

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OCTOBER 5, 2016**

Present: Melissa M. Mack, Joanne Sullivan, Krystal Holmes, Mel Chafetz

Absent: Timothy Reynolds

Also in attendance: Economic Development Director Patrick McMahon; North Central District Health Department Suffield Representatives Ben Rodriguez and Vic Mathieu; Town Planner Bill Hawkins; Town Counsel Derek Donnelly

First Selectman Mack called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Approval of the Minutes from the September 21, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Holmes made a motion to approve the Minutes from the September 21, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Vote: 3-0 in favor. Selectman Chafetz abstained.

Public Comment

Robert Brooks, 418 North Main Street, stated that he has noticed the dump trucks on Main Street have become larger, carrying trailer hoppers, and sometimes travel in threes. He is concerned that this presents a danger to Suffield Academy students specifically along the cross walks. He believes there is a better route than through a Historic District. First Selectman Mack replied this is an issue near and dear to her as well. She has brought up the matter with Senator Murphy's office and other legislators. The Town is in the process of coming up with a town wide plan to address traffic and speeding town-wide. Her main concern is that the additional activity at Bradley International Airport and the casino in Springfield will increase traffic through Suffield significantly if we are not proactive. She does not want to address traffic just in the Main Street area with the result that it forces traffic onto other over-utilized town roads. She would like to see a town wide study performed on how to curb traffic. She has approached Senator Kissel and Representative Zawistowski and has had informal conversations with DOT given that Route 75 is a State road. The resolution will require a lot of work and involve a lot of agencies. Mr. Brooks mentioned signs he has noticed in other communities asking trucks not to use a road per the request of the Board of Selectmen. First Selectman Mack replied that those signs are illegal per a UCONN consultant that the Town recently worked with on a town wide road/signage survey. Lester Smith from the audience noted that alternate routes have been voted down in the past. First Selectman Mack stated she'd like the trucks to use Route 20 that already exists to go north from the airport. Vic Mathieu in the audience said they are using Suffield's streets because the trucks are overloaded and don't want to be stopped. First Selectman Mack stated that perhaps we should start stopping them.

Darlene Burrell, 623 Forest Road, asked that the Board of Selectmen support moving forward with the grant to get money to extend the sewer and water utility lines all the way down Route 75 to Windsor Locks. A grant was received about six to seven years ago via State Representative Elaine O'Brien. The line was supposed to go all the way down to the Windsor Locks line but does not extend that far. This effort will help businesses that are interested in the area and help build the tax base in town.

Approval of submission of Urban Act Grant funding for extension of Route 75 Utility Extension Project – Phase II and refer to Board of Finance

Economic Development Director Patrick McMahon presented.

Construction is nearing completion on the first phase of utility extensions for water and sewer in the light industrial zone along Route 75. The first phase was funded in part by a \$980,000 state grant and an allocation of Town funds. We are looking for authorization to apply for an Urban Action grant from the State of Connecticut in the amount of \$1 million to continue to extend these utilities. The total project cost is estimated to be \$1,354,000 so a local match from the Town of Suffield would be required.

The light industrial area along Route 75 is a key growth area for the community, as well as the airport region. Businesses that would find this area attractive, with appropriate utilities in place, would be light manufacturing, R&D, office, warehouse and distribution, hotels and indoor recreation. With the State's increased focus on Bradley International Airport as an economic driver, the Economic Development Commission sees this utility extension project as a tool that will bring new business and as a result increase State and Town tax revenues and produce quality jobs for the region.

The first phase of the project consists of installation of about 1,720 l.f. of 12" water main within the Rte. 75 Right-of-Way from a point south of Marketing Drive to the project limits (approximately station 32). In addition, about 1,200 l.f. of 8" sanitary sewer pipe and 5 manholes will be installed from the connection point in an existing sewer manhole located in an overland utility easement crossing the Town property. From the existing manhole connection, the sewer pipe will cross southwesterly through a wooded area on Town property until it reaches Rte. 75. It then continues south within a private easement on the property of #1160 South Street until ending at the project limits (approximately station 32). This work is expected to be completed in November.

We are looking to now extend the utilities from Station 32 to Station 19. The design has been completed by Cardinal Engineering. Cardinal prepared a construction cost estimate utilizing information from the recent Phase I bid and the estimated project cost is \$1,354,000. This extension would bring utilities to an 18 acre parcel, amongst others, which is a key development piece in the zone. There is currently a manufacturing prospect with a contract on the property that would be expected to bring significant new tax revenue to the community with a new facility. Ideally, the project would be funded so that it could be bid out over the winter for a spring construction. If the State were to award the Town an Urban Action grant we would need to identify where the additional \$354,000 will come from in order to move forward with the

project. At this point we are seeking authorization to pursue a State grant opportunity. Should the Town be awarded funds then we would need to go back before the Boards of Selectmen and Finance to seek recommendations on the Town matching funds. Also, due to the size of the potential state grant we would need to bring the project to Town Meeting for approval.

Selectman Chafetz asked the cost to complete the entire line. Mr. McMahon did not ask for that estimate. He felt a \$1.0 million request to the State of Connecticut was already quite significant. This phase would get us to the edge of the property that is most critical. He believes the Town should proceed with a phase three down the line in the future. Selectman Chafetz wondered if given the proximity to Bradley if builders would find those other areas farther down the line desirable. Mr. McMahon noted those lots already have structures on them so in the short term he did not see them turning over, but in the long term, yes.

Selectman Chafetz asked about the beer manufacturer reported in the Journal Inquirer. Mr. McMahon stated Broad Brook Brewery, currently located in East Windsor, has made an application to the Planning & Zoning Commission. It is for Lot 3 of Mach 1, the lot just south of Kelly Container. This is a challenging property but the use is perfect given the tank requirements of the brewery. The elevation of the proposed building has an agricultural, barn look. The facility will primarily be a brewery with tap room including light food choices. They are not looking to compete with restaurants in town. First Selectman Mack added her excitement about the brewery and added the news is part of her Selectmen Updates on the current agenda.

Selectman Holmes made a motion to approve submission of the Urban Action grant for the Utility Extension down Route 75. Vote: 4-0 in favor.

Approve a tax rebate for First National Bank of Suffield in the amount of \$3,890.76 due to accidental overpayment

Selectman Sullivan made a motion to approve a tax rebate for First National Bank of Suffield in the amount of \$3,890.76 due to accidental overpayment. Vote: 4-0 in favor.

Discussion of proposed State legislation regarding local health departments consolidation

North Central District Health Department Suffield Representative Ben Rodriguez presented.

Packets were supplied to the Board of Selectmen which included a memo regarding the proposed Health Department consolidation, a map of all the State Health Departments and Districts, a draft of the proposed regulation and an article from Yankee Institute summarizing the proposal. On September 15, 2016, Raul Pino, Commissioner of Health for the state of Connecticut announced draft legislation to consolidate health departments into districts regionalized by county or several by county. This proposal seems in alignment with the legislature and DPH's desire to move towards fewer, full-time health districts and in line with recent legislation requiring DPH to review local health districts. Key provisions include:

- Each municipality would contribute **1% to 1.5% of their annual operation budget** (as well as receive a per capita allocation from the state, as is the case now).

- This new format would not provide additional services to what occurs now. All municipalities would get the same baseline of service and have to contract and pay additional for more services such as vital records, housing inspections, social services, etc.
- Top level staffing is prescribed- each super district would have one director and 2 deputy directors.
- All health department staff would be housed in municipal buildings.
- Timeframe: is completion by January 1,2020, however, the proposed legislation states that on **July 1, 2017**, the Commissioner of Health will appoint a health director for each county to work on the transition

Context:

Suffield is currently part of the NCDHD, one of twenty regional health districts, spanning three different counties (Hartford, Tolland and Windham). Member towns include **Enfield, Ellington, East Windsor, Windsor Locks, Suffield, Vernon, Windham and Stafford**. This regional district is the largest in Connecticut, serving over 166,000 residents.

- The primary work of the NCDHD is to promote and protect the well-being of the public and prevent, and mitigate disease, injury and disability. This currently occurs by:
 - permitting and annual inspection of restaurants, tattoo parlors and schools, etc.
 - water well testing
 - soil testing
 - investigating health complaints from residents (food service, housing, refuse/garbage)
 - health education and awareness activities (press releases, attending local health forums)
 - emergency preparedness training
- Total annual operating budget is **\$1,457,057** and Suffield contributes **73,851** annually. Each town contributes \$4.67 per resident, which is the second lowest rate in the state.
- The state per capita is \$1.85, but for the current budget year, the state only funded it at 88.76%; (\$272,924.70).
- Staffing is as follows: 1 director, 9.5 sanitarians, 1 part time health educator, 2 part time emergency preparedness staff and several admin staff.
- The legislature is not convened so this is merely a draft by DPH. The earliest it can be considered is after the new year when a new session is held, then the Public Health

Committee would have to take it up (hold a public hearing) and it would need to pass Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committees

- The new plan calls for municipalities to contribute 1% to 1.5% of their operating budget (a major increase) yet with no additional services than what occurs now.
 - Current allocation: \$73,851 (.20% of operating budget-\$37,626,864)
 - 1% Allocation: \$376,268.64 (1.0% of operating budget-\$37,626,864), **an increase of \$302,417 or 310%**
 - 1.5% Allocation: \$564,402.96 (1.5% of operating budget-\$37,626,864), **an increase of \$490,551 or 664%**

Mr. Rodriguez stated that it is unclear where the state representatives are on this proposal or in the general concept of DPH mandating changes, although there is legislator support for regionalization. This draft consolidation plan does not take into account communities that have already realized savings, such as ours but are not solely of one county. Given the large population served by the NCDHD, he would expect DPH officials to solicit feedback prior to developing or releasing a draft proposal. Overall the plan calls for vast changes to public health in Connecticut with exorbitant increases for the same services we receive now.

First Selectman Mack asked Mr. Rodriguez to advocate on behalf of Suffield to assess Suffield's fee without regard to the over 2,000 prisoners at McDougal-Walker as the Town is charged for the prison population but does not receive a full PILOT from the State on the prison. Mr. Rodriguez said he would be happy to do so. First Selectman Mack added that she attended CRCOG today and there was vehement opposition from her municipal counterparts against this legislation so she would be surprised if it went forward.

Vic Mathieu, also a Suffield Representative on the North Central District Health Department, has mentioned the prison population issue to Representative Kissel and Department of Public Health and there is little interest/concern in remediating the matter.

First Selectman Mack requested for a future meeting if Mr. Rodriguez and Mr. Mathieu could present on whether Suffield is well served by NCDHD given their smaller population/fewer needs in such a large district and whether it would be more beneficial to be part of a smaller group. Selectman Chafetz suggested touching base with the schools as well to see if they are offered programs via NCDHD.

Approval of submission of Farm Viability Grant and refer to Board of Finance

Town Planner Bill Hawkins presented.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture is once again offering their agriculture viability grant to municipalities to "strengthen the economic viability of Connecticut farmers and to promote the sustainability of agriculture in Connecticut and its municipalities". This grant has been utilized by Suffield in 2007, 2008, 2010, and 2014. The town has completed several projects with past grants to promote

local agriculture, including purchasing new banners for the farmer's market and creating websites for the farmer's market and agriculture council. The grant requires a 40% cash match of the total project cost from the town. The Town can apply for a portion of our match as in-kind expenses.

If awarded, this year's project will help repair and repave the 1,100 foot farm access drive into the 79 own-owned acres of preserved Hilltop Farm property. Since the town took over the property in 2002, this access drive has been in disrepair. This driveway also provides an important connection to the property to the north owned by the Friends of the Farm at Hilltop as it provides another way out to Mapleton Avenue for FOFAH events which is invaluable for site circulation. Reconstructing the pavement will provide a safer means of ingress and egress for the residents and farmers that use the property. The proposed paving project will also advance agriculture in Suffield and specifically on the Hilltop Farm property. Reconstructing the driveway will improve the farm and enhance access to the buildings, fields, and walkways which will also allow for better maintenance of these facilities. The town has a community garden on the farm with 25 plots and has other educational programs focused on agriculture. The rebuilt driveway will provide for better parking for the community garden and we should be encouraging residents to visit this property. Also included in the grant is \$10,000 for two appraisals for farmland preservation purposes, enough for one farm. The money for the town match would come from the appraisals line item of the open space fund. Also, we would like to purchase three new preserved farm signs for recently closed or soon to be closed farm properties. These signs run approximately \$650 apiece. In-kind hours include time from the Town Planner to administer the grant and run the projects with help from the Town Engineer totaling \$1,250.

The total project cost of \$65,200. The Town's portion is \$26,080, including \$1,250 of in-kind services for a net cost to Suffield of \$24,830. The Town's portion will be drawn from current 2016-2017 budgeted amounts in the Pavement Management Account, Open Space Fund and Planning and Zoning Department contracted services and in-kind hours from the General Fund. The State of Connecticut portion of the project is \$39,120 and the Town can ask for 50% of the state portion up front.

Selectman Holmes asked how much money is in the grant. Mr. Hawkins responded that the maximum grant that would be awarded is \$49,999; if we were trying to max out we'd go for \$83,000 worth of project. Selectman Chafetz asked if there is still money in the State. Mr. Hawkins clarified that the grant does indicate pending funding. He heard that last year's money was awarded and then pulled so that is a possibility.

Selectman Holmes made a motion to approve the request of the town planner to apply for the 2016-2017 Agriculture Viability Grant in the amount of \$65,200 with the town portion of the project totaling \$26,080 pending Board of Finance approval. Further, the Board of Selectmen authorizes the First Selectman to sign any documents related to the grant.
Vote: 4-0 in favor.

Discussion and appointment of alternate member to Planning & Zoning Commission to fill the remainder of Jeff Peak's term through November 19, 2019

First Selectman Mack recommended tabling this item having just heard of another applicant, also a Democrat, who would like to apply. In the spirit of allowing any available Democrats to throw their hat in the ring for consideration, she recommended tabling the item. Selectman Holmes asked if this candidate had reached out to the Democratic Town Committee. First Selectman Mack was not sure if that was the case and was not certain they were part of the DTC. DTC Chair Tom Frenaye, from the audience, added that he was aware of the candidate but she did not respond to his emails. First Selectman Mack reiterated that we should at least entertain the possibility.

Selectman Holmes made a motion to table appointment of alternate member to Planning & Zoning Commission to fill the remainder of Jeff Peak's term through November 19, 2019.

Vote: 4-0 in favor.

Selectmen Updates

- Broad Brook Brewery is moving along as discussed earlier in the meeting
- Awarded Certified Local Government Grant – Phase II Historic Resources Inventory for \$30,000 – allows us to continue the inventory of historic properties
- CRCOG – presentation on BOE case; Coalition for Justice Education Funding (CJEF) v. Rell; trial court ruled that State was not providing adequate education to public school students based on a number of criteria; key point is that the State can't delegate its duty to supply an adequate education to the towns; could potentially have a positive effect on local town education budgets
- Video streaming – our participation in the CRCOG pilot program for streaming has had pros and cons. We've had many of the same issues that other towns have experienced with the quality of streaming. The grant was for approximately \$1,000 with the Town contributing substantially more. I expressed our frustration with the quality of CRCOG's recommendation to them and have asked them to make us whole. We rely on CRCOG to make sound recommendations. CRCOG is also unhappy with the vendor they chose to carry out the pilot program. We are working with them on a solution to improve sound quality and provide more reliable live streaming and taping.

Selectman Chafetz asked about the status of the hydroponics farm. First Selectman Mack visited their beautiful facility in Wallingford. Significant progress is being made with the Army Corp of Engineers. Environmental Protection Agency will also have to approve the wetlands remediation piece to the project. She understands that the CT Department of Economic Development's piece is making progress. Once she has the go from Four Season, the Board of Selectmen will move forward with the farmer's tax abatement ordinance discussed months ago. The delay has included a positive development in that the company has requested Army Corp of Engineer's approval of all phases of the project at the outset so the company will be more likely to proceed with all phases of the project. This should provide the Town with more comfort when considering approval of the farmer's tax abatement ordinance.

Selectman Chafetz asked about bonding from the Tri-Board Meeting. First Selectman Mack said that she and Finance Director Deb Cerrato are moving forward. The hope is to be able to go to market before mid-December with \$9.0 million for 20 years.

Selectman Chafetz asked about Town Hall. First Selectman Mack explained that the Permanent Building Commission has a meeting tomorrow night and they plan on discussing next steps with EDM who is the space management consultant. We are continuing to refine the layout with them. Public Works is reissuing an RFP for environmental remediation; they will be separating Town Highway Garage outbuildings so we can proceed with Ffyer Place sooner rather than later.

Selectman Sullivan made a motion to enter into Executive Session regarding police personnel. Vote: 4-0 in Favor.

Executive Session convened at 7:57 p.m. and included Police Commission Chair Kevin Armata and Town Counsel Derek Donnelly.

Executive Session ended at 8:36 p.m.

Selectman Chafetz made a motion to first enter into Executive Session regarding potential litigation and second enter into Executive Session for the purpose of Town of Suffield v. Blue Sky Builders legal matter. Vote: 4-0 in Favor.

Executive Session convened at 8:37 p.m. and included Bobbie Kling and her husband for the first half of the Executive Session; Town Counsel Derek Donnelly attended the entire Executive Session.

Executive Session ended at 9:11 p.m.

Potential action on Executive Sessions

Selectman Holmes made a motion to approve the settlement reached in Executive Session on board secretary rates and recommend to the Board of Finance. Vote: 4-0 in Favor.

Public Comment

None

Selectman Chafetz made a motion to adjourn and by unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

The next regular Board of Selectmen Meeting will be Wednesday, October 19, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim M. Worthington
Recording Secretary