

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OCTOBER 7, 2020
7:00 P.M.
VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE
Dial-in Number: 1-646-876-9923
Meeting ID: 885-2674-0935**

Selectmen Present via Zoom teleconference: Melissa M. Mack, Pete Hill, Kathleen Harrington, Jeremiah Mahoney and Tim Reynolds

Also Present via Zoom teleconference: Town Attorney Derek Donnelly, Director of Planning & Development Bill Hawkins, Suffield School Superintendent Tim Van Tassel, Registrar Darlene Burrell and Director of Technology Becky Osleger

First Selectman Mack called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and began with the Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the minutes from the September 2, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the minutes from the September 2, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. **Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of the minutes from the September 21, 2020 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen, Finance and Water Pollution Control Authority

Selectman Reynolds motioned to approve the minutes from the September 21, 2020 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen, Finance and Water Pollution Control Authority. **Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of the minutes from the September 23, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Reynolds noted one correction:

- **Page 1 – In the section titled Public Comment the second speaker referenced “Longmeadow” which was incorrectly reported as “East Longmeadow.” Adjustment should be noted.**

Selectman Mahoney noted one correction:

- **Page 3 – In the section titled Discussion and approval of expansion of members of Charter Revision Commission it was referenced that “no more than 1/3 of the members are elected officials in other towns.” The phrase “in other towns” should be removed.**

Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the minutes from the September 23, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen as amended. **Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion and approval of Statement by Board of Selectmen

First Selectman Mack stated the following:

“In the course of talking to residents over recent months, I can say definitively that the community has varied perspectives and viewpoints on the topic of racism in Suffield. I want to thank the Board of Selectmen for listening to public input, both here during public comment and talking to others out in the community, for doing their own research and reading on the subject, and for providing input on the development of this statement, which will be adopted and shared with all of the Town of Suffield’s Boards, Commissions and municipal employees.

“The time we took allowed us to engage in meaningful discussions among board members and the public. The process we engaged in to develop a statement that each of us from our various backgrounds and experiences agreed on was exactly what we are encouraging the public to do through the programming supported and offered by the Town and in other private areas. Our statement is as follows:”

“The Town of Suffield is committed to fair and respectful treatment of all people, enhancement and promotion of inclusivity and diversity, and elimination of racism, discrimination and bias.”

First Selectman Mack continued as follows:

“I personally view the Board of Selectmen’s definitive statement as making clear that we, as a board and as a Town, denounce the type of hateful and harmful behavior reported by some of our residents and their families. I want to thank the public for bringing their stories forward and allowing us to reflect on the direction our board wanted to take.”

First Selectman Mack asked if any of the Selectmen would like to make any additional comments. No additional comments were made.

Selectman Reynolds motioned to approve the Statement by Board of Selectmen as presented. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of formation of Joint Facilities Committee

First Selectman Mack provided the following overview:

- The Board of Education and the Town have been engaged in discussions regarding a Facilities Master Plan.
- A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be issued soon
- The RFP, which has been included in current budget for FY 2020- calls for the formation of a Joint Facilities Committee.
- Although a bit large, First Selectman Mack thinks it will help to include all of the stakeholders early on so people are comfortable with and aware of the process and the scope of work.
- First Selectman Mack proposed the formation of the Joint Facilities Committee to review submissions, interview and select the firm to prepare the facilities master plan and provide input when needed comprised of the following members:
 - First Selectman
 - Town Director of Planning and Development
 - Town Facilities Manager
 - Town Building Official
 - Superintendent of Schools
 - School Business Manager
 - School Director of Facilities
 - Representative from Board of Finance

- Representative from Permanent Building Commission
- Representative from Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures
- Representative from Board of Education Finance and Facilities Subcommittee

First Selectman Mack closed her comments by stating that *“this diverse group of stakeholders will bring a lot to the conversation and will help us to report back to the large decision makers throughout town who can then provide meaningful input and allow us to come together during budget season and prioritize where we want to allocate the assets of the Town of Suffield.”*

First Selectman Mack invited Superintendent Van Tassel to speak on behalf of the Joint Facilities Committee. Superintendent Van Tassel thanked First Selectman Mack for the invitation to attend the meeting this evening and for the consideration by the board to move forward with this. He feels this will be a good step forward in understanding our facility needs within the public school system but also to support capital projects moving forward and having a plan as to what we will do in the years ahead. The Board of Education member who will be serving on the Joint Facilities Committee will be Michael Sepko who is the chair of the Board of Education Finance and Facilities Subcommittee as well.

Selectman Reynolds inquired as to the frequency of meeting for the Joint Facilities Committee. First Selectman Mack gave him a brief outline of her expectations based on the work they will be tasked with doing but did not provide a specific schedule at this time.

Selectman Reynolds motioned to approve formation of Joint Facilities Committee as presented. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

COVID-19 Suffield Long Term Recovery Update

Discussion of in-person Town and Board meetings

First Selectman Mack gave the following statement:

“I am saddened to report that we have experienced an increase of 13 cases in 11 days in Suffield. Based on these numbers it is safe to say that we are likely experiencing an uptick in Suffield to some extent. Over the summer, we stayed relatively flat and now we are undeniably increasing. Based on the State of CT Case Rate per 100,000 data Suffield is experiencing 4 cases per 100,000 versus towns such as Granby, East Granby, who have 1 case per 100,000, Simsbury and Somers who have 2 cases per 100,000 and Enfield which has 3 cases per 100,000. Suffield is trending higher than our surrounding towns. Due to this increasing trend in Suffield we are being watched closely by the North Central District Health Department. Having said that I surveyed the department heads yesterday on the status of admitting public to Town buildings as we said we would, in four to six weeks, at our last meeting when we discussed this. The governor and his public health advisors are still recommending that certain age groups and those with preexisting conditions stay home and stay safe. This precaution is necessary with respect to our own town employees as many are in the age that are at greater risk. In fact, I think I might fall into that range as well. We have to be very mindful that we are trying very hard to protect our town employees in addition to the public.”

“I will be a little silly here and that that unlike the Patriots, when Cam Newton was diagnosed with COVID, we don’t have a bench to pull from. If the Town Engineer, Building Official, Town Clerk, or First Selectman fall ill, Suffield’s municipal services will stop. It’s as simple as that. There is no temp agency I can pull from. Our multi-town mutual aid that might be able to pitch in when we have some needs are simply not available during the pandemic. I reiterated my question to department heads if business is able to be conducted with limited public access to our facilities. All responding department heads stated that they are able to do their work and are busier than ever. To-date, feedback I have received for admission to town buildings is based on desire

rather than an impediment to doing business. When needed, departments are happy to make appointments and arrangements on a case by case basis to meet residents in the parking lots or in extenuating circumstances, in person inside while socially distancing. When phone calls, mail, email, zoom meetings, face time and other technological alternatives do not suffice we will make other arrangements. Departments are also willing to assist customers with technological challenges or other impediments that may be the issue with why people want to come into the buildings. I want to restate my request that anyone from the public who is unable to perform town business through virtual means to please email me in addition to the department head of the area they are trying to engage with and I will personally make sure their needs are met. At this time I am strongly recommending that we keep the status quo so that we can continue doing business in Suffield.”

First Selectman Mack provided follow-up with on the prospect of having a version of in-person meetings as had been promised at the beginning of September. Since that time, First Selectman Mack has asked the Board of Education, who has been receiving a lot of pressure to meet in person, to serve as the pilot for a hybrid meeting in which the Board of Education and administration meet in person with required indoor compliance of mask wearing and six feet between each participant, and the public can participate via Zoom or other virtual platform. First Selectman Mack invited Technology Director Becky Osleger to provide an update on how the hybrid meeting worked and what would be needed from a technology standpoint if we were to implement this type of meeting format and what type of impact this would have on our town hall meeting room renovations as we are currently in the middle of construction and technology enhancement opportunities.

Director Osleger discussed the observations that were made during the first hybrid meeting with the Board of Education, both positive and negative. A large concern is the current visuals depending on whether the individual is participating in person or virtual. There will be an obvious need for upgraded cameras to ensure quality communication amongst all parties participating. Director Osleger went on to explain what would be necessary if the town moved all of its board and commission meetings to a hybrid approach. There will be an increased need for spaces that can accommodate technological needs such as audio, lighting and cameras. In addition, custodial services will be required to ensure safety protocols are followed and the areas are thoroughly sanitized before and after each meeting and hosting will take on a different look from how it is currently being handled due to a more complex scenario being in place. Director Osleger participated in a walk-thru of the meeting rooms currently being renovated at Town Hall and had the opportunity to express her ideas for what will be necessary as we move forward and prepare for the ability to live stream, record, and hold hybrid type meetings. If this is the direction we plan to move in outside of the pandemic we will need to give serious thought to the number of spaces we have available for this hybrid type of meeting; planning for at least four locations. Possible locations would include Town Hall meeting rooms, the Police Department Community Room and space in either Suffield High School or Suffield Middle School.

Selectman Reynolds asked First Selectman Mack for clarification on the current cases identified in Suffield which First Selectman Mack provided. Based on the information Selectman Reynolds expressed his desire to be very careful when considering opening things up and we should keep things as they are for now and continue to monitor the situation as further information becomes available.

First Selectman Mack explained that the CT Department of Corrections has decided that the COVID-19 positive cases showing symptoms will now be housed at McDougall-Walker Correctional Facility. She has lodged her concerns with the CT Department of Corrections because of the fact that we have a volunteer ambulance association that is based on volunteers which is typically staffed by one ambulance, perhaps two, and any additional strain on our services will have an impact on the town, not to mention if their exposure leads to COVID-19 positive cases among our first responders. First Selectman Mack will be monitoring the status at McDougall-Walker and advocating as needed.

Selectman Mahoney expressed his desire to get back to in-person meetings, however, he is not hearing anything that makes him believe that we are ready at this time. He noted that although the positive case number is still

relatively small, we are not moving in the right direction. He supports the idea of the Board of Education experimenting with a hybrid approach, which will allow us to get valuable information, but he would not be looking to expand it any further as it will require much coordination and consideration before any major decisions can be made.

First Selectman Mack agreed with all and would like to get the price for the Town Hall in order to provide us with the flexibility that we will need and position us to take advantage of the best of all worlds.

Selectman Harrington asked if the public would be allowed to attend a hybrid meeting in person or only remotely post pandemic. First Selectman Mack responded that this model will allow us to be flexible and when it is safe the public will be allowed to choose whether to attend in person or virtually. Director Osleger agreed. Selectman Harrington expressed her concern that she did not want the hybrid model to prohibit the public from attending in the long-term and feels that participation is essential.

Selectman Hill agreed with Selectman Mahoney and would like to see the costs that will be entailed. He expressed his desire for flexibility and fluidity with the hybrid model and would like to avoid getting locked into one spot. He noted that meeting participation is key to a better meeting and looks forward to that, however, pumping the brakes for a bit is a good idea at this time due to the uptick in numbers that we are beginning to see as the cooler weather has arrived and people will be indoors.

First Selectman Mack stated she would be in favor of the Board of Education continuing to experiment and would like to position the town so that when it is safe to expand the meeting process we have really vetted the technology, the set-up and the acoustics so that we are set up for success. As long as Superintendent Van Tassel and Chairman Davis are comfortable with it, the First Selectman is comfortable as well. First Selectman Mack asked if the other selectmen were fine with this position. Selectman Harrington said she was very comfortable as long as the Superintendent, Chairman and board were also comfortable and she appreciates them providing feedback and information. Selectman Reynolds asked for clarification of who would be physically in attendance and the safety protocols involved he also agreed.

Expanding on the Town Hall renovation discussion, Director Osleger explained that she would be doing some very slight wiring changes while the walls are open but she will be getting costs for all technology improvements as needed and will then report back to the board. First Selectman Mack agreed with this approach.

Update on November 2020 election

Town Clerk's update.

- As of today we have issued over 2500 absentee ballots - 350 of them have come back.
- We anticipate the real rush to come in the last two weeks of October.
- The last Presidential election 800 ballots were processed
- The addition of the permanently installed "Official Ballot Box" in front of 61 Ff Tyler Place allows the voters a safe, well lit alternative to returning the ballots by mail.
- Many resident have used this option in the last couple of days. The boxed is checked multiple times a day even on the weekends.
- With updated technology, such as scanner guns and DYMO label printers, the time to process and receive the ballots has been greatly reduced.
- Along with processing all the applications the Town Clerk's Office must maintain them alphabetically for a period of 22 months after the Election.

- Town Clerk's Office are very appreciative for all the help they have received from town offices, especially the personnel of the Registrar of Voters Office.
- Our first round of ballots were mailed on Friday 10/2/2020 (in accordance with Ct Statue) and most of them arrived to residents in the town already.

Registrar Update

Registrar Darlene Burrell provided the following update:

- Registrar's Office is very busy
- Over 1,000 records have either been added or changed
- Receiving numerous questions from residents, especially with regard to methods of voting
- For the election they are planning to have more people than usual
- Several grants have been received thus far – approximately \$15,000
- Grant money will be used as follows:
 - More workers
 - Curbside voting
 - Personnel to keep areas sanitized
 - Personnel to ensure no cross contamination with regard to traffic flow patterns being enforced
 - Disposable pens
 - Additional police
 - Signage
 - Station dividers
 - Postage and mailing labels
- No contingency funds should be required as expenses should be covered by grant funds and funds normally budgeted for Election

Discussion and approval of CTCL COVID-19 Response Grant from the Center for Tech and Civic Life

First Selectman Mack asked Registrar Darlene Burrell to provide a quick update on the CTCL COVID-19 Response Grant from the Center for Tech and Civic Life. First Selectman Mack explained that this grant does not need approval by the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Finance because it is from a non-profit. The Charter only requires an approval process if it is state or federal funding.

Registrar Burrell provided the following update:

- Town Planner Bill Hawkins informed Ms. Burrell about the money being offered through Common Cause
- Ms. Burrell reached out to Common Cause who forwarded her to Center for Tech and Civic Life which is an organization who wants to ensure that the election runs smoothly and there are no difficulties as a result of a funds shortage
- Requested our election budget numbers and upon review they granted us \$5,526 to help with expenses
- Must provide proof of what it was spent on which have to be COVID-19 related costs

First Selectman Mack thanked Ms. Burrell, Lynn Joyal and the registrar staff as well as all of the individuals who have been working so hard to make this election successful.

Selectman Hill expressed his thought that it is vital to have signage directing individuals to the appropriate location for voting. Ms. Burrell agreed, however, also explained they are trying to avoid having people wait until the last minute to come out and register and therefore the signage will be going out in a week or so.

Update on temporary Parks & Recreation Enrichment Programming

First Selectman Mack noted that other communities, as well as the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, are reaching out to us to see how we are operating the program. First Selectman Mack extended her thanks to Director Leclerc and his staff along with Youth Services for all their hard work and willingness to put this program together.

First Selectman Mack gave the following summary of the S-PREP program through October overview from Parks and Recreation Director Pete Leclerc:

- We were able to accommodate three more students for Cohort A for the month of October, including the addition of one sibling of an existing participant.
- Cohort B was at capacity for the month and has seen some turn over, due to a family withdrawing to attend a private school for full-time learning. They sent a nice note praising the program and staff, while thanking the town for offering the service.
- Those slots were filled, and Cohort B is at capacity until more staff are able to be hired.
- We have not had many applicants for the program assistant position; which is a current trend for education positions.
- One additional staff member has been hired.
- As this is a new program for everyone, the processes are constantly being refined.
- For ease of access to be put on the waiting list, at the suggestion of a constituent, we have created an on-line waiting list for S-PREP that families can register for, if they are interested.
- The registration link for the waiting list can be found through the Parks and Recreation link on the town website, or directly at: www.suffieldrec.com . If anyone has any questions about the program, they are encouraged to email: recreation@suffieldct.gov.
- Based on the financial information shared with you, the program is covering its expenses.

Economic Development Update

First Selectman Mack asked Planning and Development Director, Bill Hawkins, to provide an economic development update this evening because some of these items could end up impacting future Board of Selectmen agenda items including the optional municipal tax abatement provisions for farmers.

Director Hawkins provided the following update:

100 Marketing Drive

- Potential sale to Rug Pad USA – Getting closer to purchasing the property; 98% there according to the attorneys.
- First Selectman Mack and Director Hawkins have contacted the DECD Commissioner and State Reps for help. They are all aware of the transaction and that Rug Pad may locate elsewhere if the deal does not go through.
- Eviction & foreclosure actions, encumbrances on the property have caused delays.
- Rug Pad USA – Currently have 75 employees.
- Would relocate and create 50 to 150 employees in Suffield within 3-5 years.
- 2019 revenues of \$26M – 2020 revenues projected to be over \$30M
- Rug Pad is seeking the Bradley Airport Development Zone (BADZ) benefit – 80% abatement on property taxes for 5 years and would ask Suffield for an addition 2 years of the benefit.

Lily House Bed & Breakfast, 13 Bridge Street

- Removed the old garage and rebuilt it in a slightly different location.
- The new structure is built to commercial standards so that Moxy Boutique can be located in a portion of it.
- Plan to open the boutique in November.

Francesco's – Mountain Road

- Will be replacing sign, awning, windows, and painting the building to refresh the look.

Bissell Meeting House

- Officially closed.
- Restaurant was part of Suffield Commons at 82 N. Main Street.
- COVID-19 cited as main contributing factor.

Bar Fore Grill

- Located at Suffield Country Club.
- Opened over the summer and have been collaborating with local farms for fresh ingredients.

Suffield Village

- The Design Review Board had a meeting on 9-24 to review a standalone ATM in the Village parking lot.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission will also need to review a site plan modification application for the use, which is expected this month.

Webster Bank Building

- New owner is working on a plan and seeking approval to have a café on the north side of the building

1524 Mapleton Avenue

- Gas station reopened.
- All new pumps, canopy, signage and pavement.
- Store cleaned up and property back in productive use after being vacant for 4-5 years.

1760 Mapleton Ave.

- Development group considering former culinary school property for market rate apartments.
- This property has vacant for 6 or 7 years.

200 Mountain Road

- 4,600 SF office building and 6 condominiums currently under construction.

Broad Brook Brewery 915 South Street

- Opened to the public this summer.
- In 2016 they applied to the Bradley Airport Development Zone program to receive property tax abatement.
- They are following up on the paperwork with Director Hawkins at this time.

1700 Mountain Road

- Home base for Baker's Nursery for a number of years
- Prides Corner Nursery – Based in Lebanon, CT with two other locations in the state have a closing date to acquire nearly 130 acres of Baker Nursery property.
- Acquisition involves several parcels stretching from Mountain Rd, N. Stone, and Ratley Road.
- Nursery has over 700 employees (including seasonal)
- Have hired some local workers who were former employers of Bakers Nursery.

Poole Road

- Baker Nursery looking to close on sale of property to Four Seasons Farm in the next couple of weeks.
- Back in 2016, this property was approved for a large commercial greenhouse growing hydroponic tomatoes.
- The first phase would be 11.79 acres of greenhouse with a 68K SF support building with the potential of 43 acres if fully built-out.
- They will be transferring approximately 68 acres to the Suffield Land Conservancy to satisfy a requirement in the Army Corps of Engineers permit.

Firestone Drive

- A 70-acre property owned by Dewhirst Associates off the end of road have worked out a tentative deal with Ferrell Gas (Blue Rhino is a division of Ferrell) to build a propane tank refurbishment & distribution facility.
- Ferrell Gas have 11 such facilities in the country.
- This would be their Northeast Facility
- Town staff had a meeting last week to discuss the proposal with Ferrell Gas and their engineer.
- More information is needed from them in order to analyze zoning regulations more thoroughly regarding large above ground propane tanks that would be housed on the property.
- 24,000 Sq. Ft. building with up to 50 employees
- Facility would house up to 200,000 20 pound propane tanks

50 Ucar Street

- Praxair/Linde working on plans to expand facility with more office space and material storage and shipping facilities.
- Likely will see site plan application in the coming months.

South Street

- Application in front of the Planning and Zoning Commission for 8,400SF commercial building, which will be a combination of office and storage with multiple units for small businesses.
- The property is over 7 acres with room for expansion if needed.
- Public hearing will be held in a few months.

Ffyer Place

- Economic Development Commission has been reviewing ways to make the private property on Ffyer Place more marketable to encourage economic development.
- Staff met with Lauren Enterprises and a landscape architect about screening the highway garage.
- We are exploring the town property to the east of the garage for wetlands to see if a portion of the property could be used for storage and/or circulation purposes.
- Staff is also reviewing Ffyer Place to determine what it will take to get the road up to town standards for the possibility of making it a public road.

Other

- Neighborhood Assistance Act project approved - We are currently trying to sell \$150,000 worth of tax credits for street light conversion to LED's.
- Suffield was awarded an affordable housing plan technical assistance grant from Dept. of Housing. Staff is working on an RFP to get consultant on-board to help draft the plan.
- RFP for Facilities Master Plan
 - Draft complete
 - Permanent Building Committee members reviewing with hope to finalize and issue next week.
 - Tentative schedule – Advertise RFP possibly next week , Open Bids beginning of November, Interviews throughout November, Price Review, Document Submission, Contract Execution late November/early December Commence Work late December/early January.

Selectman Reynolds inquired about the zoning for 1760 Mapleton Avenue which Director Hawkins explained in detail. Selectman Reynolds feels that building apartments would be a good use of that property. He expressed his doubts about the success of the café at Webster Bank during these difficult times, however, wishes them well.

Selectman Harrington thanked Director Hawkins for the fantastic run down of all the projects currently in progress in town.

Discussion and approval of transfer of \$50,000 from the Open Space Account Development Rights line item into the Appraisal/Survey Services line item and refer to Board of Finance

Director Hawkins provided the following overview:

- Farmland preservation has been a priority in Suffield for decades

- Part of our success comes from the towns willingness to participate in the farmland preservation program by having funds set aside
- Director Hawkins is seeking transfer from the Development Rights line item to the Appraisal/Survey Services line item in the Open Space account to pay for consultant services on future farmland preservation projects.
- It takes a lot to get a property ready for Preservation and the Appraisal/Survey Services line item it used for property appraisals, surveys, and any other studies needed which can become quite costly depending on property size and configuration.
- Costs are much higher on these types of appraisals and surveys
 - A typical A-2 survey can cost between \$6,000 - \$15,000
 - A typical property appraisal can cost \$4,000 - \$5,000 and two are required for the Farmland Preservation Program and DEEP Open Space grant programs.
- The \$50,000 request is to cover these costs for properties under preservation consideration over the next few years.
- Similar requests were made in 2007, 2010 and 2015
- Having these funds in place has helped expedite the process and sometimes acts as a partial match toward a project.
- No cost to the town at this time as this request transfers existing funds into appraisal services line item of the Open Space account, which has a current balance of \$998,000.
- The anticipated cost to the town is \$50,000 as we expect to utilize all the funds over the next few years.

Selectman Reynolds motioned that the Board of Selectmen approves the request to transfer \$50,000 from the Development Rights line item to the Surveys and Appraisals line item of the Open Space account and moves the request to the Board of Finance. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and appointment of alternate member to the Parks & Recreation Commission to fill the remainder of Andrew Joly's term through September 30, 2020 and amend to June 30, 2024 per Town Charter

Selectman Reynolds motioned to appoint Anthony Migliozi as alternate member to the Parks & Recreation Commission to fill the remainder of Andrew Joly's term through September 30, 2020 and amend to June 30, 2024 per Town Charter. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and appointment of alternate member to the Parks & Recreation Commission to fill the remainder of Sam Lombardo's term through June 30, 2023.

Selectman Reynolds motioned to appoint Stephen Marchillo as alternate member to the Parks & Recreation Commission to fill the remainder of Sam Lombardo's term through June 30, 2023.

Selectman Hill motioned to amend the agenda to include agenda item 10a. "Discussion and approval of Resolution Supporting Participation in the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification Program." Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of Resolution Supporting Participation in the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification Program

First Selectman Mack explained that this resolution had been adopted back in March of 2020, which is required for us to be able to participate in the program offered by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities where

we work with our environmental and sustainability committee to make improvements in town and get our certification as a sustainable community. Unfortunately, COVID-19 hit shortly after it was adopted and the adoption needs to be redone as it has been longer than 90 days since we started the program. First Selectman Mack noted that the resolution had been circulated to all the selectmen and a motion will be entertained to accept as presented. Selectman Harrington pointed out that there was an error in the document. Where it reads “committee shall report annually to a town council” it should read “to the Board of Selectmen.”

Corrected resolution reads as follows:

**Town of Suffield
Resolution Supporting Participation
In the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification Program**

WHEREAS, Sustainable CT is a comprehensive, statewide, action-oriented voluntary certification program, built by and for municipalities, with the vision that: Sustainable CT communities strive to be thriving, resilient, collaborative, and forward-looking; they build community and local economy; they equitably promote the health and well-being of current and future residents; and, they respect the finite capacity of the natural environment, and

WHEREAS, Sustainable CT is designed to boost local economies, help municipal operations become more efficient, reduce operating costs, and provide grants and additional support to municipalities, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Suffield embraces an ongoing process of working toward greater sustainability, selecting which actions it chooses to pursue from the voluntary menu of actions provided by Sustainable CT,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN OF THE TOWN OF SUFFIELD that the Town of Suffield Water Pollution Control Authority Superintendent is hereby authorized to serve as Suffield Sustainable CT representative for the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification process and authorize him/her to complete Municipal Registration on behalf of the Town of Suffield,

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to focus attention and effort within Suffield on matters of sustainability, and in order to promote the Board of Selectman’s local initiatives and actions toward Sustainable CT Municipal Certification, the Board of Selectman authorizes the Town’s First Selectman to establish an advisory Sustainable CT Committee.

- The first meeting of the Sustainable CT Committee must be held within 90 days of passing this resolution.
- The Sustainable CT Committee shall meet as frequently as needed, but no less than quarterly.
- The Sustainable CT Committee shall report annually to the Board of Selectmen on the progress of its activities toward Sustainable CT certification, with reports and presentations made publicly available.

Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the Resolution Supporting Participation in the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification Program as presented and amended. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Retirement of Gerry Turbet

First Selectman Mack made the following statement:

“It is with mixed emotions and sincere gratitude that I announce that after 32 years as the Town Engineer at the Town of Suffield Gerry Turbet has announced he will be retiring on December 31, 2020. I’m so happy that Gerry is healthy and in a position to enjoy his retirement after a successful career serving the town. He has certainly earned it! However, I know the difficult task it will be to fill his shoes! He is leaving behind a very proud legacy! Our roads and bridges are the envy of surrounding towns in two states! I am personally grateful for Gerry’s dedication to Suffield and for the quality, integrity and impeccable work ethic Gerry has always brought to his work. I am appreciative that he is willing to help transition 32 years of institutional knowledge (and files) so someone can pick up where he is leaving off. We are updating the Town Engineer Job Description (after 32 years, it was done on a typewriter and it needs a few tweaks) and HR will be posting it as soon as possible. We will plan a time to celebrate Gerry and his long career with his coworkers, family and friends as soon as it is safe to do so.”

Remington Street Bridge Update from Construction Meeting on October 1, 2020

First Selectman Mack referenced photos that were provided to the selectman and gave the following update:

- The first picture shows the contractor in the final stages of installing reinforcement steel in preparation for the concrete deck pour scheduled for tomorrow or Friday (subject to completion of steel rebar work and weather). The pour will involve pumping 180 cubic yards of concrete from 18 trucks to form the concrete deck on which 3 inches of pavement will be placed.
- Pictures from both sides of the bridge structure show the brook channel restoration to be mostly completed.
- The latest payment request (No. 7) shows approximately \$2.5 million out of a total of \$3.8 million of work completed as of the end of September.
- Likely project completion (subject to material delays) is sometime in November.

Bond Issuance

- Bond issuance successfully closed on Tuesday.
- \$11,383,413.20 deposited to our General Fund account, reflecting over \$848,000 premium on our \$10,535,000 bond issuance.
- Congratulations to everyone involved.
- This week First Selectman Mack, Finance Director Deb Cerrato and Business Manager Bill Hoff attended a compliance call with Bond Counsel to understand the continuing disclosure rules for transactions that would trigger the town’s required disclosures.
- The Finance Director will be informing the Water Pollution Control Authority Superintendent and its Business Manager and the Town Treasurer to assist us in spotting these items in order to avoid defaults for failure to disclose certain transactions.
- Department heads who may be involved in any material transactions will also be updated, such as Technology, Highway and Public Works that may enter into lease/purchase agreements or other types of transactions that could require disclosure.

Halloween Update

- Given upward trends in COVID-19 in Suffield and the Department of Public Health’s guidelines noting Trick or Treating as a “high risk” activity” the town department heads have been working together in order to provide safer alternatives to allow for a Halloween experience based on each family’s risk tolerance.
- Halloween has not been cancelled in Suffield, but is at your own risk
- Desire is to provide people with numerous options so that they can do what makes them feel most comfortable.
- Suffield Halloween Lights will be held at Bruce Park on October 29th with a rain date of October 30th.
- Communication regarding upcoming events will be put out within the next week or so.

350th Activities

- Fireworks 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, 10/10/20 – Rain date is Sunday, 10/11/2020
- Car Parade – 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, 10/11/20
- Livestream Anniversary Commemoration – 10:00 a.m. Monday, 10/12/2020
- Field of Flags – On Town Green and Veterans Park from October 10th through Veterans Day

Public Comment – Limited to 30 minutes

Selectman Mahoney wanted to comment on the tone of public comment and made the following statement. *“It is certainly understood that people feel strongly about public matters. Folks here that are participating in a Board of Selectmen meeting when we talk about things that we feel very strongly about it is easy to say something, say more than we should, and may even sometimes say things that we don’t even fully mean. Public comment, the rules of public comment, can help us with that. Public comment is limited to the merits of action by the Board of Selectmen and personal attacks are out of order during public comment. We had two weeks ago a speaker tell the Board of Selectmen “not to just care about the white people.” That is a pretty offensive thing to say and it is certainly an attack that has no place in public comment. I would like to think that the person who said that would choose to say something different if she was to do that over again. We also had someone whose use of a quotation by a Holocaust survivor suggested that residents of Suffield that have not adopted her point of view are Nazis or Nazi supporters. Suffield, Connecticut in the United States of America in the year 2020 is not Nazi Germany. We also had, when board member Pete Hill began speaking at the last meeting, he was interrupted by someone who said “well here we go.” I want to once again emphasize I understand that people feel strongly about things and we can become emotionally involved and under those circumstances perhaps become less careful what we are saying than we otherwise might be. Public comment is limited to the merits of proposed action through the board and personal attacks are out of order. Thank you.”*

Kristina Hallett, 1211 Newgate Road – Ms. Hallett thanked First Selectman Mack and each member of the board for hearing the concerns of the residents and for the statement that was released tonight. Ms. Hallett also informed the group of an inclusion event called “Lift Every Voice” that will be happening this Saturday at 1:00 p.m. on the town green. Event is open to all.

Beth Krasemann, 185 North Main Street – Ms. Krasemann echoed the sentiments of Ms. Hallett and thanked First Selectman Mack and the entire board for their statement.

Linda Cunningham, 79 Bridge Street – Ms. Cunningham thanked First Selectman Mack and the entire board for listening to concerns and for their statement this evening. She also liked the conversation earlier with regard to holding future meetings.

Robin Henrie, 12 Pheasant Lane – Ms. Henrie thanked First Selectman Mack and the entire board for the statement provided this evening. She acknowledged that it took a lot of thought and care on their part and she truly appreciates it and feels that it will go a long way.

Ann Franczyk, 31 Greenbrier Lane – Ms. Franczyk thanked the entire board for their statement and the support they have provided.

Andrea Prusi, 3925 Phelps Road – Ms. Prusi thanked First Selectman Mack and the entire board for the statement provided this evening and for taking the time to listen.

Sherry Paquette, 579 Babbs Road – Ms. Paquette gave a heartfelt thank you to First Selectman Mack and the entire board for their consideration and the statement made tonight. She also wanted to thank Town Planner Bill Hawkins for his economic development presentation this evening which she felt was fantastic! Ms. Paquette also thanked Selectmen Reynolds for his comments about additional apartments in town, encouraging those who cannot afford a house, to still be afforded an opportunity to come and enjoy Suffield.

Annie Hornish, 584 Thrall Avenue – Ms. Hornish expressed her sincere thanks to First Selectman Mack and the entire board for the statement issued this evening.

Amy Hawkins, 57 Third Street – Ms. Hawkins wanted to echo the sentiments of the crowd and thanked Selectman Mack and the entire board for their statement tonight. She also wanted to acknowledge Selectman Mahoney’s comments pertaining to the use of a quote by Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, as she had been the individual who read the quote at the last Board of Selectmen’s meeting. She expressed her desire to have an opportunity to speak privately with Selectman Mahoney at a later time as she feels he may have “misunderstood the spirit and intent” of her use of that quote and she thinks they could probably learn from each other.

Neil Hornish, 584 Thrall Avenue – Mr. Hornish thanked First Selectman Mack and the entire board for the statement provided this evening

Molly Vianney, 94 Day Avenue – Ms. Vianney thanked First Selectman Mack and the entire board for making an anti-biased/anti-racist statement and for listening to their constituents.

Elizabeth Warren, 185 North Main Street – Ms. Warren thanked First Selectman Mack and the entire board for the statement made this evening. She expressed the importance of the statement in making those in the community feel welcome. Ms. Warren spoke on behalf of all our international and students of color at Suffield Academy and all other marginalized students and faculty and staff, and explained that it means the world to them to know that First Selectman Mack and the board of selectmen are here for them and supporting them as well. Although the students don’t necessarily call Suffield “home,” it is their “home” for 9 months of the year.

Jack Henrie, 12 Pheasant Lane – Mr. Henrie also wanted to echo the sentiment of others this evening in thanking First Selectman Mack and each of the board members for their well thought out statement and exactly what the ABAR group had been looking for. He feels it will go a long way in making sure that our town is viewed as a welcoming community.

Selectman Hill motioned to enter Executive Session regarding Kent Memorial Library Legal Action, Town Hall Union Contract and Dispatch Union Contract and invited Town Attorney Derek Donnelly to attend at 8:37 p.m. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session ended at 9:03 p.m.

Selectman Harrington motioned to table Executive Session regarding Town Hall Union Contract. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Action on Executive Sessions

Selectman Hill motioned to approve the Dispatch Union Contract as presented. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Harrington motioned to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary