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**MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING
& PUBLIC HEARING
FEBRUARY 18, 2026
7:00 P.M.**

REC'D BY:

C. Mue

**83 Mountain Road, Suffield CT
Hybrid Meeting**

Selectmen present: Colin Moll, Klaire Bielonko, Kathy Dunai, Kathleen Harrington and Pete Hill

Also in attendance: Brad Belcher – Chairman

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.

Discussion and approval of the minutes from the February 4, 2026 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the minutes from the February 4, 2026 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen as presented. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Open Public Hearing on Annual Report

First Selectman Moll opened the Public Hearing for the Annual Report and referenced an email from resident Tom Frenaye that had been sent to him and forwarded to all selectmen for review. The document included recommendations for the Annual Report.

Selectman Dunai noted that she had comments and recommendations that she would be forwarding to First Selectman Moll for consideration.

Selectman Harrington stated that she and Selectman Bielonko had spoken and were both interested in establishing a uniform format. She suggested that a template be created to achieve consistency. She also commented on several of the recommendations made by Mr. Frenaye.

First Selectman Moll thanked everyone for their comments and noted they would be taken into consideration for inclusion in the annual report.

Close Public Hearing on Annual Report

First Selectman Moll closed the Public Hearing for the Annual Report.

Discussion and approval of tax abatement in the amount of \$3,719.85 to Errol Dudek due to overpayment

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve tax abatement in the amount of \$3,719.85 to Errol Dudek due to overpayment. Vote 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and reappointment of Chad Kuzontkoski to the Cable Advisory Council through February 28, 2028

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to reappoint Chad Kuzontkoski to the Cable Advisory Council through February 28, 2028. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of FY 26/27 Capital Expenditures presented by the Advisory Commission for Capital Expenditures and refer to the Board of Finance

ACCE Chair Brad Belcher addressed the selectmen and referenced the memorandum and financial package distributed in advance of the meeting. He explained that proposed bonding this year significantly impacted the ACCE request list. The process began with \$10.6 million in project requests; however, the proposed bonding is expected to remove approximately \$1.6 million from that total.

The commission met over two evenings in early February to prioritize the requests, allowing ample time for thorough discussion, particularly for projects with varying funding options. The plan reflects approximately \$2.5 million in estimated debt service, incorporating the most current bonding figures provided by the Board of Finance, along with \$3.7 million in recommended projects, totaling \$6.2 million in capital.

In addition, the commission identified \$540,000 in excess funds from completed capital projects. This year, ACCE is proposing a new approach by funding approximately \$338,000 in projects in advance of the new budget year to allow work to begin prior to July 1. This would leave a remaining balance of roughly \$200,000 available either for other projects or to be returned to the general fund, as determined by the Board of Finance.

Mr. Belcher noted that \$370,000 in requests were not recommended for funding and that \$800,000 in reductions were made to submitted requests. He then reviewed the ACCE prioritization list in detail. The selectmen asked questions, shared their perspectives, and offered suggestions and recommendations regarding several items of concern.

An in-depth discussion followed between the selectmen and Mr. Belcher regarding the potential removal of certain projects. Mr. Belcher recorded each agreed-upon change on the working document and reported that, with the proposed adjustments, the prioritization list reflected \$6 million in capital funding, along with an additional \$396,000 to be funded through sweep dollars.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the FY 26/27 Capital Expenditures as presented by the Advisory Commission for Capital Expenditures with the verbal changes made this evening and refer to the Board of Finance. Vote: 4 in favor (Moll, Bielonko, Harrington and Dunai) and 1 opposed (Hill). Motion passed.

Discussion and approval of FY 26/27 Selectmen's Budget and refer to the Board of Finance

First Selectman Moll referred to the memorandum that had been distributed to all selectmen prior to the meeting. He reported a proposed budget increase of \$680,000, representing a 3.62% increase over last year's budget. The majority of the increases are attributed to the Fire Department, Police Department,

Public Works, Public Utilities, Library, and Community Services. Collectively, these departments account for approximately 80% of the total requested increase.

Most of the increases are attributed to contractual wage adjustments, with the Police Department alone accounting for an additional \$231,000. First Selectman Moll also reviewed the remaining departmental increases and explained the rationale supporting each request.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the FY 26/27 Selectmen's Budget and refer to the Board of Finance. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Don Miner, 1855 Mapleton Avenue
Victoria Copes, 223 Hickory Street

Selectman Updates

Permanent Building Commission

The Permanent Building Commission will be participating in a joint special meeting with the Board of Education tomorrow to discuss the proposed school projects. PBC Chair Kevin Goff will be present at the next Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to provide the latest updates on town projects.

Interim Chair of Fire Commission

First Selectman Moll reported that he is serving as interim Chair of the Fire Commission until a permanent Chair is selected.

Adjournment

Selectman Dunai MOTIONED to adjourn at 8:16 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary

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