon at *Two Brothers Restaurant*. He expressed his appreciation to Senior Liaison Pam Henry and the restaurant for hosting a very successful program in which members are invited to a *prix fixe* luncheon twice a month.

The proposed flat roof mounting solar system for the school was briefly discussed. Though a strong proponent for solar, First Selectman Lyden reported that Facilities Coordinator/Public Works Director Don Bourdeau is in the process of obtaining a roof assessment in an effort to ensure that the installation of the solar panels would not pose any problems in the future. The solar panels are estimated to save the town approximately \$20,000.00 in the first year and \$350,000.00 over a 25-year span. Concerns include the warranty agreement and the history and condition of the roof which could preclude the town from saving any money due to the cost of de-installing and re-installing the solar panels to repair any issues that might arise. Having served on the Board of Education for nearly 12 years and a supporter of solar, Selectman Chmielewski agreed, stating that the roof has and will always have a propensity towards leakage and emphasized the importance of doing their due diligence to ensure that the panels would be cost effective. Selectman McKenney stated that the company, Greenskies Renewable Energy, stated that they would be responsible for the removal of the snow in the case of heavy snow. He also plans to speak with other towns and schools who have installed solar panels for their thoughts and experiences and will be joining the inspectors as they inspect the roof to gain a better understanding of its health.

#### **B. BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Selectman Chmielewski invited everyone to conduct an online search for salemct200 to view the Bicentennial website and like them on Facebook. The structural integrity of the roof of the old library and its ability to sustain the weight of the hundred year old cupola is currently being reviewed by the engineer. Selectman Kennedy has engaged the help of a very experienced coppersmith who will review the ceiling and provide an estimate for the needed repairs.

Thanks to the First Selectman's leadership, the cover/inside cover pages of the Bicentennial Booklet have been sent to the printer and the interior pages will be sent next week. Letters of congratulations have been received from Governor Ned Lamont, Senator Paul Formica, and Representative Holly Cheeseman for inclusion in the Bicentennial Booklet, which will be delivered around May 1. The First Selectman reviewed the financial process and town procedures with the Committee at their recent meeting. Selectman Kennedy reported that the time capsule will be completed and on view at this year's Memorial Day Parade. A presentation was provided to the Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company and an update to the Salem Seniors at their recent meeting where they also celebrated the First Selectman's birthday. Selectman McKenney proposed the possibility of replacing the tree prior to the closing ceremony at the annual Tree Lighting event.

Selectman Chmielewski congratulated fellow Selectmen McKenney and LaBonte for being selected by the Democratic and Republican Town Committees to serve on the Unsung Heroes Committee. In response to Selectman Chmielewski's proposal regarding the possibility of announcing and celebrating their next Unsung Hero(es) as part of their Heritage Day event, Selectman McKenney felt that the Committee would not be able to re-organize itself and complete the process within the given time frame.

#### **C. BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Selectman McKenney reported that the school's technology staff provided a presentation regarding the technology program and commended them for creating a program that has brought the students' skills well ahead of the curve in technology in comparison to other schools. The BOE engaged in an extensive discussion regarding an accountability report which reflected a decrease in one of the grade's mathematics scores. The discussion revolved around determining the possible reasons and the steps that are being taken to improve their scores. The school currently has approximately \$39,000.00 or 0.39% of their budget in unencumbered funds and expects the number to drop to zero within the next two months due to significant increases in their special education needs. The Superintendent spoke with SCCOG regarding a regional sharing report. As previously mentioned, the Facilities Director is awaiting the receipt of a report on the assessment of the roof and clarified that the BOE strongly feels the need to move forward with the installation of a solar panels to help offset the significant planned cuts. First Selectman Lyden expressed his understanding of their desire and concern, but emphasized the need to do so properly so as to avoid any costly future issues.

In light of their recent unexpected increase in special education costs, the BOE, whose proposed FY2019/20 budget increase of \$190,000.00 was cut by \$90,000.00 by the Board of Finance, is concerned with their budget. The BOE is in the process of investigating their options after rejecting the renewal of their five-year bus contract, which included a 12% increase, after being negotiated down from 28%. A number of cuts were made throughout their budget, including a decrease to the salary increases for the Superintendent and Administrators and requiring students to pay-to-play for all after school sports activities.

**D. BOARD OF FINANCE**

The First Selectman reported that, as previously stated, the Public Hearing regarding the FY2019/20 budget will be held on Wednesday, April 10, 7:00 p.m. at Salem Town Hall. Copies of the budget are available online at salemct.gov and at the Town Clerk's office. He, along with the members of the Board of Finance, will be present to answer any questions.

**E. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Selectman Kennedy reported that the representatives from the Eastern Connecticut Association of Realtors Chief Executive Officer and Southeastern Connecticut Housing Alliance (SECHA) under SCCOG, provided a brief presentation to the Commission regarding the town's housing assessment needs. It is estimated that 40% of the region's population is in need of affordable housing and the town's aging population is increasing more rapidly than that of other towns in the region. After discussing the First Selectman's presentation regarding the proposed sale of 1.124 acres of town property for the purpose of constructing an age-restricted development, the Commission unanimously voted to provide a favorable §8-24 review. The Commission also continued their discussion regarding the Riparian Corridor Overlay Zone (RCOZ) regulation.

**F. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)**

Selectman Chmielewski reported that, thanks to the First Selectman's guidance, the EDC's Business Directory is in the process of being finalized. The Commissioners have agreed to expand their outreach from the town's center to other business owners. First Selectman Lyden commended all of the past and present Commissioners for their efforts in bringing the Business Directory to fruition.

**G. LIBRARY**

First Selectman Lyden has been researching the prices for possible counters to help ensure that the library is staffed appropriately and in accordance to its ebbs and flows as well as security cameras to help the staff and visitors feel more secure. In lieu of Selectman LaBonte who had a family emergency and sent his regrets, Selectman Chmielewski reported that Selectman LaBonte continues to be impressed by the services provided by the library and is in support of both the counter and the cameras to improve their service and security.

**H. MILITARY LIASION**

Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), in conjunction with the town, are continuing to plan the parade. Retired Air Force E-9 Selectman LaBonte will be serving as the Parade's Grand Marshal and will be providing a speech at the ceremony.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**M/S/C: Kennedy/Chmielewski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

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