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REC'D BY: Chue

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FEBRUARY 19, 2025
7:00 P.M.
83 Mountain Road, Suffield CT
Hybrid Meeting**

Selectmen present: Colin Moll, Kathleen Harrington, Pete Hill, Klaire Bielonko and Mel Chafetz

Also Present: Lisa Trase – Assessor, Mandi Moore – Finance Director and Brad Belcher – Chairman of ACCE

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 South Stone Street

Discussion and approval of the minutes from the February 5, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the minutes from the February 5, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and appointment to fill the vacant position on the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2028

Selectman Chafetz MOTIONED to appoint Kristin Kling to the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2028. Vote: 2 in favor (Chafetz and Hill) and 3 opposed (Bielonko, Harrington and Moll). Motion failed.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to appoint Timothy Reynolds to the Social Services Commission through November 30, 2028. Vote: 3 in favor (Bielonko, Harrington and Moll) and 2 opposed (Chafetz and Hill). Motion passed.

Discussion and appointment to fill the vacant position on the Kent Memorial Library Commission through November 30, 2027

Selectman Chafetz MOTIONED to appoint Fred Sweitzer to the Kent Memorial Library Commission through November 30, 2027. Vote: 2 in favor (Chafetz and Hill) and 3 opposed (Bielonko, Harrington and Moll). Motion failed.

Selectman Bielonko MOTIONED to appoint Julie Bodnar to the Kent Memorial Library Commission through November 30, 2027. Vote: 3 in favor (Bielonko, Harrington and Moll) and 2 opposed (Chafetz and Hill). Motion passed.

Discussion and approval of tax abatement in the amount of \$8,149.40 to Northwest Community Bank due to overpayment

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve tax abatement in the amount of \$8,149.40 to Northwest Community Bank due to overpayment. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval to waive the Bid Policy and transfer \$15,000 from Contingency for GIS Parcel Mismatch Project to the Assessor budget and refer to the Board of Finance

Assessor Lisa Trase addressed the selectmen and referenced a memo she forwarded to them in advance which outlined the rationale for the request. She explained that the current budget only covers annual parcel updates, but there are existing errors that need to be corrected. She also mentioned the possibility of needing more funding in the future, based on the success of this year's project. The GIS system is widely used by internal departments, realtors, and appraisers, and improving its accuracy could enhance its usefulness. The budget has previously been \$7,500 annually, but the request for extra funding was due to an increase in the number of errors found. The project involves a partner, New England Geosystems, who works on the GIS system and helps correct errors. The goal is to ensure the data is error-free for users.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to waive the Bid and Purchase Policy to use New England Geosystems for the GIS Parcel Mismatch project outlined in their statement of services dated February 10, 2025. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the transfer of \$15,000 from Contingency 01-95011-50920 to Assessor Map Update account 01-41301-50389 to fund the GIS Parcel Mismatch project and refer to the Board of Finance. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of the FY 25/26 ACCE budget and refer to the Board of Finance

The board discussed the fiscal year 25/26 capital budget recommendations. Brad Belcher, ACCE Chairman, explained that the capital budget is set at about 7.29 million dollars, based on 11% of the previous year's budget. He outlined the critical items, including police cruisers, fire department turnout gear, district safety and security for the Board of Education, and pavement management. The board considered the recommendations, asked questions and suggested a number of changes and/or modifications which Mr. Belcher noted. The board also discussed potential sweeps of unused funds from previous projects.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the FY 25/26 ACCE budget, with the changes and modifications discussed this evening, and refer to the Board of Finance. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of the FY 25/26 Selectman's Budget and refer to the Board of Finance

First Selectman Moll discussed the fiscal year 2025/26 budget, which had a 3.9% increase. The majority of the increase was due to insurance and public utilities costs. He also mentioned the potential for a 10% increase in insurance costs the following year. He explained that the budget had been revised to account for potential salary increases due to union contracts and also mentioned that the town has merged some positions in order to save costs.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the FY 25/26 Selectman's Budget and refer to the Board of Finance. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Fred Sweitzer, 165 South Stone Street

Selectman Updates

Permanent Building Commission

The Permanent Building Commission should be presenting their final review and recommendations to the Board of Selectmen in the next month.

Department of Public Works

Thank you to the Department of Public Works crew for all their hard work during the recent snow storms.

Part-Time Firefighters

Two part-time firefighters, which were budgeted for in this current fiscal year, have been hired. This will allow for two firefighters to be on at all times and should help offset some overtime.

Selectman Hill MOTIONED to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary

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