



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187
TEL 860-870-3100 FAX 860-870-3102

www.ellington-ct.gov

JAMES M. PRICHARD
Deputy First Selectman

SARAH D. COOK
MELINDA M. FERRY
DAVID E. STAVENS
RONALD F. STOMBERG
JOHN W. TURNER

LORI L. SPIELMAN
First Selectman

BOARD OF SELECTMEN SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, June 22, 2020

Town Hall Meeting Hall and Via ZOOM Conferencing

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Lori Spielman, James Prichard, Ronald Stomberg, David Stavens, Melinda Ferry, Sarah Cook

SELECTMEN ABSENT: John Turner

OTHERS PRESENT: Tiffany Pignataro, Finance Officer/Treasurer; Julia Connor, Executive Assistant/Website and Social Media Coordinator; Peter Hany, Sr., Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps President; Jack Rich, II, Chief, Bob Smith, Deputy Chief, Betsi Feldman, Treasurer, Ellington Volunteer Fire Department

PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Susan Phillips, Hall Memorial Library Director; John Rachek, Chairman and Peg Busse, Board of Finance, Bruce Hoffman

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting was called to order at 6:44 P.M. by First Selectman Spielman.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. CITIZENS' FORUM: No one came forward.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Award Contract: Website Re-design

Ms. Spielman noted that the BOS received a bid tabulation from the Finance Office and that there was only one vendor that met the criteria that was put forth in the bid process. She added that the Ellington Public Schools uses Finalsite as well for their website vendor.

MOVED (STAVENS), SECONDED (COOK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR THE REDESIGN OF THE TOWN WEBSITE TO ACTIVE INTERNET TECHNOLOGIES, LLC, DBA FINALSITE OF GLASTONBURY, CT AS RECOMMENDED BY THE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR AND FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER. THE TERM OF THE CONTRACT SHALL BE FOR THREE YEARS, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 WITH THE TOWN HAVING THE OPTION TO RENEW FOR TWO ADDITIONAL ONE-YEAR TERMS AT THE SAME RATE AS STIPULATED IN THE BID TABULATION (ATTACHED).

B. State of CT 2020 Neighborhood Assistance Act Grant Application: Ellington Volunteer Fire Department; Energy Conservation-Improvements Station 43 at 29 Main Street

1. Set Public Hearing:

MOVED (STAVENS), SECONDED (COOK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON MONDAY, JULY 13, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE ELLINGTON TOWN HALL MEETING HALL, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALLOWING CITIZENS TO COMMENT UPON THE STATE OF CT 2020 NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE ACT GRANT APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE ELLINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, AIMED AT QUALIFYING FOR UP TO \$45,500 REIMBURSEMENT FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENTS AT STATION 43 LOCATED AT 29 MAIN STREET.

C. Proposed Board of Selectmen Policy regarding Member In Person Attendance

Ms. Cook agreed that in-person meetings are more productive than those via ZOOM, however, she does not feel that a policy is necessary. She added that she questioned the First Selectman's authority to require BOS members to appear in person, and therefore, she requested a legal opinion from the Town Attorney. Ms. Spielman solicited the opinion of the Town Attorney. The BOS members were provided with Attorney Famiglietti's response. Ms. Ferry agreed that ZOOM meetings are difficult, but she feels that ZOOM meetings should be allowed depending on the health risks present at the time. She added that people need to use their common sense, noting that if at all possible, it is understood that all BOS members should attend in person. Ms. Ferry suggested adding staff members to each meeting to assist with the ZOOM process.

Ms. Cook said that a formal policy is not necessary if people agree to attend when they feel it is safe. She disagreed that the ZOOM meeting distractions recently experienced "unduly impact the efficient and effective conduct of the meeting" as put forth in Ms. Spielman's memo to the Board of Selectmen dated June 18, 2020 [ATTACHED]. Ms. Spielman reviewed the difficulties of the ZOOM meetings not only in the BOS meetings, but in other Town associated meetings as well. Mr. Stavens said that if Connecticut returns to an unsafe situation, of course, exceptions will be made.

Ms. Ferry expressed her concern that Ms. Pignataro was interviewed in Executive Session, while Ms. Ferry herself was attending remotely. Ms. Spielman said that Ms. Pignataro was interviewed during the very beginning of the COVID-19 situation when details were still being worked out. She said she wanted all BOS members to have the chance to meet the potential new Finance Officer, if possible. The motion to hire Ms. Pignataro was made outside of Executive Session, and the legal opinion regarding holding remote Executive Sessions was received just recently. The motion stands.

Mr. Stomberg said that he has concerns that some BOS members will consider ZOOM meetings the "new normal" and he has reservations about the percentage of meetings that will be attended in person, referring to the attendance policy. Ms. Cannella noted that the appointed officials fall under the attendance policy, and she does keep attendance for the BOS members as well. Ms. Cook said that Mr. Stomberg has nothing to worry about because as long as it is safe to do so, the BOS members will attend in person.

Ms. Feldman noted that as someone who was attending meetings via ZOOM previously, it is important to be cognizant of how difficult it is to hear what is going on and if the Town gets into this situation again there are some infrastructure improvements that need to be considered to correct this problem. This is a public meeting for the Townspeople to be part of; it is very challenging to hear what is going on. Ms. Ferry said that she has suggested purchasing a sound system in the past. Ms. Spielman said that she had asked Felicia LaPlante, Assistant Finance Officer, to research the cost of adding a sound system with microphones to the Town Hall Meeting Hall. Ms. LaPlante did the research and presented the cost, however, this proposal was cut out of the Town Hall Renovation project due to lack of funds. Ms. Spielman said this will be looked into again to see what the cost will be now and what can be done to get the much-needed sound system installed.

Ms. Feldman added that ZOOM Meeting attendees using multiple devices during a meeting is distracting. She added that she observed people on ZOOM text messaging each other during the meetings and this should not be happening. Ms. Spielman said that she is aware that this is going on and she is addressing it.

Board of Selectmen members agreed to vote nay on this policy and to attend BOS meetings as long as it is safe.

MOVED (STAVENS), SECONDED (PRICHARD) AND FAILED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED BOARD OF SELECTMEN ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS IN PERSON ATTENDANCE POLICY, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE FIRST SELECTMAN.

D. EVFD Replacement Pumper ET-143 – Lease Agreement

PURSUANT TO EXECUTIVE ORDER 7JJ, MOVED (STAVENS), SECONDED (COOK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ENTER INTO A FIVE YEAR LEASE AGREEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE EVFD-REPLACEMENT PUMPER ET-143 NOT TO EXCEED \$650,000.

V. ADJOURNMENT

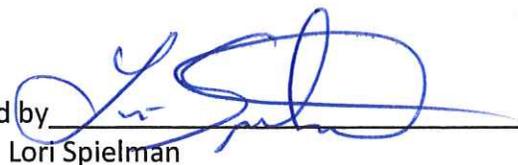
MOVED (STAVENS), SECONDED (COOK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN AT 7:03 P.M.

Submitted by


LouAnn Cannella

Recording Secretary

Approved by


Lori Spielman

First Selectman

**TOWN OF ELLINGTON
FINANCE OFFICE**



MEMO

To: Lori Spielman, First Selectman
 From: Tiffany Pignataro, CPA, MBA, Finance Officer/Treasurer *tlp*
 Subject: RFP Recommendation – Redesign of Town Website
 Date: June 22, 2020

The Finance Office is in possession of and concurs with the memo to recommend the proposal from Active Internet Technologies, LLC, dba Finalsight for the Town of Ellington website of redesign as provided by Julia Connor, Executive Assistant/Website & Social Media Coordinator. Upon review of the proposals submitted prior to the 2:00pm EST June 18, 2020 deadline, Finalsight was the only vendor that met all requirements set forth by the Town.

Finalsight is registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State's Office to do business in the State of Connecticut. Finalsight's implementation timeline meets the needs and expectations of the Town, and the response times with both routine and crisis ticket items are acceptable within the needs of the Town. Finalsight is also a local business within the State of Connecticut, which will provide ease of use and access in the event on-site resolutions or training are needed.

Please also refer to the attached bid tabulation which provides a summary of all proposals considered for the Town of Ellington website redesign.

The suggested wording for this motion would be as follows:

MOVE TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR THE REDESIGN OF THE TOWN WEBSITE TO ACTIVE INTERNET TECHNOLOGIES, LLC, DBA FINALSIGHT OF GLASTONBURY, CT AS RECOMMENDED BY THE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR AND FINANCE OFFICER/TREASURER. THE TERM OF THE CONTRACT SHALL BE FOR THREE YEARS, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 WITH THE TOWN HAVING THE OPTION TO RENEW FOR TWO ADDITIONAL ONE-YEAR TERMS AT THE SAME RATE AS STIPULATED IN THE BID TABULATION (ATTACHED).

TOWN OF ELLINGTON FIRST SELECTMAN'S OFFICE



MEMO

Date: June 18, 2020

To: Tiffany Pignataro, Finance Officer/Treasurer

From: Julia Connor, Executive Assistant/Website & Social Media Coordinator

Subject: Recommendation of Proposal – Redesign of Town Website

I have reviewed the four proposals that were received prior to the June 18th deadline for the Redesign of the Town's Website. Based on factors including but not limited to the thoroughness of the proposal, accessibility for on-site training and troubleshooting, the proposed development and implementation timeline and the presented ease of use for both back- and front-end users, I recommend that the Town award this project to Finalsite.

Thank you.

Redesign of Town Website June 18, 2020 2pm									
Revize Troy, MI	Isadora Agency Manhattan Beach, CA	Blackboard Reston, VA	Finalsite Glastonbury, CT						
Total Cost for Design and Implementation of new website	\$ 29,700.00	\$ 93,750.00	\$ 39,826.25	\$ 20,000.00					
Estimated Cost for Annual Service Fee Year 2	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 19,426.25	\$ 20,000.00					
Estimated Cost for Annual Service Fee Year 3	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 19,426.25	\$ 20,000.00					
Estimated Cost for Annual Service Fee Year 4	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 19,426.25	\$ 20,000.00					
Estimated Cost for Annual Service Fee Year 5	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 19,426.25	\$ 20,000.00					
Total	\$ 53,300.00	\$ 237,750.00	\$ 117,531.25	\$ 100,000.00					
Attended Mandatory Pre Bid Meeting	yes	yes	yes	yes					
Certificate of Insurance	yes	no	no	yes					
Legal Status Disclosure	no	no	no	yes					
Non-Collusion Affidavit	yes	not notarized	no	yes					
Qualification Statement	yes	yes	yes	yes					
Warranty Statement	yes	no	no	yes					
Proposal Bond 10% of proposal	yes	no	no	yes					
Year 4 includes free redesign	Year 4 includes free redesign								

TOWN OF ELLINGTON FIRST SELECTMAN'S OFFICE



MEMO

To: Board of Selectmen

From: Lori Spielman, First Selectman *LS*

Subject: Proposed BOS Policy Regarding In-Person Attendance at Meetings

Date: June 18, 2020

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Selectman kept business going by providing a remote attendance option; a few members chose to attend via ZOOM conferencing, along with the public. Now that our Town Buildings are open in compliance with the Governor's orders and all staff members are required to be back at work, I contacted the Board of Selectmen members requiring that all of you attend meetings in person, rather via ZOOM Conferencing. All meetings will be conducted in compliance with the Governor's orders regarding safe distancing and related protocols.

Ms. Cook requested that I obtain a legal opinion to ascertain if the First Selectman is entitled to make this decision. That legal opinion is attached.

Attorney Famiglietti's response indicates that the Board of Selectman have the right to adopt a policy that addresses this issue. She indicates that remote attendance should be allowable if such remote participation **does not unduly impact the efficient and effective conduct of the meeting**. I believe that the BOS deserves the opportunity to communicate simultaneously and to engage in deliberative conversation that is clear to all.

We have been affected by the constant disruptions and difficulties experienced by some of our ZOOM participants. Without continuously monitoring the ZOOM room, it is not possible to know who of the BOS are in the room at any given time and whether or not they are hearing the dialog, the motions and the votes. I find myself often having to reiterate either what I have said or the comments of others for those who are disconnected or are having sound issues. The recording secretary has many responsibilities associated with the job of keeping the minutes, and the additional distractions of member disconnections, difficulty hearing, dogs barking, phones ringing, text messaging alerts going back and forth, screens freezing and other problems make for a very difficult meeting for all of us. Remote access is also not allowable for Executive Sessions, so any members joining remotely could not participate in this important process. The residents of Ellington deserve your full attention.

We are the governing board for the Town. A meeting of the Board of Selectman is an important official gathering of those individuals that the voters of Ellington charged with this mission to transact business for the Town. You are volunteers, I know this, but more importantly, you are Elected Officials with a responsibility to serve the people. If the best way to serve the people is to be in attendance at the Board of Selectmen meetings in person, it doesn't seem like too much to ask. It was the way meetings were always handled prior to COVID-19, and it is the best manner in which to handle meetings going forward. I appreciate those of you who have been in attendance physically for the duration of this unfortunate virus situation, and I feel strongly that we need our entire membership together in one room so that all voices are heard.

Therefore, I propose that the Board of Selectmen adopt a policy regarding in person attendance for Board of Selectmen members at Board of Selectmen meetings. I'll be preparing a draft policy for your review and action.