

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2022 ~ 5:30 P.M.
IN-PERSON AT NORTHFIELD FIREHOUSE, 12 KNIFE SHOP ROAD AND
REMOTE MEETING BY LIVE INTERNET VIDEO STREAM AND TELEPHONE**

Call to Order: First Selectman Denise Raap called the regular hybrid meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. Selectmen present were Jodiann Tenney, Jeffrey Zullo, Christine Harding and Jonathan Torrant.

Approval of Minutes

a) 10/18/22 Special: Motion: J. Zullo moved and J. Torrant seconded a motion to approve the special meeting minutes of 10/18/22. All voted aye and the motion carried.

b) 10/18/22 Regular: Motion: J. Zullo moved and C. Harding seconded a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of 10/18/22. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Public Requests/Comments: None

Selectmen's Requests: J. Tenney asked if the results of the cannabis question could be posted on the website, and Carol Bramley, P&Z Chair, said the Zoning Regulations amendment to not allow the sale or production of recreational cannabis in Town is already posted on the website.

First Selectman's Update Report: D. Raap said she attended the CCM Convention last week and had nominated Michael Lyn Cappello for an award for all her initiatives, and she won the Richard C. Lee award for the whole state. She then publicly thanked our former Park and Rec Department staff on the successful Halloween activities in Litchfield. J. Zullo added that the Historical Society reported 6,500 visitors that had registered and voted on the scarecrows, and 80% were from out of town. Next, as of yesterday we have a new Assistant Tax Collector, Melana Morin, who replaced Donna Donohue. D. Raap then said she had participated in a five-hour emergency management training exercise. R. Alexe said maps are so important to the training, and FEMA is always off. D. Raap then said we are making Litchfield a designated heart safe community and have conducted training at the Town Hall and Public Works, and will continue at the Annex, WPCA and Litchfield businesses. We would also like to have an inventory of who holds AED machines. Next, she related that over the last four years we have reduced our municipal solid waste by 92 tons/year and have increased recycling by 15 tons, so we are trending in a positive direction. J. Zullo asked about tipping fees for the commercial and non-profit accounts, and D. Raap said the ordinance is being worked on by Town Counsel. The SMART Task Force is reaching out to high producers of food waste to help them learn how they can bring more of it to the Recycling Center, as this ordinance is coming. Finally, she asked the Board for input on legislative ideas for the Representatives and Senators. They thought Craig Miner's initiatives on bear hunting should be brought forward. R. Alexe also said the prevailing wage law on construction renovation jobs over \$100,000 is deplorable. Our prices have increased from 30% to 40% on jobs, and it should be a balanced situation that gives us an opportunity to survive. The ceiling should be closer to \$400,000.

Resignations

- a) James Keller from Park and Recreation Commission, effective 11/4/22:** received and noted
- b) Gary Shuhi from Board of Fire & EMS Commission, effective 10/20/22:** received and noted
- c) David Foss, from ZBA alternate, effective 11/14/22:** received and noted

Interviews, Appointments & Reappointments

a) Interview Priscilla Jeffery for Prevention Council, alternate, term 6/2025: Priscilla was not present, but all remembered meeting her and her previous interview. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to appoint Priscilla Jeffery as an alternate member to the Prevention Council for a term ending 6/2025. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

b) Interview Matt Blasavage for ZBA, regular member, term 3/2023: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to appoint Matt Blasavage to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term ending 3/2023. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

c) Interview Amanda Glover for Traffic Safety Community Action Group, alternate, term 1/2023: Ms Glover said she had attended the public hearing and had become interested in the work of the Committee. She has children in school and thought she could help on this Committee. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to appoint Amanda Glover as an alternate member to the Traffic Safety Community Action Group for a term ending 1/2023. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

d) Interview Jennifer Keller for Torrington Area Health District Rep, term 12/2024: Ms Keller said she grew up in Litchfield and is a nurse practitioner. She would like to give back and serve her community. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to appoint Jennifer Keller as the Litchfield Rep to the Torrington Area Health District Board, with term expiration of 12/2024. C. Harding seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

e) Appoint David Foss to ZBA, regular member, term 3/2026: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to appoint David Foss to the Zoning Board of Appeals as a regular member, with term expiration of 3/2026, and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

f) Reappoint Matt Blasavage to Bantam Lake Authority, term 12/2025: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to reappoint Matt Blasavage to the Bantam Lake Authority for a term ending 12/2025. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

g) Reappoint John Cox to Conservation Commission, term 12/2025: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to reappoint John Cox to the Conservation Commission for a term ending 12/2025. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes: 10/12/22 Inland Wetlands Commission; 10/13/22 Borough/HDC Consolidation Study Committee; 10/17/22 Board of Finance; 10/13/22 Board of Education; 9/29/22 WPCA

Sustainable Litchfield Update: J. Zullo said they have not had a meeting since the beginning of November, but they are moving forward with the climate leadership initiative. The gold program has been announced, and Dean Birsdall will provide and update. We are in the queue for the DEEP grant for the EV chargers. Since this is a reimbursement program, we may have to put this into Capital to show we have funded it.

WPCA Liaison Update: D. Raap said the November 10th meeting was a good, productive meeting. She and Bill Buckley attempted to call Graham Stevens at DEEP, but were unsuccessful and will try again. J. Torrant reported on the Bantam Lake Protective meeting that covered the complaints of the lake and the State launch area.

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

Beautification Commission: 1 regular member 2/2025; 2 alternate members 2/2025

Broadband Commission: 1 alternate member 1/2023
Cable TV Advisory Council: 1 BOE members 6/2023
Capital Improvements Committee: 1 Citizen at Large 11/2023
Conservation Commission: 1 regular member 12/2025; 1 alternate member 12/2024
Economic Development Commission: 1 regular 6/2025
Inland Wetlands Commission: 1 alternate member 6/2023
Litchfield Arts Council: 1 regular member 8/2024
Litchfield Prevention Council: 1 regular member 6/2024; 2 alternate members 6/2023
Milton Historic District Commission: 1 regular 1/2023; 3 alternates; 2-1/2024, 1-1/2025
Park and Recreation Commission: 1 regular member 6/2025; 1 alternate member 6/2026
Pension Commission: 1 alternate member 3/2025
Sandy Beach Commission: 1 regular member 12/2022
Social Services Board: 2 regular members 2/2024, 2/2025
Sustainable Litchfield Committee: one regular member 3/2024; 1 alternate 2024
Town Facilities Review Committee: 1 BOF Member 3/2023; 1 BOE Member 3/2023
Veterans' Advisory Committee: 1 regular member 8/2023; 1 alternate member 8/2024
Western CT Coalition, CAC #22 (formerly NW Regional Mental Health Board): 1 member 5/2023
Zoning Board of Appeals: 3 alternate members 3/2025

Tax Refunds: **Motion:** J. Tarrant moved to approve the 20 tax refunds for a total of \$4,382.96, as submitted by the Tax Collector. J. Zullo seconded, all voted aye, and the motion carried.

Old Business

a) Consider Revised Sandy Beach Interlocal Agreement: D. Raap noted that updates were made by Tom Weik of Morris and Town Counsel Mike Rybak, but changes were not redlined. She felt it was sufficient and ready for our action. **Motion:** J. Tarrant moved to approve the revised Sandy Beach interlocal agreement. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed. This will be forwarded to a Town meeting.

New Business

a) Blue Earth Compost Presentation - Sam King: D. Raap introduced Sam King, who represents Blue Earth Compost. Mr. King said they are a food scrap collection company from the Hartford area since 2013. They wanted to find a way for people to compost if they couldn't do it in their own backyard. They are now operating 7 trucks out of Hartford and are the biggest hauler of food scraps in Connecticut. They give containers to their customers and educate them as to how to best use their services and what can be composted. The tipping fee for compost collections is lower than MSW, close to half the cost. Transportation is the barrier, but as density increases with more customers, the transportation burden is shared and the cost lower. Now the cost is a little bit higher for most customers, but they are beginning to compete. In an area where density is higher the fee is \$130 to \$140 per ton. Litchfield is now paying \$105 per ton, and Mr. King said they are shooting for this price in the future. J. Zullo asked if we have data on how many tons a year we are saving by composting. R. Alexe said it's about 1.5%, or 92 tons. J. Zullo then asked what the composted material is used for. Quantum, an urban digester in Southington, can digest the compost and make electricity in the process. The compost gets sold wholesale, gets mixed with forest products and they sell it wholesale. Discussion followed on analysis of tonnage and cost. Given that we are transitioning to having businesses and non-profits pay tipping fees, this would be an incentive. If Blue Earth gets 50 residential subscribers from a given area, they can start services at \$25/mo. for weekly collections and \$17 for every other week. Bears will still be a problem, as your food scraps will be put out in a separate container. J. Zullo said this is an ideal option for schools and restaurants to have some savings. Sean Mullen of the Litchfield SMART Task Force asked if the Recycling Center would still take food scraps at no cost, and the answer was yes. D. Raap asked Sam King to send pricing so we can see if residents and restaurants have an interest. The Board agreed and thanked Mr. King for his presentation.

b) DPW Plowing Proposal for Plumb Hill Road: Raz Alexe, Public Works Director, reminded the Board of the agreement we had with the schools four years ago that the maintenance of the schools was given back to the schools with a significant amount of money. When asked by the Superintendent if Public Works had the capacity to take on the plowing/clearing of snow at LHS/LMS and LCS, R. Alexe said he had no capacity for that. The request was reduced to one school with salt included. Town Counsel said that unless it is a Town road, we are not obligated because of the agreement. The only Town road that is still active is Plumb Hill Road that goes from Constitution to LIS and back down. We are not doing that road per the contract, as there was always a conflict over the sidewalks. R. Alexe says it would be an issue to take back that road, as it is not simple. We need correct timing for school, a plow, a loader, and finishing touches to make it safe for the student population. He does not have enough bodies to take this on.

J. Zullo suggested we respectfully decline, as we have a budget we are operating under and an agreement with the schools. J. Torrant recalled that Towne & Aurell took the plowing contract for the schools. R. Alexe confirmed but said its contract is expiring now. J. Zullo said it is difficult to consider this request coming in at the middle of a budget year. R. Alexe said the only flexibility he would have is to do a pass up, around and back down Plumb Hill Road. No sidewalks or parking lots, other than the teachers' parking lot at LCS, are included. They would pay for salt at our cost. J. Torrant agreed. J. Tenney asked why we should do one pass if they would still have to continue themselves with more than one pass. C. Harding agreed to say no. J. Tenney suggested making the point in declining that we just do not have the capacity.

c) Wastewater Treatment Plant Solar Rebid Results Discussion: J. Zullo reminded the Board that we went out to bid in June and pulled them back because of the inflation reduction act. We went back out to bid in October and received bids from Verogy and SHR that he and Raz reviewed. J. Zullo recommended the zero escalator for 25 years. SHR savings for 25 years was \$695,111, while Verogy was \$705,559. He recommended SHR for the benefit of the taxpayers and rate payers of Litchfield. SHR had done more site plan analysis, showing bedrock in the calculation that Verogy did not show. In prior history with SHR, they performed well and also did the Wamogo project and Morris and Goshen projects. R. Alexe also felt SHR's proposal was more comprehensive and more hands on. There was also a discussion of saving as many trees as possible. They are also committed to using local contractors. For less than one percent difference in the two quotes, they recommended SHR. The WPCA will realize the power rate this system generates, or 8.4 cents /KWH for 25 years fixed flat, conservatively estimated.

Motion: J. Torrant moved to approve SHR Energy for the PPA on the solar project at the wastewater treatment plant. J. Tenney seconded. J. Zullo said he would like to look at the DPW building again, perhaps re-orienting the solar panels to pass the Historic District Commission. Voting on the motion, all voted aye and the motion carried.

d) Approve Proclamation for the Menorah: D. Raap said the Rabbi Eisenbach asked if the Town would issue a proclamation recognizing the lighting of the menorah on December 18, 2022. **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to recognize, endorse and approve the proclamation, and J. Zullo seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Correspondence: None

Adjournment: **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to adjourn at 6:51 p.m. and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.


Denise Raap, First Selectman