

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
NOVEMBER 16, 2022  
7:00 P.M.  
Town Hall Meeting Room, 83 Mountain Road, Suffield CT  
Hybrid Meeting**

**Selectmen present:** Colin Moll, Mel Chafetz, Kathleen Harrington, Pete Hill and Jerry Mahoney

**Also present in person or via Zoom:** Human Resource Director Karin Ziemba, Director of Planning & Development Bill Hawkins and Business Manager Bill Hoff (via zoom)

**First Selectman Moll** called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment**

None

**Approval of the minutes from the November 2, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen**

**Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the minutes from the November 2, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen with the following changes as noted:**

Page 1 - Under Department Updates from Director of Finance the sixth line says “each departments” should read “each department.”

Page 2 – The second paragraph needs a period at the end.

Page 4 – There were two duplicative motions for agenda item #11 as it already appears on Page 3 and when **Selectman Harrington** motioned to amend agenda item #13 it is also stated twice.

**Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Department updates from the Human Resources Director**

**First Selectman Moll** invited **Human Resources Director Karin Ziemba** to address the board. **Ms. Ziemba** gave a comprehensive overview of the Human Resources Department which included updates on recent retirements, open positions filled during 2022 and ongoing recruitment efforts. She provided a detailed overview of the role that the Human Resources department plays in the town-wide recruitment process from the initial job posting to the new hire onboarding. **Ms. Ziemba** touched on the recent changes to the review process for Department Heads, the status of union contracts, employee recognition efforts, the roll out of the new Time Clock Plus system, the latest updates to the town’s retiree benefits and the cost-saving measures being incorporated into the current employee benefit plans.

The selectmen thanked **Ms. Ziemba** for her very thorough update and congratulated her on the impressive accomplishments of the Human Resource Department.

**Discussion and reappointment of Nathan Prusi to the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2026**

Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the reappointment of Nathan Prusi to the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2026. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion and reappointment of Marcia Dufore to the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2026**

Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the reappointment of Marcia Dufore to the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2026. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion and reappointment of Sharon Bruno to the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2026**

Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the reappointment of Sharon Bruno to the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2026. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion and approval to allow the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee to expand their role and duties**

First Selectman Moll invited the Chairman of the Veteran's Memorial Expansion Committee, Dave Gauthier, to present to the board. Mr. Gauthier discussed whether it would be more appropriate to create one memorial honoring all veterans or create two memorials. One memorial would represent veterans who entered active duty elsewhere but moved to Suffield and lived here for 20 years or more and fit certain additional criteria. This particular memorial would continue to grow over time with Mr. Gauthier estimating 100 or 200 names to be included initially and perhaps an additional 10 names each year thereafter. The other memorial would encompass all other veterans who had served. It was noted that conceptual designs would be required in both instances.

Discussion ensued with the selectmen asking Mr. Gauthier numerous questions regarding the size of the proposed memorial(s), the proposed location(s), whether or not additional land would be required and the design that the expansion committee has in mind. Also discussed in depth was the strong desire for some to have their individual name on a memorial versus being honored on a general monument for all veterans. Mr. Gauthier tried to explain that it was a very emotional decision for some as to whether they could even talk about what happened to them during war time, however, a recognition by name on a memorial gave them a sort of validation for what they went through. Mr. Gauthier also reviewed the completed tasks, as well as the open tasks of the committee and noted that at this time the main focus is to address veterans from 1991 forward and determine a course of action for memorializing them and their service.

The selectmen discussed their concerns regarding the idea of two separate monuments/memorials and came to an agreement that the best way to proceed at this time would be to build one memorial that encompasses all veterans. They see this approach to be the fairest way to do it and agree that it will also eliminate the possibility of leaving anyone out accidentally. Selectman Hill suggested that the proposed memorial should be somewhat grand in nature and should also include additional seating which would allow individuals to sit and reflect nearby. All were in agreement with this idea. Each selectman thanked Mr. Gauthier for all of his hard work on this project, recognizing that it is a delicate topic and he has been faced with a difficult task.

**Selectman Harrington motioned to allow the Veteran's Memorial Expansion Committee to expand their role and duties to include creation of one memorial/plaque to include all veterans. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Mr. Gauthier** continued with a second topic involving the inaccuracy of the current maps and plot plan for Veterans Memorial Park. He explained that an updated survey and updated plot map with the exact location of items already on the property should be undertaken before moving forward with any future design plans. **Mr. Gauthier** stressed that an architect will want to have an accurate plot plan before embarking on a monument/memorial project and estimated that an updated survey will cost approximately \$20,000. The group discussed possible ways to fund such an endeavor. It was determined that further information is required before the selectmen can make any type of decision on this topic. **Mr. Gauthier** agreed to return at a later date with more detail.

**Discussion and approval of the purchase of development rights to the Chmiel Farm located on Hill Street and recommend to the Board of Finance and Town Meeting**

**First Selectman Moll** invited **Director of Planning and Development Bill Hawkins** to address the board. **Mr. Hawkins** referenced a memo he had provided to the board in advance of the meeting this evening which outlined the background of the Chmiel Farm property located at 1449 Hill Street. He provided information pertaining to the property itself and explained the value in preserving this piece of property. Discussion ensued among the selectmen and **Mr. Hawkins** answered all their questions accordingly.

**Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the expenditure of \$37,600 (subject to any adjustment due to the final survey acreage) from the open space fund for the purchase of development rights to the 38.97 +/- acre Chmiel Farm located at 1449 Hill Street and refers the request to the Board of Finance and Town Meeting.**

**Selectman Mahoney** stated that he would be voting against this item. His feeling is that the town has purchased a lot of development rights and seems to already have a lot of open space. He noted that with an agenda item to create an Affordable Housing Commission up for discussion this evening it would seem that there is at least a perception that housing in town is NOT affordable and as development rights continue to be purchased it will only put upward pressure on the cost to build in town.

**Vote: 4 in favor (Moll, Harrington, Hill and Chafetz) and 1 against (Mahoney.) Motion passed.**

**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**

**First Selectman Moll** invited **Director of Planning and Development Bill Hawkins** to address the board. **Mr. Hawkins** provided a brief overview of the reasoning behind the transfer of funds. He provided background on farmland preservation over the years and why it is important to the town. He explained what the funds will be used for and the fact that there is no financial impact to the town.

**Selectman Harrington motioned to approve 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 refer the request to the Board of Finance. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Discussion and approval to authorize the Suffield Board of Education to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for the proposed boiler replacement project at McAlister School, A. Ward Spaulding School, and proposed HVAC Rooftop Units replacement project at Suffield High School**

**First Selectman Moll** invited **Business Manager Bill Hoff** to present to the board. **Mr. Hoff** provided an overview of the grant to be applied for and the estimated reimbursement the Town of Suffield will receive should they receive the funds. He discussed projects in each of the three schools mentioned and the current condition of each system to be addressed. **Mr. Hoff** provided high level cost estimates and anticipated life expectancy of each facility. He stated that he was coming before the board this evening to get approval to apply for the grant and expects that he will be back before the Board of Selectmen for further approval. Discussion ensued among the selectmen and **Mr. Hoff** who answered all questions accordingly.

**Selectman Harrington** asked for clarification that all **Mr. Hoff** was asking of the board this evening was to authorize the Board of Education to apply for the grant and that the Board of Education would be coming back to the Board of Selectmen at a later date regarding funding of the projects. **Mr. Hoff** agreed and explained the full process that will be required in order to move forward should the application be approved, including the calling of a Town Meeting.

**Selectman Harrington read the motions as drafted and provided by Mr. Hoff as follows:**

**McAlister Boiler Replacement**

RESOLVED, that the Suffield Board of Selectmen authorizes the Suffield Board of Education to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for the proposed boiler replacement project at McAlister School.

RESOLVED, that the McAlister boiler replacement project is hereby assigned to the Permanent Building Commission.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the proposed boiler replacement at McAlister School.

**A. Ward Spaulding Boiler Replacement**

RESOLVED, that the Suffield Board of Selectmen authorizes the Suffield Board of Education to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for the proposed boiler replacement project at A. Ward Spaulding School.

RESOLVED, that the A. Ward Spaulding boiler replacement project is hereby assigned to the Permanent Building Commission.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the proposed boiler replacement at A. Ward Spaulding School.

## **Suffield High School HVAC Rooftop Unit Replacement**

RESOLVED, that the Suffield Board of Selectmen authorizes the Suffield Board of Education to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for the proposed HVAC Rooftop Units replacement project at Suffield High School.

RESOLVED, that the HVAC Rooftop Units replacement project is hereby assigned to the Permanent Building Commission.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the proposed HVAC Rooftop Units replacement project at Suffield High School.

**Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Discussion and approval to form an Affordable Housing Committee**

**First Selectman Moll** explained that a few months ago, the Affordable Housing Plan had been approved. He feels it would be in the town's best interest to form a small committee made up of the following members:

- 1 member of the Board of Selectmen
- 1 member of the Social Services Commission
- 1 member of the Planning and Zoning Commission
- 1 member of the Board of Finance
- 3 interested citizens

His vision for this committee would be for them to make recommendations based off of the plan to the Board of Selectmen in terms of what the town can do and what they would like to do in regards to affordable housing moving forward in Suffield.

**Selectman Harrington** expressed her support of the idea, mentioned that she had served on the committee that came up with the plan and stated she would be willing to volunteer to serve on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.

**Selectman Mahoney motioned to approve the formation of an Affordable Housing Committee. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Discussion of Environmental and Sustainability Task Force**

**Selectman Hill** explained the Nickel-per-nip bottle program and how the funds are calculated and distributed to each town. Each municipality receives 5 cents for each nip sold within its borders during the preceding six months which is paid in April and October. As a result of this, a task force is required in order to spend the money. As of this date, the town has received over \$10,000. The size of the task force was discussed and a five person task force was agreed upon.

**Selectman Harrington motioned to amend the agenda to change agenda item #13 to read "Discussion and approval to form an Environmental and Sustainability Task Force." Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Selectman Harrington motioned to form an Environment and Sustainability Task Force made up of five interested citizens to make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on how to spend the funds. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Discussion and approval of 2023 Regular Meeting Schedule**

**Selectman Harrington motioned to approve the 2023 Regular Meeting Schedule as presented. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Selectmen Updates**

#### **Suffield Alight**

The annual Suffield Alight event will be held on Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on the town green. Thank you to **Pete Leclerc** and **Kris Lambert** for coordinating the event.

#### **Breakfast with Santa**

Parks and Recreation is hosting a Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at the Suffield Senior Center. Contact Parks and Recreation for further details and registration.

#### **Town Meeting**

Reminder to all that there will be a Town Meeting held on Tuesday, November 22, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Auditorium.

#### **Tentative Agreements**

The town has reached tentative agreements with the Library, Town Hall and Dispatch Unions. These will be presented to the Board of Selectmen soon.

#### **Joint Facilities Committee Meeting**

The Joint Facilities Committee meets tomorrow to discuss the Facilities master Plan. **First Selectman Moll** hopes to have a recommendation to start bringing to the boards soon. His plan is to present to each board; Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen and Board of Education, individually as opposed to a Tri-Board Meeting.

#### **Troop 260**

**First Selectman Moll** extended his thanks to Troop 260 for presenting the colors and assisting with serving our veterans at the recent Veterans Breakfast.

#### **Election Day**

**First Selectman Moll** extended his thanks to the entire election team and the volunteers that helped to ensure a fair and well run election.

## **Field of Flags**

**First Selectman Moll** thanked SHS Athletic Director Todd Zenczak, the SHS boys and girls soccer and volleyball teams and their coaches, the RTC and all other volunteers that came out to help with the Field of Flags installation. Additional thanks to Kris Lambert of the First Selectman's Office and the Town of Suffield Public Works Department for all their work on this project.

## **Volunteer Page on Town Website**

**First Selectman Moll** announced the creation of a new Volunteer Page on the town website and encouraged residents to visit this page and help the town.

## **Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service**

**Selectman Chafetz** invited all to the upcoming Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at the First Church on Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.

## **Public Comment**

**Paul Kulas, 120 Ellison Street – Mr. Kulas** expressed his thoughts and concerns on the current Veterans Memorial Expansion efforts and proposal. **Mr. Kulas** also provided historical information relating to what had been done when he was the Chair of the original Veterans Memorial Committee years prior. He expressed his displeasure at the current committee for not including him or other members of the original committee when making decisions regarding the expansion as he feels they should have input on the subject.

**Kevin Goff, 475 Thompsonville Road – Mr. Goff**, a member of the Veterans Memorial Committee, provided his perspective and his concerns on the proposed memorial which will not provide individual names but instead will honor all veterans. He also commented on the Affordable Housing discussion which occurred earlier in the meeting.

**Selectman Mahoney motioned to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristen O. Lambert  
Recording Secretary