

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021, 7:00 P.M.
MEETING ROOM 1, SALEM TOWN HALL**

PRESENT

Kevin Lyden
Edward Chmielewski, Jr.
Ron LaBonte
Hugh McKenney
Terri Salas

ABSENT

none

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Lyden called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** with a moment of silence for the recent passing of long-time resident and active member of the community Carole Eckhart.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. **Tuesday, February 2, 2021 Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting**

M/S/C: Chmielewski/LaBonte, to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, February 2, 2021, with the following amendments:

 - 4(D) **Tax Collector Refunds** (*Action Item*)

M/S/C: Chmielewski/McKenney, to direct the Town Treasurer to issue refunds,...Voice vote, ~~3-0~~ 4-0, all in favor.
 6. **ADJOURNMENT**

M/S/C: LaBonte/Chmielewski, to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, ~~3-0~~ 4-0, all in favor.
Meeting adjourned.

Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.
 - B. **Wednesday, February 24, 2021 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting**

M/S/C: McKenney/LaBonte, to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, February 24, 2021. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.
4. **CORRESPONDENCE/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

E-mail public comment to SelectmenPublicComment@salemct.gov prior to 7:10 p.m.

No comments were received via e-mail or the white drop box located in front of Town Hall.

First Selectman Lyden recited the letter of resignation received from Selectwoman Salas, effective March 2, 2021, who will be relocating to be closer to family. She thanked the

residents of Salem for their support and offered her heartfelt appreciation to the First Selectman and her fellow Selectmen with whom she has had the honor to serve.

The Selectmen thanked her and presented her with a small token of their appreciation.

5. AGENDA:

A. Set Amnesty Dates for May 12, 15, and 16, 2021

M/S/R: LaBonte/Salas, to set the Transfer Station Spring Amnesty Dates for Saturday, May 12; Sunday, May 15, and; Wednesday, May 16, 2021.

Discussion: First Selectman Lyden reminded everyone that Amnesty Days are scheduled annually between Mother's Day and Memorial Day, beginning on a Saturday and ending on a Wednesday. Due to an error on the dates, the motion was rescinded and amended as follows:

M/S/C: LaBonte/Salas, to set the Transfer Station Spring Amnesty Dates for Saturday, May 15; Sunday, May 16, and; Wednesday, May 19, 2021.

Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

B. Updated from Emergency Services Administrator Mike Bednarz

Selectman and Emergency Services Liaison Chmielewski commended Emergency Services Director Mike Bednarz and Assistant Director Rick Martin who have been doing a phenomenal job. They continue to meet with the Gardner Lake and Salem Volunteer Fire Company Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs and the town's Finance Specialist/ Human Resources Administrator to discuss their logistics, operations, and services. They aim to not only maintain, but also enhance their services to the town and its residents and, above all, ensure their safety. To this end, the team now conducts an After-Action Review following an incident to discuss how it was handled and how they can further enhance and improve their services.

Emergency Services Director Bednarz reported that there were 37 total calls for service, including two (2) significant structure fires in the month of February. An individual was tentatively hired for the full-time position and is expected to begin training this month. Emergency Services Assistant Director Martin, with the help of current full-time EMT/Maintainer Ryan Teixeira, is in the process of developing the training syllabus and program. They are also in the process of finalizing the uniforms for the emergency personnel and further improving the Emergency Services Team. He thanked the Selectmen for their continued support and, while they have been experiencing a very difficult period in time, he looks forward to moving forward and having everyone begin engaging in activities together again.

Selectman McKenney commended and expressed his appreciation to the Emergency Services and Public Works Departments on behalf of a resident who contacted them and received their help during the recent snowstorm.

First Selectman Lyden added that all of the calls for service are tracked in terms of the origination of the calls (in-town vs. out-of-town) and types of calls. In the past, the Fire Companies were able to hire volunteers, who were already in possession of the necessary gear and equipment, to fill their full-time positions. This is no longer the case. All of the uniforms and necessary gear and equipment for the paid emergency personnel is currently paid for by the town.

The Selectmen expressed their appreciation to Emergency Services Director Bednarz for his hard work and efforts.

C. COVID-19 Update

First Selectman Lyden reported that, as of last week, the town has had 207 COVID-19-positive cases and 3 COVID-19-related deaths. Educators, Child Care Providers, and individuals who are 55 to 64 years of age may now receive vaccinations. Educators are currently receiving priority at various locations throughout the State.

D. Tax Collector Refunds

M/S/C: Salas/LaBonte, 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 \$5,429.94 (five thousand four hundred twenty-nine dollars and ninety-four cents) on the 2nd day of March 2021. Discussion: Selectman McKenney noted that *Horde* Pond Road should be corrected to *Horse* Pond Road. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

5. REPORTS:

A. FIRST SELECTMAN

First Selectman Lyden reported that the Resident State Troopers had 124 calls for service in February 2021.

With the pandemic subsiding, an announcement seeking volunteers to serve on the town's various boards, commissions, and organizations was recently e-blasted to those who have registered through the town to receive news and announcements. Volunteers need not be subject matter experts. He encouraged everyone to get involved and become part of the solution. Selectwoman Salas added that the members of the boards, commissions, and organizations are also very supportive.

He recently participated in a conference call with Senator Matt Blumenthal and DEEP (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) Commissioner Katie Dykes regarding solid waste management. The town is currently a member of Sustainable CT. As requested by the residents, the town will be partnering with *Willimantic Waste* to place a water-tight dumpster at the Transfer Station in which compostable waste can be deposited. The town currently pays \$90.00/ton of garbage and \$40.00/ton for recyclables. It is estimated that 20% of the garbage that is deposited in the bins is comprised of organic

materials. Compost bins and containers will continue to be available for purchase at Town Hall. The town's Wetlands Officer has approved the placement of the bin as its contents will be contained and any potential runoff could be controlled.

He also met with Salem Youth Baseball League President David Donat and Recreation Chairman Alan Maziarz regarding the League's Spring Baseball and Softball Season. The League will observe all of the necessary and required safety protocols.

B. BOARD OF EDUCATION (BOE)

Selectman McKenney reported that the School's current expenditures for COVID-19 are approximately \$194,000.00; funds have been set aside for any additional expenses that might arise. The BOE currently has 2.7% unencumbered funds, which is not unusual. The Ed Specs for the Oil tank removal/replacement were approved. The BOE will be presenting their budget for FY2021/22 to the Board of Finance this week; the proposed budget will include an approximately 4.7% increase. They continue working on the administrative staff structure. East Lyme High School students will be returning to full-time in-person school by the end of March.

First Selectman Lyden added that he had correspondence with BOE Business Manager Gadaree regarding the oil tank removal and replacement and provided her with the materials required to apply for reimbursement with the State. He expressed his availability should she require any additional information.

Selectman Chmielewski expressed his appreciation to the BOE for engaging the CABE (Connecticut Association of Boards of Education) Consultants, who asked very thoughtful questions and appear to be doing their due diligence. He requested a copy of the final report, once it is completed.

C. BOARD OF FINANCE

First Selectman Lyden reported that the Board of Finance will be reviewing the budget for the BOE this Thursday. The town's Capital Plan and budget for most of the town departments have been reviewed.

E. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Selectwoman Salas reported that she was unable to attend their recent meetings; Selectman Chmielewski will be the Commission's Liaison in her stead.

F. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)

Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Commission continues to discuss the improvements that were made to 1 New London Plaza; the 2021/22 Business Directory; the status of the construction of the recently approved Age-Restricted Development, and; their input for the Plan of Conservation and Development, which Commissioner Fontneau, who is also a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission, is spearheading. Commissioner Shelley is finalizing an e-survey for businesses. The Commission continues

to visit and support the town's businesses, who have expressed their eagerness to fully open their doors.

G. LIBRARY

Selectman LaBonte reported that the Library will continue offering curbside pick-up. The Library Board discussed their excitement for the new furniture that was recently purchased and the near completion of its HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) system, and their FY2021/22 budget. The Community Foundation Scholarship is now available and will be posted on their webpage on the town website. They are hoping to host a Book Sale in conjunction with the Applefest event. The Library Board will be holding their next meeting on Tuesday, March 9.

H. MILITARY LIAISON

Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Salem VFW is making plans to host an in-person Memorial Day parade as well as a contingency plan for a mobile parade.

Qualified veterans may contact the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs to have the American Flag printed on their Driver's license and/or apply for a burial plot for themselves and their spouses at the State Veterans Cemetery, free of charge. He relayed his personal experience, stating that he received approval within two weeks of submitting his application for both of those items. He looks forward to the inclusion of the American Flag the next time he renews his license to signify his veteran status.

6. ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C: Salas/LaBonte, to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem