

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2021 ~ 5:30 P.M.
IN-PERSON AT LITCHFIELD FIREHOUSE, 258 WEST ST. AND
REMOTE MEETING BY LIVE INTERNET VIDEO STREAM AND TELEPHONE**

Call to Order: First Selectman Denise Raap called the live and remote meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. There were no participants via Zoom. Selectmen present were Jonathan Tarrant, Jeffrey Zullo and Jodiann Tenney. Selectman Thomas Waterhouse was absent.

Execute Signing of Lease Agreement with Litchfield Volunteer Ambulance: D. Raap noted that signatures were needed from all Board of Selectmen, Litchfield Public Schools Superintendent, and LVA Chief. Town Counsel Mike Rybak said the Board of Ed must sign off because they have custody of the schools, although they could request a qualifier citing that as the only reason for signing. He also said that a majority of the Board of Selectmen could sign. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve and sign the lease agreement with LVA as approved by Town Meeting. J. Tarrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried. The Selectmen present signed, and D. Raap said she would get the other signatures later.

Approval of Minutes

a) 6/1/21 Regular Minutes: Motion: J. Tenney moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of 6/1/21, and J. Zullo seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

b) 6/4/21 Special Minutes: Motion: J. Tenney moved to approve the special meeting minutes of 6/4/21, and J. Zullo seconded. All voted aye except J. Tarrant, who abstained because of absence, and the motion carried.

Public Requests/Comments: Anne Haas, Bantam, offered a solution to alleviate congestion in the center of the Borough of Bantam. The DOT has just installed new crosswalks and signals, but that will not address parking, crosswalks, speeders and rude behavior. She would like to get parking signs on the east side of Doyle Road directing traffic overflow to the lower lot of Bantam School. Permission was granted years ago for workers of Arethusa. She also asked for potholes to be repaired in the Annex parking lot. D. Raap thought it had been done but will discuss it with Public Works.

Selectmen's Requests: J. Tenney said Chris Leone plans to attend the July 20th Selectmen's meeting to give an update on recommendations that will go to the Board of Ed from the collaborative work group. The Board of Ed will meet Saturday at 9:00 a.m. at the Wamogo auditorium.

First Selectman's Update Report: D. Raap reported that a large group did a walk-through in the center of Town with the DOT and traffic safety people and expect a report within a month. She is optimistic they are making headway toward safer roads. Jane Bailey of the Beautification Commission brought up a plan to redo the Town Hall sign, and D. Raap asked that it be added to the agenda for discussion.

Motion: J. Zullo moved to add to New Business g) "Town Hall Sign". J. Tarrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed. D. Raap said she met with the Litchfield Housing Trust about the Litchfield Housing Plan to put together a grant application that is required by the State for completion by 6/2022.

Motion: J. Zullo moved to add New Business h) "Affordable Housing Plan" and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed. The Facilities Review Committee is planning three public presentations of its survey results. Special meetings will be held at the Litchfield Firehouse 6/23/21, Northfield

Firehouse 6/24/21 and Bantam Borough on 6/29/21. D. Raap then informed the Board of the painted plow on display at Public Works that was done by students at LHS. The Board of Finance selected Clermont & Associates for the Town auditor for the next four years. The Northfield Fire Department is holding its first breakfast this Sunday after a 15 month hiatus. Smithsonian Magazine digital issue reported Litchfield as one of the 15 best small towns to visit in 2021. In a poll for the Board's attendance on July 6, J. Tenney said she will be on vacation, but the others in attendance were available.

Resignations

- a) **Sharlene Copeland, from Northwestern CT Transit District, effective 6/9/21:** received and noted
- b) **Ruth Erickson from Beautification, regular member, effective 6/11/21:** received and noted

Interviews, Appointments & Reappointments

a) **Reappoint Kathy Brown to Assessor, term 6/2025: Motion:** J. Tenney moved to reappoint Kathy Brown as Assessor for term ending 6/2025, and J. Tarrant seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

b) **Reappoint Brooke Healy to Inland Wetlands Commission, term 6/2022: Motion:** J. Tenney moved to reappoint Brooke Healy as above for term ending 6/2022, and J. Tarrant seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed. J. Tarrant questioned the term, and D. Raap explained that alternate is a one year term.

Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes: 5/20/21 Sandy Beach Commission; 5/13/21 Board of Ed; 5/13/21 WPCA

Sustainable Litchfield Update: J. Zullo noted a button on the Town website about Sustainable Litchfield. They approved the logo today done by Evan DaRoss, which was chosen from 18 submittals. They also are reviewing actions for silver certification to be submitted by August 24th.

WPCA Liaison Update - Tom Waterhouse: No report

Vacancies: The list of current appointed vacancies with term expirations is as follows:

Beautification Commission: 1 regular member 2/2022; 2 alternate members 2/2022

Broadband Commission: 1 alternate member 1/2023

Cable TV Advisory Council: 1 BOE members 6/2023

Conservation Commission: 2 alternate members 12/2021

Economic Development Commission: 1 alternate member 6/2023

Litchfield Prevention Council: 2 reg. members 6/23, 6/24; 4 alt. members: 2-6/22, 2-6/23

Milton Historic District Commission: 3 alternates; 2-1/2024, 1-1/2022

Northwestern CT Transit District: 2 members, both 5/2022

Pension Commission: 1 regular member 2/23; 1 alternate member 3/2022

Social Services Board: one regular member 2/2022

Traffic Safety Community Action Group: 2 alt. members 1/2023

Veteran's Advisory Committee: 1 regular member 8/2023; 1 alternate member 8/2021

Western CT Coalition, CAC #22 (formerly NW Regional Mental Health Board): 1 member 5/2023

Zoning Board of Appeals: 2 regular members 3/2023, 3/2025; 1 alternate member 3/2025

Tax Refunds: **Motion:** J. Tenney moved approval of one tax refund in the amount of \$200.27, and J. Tarrant seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Old Business

a) **Discussion of Ordinance Amendment to Include Food Trucks:** J. Tenney asked a question about one area, and Mike Rybak said there is a veteran's exemption. Ms. Tenney said she does not want to put a

burden on restaurants that have food trucks, so she would like to further discuss the fees. She also wanted to make sure that no permits would be required on private property. Food trucks for private gatherings on private property would have to have language for exemption per Attorney Rybak. **Motion:** J. Tarrant moved to table this item until the next meeting, and J. Zullo seconded. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

b) Arts Council Resolution: Motion: J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the Resolution Establishing a Litchfield Arts Council. J. Tarrant seconded. They were pleased that the Duties section was complete, and they had no questions. Upon voting all voted aye and the motion passed.

c) Silicon Ranch Solar Redesign: D. Raap said that she, Carol Bramley and Jeff Zullo met with Allie Weaver, Director of Project Development, and Pete Candelaria, CEO, of Silicon Ranch. They reported the project has been scaled down and panels reduced in size. There are 62% less trees to be cut and less excavation. They modified the retention basin near Mr. Viola's property as requested. They also will initiate regenerative energy, using sheep to keep the grass down. J. Zullo was impressed with less panels with higher wattage. Both sides of the panel can be used so that reflective energy will be absorbed on the bottom. Silicon Ranch would like to conduct a public information session and tie in with the schools to present the educational aspects of the project, hopefully in September. The project should begin late this year and be done by fall of 2022. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen submit a letter of support signed by the First Selectman to the CT Siting Council with regard to the Silicon Ranch solar project. J. Tarrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed.

New Business

a) Award Bid for Headquarter Rd. Culvert/Bridge Replacement: Raz Alexe explained the history of a long process leading up to the results. In deciding to do this project on a much smaller scale, there were nine bids. He endorsed the lowest bidder, Yield Industries LLC, at \$99,232.00, who has done an excellent job on prior projects. With a total budget of \$155,000, we will be under by about \$5,000 after other engineering and survey expenses. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the replacement bridge No. 073-003 on Headquarters Road and award the bid to Yield Industries LLC in the amount of \$99, 232.00. J. Tarrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

b) Award Bid for Goodwin Hill Rd. Culvert Replacement: R. Alexe said this is a very long culvert and there are very competitive bids. He recommended either Yield Industries LLC or Towne & Aurell, Inc., as both are local contractors that we are encouraged to hire per our Town's Purchasing Policy. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to award the contract for Goodwin Hill Road culvert replacement to Towne & Aurell in the amount of \$ 215,130.00. J.Tarrant seconded. R. Alexe said they will be \$29,000 over budget, but he will do the inspections in house. He could reach into the Town Aid Road money if needed. They will have a savings also from the Milton Road bridge project of \$169,000, which will go into the capital nonrecurring account. J. Zullo suggested using that account for the overrun. In voting on the motion, all voted aye and the motion passed.

c) Award Bid for Old Smith Rd. Overall Road Improvements: R. Alexe explained that this is a dirt road, but all the residents, Litchfield and Thomaston, asked for it to be improved. Thomaston will share in payment to have the road improved and prepared for asphalt. The budget was \$400,000 for just the drainage and creating a base and sub-base. There are two bids under that, and he recommended the bid be awarded to Green & Sons LLC for \$315,946.00. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the Old Smith Road road drainage improvements and preparation for asphalt paving and award the bid to Green & Sons LLC for \$315,946.00. J. Tarrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

d) Award Bid for South Lake St. Drainage Improvements: R. Alexe said there were six bidders and the budget was \$339,000 and with asphalt, about \$150,000 more, so they are over by about \$120,000.

There are provisions to use TAR money and he will not have to ask for more. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the bid for South Lake Street drainage improvements and preparation for asphalt paving, and award the project to Deacon Excavating in the amount of \$301,730.00. J. Torrant seconded. R. Alexe said all four of these projects are all prevailing wage jobs and are a major concern, with ceiling being at \$100,000. It adds between 30% to 40% to a project, or about \$100,000. Upon voting all voted in favor and the motion carried.

e) Proposed Parking Signs for Bantam Annex: D. Raap said that Bantam Borough representatives have asked for quite some time that people visiting Arethusa park toward the Annex and avoid parking on Doyle Road, as it is an egress for Bantam Fire Co. emergency vehicles. Dick Sheldon has sent a letter endorsing the designation of municipal parking at the Bantam Annex in support of local businesses, and added that the parking hours should be limited to business hours. R. Alexe asked that hours should be delineated on the sign. J. Zullo said he assumed that the enterprises should have had parking addressed by the Bantam P&Z. Anne Haas asked that the Town approach the Bantam P&Z with an 8-24 to make its lower Annex lot a municipal lot. J. Zullo recalled that permission was granted for the employees of Arethusa to park in the lower lot. He said if we do designate the lower lot as a municipal lot open to all, we should clean up the documentation, do an 8-24 from Litchfield to approve the lot for use by all, and ask for insurance certificates. M. Rybak said the parking area should be treated as a municipal parking lot similar to the municipal lot in the center of Town, available to all the businesses and have a marked out area. **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to table this item to a future meeting until there is more information. J. Zullo seconded, and asked if the lot is not already a municipal parking lot, and if so, why would we have to change the use? M. Rybak confirmed it is, but would have to review the regulations. Anne Haas asked that the signs be put up and let the Bantam P&Z do a cease and desist if needed. R. Alexe said there must never be vehicles left overnight. J. Torrant suggested perhaps hours as 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and J. Tenney said “no overnight parking.” R. Alexe said there should be more thought put into it. D. Raap said she had some phone calls to make to investigate. Talk about placement of parking signs ensued. **Vote:** Voting on the motion, all voted aye and the motion carried.

f) Confirm Authorization to Close Roads for Litchfield Hills Road Race: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to confirm authorization to close roads for the LHRR on Sunday. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

g) Town Hall Sign: Jane Bailey, Beautification Commission Chairman, asked for permission to refresh the Town Hall sign on the front lawn. There is wood rot and the letters are always falling down. Member Julith Sink’s husband, Gary Sink, will donate his time for only the cost of supplies. The Beautification Commission will donate up to \$800 from its budget for supplies. The sign will look exactly the same when refreshed. She asked if this needs to go to the HDC since it is being replaced exactly as is, and was told no, it is merely maintenance. J. Zullo suggested the website address be permanent on the sign, but there was a directive from the HDC that said “no permanent signs.” **Motion:** J. Tenney moved to approve the maintenance of the sign, using funds from the Beautification Commission, and J. Zullo seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

h) Affordable Housing Plan: D. Raap said this resolution allows the Selectmen to apply for a grant of \$15,000 to adopt an Affordable Housing Plan, which will be submitted by Jocelyn Ayer of the NHCOG. After receiving the grant, D. Raap will establish a steering committee made up members from the Housing Trust, Housing Authority, P&Z Commission, Board of Selectmen, Economic Development Commission, Sustainable Litchfield and a local realtor. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectman adopt the resolution authorizing the application for a CT Department of Housing Grant for an Affordable Housing Plan. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried. The resolution reads as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen may accept planning grant funds to prepare and adopt an Affordable Housing Plan under the provisions of § 8-30j of the Connecticut General Statutes (“CGS”).

FURTHER RESOLVED, that _____, as First Selectman of the Town of _____, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town and to do and perform all acts which he deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents.

Correspondence

a) 6/4/21 Letter from Guion, Stevens & Rybak, LLP Re Fee Increase: Mike Rybak said he has charged municipalities the same \$150/hr. since 2001. He has spoken ahead with each First Selectman. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the Town Counsel rate of \$200/hr. for services of Guion, Stevens and Rybak, beginning July 1, 2021. J. Tenney seconded. J. Zullo noted that the increase is less than 2% per year over 18 years, so it is a very reasonable increase, and he thanked him for his services. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

b) 5/26/21 Letter from Scott E. Parsons: His correspondence was duly received and noted. Mr. Parsons asked for a letter, and we have sent him a response letter.

c) 5/24/21 Letter from South Lake Street Residents Re Roadwork: J. Tenney said that this letter was signed before the public information session was held, and she felt some may have signed due to misinformation. Those she spoke to after the meeting indicated that they were pleased with the outcome of double yellow lines and equidistant white lines on the sides. D. Raap agreed. J. Tenney commended Raz Alexe for how well done and inclusive the informational meeting was. He said he still felt we should encourage pedestrian and bicycle traffic in this town, and pavement markings are the best way to help with safety. The roads have room for this accommodation, but we have to start somewhere to initiate it.

Possible Executive Session - Discuss/Ratify Labor Contract for Supervisors Union: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen go into executive session at 7:05 p.m. to discuss the contract for the Supervisors Union. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried. Out of executive session at 7:24 p.m. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the agreement with the Litchfield Supervisors Union CSEA SEIU Local 2001 for the term 7/1/21 through 6/30/24. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed.

Adjournment: **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to adjourn at 7:24 p.m. and J. Zullo seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Denise Raap, First Selectman