

TOWN CLERK
SUFFIELD, CT

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

2024 OCT 16 PM 4:26

REC'D BY:

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Selectmen present: Colin Moll, Kathleen Harrington, Pete Hill, Mel Chafetz and Jerry Mahoney (via Zoom)

Also Present: Michael Addington – Building Official and Derek Donnelly – Town Attorney (7:14 p.m. arrival)

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

Fred Sweitzer, 165 S. Stone Street – Mr. Sweitzer noted he had a difficult time signing into the zoom meeting this evening and wanted to make the group aware that there might be an issue with the zoom link.

Approval of the minutes from the September 9, 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 with one correction:

Header: Change date from September 9, 2024 to September 4, 2024.

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

Discussion and approval to reappoint Doug Mayne as a full member of the Historic District Commission through August 31, 2028

Discussion and approval to reappoint Scott MacClintic as a full member of the Historic District Commission through August 31, 2028

Discussion and approval to reappoint Aysha Moore-Manwaring as an alternate member of the Historic District Commission through August 31, 2028

First Selectman Moll explained that he had been contacted by a resident who expressed concerns about the attendance of commission members on the Historic District Commission. He noted that he looked at the attendance records and would like to discuss the issue with Doug Mayne, the current Historic District Commission Chair, before moving forward with reappointments.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to table Agenda items 4, 5 and 6. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

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

First Selectman Moll noted there were two candidates interested in the Social Services Commission position; Kristin Kling and Mark Blackaby.

Selectman Chafetz MOTIONED to appoint Kristin Kling to the Social Services Commission to fill the remainder of Marcia DuFore's term through November 30, 2026. Vote: 2 in favor (Chafetz and Hill) and 3 opposed (Moll, Harrington and Mahoney.) Motion failed.

Selectman Mahoney MOTIONED to appoint Mark Blackaby to the Social Services Commission to fill the remainder of Marcia DuFore's term through November 30, 2026.

A brief discussion ensued among the selectman regarding the fact that both candidates were highly qualified for the position.

Vote: 4 in favor (Moll, Harrington, Hill and Mahoney) and 1 opposed (Chafetz.) Motioned passed.

Discussion and approval to appoint a member to the Kent Memorial Library Commission to fill the remainder of Michelle Kynard's term through November 30, 2025

First Selectman Moll noted there were three candidates interested in the Kent Memorial Library Commission position; Fred Sweitzer, Ann Borracci and Tess McCool. He noted that one candidate was unable to submit a bio/letter of interest for the commission to consider as they were out of town. Discussion ensued as to whether or not the agenda item should be tabled in order to allow the candidate to submit the missing information needed in order to provide a fair evaluation of all candidates.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to table the agenda item. Vote: 4 in favor (Moll, Harrington, Hill and Mahoney) and 1 opposed (Chafetz.) Motion passed.

Discussion and approval of tax abatement in the amount of \$9,207.58 to Gregory D. Boisvert due to overpayment.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve tax abatement in the amount of \$9,207.58 to Gregory D. Boisvert due to overpayment. 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 update the selectman on the information he had obtained since the September 4, 2024 meeting when he was asked to research the possibility of an escalated fee structure. He reported that an escalating fee structure would not be possible as there would need to have an appeals board available to handle any appeals that may be filed, which the town does not currently have in place. Mr. Addington suggested a fee of anywhere between \$250 and \$350. He provided examples of the various levels of permit fees as they relate to different size projects and explained that the majority of the problems with unpermitted work are affiliated with contractors as opposed to homeowners doing their own work. The selectmen asked numerous questions which Mr. Addington and Town Attorney Donnelly answered accordingly. The selectmen discussed next steps and agreed that the \$250 fee would be an appropriate level to start at with an effective date of November 15, 2024. The selectmen would like to meet with Mr. Addington in six months to discuss how the process has been working and make changes at that time if necessary.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve late fees of \$250 under chapter 159-5 of the Building Construction Ordinances to be effective on November 15, 2024. Vote: 4 in favor (Moll, Harrington, Mahoney and Chafetz) and 1 opposed (Hill.) Motion passed.

Discussion of Town Property on 1440 Mountain Road

First Selectman Moll reminded the group that a request had been made at the September 4, 2024 meeting to get further pricing for possible work to be done on the building to preserve it from further damage. Director of Public Works Lee Corbert was able to provide an estimate of between \$7,000 and \$35,000 to fix the building. Discussion ensued among the selectmen as to what level of repairs should be completed or if it should be torn down. At this time, the selectmen feel that immediate repairs should be made and more research needs to be done as far as evaluating the town-wide storage needs.

Public Comment

Sandra Janik, 380 Prospect Street – Ms. Janik commented that it was extremely difficult to hear the presenter and some of the selectmen this evening. She suggested the town consider using microphones in the future.

Annie Hornish, 864 Thrall Avenue – Ms. Hornish thanked Selectman Chafetz for nominating Kristin Kling for a position on the Social Services Commission. She shared her thoughts on why Ms. King would be eminently qualified and urged the selectmen to consider qualifications when appointing commission members.

Selectman Updates

Emergency Services Radio Project

A joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance will be held on Tuesday, October 15, 2024 to discuss the Emergency Services Radio Project.

Permanent Building Commission Wrap-up

They PBC should be wrapping up work reviewing all buildings against the results of the Facilities Master Plan and should be providing a report within the next two to three months on their findings and recommendations.

Streaming Equipment

Thank you to Robin Zatony, resident and Chair of the Social Services Commission, for her generous donation of \$10,000 to be used to install streaming equipment in the Community Services Building.

Field of Flags

Residents are invited to participate in the annual Field of Flags event by sponsoring a flag for a special veteran. Registration information can be found on the town website.

Hurricane Helene Relief

Thank you to Don Ledoux of Turning Point Wellness, George and Kristie Fields of Suffield Hardware and Dave and Shute of the VFW for gathering and sending supplies for Hurricane Helene Relief.

Bronze Status – Sustainability CT

Congratulations to Jamie Kreller of the WPCA and the Sustainable Suffield group for all their hard work on helping the Town of Suffield to obtain Bronze Status.

Retirement

Town Clerk Kathy Dunai has announced her retirement effective December 7, 2024.

Halloween Trick or Treating

The annual Halloween Trick or Treat event normally held at Town Hall on October 31st will be hosted at the Library and Community Services Building as the Town Hall will be holding early voting and must abide by voting rules.

Fire Union Tentative Agreement

A tentative agreement has been reached with the Fire Union.

Executive Session – General Update with Town Attorney on all pending litigation

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to enter Executive Session to discuss all pending litigation and invited Town Attorney Derek Donnelly to join at 7:37 p.m. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive session ended at 8:03 p.m.

Selectman Hill MOTIONED to adjourn at 8:03 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary