

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2021, 7:00 P.M.  
MEETING ROOM 1, SALEM TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT**

Kevin Lyden  
Edward Chmielewski, Jr.  
Ron LaBonte  
Hugh McKenney

**ABSENT**

*none*

**CALL TO ORDER**

First Selectman Lyden called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Tuesday, March 2, 2021 Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting**

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

**Page 2, Item 5:**

**Discussion: First Selectman Lyden reminded everyone that Amnesty Days are scheduled ~~annually~~ *twice a year* ...**

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

**B. Wednesday, March 4, 2021 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting**

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

**4. CORRESPONDENCE/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*E-mail public comment to [SelectmenPublicComment@salemct.gov](mailto: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.

On behalf of the Board, First Selectman Lyden wished everyone a happy season, spending time outdoors, after a long and challenging winter. He reported that he and his wife have been fortunate enough to enjoy the company of their oldest son, James, and his family who recently relocated from the West Coast.

The town will also be celebrating Earth Day with a Clean-Up Day on Saturday, April 24 between 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. He encouraged everyone to come to Town Hall and pick up a free Salem trash bag(s), select a town road, and enter a raffle for a chance to win a

Soilsaver™ Compost Bin for the backyard or a Countertop Compost Pail for the kitchen. For safety purposes, the town is asking that only adults take part in the event. After collecting the garbage, the trash bag(s) may be left on the side of the road to be picked up by one of the town's Public Works employees.

**5. AGENDA:**

**A. Appoint Susan Sullivan to the Board of Selectmen**

First Selectman Lyden provided a brief background of Susan Sullivan, a 30-year resident of the town. A Registered Nurse, Ms. Sullivan recently retired from her 28-year position as the Medical Program Director at Waterford Country School, which cares for the special needs of children and families. She currently works with Cornell University to enhance best practices for working with high-risk youth and families and HELP Mission International, Inc., which supports Haitian churches and orphanages and has traveled to Haiti several times for relief work. She also penned a children's book based on a true story; 100% of the proceeds are utilized to purchase medical supplies.

**M/S/C: Lyden/Chmieliewski, to nominate and appoint Susan Sullivan to the Board of Selectmen with a term to expire on November 2, 2021.**

**Discussion: First Selectman Lyden felt that Ms. Sullivan would be a huge asset to the Board. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

Ms. Sullivan was welcomed to the Board.

**B. Extension of the State of Emergency for the Town of Salem, CT until May 20, 2021**

**M/S/C: McKenney/LaBonte, to extend the Declaration of the State of Emergency for the Town of Salem, Connecticut to May 20, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.**

**Discussion: The current State of Emergency expires on April 15; the extension will align with the State's State of Emergency. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

**C. COVID-19 Update**

First Selectman Lyden reported that the Uncas Health District's most recent weekly report indicates that the Town of Salem has had a total of 229 COVID-19-positive cases and 3 COVID-19-related deaths, to date. Everyone is encouraged to continue practicing proper safety protocols as some areas are continuing to experience higher positive cases. The Salem HealthMart Pharmacy is now offering the Johnson & Johnson (one dose) vaccination. Senior Liaison Pamela Henry has coordinated vaccination appointments for many of the town's seniors. Both the Uncas and Ledge Light Health Districts are also available to aid those who are at-risk or would like to schedule an appointment, but do not have the means to do so.

The town is expected to receive \$403,126.00 through the American Rescue Plan. The funds must be expended by December 2024 for necessary sewer, water, or broadband

infrastructure improvements. Because of the vague nature of the allowable expenditures, the Connecticut Council of Municipalities (CCM) has requested clarification from U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen. The Board of Education is expected to receive \$181,000.00 for expenses related to learning loss, evidence-based summer and after-school programs, the hiring and retaining of teachers or other personnel, purchasing of computers, supporting underserved students, cleaning or sanitation supplies, or other equipment necessary to maintain the continuity of providing educational services. Selectman McKenney expressed his hopes to utilize the Connecticut Council of Governments' resources to determine how other municipalities will be utilizing the funds.

The town's Virtual Budget Public Hearing will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, April 7, at 7:00 p.m. and will be followed by the Board of Finance's Regular Meeting on Thursday, April 8. The Annual Town Meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, May 5, will include the following questions:

- 1) Do you accept the FY2021/22 Capital Plan?
- 2) Do you approve to adjourn to referendum to vote for the funding of the School HVAC/Roof Repair for \$1,050,000.00 with an anticipated reimbursement for \$500,000.00?
- 3) Do you approve to adjourn to referendum to vote on the Annual Town Budget?

Because the Town Meeting will be held virtually, a roll call vote will be conducted.

Individuals who own \$1,000.00 of taxable property in the Town of Salem are eligible to vote. The Referendum will be held in-person on Wednesday, May 12, from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., at Town Hall. The details of the Governor's Executive Order No. 10E, which was issued this afternoon, regarding absentee voting will be investigated.

The Town Budget will be available on the town website, outside of Town Hall, and in the Town Clerk's office over the coming days.

#### **D. Tax Collector Refunds**

**M/S/C: McKenney/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 \$7,047.25 (seven thousand forty-seven dollars and twenty-five cents) on the 2nd day of March 2021.**

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

### **5. REPORTS:**

#### **A. FIRST SELECTMAN**

First Selectman Lyden congratulated Salem Resident State Trooper Chris Pariseau who has been awarded a new assignment at the CT State Police Meriden Complex. He expressed the town's appreciation of Trooper Pariseau's dedication and commitment to

the town, its businesses, and residents with whom he has built positive relationships and wished him the best.

The Friends of The Salem Free Public Library will be hosting its Annual Plant Sale, which is comprised of, primarily, locally-grown trees, shrubs, perennials, vegetables, herbs, annuals, and houseplants on:

Thursday, May 6, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Friday, May 7, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 8, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Revaluation for the 2021 Grand List has begun. Vision Government Solutions representative Brandon Fromme, who drives a grey 2007 Mercury Montego, will be conducting door-to-door inspections, which may be comprised of requesting interior information at the door and/or exterior inspections, including measurements. The vehicle will have a Salem Assessor's Office magnetic sticker. While the ten-year revaluation normally conducts in-house inspections, they will not be doing so this year due to the pandemic.

#### **B. BOARD OF EDUCATION (BOE)**

Selectman McKenney reported that the high school students are now back in school full-time and discussions regarding the possibility of hosting a prom have begun. The BOE currently has approximately 1.5% unencumbered funds and approximately \$195,000.00 has been expended, to date, for COVID-19 mitigation costs. The BOE cut its initially proposed budget for FY2021/22, per the Board of Finance. The recommendations provided by the Consultants regarding the school administrative structure are now available on the school website. The BOE has not yet posted the Superintendent position.

First Selectman Lyden reported that the Town of Marlborough, which has approximately 450 students, is also in the process of hiring a 0.45 Superintendent and has received 17 applications for the position.

#### **C. BOARD OF FINANCE**

First Selectman Lyden reported that the Board of Finance will be holding a Virtual Budget Public Hearing on Wednesday, April 7, at 7:00 p.m. Residents are encouraged to voice their public comments via e-mail, the white drop box located at Town Hall, or at the meeting.

#### **D. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Recently appointed Selectwoman Sullivan reported that the Commission has held public hearings regarding applications received from Salem Valley Farms Ice Cream, Syman Says Farms, and a proposed re-subdivision. The Commission is currently working on updating the town's Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) and the

survey will be distributed to the residents in the coming days. One of their biggest discussions has included the legislation's recently proposed Affordable Housing Bills, for which the Commission is planning to draft a letter expressing their position and requesting that the term be redefined.

First Selectman Lyden noted that, because the town does not have public water or sewer, the establishment of any type of development is very limited and cost-prohibitive for most developers. While most of the condominium units located on Horse Pond Road could be considered affordable, they do not meet the State's definition of affordable housing. Selectman Chmielewski added that the Economic Development Commission has also been discussing the proposed unfunded mandates that would penalize those towns that do not meet the 10% affordable housing threshold and the possibility of receiving credit for meeting and/or exceeding the State's goal of open space. Recently appointed Selectwoman Sullivan stated that the town currently has 2% affordable housing, which includes properties that are either deed-restricted or rented to individuals with a voucher. Unfortunately, vouchers have not been distributed for the past 12 years, making it highly unlikely for the town to ever meet the 10% threshold. In addition, developers would not seek to develop affordable housing units in a town such as Salem, which not only lacks public sewer/water, but also lacks any transportation or other necessary amenities.

The First Selectman also stated the importance of ensuring that the responses received for the POCD survey derive from Salem residents. Selectman McKenney stated the importance of the POCD Survey addressing land use issues, including affordable housing.

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

Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Commission is continuing to work on its contribution to the town's POCD. The Age-Restricted Development on Route 82 is currently in process and he is hoping to arrange for a tour of the property for the Salem Seniors in the near future. Commissioner Steven Shelley has been busy reaching out to the community and updating the directory. He encouraged everyone to support the town's local businesses who continue to struggle.

#### **G. LIBRARY**

Selectman LaBonte reported that the Board was very pleased with the presence of Friends of the Library Member Carl Nawrocki at their last meeting. The Library is very excited about the remodeling of the teen room and is looking forward to inviting the public back into the Library.

First Selectmen Lyden reported that the Library's closure due to the pandemic has been productive with the replacement of the HVAC system, installation of a new telephone system, partial roof replacement, and the remodeling of the teen room – all of which

would have been otherwise challenging. Two of the Library staff over the last year tested positive for the coronavirus and most of the staff have received, at least, their first vaccination. He hopes to open the Library after all of the employees have received both vaccination shots. Meetings will not be held in the Library, per Sector Rules. Groups are encouraged to use the Pavilion for their meetings for the time being.

#### **H. MILITARY LIAISON**

Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Salem VFW is continuing to plan the town's annual Memorial Day parade. Should the traditional annual parade not be possible, a parade throughout the town, as was held the previous year, will be conducted. First Selectman Lyden reported that he has requested the closure of the road; should the parade take place, he imagines an event primarily concentrating on the service and an abbreviated parade.

#### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

**M/S/C: McKenney/Chmielewski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

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