Call to Order: First Selectman Denise Raap called the hybrid meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with Selectmen Jonathan Torrant, Jodiann Tenney and Christine Harding also present in person and Jeffrey Zullo present via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes
a) 11/15/22 Special: Motion: J. Torrant moved to approve these minutes regarding ARPA fund distribution and J. Tenney seconded. J. Torrant asked that the figure in the final motion after No. 16 be corrected to $23,233 instead of $22,237. All voted aye on the motion as corrected.

b) 11/15/22 Regular: Motion: J. Torrant moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of 11/15/22, and J. Tenney seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Public Requests/Comments: Barbara Putnam, Clark Road, Facilities Review Committee member, put in a good word for the proposal to review the condition of the Annex building by hiring a consultant. They built flexibility into the RFP, so it could be done in segments and urged the Town to move forward with it.

Carol Powers, Doyle Road, echoed Barbara’s words and said the Board of Finance did not listen well to the presentation, asked for plans for a whole new Town Hall and balked at the revised cost. She understood them to agree to ask the Selectmen to issue an RFP for both things that architect/engineering firms would do the work and receive no pay. If that’s the plan, she asked that they separate the two projects so one architect/engineer for the school would not have to pay for a plan for the Town Hall.

Burke Gibney, South Lake Street, also a member of the Facilities Review Committee, reiterated the prior comments and added there have been no next steps taken that were spoken of six months ago by the Board of Selectmen. He felt the Committee’s work has not been received with the same efficiency and praise that was given them for their work in fulfilling their mission. He asked that the Board of Selectmen move forward with the RFP. He then said the Committee does not agree to an evaluation of the cost to build a new Town Hall.

Frank Simone, Mason Hill Road, asked if questions can be asked at the time of the cell tower presentation and was told they may.

Kate Honan, Beach Street, spoke about the letter read at the last WPCA meeting from the Bantam Lake Protective Association to DEEP recommending that Woodridge Lake Sewer District come to Litchfield. She did not know what WLSD told them in a meeting or if they have inside information about the economic benefit of bringing WLSD sewage to Litchfield, but it seems they are going underground. They wrote a letter to the paper saying the DEEP will not let them fix their problem, which is false. Ms Honan said she wrote a letter refuting what was said, and since then they have gone to Woodridge Lake. She thought they may have shared a Federal change in the RUS program where they can no longer go to Torrington the way they could before. She talked to an administrator in the USDA RUS program in Washington who said there have been no changes to the RUS program. She is concerned about the false narratives advanced and the secrecy.

Lynn Murphy, Camp Hill Road, asked that the Board of Selectmen establish a wireless committee to help these wireless companies find suitable locations. The Town must have a plan for responsible
development. Other utility companies are required to present development and management plans that avoid piecemeal projects. It is also unfair for one residential property owner to benefit from the lease income while neighboring properties bear the nuisance of the development. Locations should be sited on State and Town properties where the whole Town can receive the lease money.

Peter Elliot, Bantam, said the Bantam School is an asset and should be used as a multi-purpose space.

Charles Smith, Northfield, said very few people know about the proposed cell tower. There are municipal areas that would be useful for this purpose. He warned against RF (radio frequency) radiation and said it could be harmful for someone living near a cell tower.

Deborah and Joel Volovski, Mason Hill Road, said they never received a letter about the cell tower. She then asked if the location was in Northfield or Thomaston. D. Raap said it is in Northfield, with Thomaston very close. She also noted only abutting property owners get a notification letter.

**Selectmen’s Requests:** Jon Torrant, Board of Selectmen’s Liaison on the Fire & EMS Commission, noted there has not been a study of the fire departments in at least 25 years, and he proposed we pay for a study of the fire departments, their equipment and operation. Perhaps it will result in good recommendations, consolidation ideas, and financial savings. J. Zullo, former BOS Liaison to the Fire & EMS Commission, concurred with Mr. Torrant’s idea and felt the system should be evaluated. He volunteered to work with J. Torrant on it. J. Tenney asked if there are companies that look at the whole Town government, and D. Raap said that is more of a role for a Town Planner.

**First Selectman’s Update Report:** D. Raap reported hiring a new Land Use Official, Spencer Musselman, who will be working with Dennis Tobin, who will be working 20 hours/week to mentor Spencer. After a candidate declined our job offer, we have done another search for a Park and Recreation Coordinator and will have another interview process next week. She then asked for any items for the Legislative Committee of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments, as she is serving on it to bring items forward to the Legislature. Finally, a Recycling helper has been hired today to start work at the end of December.

**Resignations**

a) Lara Hillman from Democratic Registrar of Voters, effective 11/18/22: received and noted

b) Leolah Campo from Economic Development Commission, alternate, effective 11/30/22: received and noted

**Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes:** 11/14/22 Board of Finance; 11/10/22 Borough/HDC Consolidation Study Committee; 11/9/22 Inland Wetlands Commission; 11/10/22 WPCA; 11/15/22 Capital Improvements Committee; 11/7/22 & 11/21/22 P&Z Commission; 11/10/22 RSD 20 BOE

**Sustainable Litchfield Update:** J. Zullo said the meeting was canceled, and the next meeting will be in January.

**WPCA Liaison Update:** C. Harding said she read the minutes from the last meeting but was not able to attend it. She is trying to follow up with Bill Buckley. D. Raap said that tomorrow there will be a more in-depth call with the DEEP, Grant Stevens and Nisha Patel, and the First Selectman of Goshen. J. Zullo said he would attend the WPCA meeting on Thursday to review the solar project for the WPCA. Noel Lafayette did a walk-through with Planning & Zoning to make sure not to disturb the special tree.

**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; 1 alternate 6/2023
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 member 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: None

Old Business
a) ARPA Discussion/Approval: Motion: J. Torrant moved to approve and forward to the Board of Finance the ARPA recommendations made at the 11/15/22 special meeting totaling $926,152. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed.

New Business
a) Cell Tower Presentation for Mason Hill Road: Ken Baldwin, attorney with Robinson & Cole, represented Verizon Wireless in the pending application for a tower site on Mason Hill Road. He introduced other team members who were present on Zoom. The CT Siting Council has exclusive jurisdiction over telecommunications towers, and their authority preempts the local Planning & Zoning authority. They Town can, however, make recommendations that will be taken into consideration as a part of their review. The technical report submitted 10/25/22 precedes the application by 90 days earliest and gives time for public information and comment. He then went through the slides showing maps of the tower sited next to existing transmission lines, abutters, access road, the compound plan with 110 ft. monopole tower, coverage maps, and preliminary viewshed analysis. The Town’s responsibility is to review the pre-application information and submit comments and recommendations to the Siting Council. The Town advises as to what the local zoning regulations are so they can take them into consideration. The Siting Council determines if tree towers are appropriate. The tower and the compound will not be lit at night. There was a disagreement between the use of repeaters vs towers, But Mr. Baldwin said there are drawbacks to using repeaters, so they use towers. The standard has been established for radio frequency emissions, making this a low frequency system and in compliance. They can also consider municipal properties if identified in the area. He then reviewed the Siting Council’s procedural steps within a six-month process, including public hearing.

b) Opioid Settlement - Discuss Use of Funds: D. Raap said we have received a check for $22,208.28 and asked what the Board would like to do with it. She said it could also be put aside for a while. J. Zullo suggested creating a special account for it to disburse over a period of time for entities in need. It would not be part of the budget. Motion: J. Torrant moved and J. Zullo seconded a motion to create a fund to hold the money until needed. All voted aye and the motion passed.
c) Draft Solid Waste Ordinance: D. Raap said the ordinance has not been updated since 1988. The whole ordinance has been updated, and she would like it to go to a Town Meeting in February. Motion: J. Torrant moved to table this until the next meeting to allow time to study it, and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

d) Town Facilities Review Committee - Discuss Recommendation: D. Raap said the Town Facilities Review Committee wants the Town to put out an RFP for an engineering study at the Bantam Annex and allocate $300,000 - $500,000. The Board of Finance was leery of spending that type of money on that building without a true plan for its use. The anticipated cost of doing the work is $10 million. Do we think the Town would be supportive and do we want that to go to a town meeting? J. Tenney and C. Harding commented that we need to move along, but must tailor the RFP to what we need. J. Zullo felt the RFP is valuable as is to find out what type of A&E firms would be interested and what it would cost. The scope could be amended or broadened along the way. J. Torrant said he is very concerned about the high jump in the cost of the study. He also is concerned about what we can do with that property because of the refusal of the Bantam Planning & Zoning to change the zoning designation from residential to commercial or mixed use. He does not want to spend $300,000 - $500,000 on a study only to find the Town will not spend $10 million on the facility. He said we should put out the RFP and see what comes back. Motion: J. Tenney moved to put out the RFP with R. Alexe’s fine turning. C. Harding seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

e) Set 2023 Regular Meeting Schedule for Board of Selectmen: D.Raap thought it would be easier to hold meetings at the Annex meeting room. Motion: J. Torrant moved to adopt the 2023 Selectmen’s meeting schedule as presented, and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

f) Use of Roads for Milton Resolution Road Race - 1/1/23: Motion: J. Torrant moved to approve the use of roads for the 1/1/2023 Milton Resolution Road Race, and C. Harding seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Correspondence: None

Adjournment: Motion: J. Torrant moved to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

Denise Raap, First Selectman