

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020, 7:00 P.M.
MEETING ROOM 1, SALEM TOWN HALL**

PRESENT

Kevin Lyden
Edward Chmielewski, Jr.
Ron LaBonte
Hugh McKenney

ABSENT

Terri Salas

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Lyden called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Tuesday, July 7, 2020 Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting

**M/S/C: LaBonte/Chmielewski, to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of
Tuesday, July 7, 2020. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0.**

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

Item 4(H), Executive Session, was moved to follow Item 5, Reports.

3. CORRESPONDENCE/PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Comments

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

Correspondence

- a. A copy of a letter from the Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company acknowledging the receipt of the partial payment for the ambulance stipends.

First Selectman Lyden added that information regarding the additional weeks was also received; the payment for those weeks is currently in process.

- b. A copy of a letter from the Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company stating their continued interest in seeking efficiencies and their agreement to engage in conversations regarding joint purchases and training with the Salem Volunteer Fire Company to best serve the town.

4. AGENDA:

A. Extension of the State of Emergency for the Town of Salem, CT until September 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. (*Discussion & Action*)

M/S/C: McKenney/Chmielewski, to further extend the Declaration of the State of Emergency for the Town of Salem, Connecticut that was originally signed and issued on March 16, 2020 at 5:49 p.m. and was previously extended to April 30, 2020, May 15, 2020, June 5, 2020, July 15, 2020, and again to August 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. to September 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

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

B. Authorize Resolution for the Affordable Housing Grant Technical Assistance Program (*Discussion & Action*)

M/S/C: Chmielewski/LaBonte, that on July 15, 2020, the Town of Salem was awarded a grant from the Connecticut Department of Housing, in the amount of \$9,928, to assist in the preparation of an Affordable Housing Plan, as required by the State of Connecticut.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Kevin T. Lyden, as First Selectman of the Town of Salem, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents required for the grant acceptance on behalf of the Board of Selectmen 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: The execution date of the certificate will be amended from the 5th Day of August 2020 to 7th Day of August 2020. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

C. Authorize Resolution for FFY2020 State Homeland Security Program (*Discussion & Action*)

M/S/C: Chmielewski/McKenney, that the Town of Salem Board of Selectmen may 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 RESOLVED, that Kevin T. Lyden, as First Selectman of the Town of Salem, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Salem Board of Selectmen and to do and perform all acts and things which he/she 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: The resolution must be authorized by all of the towns within the region to receive funding for regional emergency purchases. The execution date of the certificate will be amended from the 5th Day of August 2020 to 7th Day of August 2020. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

D. Approve Municipal Certification of Resolution for STEAP Grant 2020

(Discussion & Action)

M/S/C: LaBonte/McKenney, that First Selectman Kevin T. Lyden be, and hereby is, authorized to accept on behalf of the Town of Salem, a 2020 Connecticut STEAP Grant in the amount of \$120,000 for Replacement of Underground Fuel Tanks with new Aboveground Fuel Tanks; and **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that First Selectman Kevin T. Lyden is hereby authorized to enter into and execute any and all agreements, contracts and documents necessary to obtain said 2020 STEAP Grant with the State of Connecticut.

Discussion: The STEAP Grant, which has not been available since 2016, is, once again, being offered. The grant will be utilized to partially fund the replacement of the 23/24 year old underground fuel tanks, which are estimated to have a lifespan of approximately 25 years. The remaining funds for the project have already been allocated as part of the town's Capital Plan. The tanks provide fuel for the EMS (Emergency Management Services), School buses, and Public Works vehicles. The STEAP (Small Towns Economic Assistance Program) Grant does not include the tanks for the School, which could be reimbursed by the State. The execution date of the certificate will be amended from the 5th Day of August 2020 to 7th Day of August 2020. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

E. Appoint Selectman McKenney as a Salem representative to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA) *(Discussion & Action)*

M/S/C: Chmielewski/LaBonte, to appoint Selectman McKenney as a Salem Representative to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA). **Discussion:** Selectman McKenney will be filling a vacancy left by George Jackson, who recently moved out of town, and will be serving on the Authority with Jim Fogarty. SCWA has jurisdiction over several water systems throughout the county, including the condominiums located on Horse Pond Road. Selectman McKenney expressed his appreciation and looks forward to serving on the Authority. First

Selectman Lyden, likewise, thanked him for his willingness to serve on SCWA. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

F. Update from Selectman Chmielewski as newly appointed liaison to Emergency Services (*Discussion*)

First Selectman Lyden recited the letters that were recently sent to the staff regarding the appointments of Selectman Chmielewski as the Liaison to Emergency Services and Deputy Fire Marshal Michael Bednarz as the Salem Emergency Services Administrator. He briefly cited their experience and looks forward to hearing their ideas as they develop a 5/10 year plan.

Selectman and Emergency Services Liaison Chmielewski thanked First Selectman Lyden for his confidence, support, proactive leadership, innovation in Salem Emergency Services, and formation of an excellent team of dedicated professionals at Town Hall who embrace the “Salem First” public service philosophy. He introduced and welcomed Deputy Fire Marshal and Emergency Services Administrator Bednarz, citing his wealth of administrative training, experience, and knowledge.

Deputy Fire Marshal and Emergency Services Administrator Bednarz expressed his appreciation to the Selectmen for the opportunity to serve the town. He is excited and looks forward to the future of Emergency Services in Salem.

G. Tax Collector Refunds (*Action Item*)

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 \$1,001.98 (one thousand one dollar and ninety-eight cents) on the 6th day of August 2020. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.

5. REPORTS:

A. FIRST SELECTMAN

First Selectman Lyden reported that a State of Emergency was declared for Tropical Storm Isaias. The Salem Emergency Operation Center, Public Works Crews, and Emergency Personnel as well as the town’s tree sub-contractor were working and available during the duration of and after the storm. The storm caused a brush fire on Witch Meadow Road and several fully- and partially-blocked roads due to downed wires/trees. A brush pile is open at Salem Community Park for residents to bring their branches and brush caused by the storm. He expressed his frustrations with Eversource, which has been slow to respond to the power outages. It is estimated that 70% of the town has electricity at this time.

Town Hall, which has been open throughout the pandemic, continues to be open to the public, by appointment only. While some are disappointed, most are understanding and have been utilizing the dropbox located in front of Town Hall. He stated that his goal is to maintain and ensure the health of the staff and continue serving the public.

B. BOARD OF EDUCATION (BOE)

Selectman McKenney reported that the BOE discussed the re-opening of the school; the establishment of strict protocols, including the isolation of children into groups or cohorts, and; the development of three comprehensive plans (in-school, hybrid, and virtual) – one of which will be instituted depending upon the percentage of COVID-19-positive numbers. The estimated costs related to the purchase and placement of signage, masks, gloves, and infrared thermometers; three part-time custodians; increasing the technology position from a part- to full-time position, and; upgrading and increased maintenance of the HVAC filters were also discussed. The initial cost estimate is \$234,000.00, 75% of which is expected to be reimbursed by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). BOE Chairman Sean Reith also requested the formation of an ad-hoc working committee comprised of the First Selectman and members of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance to maintain transparency, ensure communication, and expediency.

First Selectman Lyden reported that a Zoom meeting is being planned with Superintendent Joseph Onofrio, Business Manager Kim Gadaree, BOE Chair Reith, and Finance Specialist Lisa Jablonski to discuss the finances. First Selectman Lyden added that some items have been purchased and extra signage that was received, free of charge, by CCM (Connecticut Council or Municipalities) has been given to the school. Selectman Chmielewski proposed the possibility of partnering with East Lyme for the bulk purchasing of signage, masks, gloves, etc., for some cost savings. Selectman McKenney requested an invitation to the upcoming Zoom meeting.

C. BOARD OF FINANCE – *no report*

D. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – *Selectwoman Salas absent; no report*

E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)

Selectman Chmielewski reported that both Senator Paul Formica and Representative Holly Cheeseman provided a report to the Commissioners regarding their efforts to support the local businesses during the pandemic. The Commission continues to discuss the upcoming 2021 Business & Service Directory.

F. LIBRARY

Selectman LaBonte reported that the Library Board discussed their current and future operating procedures and the upgrade(s) to their HVAC system. A positive financial report was also provided by their new treasurer. The Friends of the Library are anxious

to begin their volunteer work at the Library. The interlibrary system has resumed service and, though the participation was lower than usual due to the pandemic, a successful Summer Reading Program was had.

G. MILITARY LIAISON

Selectman Chmielewski encouraged those in need of temporary housing to visit the Department of Veterans Affairs website for information regarding available space at the state veterans' home. He is currently working with the widow of a veteran to reinstate her lifetime benefits, which suddenly expired. The individual was referred to him by Former First Selectman and Executive Director of the Office of Military Affairs Bob Ross. He commended the town's veterans and those with ties to the State for their help and support.

4(H) Executive Session regarding legal strategies for current lawsuit between The Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. vs. The Town of Salem, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(B).

M/S/C: McKenney/LaBonte, to enter into Executive Session at 8:05 p.m.

Discussion to include members of the Board of Selectmen and Deputy Fire Marshal and Emergency Services Administrator Bednarz.

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

M/S/C: Chmielewski/LaBonte, to exit from Executive Session at 8:37 p.m.

Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor. No votes were taken during Executive Session.

6. ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C: LaBonte/McKenney, to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 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