

**SALEM BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018, 7:00 P.M.  
SALEM TOWN OFFICE BUILDING**

**PRESENT**

Kevin Lyden, First Selectman  
Edward Chmielewski, Jr.  
David Kennedy  
Hugh McKenney

**ABSENT**

Stuart Gadbois

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

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

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** January 2, 2018 Regular Meeting

**M/S/C: Kennedy/McKenney to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 2, 2018  
with the following amendments:**

**Page 2, Item 5(B), 1st Sentence:**

...non-interest bearing note of \$5,000.00/~~month~~ *year*...

**Page 3, Item 5(B), 7th line:**

...all of the handwritten information pertaining *to* the history...

**Page 4, Item 6(F), last line:**

Voice vote, ~~3-0~~ *5-0*, all in favor.

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

**4. CORRESPONDENCE/PUBLIC COMMENTS:** *none*

**5. AGENDA:**

**A. Bicentennial Committee Update**

Seven (7) members of the community have expressed an interest in serving on the Bicentennial Committee, which will help organize and plan the events in celebration of Salem's 200th birthday next year. Interested member George Householder has reached out to the School and Library Director Vicky Coffin will be relaying information to Friends of the Library President Carl Nawrocki. Both the Town and the Friends of the Library will be allocating funds in their budget for the Celebration. A preliminary informational meeting will be scheduled and members will be appointed to serve on the Committee at the Board's March Regular Meeting. Selectman McKenney recommended the Committee develop a charter that is vetted by the First Selectman and presented and approved by the Board. In addition, as the Board of Education (BOE) Liaison, he reported that the Salem School Principal discussed the School's plans for a

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Bicentennial celebration at a recent BOE Meeting and recommended the Committee involve the Principal in their plans. Selectman Chmielewski agreed, adding that the Committee should reach out to all of the Town's organizations so that all of the events are coordinated and none are duplicated.

B. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

**M/S/C: Lyden/Chmielewski, to appoint Jennifer Lindo-Dashnaw to the Inland Wetlands Commission. Discussion: Ms. Lindo-Dashnaw is a former member of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

**M/S/C: Lyden/McKenney, to appoint Jessica Fletcher to the Recreation Commission. Discussion: Ms. Fletcher is a current member of the Salem PTO (Parent Teacher Organization). Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

**M/S/C: Lyden/Kennedy, to appoint Amie Hoinsky to the Economic Development Commission. Discussion: Ms. Hoinsky is a business owner in the Town of Salem. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

**M/S/C: Lyden/Chmielewski, to appoint Alternate Member Emil Casciano as a Full Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

**M/S/C: Lyden/Kennedy, to appoint Larry Benedict and Joshua Rehrig as Alternate Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Discussion: Both of the candidates are active members of the community. Mr. Benedict is a military veteran, business owner, an active member of the Community Church, and has been involved in real estate. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

**M/S/C: Lyden/Chmielewski, to re-appoint James Fogarty and George Jackson to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA). Discussion: Mr. Fogarty is a former President of SCWA. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

The following individuals expressed their interest in filling a vacancy on the Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA):

Debra Gernhardt discussed her past experience as an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) and Assistant Assessor and Assessor, among other positions, for the Town. She has been serving as the Assessor for the town of Hebron since 2001 and has a total of 28 years of experience as an Assistant Assessor/Assessor. In response to Selectman Chmielewski, who wished to ensure proper minority/majority representation on the Board, she stated that she is registered as an Independent.

Diane Weston has been a resident of the Town for the past 30 years, is a former employee of the Town's Building Department, a member of the Recreation Commission, and a former Minutes Clerk for the BAA. Both BAA Chairman Robert Green and Democratic Town Committee Chairperson Kristina Len have expressed their support of her appointment.

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**M/S/C: Lyden/Chmielewski, to appoint Debra Gernhardt to the Board of Assessment Appeals. Discussion: First Selectman Lyden felt that Ms. Gernhardt's experience as a licensed Assessor would be an asset to both the Board and the Town. Voice vote, 3-1. Voting in Favor: Selectmen Chmielewski, Kennedy, and Lyden. Voting in Opposition: Selectman McKenney.**

Anyone interested in serving on the Niantic River Watershed Commission is encouraged to contact the First Selectman's office.

- C. Presentation by Connecticut Land Conservation Council  
Salem Resident and member of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) Steering Committee David Bingham introduced CLCC Executive Director Amy Paterson, Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee (ERWSC) Chairman Tony Irving, ERWSC Program Director Pat Young, and Salem Land Trust President Linda Schroeder. All of the towns associated with the Eightmile River are being initially requested to endorse the Program. Thus far, the town of Lyme has submitted a letter of support.

Speaking on behalf of the Board, First Selectman Lyden expressed their support of the Salem Land Trust's conservation efforts; they are proud and fortunate to have part of the Eightmile River running through its Town.

CLCC Executive Director Paterson presented a brief background of the Council, which provides training and education opportunities, direct technical assistance, grants to local land trusts, and advocates on behalf of the communities at the State Capital. They are requesting that towns draft a letter of support for a bill that "would allow, but not require, certain towns and cities to establish a fund to acquire, preserve, and steward open space and farmland at the municipal level by including a conveyance fee of up to 1% paid by the buyers of residential real estate" after the first \$150,000.00. The Legislation has been successfully enacted in municipalities of such States as Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania.

In response to Selectman McKenney, she stated that once the town expresses their support, the town is included in the legislation. Should the legislators pass the law, the Town would follow their legislative process to enact it, per their Town Charter. She recommended they consult with the Town Attorney with any questions they might have regarding the adoption of the bill.

Though he is a supporter of the Salem Land Trust and its efforts, First Selectman Lyden expressed his opposition to the proposal due to the additional fee that would be imposed upon the homebuyer. He also questioned the need for such a bill due to the strained resources of many of its citizens, the current real estate market, the declining school population, and limited overall population growth. He felt that the fee might be more appropriate in towns where open space is more limited, deeming the land more precious. He reiterated his support of the Land Trust, its efforts and stated his willingness to generate letters of support for purchases. CLCC Executive Director Paterson expressed her appreciation of his input and clarified that the bill proposes a one-time fee that would only impact the buyer(s) who has already decided to invest

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in the community and the funds would be utilized to maintain and protect that community's natural resources, unlike a bond or any budgetary issues that would impact all of its residents through an increased mil rate and, possibly, the Town's credit rating. Selectman McKenney disagreed with the First Selectman and relayed a personal experience when he once considered purchasing a piece of property in the State of New York, where a similar bill was enacted and the fee was understood and accepted by the buyer. He also felt that the proposed Bill supports the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development "to preserve the town's rural character."

**M/F: McKenney, to support, in principal, the institution of a conveyance fee of less than 1% on real property sales to generate funds for the purchase, preservation, and stewardship of open space. The motion was not seconded.**

Selectman Chmielewski thanked the Salem Land Trust for all of their efforts, adding that the Town and its land is its most valuable resource. While he agrees that, in many cases, it may not be a significant amount of money and he supports the idea of the proposed bill, he believes that the added expense would negatively impact its current and future citizens, especially given the State's current fiscal crisis. Personally aware of residents who have and/or are experiencing various financial hardships and not aware of any who might be in favor of the bill, he felt that he could not comfortably endorse the proposed bill. In response, CLCC Executive Director Paterson clarified that, by supporting the bill, the Board would merely be providing the Town with the opportunity to engage in a conversation with its residents regarding the conveyance fee and allow them to vote upon the bill, themselves. Selectman Chmielewski reiterated his appreciation of the Committee and Land Trust's efforts and suggested the possibility of creating a form by which residents are able voluntarily donate to the fund.

CLCC Steering Committee Member Bingham referred to and discussed the case studies included in their packet (*see file copy*) and discussed the value of the bill, which, if enacted, would add to, rather than diminish, the value and economy of not only the Town's homes, but also of the Town. Many realtors and builders, who had initially opposed the bill, have witnessed its positive effects and now support it. Should significant subdivisions be created on existing large parcels of property, the rural character of the Town would be significantly affected and the additional costs related to the maintenance of any additional roads and infrastructure would negatively impact the Town's budget and, thereby, its mil rate. In addition, the funds generated from such a bill could be utilized to protect their current assets, e.g., the huge cost of fighting invasive species, rather than through the Town's general fund, which would financially affect all of its townspeople.

Former Scout Leader and an Eagle Scout Mentor Selectman Kennedy also expressed his appreciation of the CLCC and Land Trust and stated his interest in preserving the Town's open space. As a Selectman, he has had the opportunity to serve as the Board's Liaison to the Planning & Zoning Commission, which has spent a great deal of time and energy rewriting parts of the Town's regulations in an attempt to attract more people to the Town. He felt that the institution of such a fee would be counterproductive to their efforts as the State's

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population continues to diminish due to taxes and that the added fee would, potentially, impact any future sales. In response, CLCC Executive Director Paterson reiterated that, by supporting the bill, the Town is not mandated or required to make any commitment(s). Rather, it merely enables the Board with the opportunity to engage in a conversation with its townspeople, now or in the near/far future, and decide whether they would like to move forward and institute the conveyance fee to help fund the cost of the maintenance and stewardship of its natural resources. While the Town should be proud of the investments it has made in land acquisitions, which have helped to maintain the character of the Town, the ongoing cost of properly maintaining its trails, kiosks, and amenities and preserving its natural resources could result in a burden to its taxpayers. The bill allows future residents, i.e., contributors to the fund, to move into the Town knowing that it purchases, preserves, and maintains their natural resources and is doing so in perpetuity. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak with them.

Selectman Chmielewski reiterated his appreciation and support of maintaining and preserving the Town's open space, but believed in having fewer mandates and increased volunteerism. Selectman McKenney disagreed, but understood the Board's viewpoint. CLCC Steering Committee Member Bingham felt that the townspeople should be afforded with the opportunity to discuss and decide upon the bill themselves.

The Board thanked them for their presentation.

D. Review Plan of Conservation and Development Recommendations

The Board reviewed and discussed the checklist of Board of Selectmen-tasks items:

- 1.1.1 – Investigate feasibility of creating a separate Conservation Commission  
*Selectman McKenney to follow-up on this item.*
- 1.3.3 – Adopt policy to prohibit town from purchasing/planning invasive species  
*A policy, listing the prohibited invasive species, will be requested from the Wetlands Officer, reviewed by the First Selectman, and presented to the Board of Selectmen for review and adoption.*
- 1.5.1 – Strengthen authority to impose fines for IW violations  
*Refer to Inland Wetlands and Conservation Commission for their recommendation(s)*
- 1.6.4 – Adopt aquifer protection ordinance guided by CT DEEP model  
*Refer to the Planning & Zoning Commission*
- 3.1.3 – Develop Forest Management Plan for town-owned forestland  
*Refer to the Planning & Zoning Commission for their input*
- 4.2.1 – Deed cemeteries within proposed sub-div to Town  
*A Town Meeting is required for the deeding of any property.*
- 4.2.2 – Initiate regular maintenance plan for cemeteries  
*Currently, there is a very minimal amount of funding allocated to the maintenance of cemeteries. There are approximately 30 to 40 abandoned family cemeteries. The*

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*Boy Scouts, Veterans, and Town Volunteers are currently maintaining a number of the cemeteries. The item will be continued.*

- 4.3.1 – Designate appropriate candidates as scenic roads
- 5.1.2 – Develop and implement business championing process for targeted business  
*Tasked to the Economic Development Commission*
- 6.1.1 – Implement short-term projects to rejuvenate 4 Corners  
*Tasked to the Economic Development Commission*
- 9.2.2 – Explore tax incentives for trail access easements on private land  
*Task to the Economic Development and Recreation Commissions*
- 9.3.2 – Schedule bike path construction to coincide with Public Works road maintenance  
*Refer to the Recreation Commission and Public Works Department to determine feasibility. The installation of a bike lane on Music Vale Road through Clark Lane to the Pavilion has been suggested.*
- 10.1.5 – Consider using social media to communicate Town information (Facebook)  
*This item is under research. Discussion ensued regarding the use of social media to communicate certain information due to the sensitivity of some occurrences. Information regarding special events, road construction, paving, and construction, or the like would be acceptable, but information regarding accidents, fire and/or emergency calls might constitute a HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) violation. Utilizing Everbridge for emergency mass communication was considered to disseminate information. First Selectman Lyden will provide the Board with information regarding CIRMA's (Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency) recommendations.*

Established and ongoing items:

- 2.3.5 – Continue Town support of Community Garden program
- 4.5.1 – Develop educational materials and sponsor events about H&A (Historic and Archaeological) Resources – *Historical Society*
- 4.5.2 – Display Salem Historic memorabilia – *Historical Society*
- 6.1.2 – Implement long-term projects for future economic use of 4 Corners  
*The Roundabout was completed and the plantings are currently being maintained by Burnett's Landscaping. Selectman McKenney suggested installing signage with reflective poles at the Roundabout to help ensure the safety of the pedestrians.*
- 8.2.2 – Allow non-perm structures to facilitate enjoyment of property  
*The Town currently provides such structures as the Pavilion and Gazebo*
- 10.1.1 – Expand use of existing Website to provide Town news and information  
*The website was upgraded approximately two years ago. The website address (salectmct.gov) will be added. The Webmaster is Virtual Towns & Schools.*

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- 10.1.6 – Encourage town residents to enroll in town-managed email distribution  
*Approximately 600 residents are currently enrolled to receive information.*
- 12.1.2 – Assign point person to review current regs for consistency with State regs on affordable housing; periodically update Boards & Commissions on status  
*Referred to the Planning & Zoning Commission, under the Town Planner*
- 14.1.1 – Periodically update long-range maintenance and improvement plan for Town roads  
*Approximately \$300,000.00 to \$400,000.00/year is budgeted for the maintenance of Town roads. The next area slated for road improvements is the Valley Drive subdivision. Approximately four miles of road maintenance/improvements is completed annually and includes any drainage work and catch basin replacements.*

Completed items:

- 8.1.1 – Establish BOS oversight of Gadbois property  
*The property was divided between the Pavilion (89 Norwich Road), which is under the handled by the Town, and Volunteer Park on Forsyth Road, which is handled by the Recreation Commission. Policies are in place for both locations.*
- 8.1.2 – Develop and implement rules, policies and procedures for use of Gadbois property  
*Policies are in place for both the Pavilion and Volunteer Park.*
- 11.1.1 – Take Municipal clean energy pledge  
*The Town recently received a \$5,000.00 Bright Idea Grant for its energy savings and upgrades.*
- 11.2.1 – Continue to stress importance of proper hazardous waste disposal; ...develop list of resources and educational materials  
*The list currently includes: single stream recycling, an Eagle Scout project, information regarding the proper disposal of waste provided by SCRRRA (Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resource Recovery Authority), and Hazardous Waste Days hosted at seven different locations in neighboring towns.*
- 16.1.2 – Modify BOS policies to seek reg'l solution for goods and services  
*A Purchasing Policy is currently in place.*

Terminated items:

- 14.3.1 – Apply public pressure to complete Route 11
- 14.3.2 – Apply public pressure to complete Route 11 Greenway

E. Economic Overview – Salem, CT

The Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region's (seCTer) Economic Overview of the Town, providing a snapshot of the Town's Demographic Profile, Employment and Wage Trends, Cost of Living Index, Industry and Occupation Snapshots, Industry Clusters, and Education Levels, was presented to the Board for review.

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- F. Schedule Board of Selectmen Special Meeting to review budget, per Section 10.02 of the Salem Town Charter

The Selectmen agreed to schedule a Board of Selectmen Special Meeting for Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. to review the budget.

- F. 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 \$26,367.39 (twenty-six thousand three hundred sixty-seven dollars and thirty-nine cents) on the 6th day of February 2018. Discussion: The refund amounts for the month are high this month due to the receipt of tax payments by both the taxpayers and the taxpayers' escrow companies. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor**

**6. REPORTS:**

**A. FIRST SELECTMAN**

First Selectman Lyden distributed the Auditors' financial report for the Town. He expressed his appreciation to the Finance, Tax, Assessors, and School's Finance office for their very thorough and professional handling of the Townspeople's money.

The section of the roof joining the old and new Town Hall buildings, which developed a minor ice dam, will be re-roofed with an underlayment of ice and water shield this year.

State Senator Paul Formica and State Representative Holly Cheeseman hosted Office Hours at Town Hall and attended the Board Finance's Special Meeting on January 25 to discuss the State budget and potential future cuts to municipalities.

The Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition will be providing a presentation at next month's Board of Selectman Regular Meeting. The Economic Development Commission has also been invited and residents are encouraged to attend.

The Mobile Food Pantry is scheduled for tomorrow, February 7, at 5:00 p.m., but may be cancelled due to inclement weather. Residents should check the salemct.gov or United Way website, contact the Town Clerk, or their e-mail for cancellation information. Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company Chief Savalle reiterated their offer to host the Mobile Food Pantry indoors should the Town need an alternative location during times of inclement weather.

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

Selectman McKenney reported that the Superintendent's proposed budget for FY2018/19, which reflects a 1.77% decrease, will be revised due to a 13%, rather than the previously predicted 7%, increase in health insurance. The BOE discussed the possibility of utilizing a two-year budget cycle as a projection tool. They also discussed the possibility of requesting the Boards of Finance and Selectmen to approve the establishment of a non-lapsing account for the deposit of their unexpended education funds (up to 1% of the BOE budget). A copy of the



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State's ECS (Education Cost Sharing) projections were distributed, reflecting that the Town of Salem will be receiving \$2.65 million this fiscal year; the State is proposing a \$200,000.00 decrease for the next fiscal year. A document regarding the implementation and assessment of the MBR (Minimum Budget Requirement) was provided to the First Selectman.

**C. BOARD OF FINANCE**

Several Town departments, including the Town Clerk, Building Department, Public Safety, Salem Volunteer Fire Company, Security, and Recreation Commission, will be presenting their proposed FY2018/19 budgets this Thursday, February 8.

**D. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

A Public Hearing was held to discuss amendments to the zoning and subdivision regulations addressing Rural Cluster Development, Non-Conforming Uses, Accessory Apartments, Temporary Health Care Structures, and Net Buildable Area.

**E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION – none**

**F. LIBRARY BOARD**

The Library's Food for Fines Program was successful, having collected 20 bags of groceries for those in need. Ongoing programs, funded by the Friends of Salem Library, include Storytime, LEGO Night, Multi-Movie Times, *Mah Jongg*, and DIY Drop-in Crafts, and will be offering a Beginner's 3-D Printing Class, Winter Reading Program, and St. Patrick's Day Program. In addition, the Salem Seniors, Books in the Afternoon Book Club, and Salem Library Knitters continue to hold weekly/monthly meetings/activities. Everyone is invited and encouraged to like them on Facebook and visit the Town website for more information and news on additional programs.

Municipal Veterans Report

Selectman Chmielewski met with Commander Robert Green of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Salem Post, to discuss possible initiatives and programs that might be hosted at the Town Hall, Fire Departments, and Library in the near future.

Selectman McKenney suggested adding a discussion item for Plus Deltas at the conclusion of their meetings. The item will be added to the agenda for discussion next month.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**M/S/C: Kennedy/Chmielewski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem