

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SEPTEMBER 9, 2024
7:00 P.M.
83 Mountain Road, Suffield CT
Hybrid Meeting**

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

Also Present: Michael Addington – Building Official, Kacy Colston – America 250 Celebration Member, Bill Hawkins – Director of Planning & Development and Kevin Goff – Chairman of the Affordable Housing Committee

First Selectman Moll called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance. First Selectman Moll asked the group to join him in a moment of silence to honor Town Historian, Lester Smith, who died at the age of 97 on August 29th.

Public Comment

Robin Zatony, 95 Brookside Drive – Ms. Zatony, the new Chair of the Social Services Commission, noted she is hopeful that moving forward it can be a more active commission, one that will improve our sense of community and support for our resident’s needs. She asked the selectmen to consider postponing their appointment of a new member to the Social Services Commission for an additional month. She also expressed her support for the Affordable Housing recommendations to be made by Kevin Goff later this evening.

Kathy Bielonko, 981 East Street North – Ms. Bielonko inquired as to whether the alternate members of the Planning and Zoning Commission were given an option to move up to full member status before an outside candidate was considered.

Approval of the minutes from the August 21, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the minutes from the August 21, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen as presented. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval to reappoint David Mercik to the Retirement Commission through August 31, 2028

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to reappoint David Mercik to the Retirement Commission through August 31, 2028. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval to reappoint David Innes to the Retirement Commission through August 31, 2028

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to reappoint David Innes to the Retirement Commission through August 31, 2028. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval to fill the open seats on the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures (ACCE) through May 31, 2028

First Selectman Moll explained that there were three open seats on the ACCE Commission. He noted two current members, Jim Irwin and Mike Sattan, had expressed interest in reappointment and the RTC also submitted two candidates for consideration. He opened the floor to discussion.

Selectman Mahoney MOTIONED to appoint nominees Saeed Akbar and George Austin and reappoint Mike Sattan to the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures (ACCE) through May 31, 2028.

Discussion ensued as to whether or not any candidates were submitted by the DTC and what the party affiliations would be should the proposed nominees be approved. Brief discussion ensued as to why Mr. Irwin was not selected for reappointment with all selectmen providing their opinions.

Vote: 3 in favor (Moll, Mahoney and Harrington) and 2 opposed (Hill and Chafetz.). Motion passed.

Discussion and approval to appoint Scott Guilmartin to the Planning and Zoning Commission to fill the remainder of Leon Litvak's term through November 18, 2025

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to appoint Scott Guilmartin to the Planning and Zoning Commission to fill the remainder of Leon Litvak's term through November 18, 2025.

Selectman Chafetz stated that he disapproved of Mr. Guilmartin's appointment and shared his reasoning. Discussion ensued among the selectmen regarding the candidate with all of them providing their opinions.

Vote: 3 in favor (Moll, Mahoney and Harrington) and 2 opposed (Hill and Chafetz.) Motion passed.

Discussion and approval to appoint a member to the Social Services Commission to fill the remainder of Marcia DuFore's term through November 30, 2026

Selectman Mahoney MOTIONED to table until the October meeting. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of tax abatement in the amount of \$4,022.43 to CoreLogic due to overpayment

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve tax abatement in the amount of \$4,022.43 to CoreLogic due to overpayment. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval for payment of invoices to River Valley Animal Hospital for Hornish dog – February 1, 2024 – July 31, 2024 and August of 2023 and refer to the Board of Finance

Selectman Mahoney MOTIONED to approve payment of invoices to River Valley Animal Hospital for Hornish dog – February 1, 2024 – July 31, 2024 and August of 2023 and refer to the Board of Finance. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval to set late fees under chapter 159-5 of the Building Construction Ordinances

First Selectman Moll invited Michael Addington, Building Official, to answer questions pertaining to the request to set late fees. Discussion ensued as to current practices, the effectiveness of stop work orders, contractor responses and whether the proposed one-time fee of \$250 would be enough of a deterrent to contractors. The selectmen asked numerous questions which Mr. Addington answered accordingly. Escalating fees or a higher one-time fee were also discussed as options to consider. The selectmen decided against approving any fees this evening in order to give the Building Official time to work with the Town Attorney on creating an escalating fee structure to be presented to the board for consideration in the near future.

Selectman Chafetz MOTIONED to table the discussion and approval to set late fees under chapter 159-5 of the Building Construction Ordinances. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of resolution adopting the 2024-2029 CROG Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Bill Hawkins, Director of Planning and Development, presented to the board on the 2024-2029 CROG Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. He provided a historical overview of how it was originally created, what it includes, what it can do for the town, the consequences involved if we do not adopt and any financial implications. A brief discussion ensued

with the selectmen asking questions that Mr. Hawkins answered accordingly. He recommended that the town adopt the update as presented and provided appropriate resolution language.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the resolution adopting the 2024-2029 CRCOG Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update as presented and authorize the First Selectman to execute the required document. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of America 250th Celebration

First Selectman Moll gave a brief description of the America 250th Celebration and invited Kacy Colston to present to the selectmen. Ms. Colston gave a high level overview of the celebration and spoke on the number of towns currently involved, what type of activities will be taking place, the types of funding available and resources available to assist in event planning. Ms. Colston hopes to bring awareness to the event, and suggested the possibility of a town parade. Her vision would be to link the timing of the parade with the annual Suffield Summer Fair. The event will take place in the first half of 2026. Ms. Colston distributed information to the group and offered to take the lead on this endeavor.

Discussion of Town property on 1440 Mountain Road

First Selectman Moll reminded the group that this property had been discussed at the last Board of Selectmen meeting and the discussion revolved around whether to fix the roof and the siding on the building and use it as a storage area or to consider selling. Discussion ensued and it was determined that more detailed information on the needs of the building is required prior to the selectmen making a decision. It was clarified by Bill Hawkins, Planning and Development Director, that the building is NOT located in a Historic District as previously reported.

Presentation of recommendations by the Affordable Housing Committee

First Selectman Moll thanked Kevin Goff, Chairman of the Affordable Housing Committee and all its members for their efforts and hard work over the last year and a half. He also thanked Selectman Harrington for her role as the Board of Selectmen Representative. He invited Mr. Goff to present the committee's findings and recommendations to the board. Mr. Goff shared the committee's mission to make plans and recommendations to the Board of Selectmen based off of the recently adopted Affordable Housing Plan by looking for housing options that will fit the town's needs while meeting the State's mandatory requirements. He walked the board through a PowerPoint presentation that defined what affordable housing in Suffield is, the percentage of affordable housing stock Suffield currently has, the breakout of current affordable housing units and the towns 2024 profile with regard to general and housing demographics. With this information clarified, he shared the committee's recommendations for attracting developers who can provide more housing options, recommendations for Planning and Zoning and recommendations for additional affordable senior housing. Extensive discussion ensued between the selectmen and Mr. Goff. The selectmen expressed their thoughts and concerns and asked numerous questions which Mr. Goff answered to the best of his ability. The group thanked Mr. Goff for his very thorough presentation this evening.

Public Comment

Dave Gauthier, 3219 Phelps Road – Mr. Gauthier extended thanks to Building Official Michael Addington and his office on behalf of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee for their assistance with the committee's recent permitting process. Mike and his team were extremely helpful and everything went smoothly. Mr. Gauthier also mentioned that the DAR recently came to the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee with a request to add names of approximately 40 soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War that are not currently included on the monument in Suffield. He also shared a personal experience he encountered as a young man and the importance of affordable housing and other options for helping individuals.

Selectman Updates

Library Director

The town has hired a new Library Director who should be starting within the next two weeks.

Parks and Recreation Road Race

The Suffield Parks and Recreation will be holding their 10K and 5k Road Races along with their 2.5K walk and kids Fun Run on Saturday, September 7th.

Suffield on the Green

Suffield on the Green will be held this weekend from 10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 7th and 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 8th.

Thank You – Ordinance Work

First Selectman Moll thanked the entire board, as well as the Town Attorney, for all their work on the recent ordinances that were presented at the Town Meeting.

9/18/2024 Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Cancellation

The September 18th Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting will be cancelled.

Book Fair

The annual Kent Memorial Library Book Fair will be held this weekend with over 30,000 books available for purchase.

Selectman Mahoney MOTIONED to adjourn at 8:49 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary