

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2022, 7:00 PM
SALEM TOWN HALL – CONFERENCE ROOM 1**

**The minutes submitted below have been filed in accordance with
Section 1-225 of the CT General Statutes. They are subject to
final approval with or without amendments by a vote of the Board of Selectmen.
Approval and any such amendments will be detailed in subsequent minutes.**

PRESENT

Edward Chmielewski, Jr.
Thomas (TJ) Butcher
Kevin Lyden
Pam Munro

ABSENT

Ron LaBonte

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Chmielewski called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a. Tuesday, November 1, 2022 Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting

**M/S/C: Lyden/Butcher, to approve the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting
Minutes for Tuesday, November 1, 2022. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0,
all in favor.**

3. CORRESPONDENCE / PUBLIC COMMENTS

Correspondence

A copy of a letter from Atty. Thomas J. Riley, Tobin, Carberry, O'Malley, Riley & Selinger, P.C., regarding the sexual harassment of Lisa Jablonski was read into the record by Selectman Butcher.

Public Comments

Horace Lindo, 542 Flanders Road, Oakdale, Lifetime Member and former President of the Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company (GLVFCO), and former Member of the Board of Finance, distributed an unsigned letter from GLVFCO Chief Pete Silva. The signed letter will be mailed to the Board via certified mail. The letter, which was approved by the GLVFCO Board of Directors, requests clarification regarding whether the paid Firefighter/EMTs provide R1 service, which provides basic life support at the scene, or R2 service, which provides a higher level of medical care at the scene and transports patients to the hospital. He stated his ultimate desire to bring the Town and Fire Company together and the

importance of the ambulance service to the residents. He wished to ensure that the service is maintained as a viable service to the Town of Salem.

First Selectman Chmielewski thanked Mr. Lindo for their recent conversation and his service as a lifetime member of the GLVFCO and the military. He stated that a monthly meeting with the Fire Chiefs from both Departments was established and the contact information for himself, Selectman Liaison LaBonte, and Emergency Management Director/Emergency Services Coordinator Mike Bednarz was provided to both Fire Chiefs with an invitation to communicate with them 24/7. However, neither the GLVFCO Chief nor Deputy Chief has attended the monthly meetings nor communicated with them in the past four (4) years. He understands the loss of volunteers in every aspect, from the Lions Club to the Fire Departments, but stated the importance of communication between the commanding officers and the Town.

Lindo stated that the GLVFCO is run by the Board of Directors, not the Chief. The Chief, he reported, recently acquired a new position as a paid firefighter resulting in scheduling difficulties. The Fire Department recently experienced leadership changes and it is taking time for the new leadership to acclimate to their positions. He concurred with the importance of communication and is striving to encourage the Fire Company to cooperate with the Town. He informed the Board that, to comply with the Town's requests, the members recently attended a Sexual Harassment class with a State-certified Instructor. Documentation will be provided to the Town, listing all of the steps that they have taken to comply with the Town's requests. While he and his wife are no longer members of the Board of Directors, they are maintaining their membership. The Fire Department has individuals who are interested in being involved, but efforts need to be made to bring the Town and the Fire Department together.

Selectman Lyden stated that it is the members of an organization that need to make the changes and adapt their practices. He added that the Town is currently in negotiation with the Fire Company regarding the lawsuit they introduced to the Town. While he commended the organization of which he and his family are former members, he stated that there was only so much the Boards of Selectmen and Finance could do.

Mr. Lindo concurred that the funds the Town and the Fire Company have expended on the lawsuit are ridiculous and expressed his honest feeling that the lawyers will not be able to solve their problems.

Selectwoman Munro applauded his efforts and understood his position. She felt that it would be prudent for the Fire Company to respond to the Town's requests should the Fire Company wish to continue receiving the Town's support, adding that the Town's budget is dependent upon their responses.

First Selectman Chmielewski expressed the Board's wholehearted endorsement and support for the Firefighters and 98% of the members who work hard to serve and protect the community. However, there are rules and regulations regarding sexual harassment, workplace violence, toxic work environment, and threatening behavior that must be followed. The leaders of the Town and Salem and Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Companies agreed early on that they could not survive without each other. In order to do so, they must communicate with each other and discuss and resolve any issues they might have. He explained the course of events that led to the third-party investigation. He noted the Fire Company's lack of communication within the Fire Company, its Board of Directors, and its membership as well as the Town. This lack of communication is evidenced by one of its Board of Directors members submitting a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) request for a letter from the Town addressed to them. He reiterated his support of the Fire Companies and the Town's wish to bring the issue to an end.

Selectman Butcher stated that the Boards of Selectmen and Finance have been and are open. He felt that the Fire Company has drifted away and changes need to be made on their end. He expressed his appreciation to Mr. Lindo for coming before the Board to express his willingness to work with both parties and resolve their issues. The fact that the Board has engaged in an extensive dialogue with him during the Public Comment portion of the meeting reflects the importance of the matter and their shared desire to resolve their differences and move forward for the betterment of the Town. Selectman Lyden concurred.

In conclusion, Mr. Lindo stated that the Fire Department could not continue to run without the Town's support and the Town cannot run the ambulance service without its volunteers. The Town and the Fire Company must work together. He thanked the Board for their time and stated that he plans to act as a conduit between the Town and the Fire Company and will do his best to resolve *all* of the issues.

First Selectman Chmielewski thanked Mr. Lindo for his service and his and his family's courage to step up to do the right thing for the right reasons for the Town of Salem.

Friends of the Library President Carl Nawrocki spoke with respect to the Friends' use of the Zemko Garage to sort and store used books. The Friends currently sell used books through the Book Cart located in the Library, at the Lions' Club Tag Sale, and their Annual Used Book Sale event at Salem School. Approximately \$8,000.00 has been raised through the sale of used books this year. The efficiency of sorting and organizing the books has markedly improved with the addition of the lights and power in the Garage and the Library Director's willingness to allow them to presort the books at the Library. He stated that the Zemko Garage is an ideal location for both the Lions' Club Tag Sale and the Annual Used Book Sale event. He has had several informal discussions with the First Selectman regarding the need for Emergency Services to expand their footprint and is aware of the Study that is being conducted. He expressed his concerns regarding their ability to continue using the Garage and requested that they be informed sooner than later regarding the need to vacate

the premises so that the volunteers do not continue to spend their time and energy sorting and storing the books for naught.

First Selectman Chmielewski thanked Friends of the Library President Nawrocki for attending the meeting and for his service to the Town. He confirmed that Emergency Services is planning to purchase and store a new trailer and other equipment, including medical supplies, in the Garage. The location of the building and its loading dock makes it convenient as a receiving and distribution point for emergency supplies. He noted that the Fire Marshal and Firefighters have viewed the interior of the building and expressed their concerns regarding the hazards of storing piles of boxes and books beside the equipment. He expressed his willingness to work with him to discuss alternative locations for the sorting and storage of the books.

Selectman Lyden stated that the Friends of the Library is a very important organization that hosts several community events. It is these community events that make Salem special. He added that the Town and Board support the Town's organizations and their endeavors. He stated the importance of working together and assured him that the Town will find space for the Friends to sort and store their books. Selectman Chmielewski concurred, commending the Friends and reiterating their support for the Friends.

Norm Rabe, Valley Drive, expressed his concerns regarding the use of the Zemko Garage. It was his understanding that when the Town purchased the property, spaces would be allotted for the Town's departments and organizations. He noted that no progress has been made to the Gift Shop, which the Lions' Club was informed they would no longer be able to utilize. He also cited the unused vehicle that is taking up valuable space in the Garage. He felt that there was a lack of planning, resulting in unreasonable demands.

4. AGENDA:

a. Appointments to School Roof Building Committee

- 1. Pam Munro**
- 2. Elby Burr**
- 3. Hugh McKenney**

M/S/C: Lyden/Butcher, to appoint Pam Munro, Elby Burr, and Hugh McKenney to the School Roof Building Committee. Discussion: Selectman Lyden stated that current members Tiffany Cunningham and LaVan Norwood will remain on the Committee. Selectwoman Munro questioned whether the remaining non-functioning Members should be officially removed from the Committee. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

M/S/C: Munro/Butcher, to remove Donald Bourdeau, Jr. and Joseph Onofrio from the School Roof Building Committee. Discussion: None. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

b. Review and endorse proposed ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Committee recommendations

M/S/C: Lyden/Butcher, to approve, endorse, and send the following proposed list of funding of the second tranche of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funds, as recommended by the ARPA Committee, to a Town Meeting:

Public Works Truck Lift	\$ 51,700.00
Recreational Facilities Upgrade	\$ 44,500.00
Salem Green Cemetery Upgrade	\$ 39,700.00
Salem Library/Friends Request	\$ 32,100.00
Town of Salem Security-Related Upgrades	\$ 33,500.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$ 201,500.00</u>

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

c. Schedule Special Town Meeting on Monday, December 19, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at Salem Town Hall, Conference Room One, to act on the ARPA Committee requests by a yes or no vote

M/S/C: Lyden/Munro, to set the date of Monday, December 19, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at Salem Town Hall, Conference Room 1, for a Special Town Meeting to act on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) expenditures, as recommended by the ARPA Committee and endorsed by the Board of Selectmen, by a yes or no vote. Discussion: Selectman Lyden stated that the Town Meeting would ensure their efforts to maintain transparency. If approved, \$400,000.00 would remain of the second tranche of ARPA Funding. The funds must be expended by December 31, 2024. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor

d. Authorize the First Selectman to purchase Public Works Over the Rail Mower that is listed on Capital Plan

M/S/C: Lyden/Munro, to authorize the First Selectman, per Salem Town Charter Section 5.05(A)(6) and 6.02(D)(7) to enter into a loan to purchase a new Public Works John Deere Model 6105E Series 4WD Tractor with Tiger Model BB-22 Mower in the principal amount of \$124,403.22 for a 2-year term at the currently prevailing interest rate; and

FURTHER RESOLVE that Ed Chmielewski, as First Selectman of the Town of Salem, Connecticut, is authorized to sign the P.O. (Purchase Order) and order the Tractor and Mower.

Discussion: Selectman Lyden stated that the item is in the FY2022/23 Capital Plan and the Resolution is a procedural formality. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

e. Authorization of the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Resolution

M/S/C: Butcher/Munro, to enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVE, that Edward Chmielewski, Jr., as First Selectman of the Town of Salem, Connecticut, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Salem, Connecticut, and to do and perform all acts and things which he deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

Discussion: Selectman Lyden stated that the Resolution is a routine resolution to accept a \$5,000.00 matching grant. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

f. Tax Collector's Refunds

M/S/C: Munro/Butcher, 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 \$647.07 (six hundred forty-seven dollars and seven cents) on this 6th day of December 2022. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

5. REPORTS:

a. FIRST SELECTMAN

A copy of the Town departments' updates was provided to the Board (*attached*). First Selectman Chmielewski commended the Town Hall, Library, and Public Works Staff who are doing an excellent job. He commented on the numerous activities hosted by the Salem Seniors, Recreation, and Salem Free Public Library, including the recent Annual Tree Lighting event and Library Anniversary event, featuring Harpist Debra Vinick.

b. EMERGENCY SERVICES – POLICE / FIRE

In lieu of Emergency Management Director/Emergency Services Coordinator Bednarz, First Selectman Chmielewski reported that they are in the process of establishing an Employee Assistance (Wellness) Program. Also in progress is the updated Emergency Services Study and an audit of the GLVFCO is also slated to begin.

c. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

First Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Town's updated Emergency Operations Plan has been approved and will be submitted to the State for approval before being

submitted to FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). Rick Martin and Christina Martin were thanked for their hard work.

This month's Public Service Announcement is about weather-related emergencies. Late seasonal winds have led to power outages throughout the Town. After speaking with one of the Eversource employees, he was informed that, due to the tree damage caused by the gypsy moths, they are expecting prolonged outages. In addition, residents are warned to expect possible rolling blackouts and are encouraged to purchase and install a generator for their home. Selectwoman Munro encouraged everyone to sign up to receive text and/or e-mail emergency notifications through the Town website.

The First Selectman and Emergency Management Director/Emergency Services Coordinator Bednarz will be meeting with the Salem School District Superintendent and his staff to discuss the School Emergency Plan that was submitted to the State.

d. BOARD OF FINANCE

The Board of Finance will be meeting this Thursday, December 8. The Departments' Capital requests for the FY2023/24 Budget have been received by the Finance Department. Board of Finance Member Cory Bourgeois conducted two (2) budget training sessions for Department Heads and Board/Commission Chairpersons. With the help of the recently purchased Smart Technology, the session included guidance regarding budget preparation and timelines. First Selectman Chmielewski commended the Board of Finance for their efforts to communicate, collaborate, and improve the budget process.

Selectman Lyden reported that, due to the delayed receipt of the East Lyme High School Reconciliation Report, the audit presentation will be provided to the Board of Finance in January. The Town has been assured that the audit will be completed and submitted in a timely manner.

e. BOARD OF EDUCATION (BOE)

In addition to meeting with the Superintendent of Schools and his staff to discuss the School Emergency Management Plan, a planned meeting between himself, the Emergency Management Team, and the BOE will be rescheduled.

Selectwoman Munro reported that the BOE adopted their Capital budget and approved the purchase of new copiers which will result in cost savings. The BOE Budget Committee will begin their discussions regarding the FY2023/24 Budget this week. The BOE is hoping to hold an Executive Session with the Town and the School to discuss the Emergency Services Plans in February 2023.

f. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

First Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Commission has held several Public Hearings for Applications and has received positive feedback for their meetings. Selectman Lyden added that, after six years of service, Town Planner Justin LaFountain

has moved on to a different position. He is confident that the new Town Planner, Nicole Haggerty, will also serve the Town well. He explained that the Town Planner is provided to the Town by the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG).

g. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The Economic Development Commission is continuing to network with the Town's businesses, including the new owners of Salem Plaza located at 1 New London Road who are continuing to improve the property. Advertisements promoting their retail spaces reflect some of their enhancements and improvements.

h. LIBRARY

First Selectman Chmielewski expressed his appreciation to and commended Library Director Shannon Henson for her leadership, eagerness to work on programs and collaborate with the Town's different departments and staff, willingness to learn, help, track, facilitate, and do whatever needs to be done. The Selectmen concurred. Selectwoman Munro added that the Library emanates a very welcoming atmosphere that derives from the top down.

First Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Children's section has re-opened and the Library recently experienced a leak, which has been repaired.

i. TVCCA (Thames Valley Council for Community Action)

Selectwoman Munro reported that TVCCA has offices in Colchester, Groton, and New London as well as Norwich. The organization offers a variety of resources, including food, fuel, counseling, and childcare. She encouraged everyone to visit their website (tvcca.org) and/or Facebook page (facebook.com/TVCCAcared) for information.

First Selectman Chmielewski added that the Town also has a Benevolent Fund which is run with the assistance of Selectman Lyden. Those wishing to contribute to the Fund may write a check to The Benevolent Fund. Residents in need are encouraged to contact the Town to receive confidential assistance.

The Town's Resident State Troopers will be accepting donations of new unwrapped gifts during their Annual Holiday Toy Drive on Saturday, December 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., in the Two Brothers' Restaurant parking lot (20 Hartford Road). Checks, Venmo, and Gift Card donations will also be accepted.

ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C: Butcher/Lyden, to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 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

Board of Selectman
Tuesday, December 6, 2022 Regular Meeting
First Selectman's Report – Department Updates

Finance Department– Lisa Jablonski

- Dept Head discussions balancing current Budgets and preparing for next year
- Employee/Dept Head discussions regarding Capital Budget and Operating Budget Procedures
- Budget preparations: New Dept Spreadsheets and Budget Book, letters to Depts
- *****Processed 171 Cks for \$222,147 for November
- AED ARPA Discussions/planning
- Communications with Auditors re: Draft & Presentation
- Discussions with Auditors re: Agreed Upon Procedures for GLVFC

Human Resources Department – Lisa Jablonski

- Discussions re: new hires, EAP planning, filed complaints
- Post and response for additional PT FF/EMT's

Public Works – Tony Gallicchio

- Painted Soccer fields
- Dragged fields
- Mowed fields
- Repaired 6 catch basins
- Top soiled and seeded Skyline
- Cleaned out and organized Zemko building
- Moved furniture at Library
- Replaced lights at Library
- Replaced/repared ceiling tiles at Library
- Picked up Payloader from WI Clark with Repairs
- Cut downed trees
- Painted cb cross marks
- Responded to 31 Maint. Requests
- Repaired Paint machine
- Welded #6 truck bed and painted
- Cleared leaves at Catch basins for 2 storms
- Responded to 6 “tree down” calls
- Removed grass and debris at PW parking lot and installed fabric and 2” stone
- Had 2 morning safety/tailgate meetings with crew
- 4 garbage runs
- Picked up catch basins at factory
- Replaced tarp and motor on PW 8
- Cleared leaves and did final seasonal mowing
- Put out curb stakes for plowing throughout the town
- Put lights on tree and decorations on buildings
- Had Safety meeting at town hall
- Had 4 tailgate meetings
- Replaced lights at Library 2

Board of Selectman
Tuesday, December 6, 2022 Regular Meeting
First Selectman's Report – Department Updates

Public Works -continued

- Cleared catch basins for 3 storms
- Got all equipment ready for snow season
- Winterized all seasonal equipment
- Start on Old Library renovation
- Replaced 2 windshields on Big dump trucks
- Repaired pot holes in town
- Reworked apron 100 Buckley

Salem Library Director - Shannon Henson

Building Maintenance:

- The locks in the library have all been updated to one key.
- We have been hosting a variety of groups within the community. There are 2 separate troops from the Girl Scouts which meet in our community room monthly, 2 separate groups of quilters bi-monthly, a book group, and the seniors meet weekly.

Events:

- Movie Matinee-Elvis-3 participants
- Book Group-7 participants
- Stamp making workshop-10 participants
- Thanksgiving storytime-8 participants

Upcoming Events:

- We are planning and looking forward to the Library's anniversary party December 3, 2022.

Tax Collector - Vivian Waters

- Collection rate continues to climb – 57.87% as of 11/28/22 with anticipation of achieving/exceeding 100% by July 1, 2023. This rate is .39% higher year over year
- The office is preparing to send out roughly 800 Supplemental bills in the month of December. They will be printed and sent from the office and not the printers saving costs to the budget.

Recreation – Agnes Miyuki

- Adult Co-ed Basketball Pick-up Games at Salem School Gym, Open to Salem & East Lyme residents, Age 18 and over, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., through March 30, 2023
- Adult Co-ed Volleyball Pick-up Games at Salem School Gym, Open to Salem & East Lyme residents, Age 18 and over, Wednesdays, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., through March 29, 2023
- Adult Co-ed Pickleball Pick-up Games at Salem School in the works
- Seniors & Strollers Walking at Salem School, Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, through May 31, 2023
- Tai Chi Classes, Session II, in progress. 8-week Sessions, Tuesdays, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m., Salem School Multi-Purpose Room. Next session scheduled to begin Tuesday, February 7, 2023.
- Re-scheduling for Disc Golf Course Staff Site Walk (Emergency Services, Building, etc.), Volunteer Park, in progress
- Various Collaborative Events/Activities in the works
- Christmas Tree Lighting was held at the town green.

Board of Selectman
Tuesday, December 6, 2022 Regular Meeting
First Selectman's Report – Department Updates

Seniors – Agnes Miyuki

- Next meeting: Tuesday, December 13, 10:30 am, Salem Firehouse
- Salem Seniors \$5 (+ tip) Lunches, Two Brothers Restaurant, first & third Tuesdays
- View their new monthly newsletter online at salemct.gov — Departments — Salem Seniors
- Salem Free Public Library:
 - Fun and Games, Tuesdays, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
 - Busy Bee Quilters, second Wednesdays of the month, 12:00-4:00 p.m.
 - Clam Shell Quilters, first and third Fridays, 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
 - Knitting and Crocheting Circle, Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.-noon
- Seniors Holiday luncheon, Saturday, December 10, 12:00 p.m., Salem Firehouse, \$10 Members, \$20 non-Members
- In the works are: BINGO, Potluck Dinner/Talent Show, Self Defense Course, 2023 Memorial Day Parade Float, Senior Yoga & Sittercise, Senior Night/Day at the Movies, Salem School Valentine's Day Wish List, Garden Team, Bus Trips
- Monthly Meeting Raffles for Seniors Helping Seniors Fund
- Blood Pressure Screenings offered at Seniors' Monthly Meetings
- Services:
 - Municipal Medical Transportation for adults 60+ and/or with disabilities can reserve rides to/from their medical appointments within the County
 - Renters' Rebate for Elderly/Disabled Renters Tax Relief Program – Request an extension of time to file to receive a reimbursement by November 15

Building Department – Agnes Miyuki

- FY2022/23, to date:

Total Permits Issued:	171
Total Fees Collected:	\$53,176.39
Total Construction Value:	\$4,263,414.54
Total Certificate of Occupancies Issued:	73

Assessor's Office – Mike Kapinos

- Personal Property processing
- Sale entry
- PA490 town clerk report
- Filing/administrative tasks

**Board of Selectman
Tuesday, December 6, 2022 Regular Meeting
First Selectman's Report – Department Updates**

Town Planner – Nicole Haggerty

- Justin LaFountain, former Planner for Salem, had his last day with SCCOG on November 17. After working with both the COG and Salem for over four years, he accepted an Assistant Director position in Bloomfield. Nicole Haggerty has taken over his duties as Planner for the Town.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission voted to continue a public hearing regarding a proposed text amendment that could allow lumbering by right on lots greater than 10 acres in the Rural A Zone. A special meeting has been called for December 7, 2022 at 7pm to continue this public hearing.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission has a Public Hearing scheduled for the Plan of Conservation and Development at their regularly scheduled meeting on December 13.

Town Clerk – Linda Flugrad

- Issued and processed returns of 185 absentee ballots
- FOIA requests have been processed and delivered
- There have been 51 documents placed on the land records; \$7,837.50 collected in State conveyance taxes and \$2,612.50 in Town conveyance taxes
- Filed two liquor permits and one trade name certificate
- Issued dog licenses
- Backfilled documents onto the land records
- Assisted residents & the public with searching, etc.
- Registered and issued vital records
- Administrative tasks