

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023 ~ 5:30 P.M.
IN-PERSON AT TOWN HALL ANNEX, 80 DOYLE ROAD, BANTAM, 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 5:30 p.m. with Selectmen Jonathan Torrant and Jeffrey Zullo also present. Jodiann Tenney and Christine Harding were absent.

Approval of Minutes

a) 3/7/23 Regular: Motion: J. Torrant moved and J. Zullo seconded a motion to approve the 3/7/23 meeting minutes. All voted aye and the motion carried.

b) 3/13/23 Special: Motion: J. Torrant moved and J. Zullo seconded a motion to approve the special 3/13/23 meeting minutes. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Public Requests/Comments: None

Selectmen's Requests: **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to add to Resignations b), Abby Conroy from Inland Wetlands Commission and from Planning & Zoning Commission, and J. Zullo seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed. **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to add to New Business i), Award Bid - Tree Work, and J. Zullo seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to delete Items f) and g) from Interviews, Appointments and Reappointments below, and J. Torrant seconded. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

J. Torrant then gave an update on the Borough/HDC Consolidation Committee's work, following a deliberate gradual process both in understanding the differences between the Town, Borough and Village governments and in their history and workings. They studied financial data for the Borough, concluding that their fund balance of 110% is too high; and they are overtaxing the Borough residents, carrying a fund balance higher than their operating budget. At this point they will develop a comprehensive consolidation proposal that would be compelling both to the residents of the Town as well as the Borough. After approval by the Committee, it would be presented to the Board of Selectmen and residents at a public hearing(s). Member Bruce Schnitzer stressed that input should be encouraged from all constituencies so it sensitively addresses the interest and concerns of merchants and residents while improving or maintaining services at equal or reduced cost to taxpayers. There was consensus that the Historic District Commission should be continued and that the historic nature of the Green is an essential element of the character of Litchfield. Findings thus far show that a material financial savings can result from the consolidation of at least some of the functions provided by the Town and the Borough. J. Zullo said the Borough could pay off the legal debt at the point of consolidation. J. Torrant added that it would cost about .2 mills to consolidate. A petition would bring this consolidation proposal to a vote of the Borough and of the Town. If approved, it would also have to be approved by the State. He felt the report would be ready in the summer.

First Selectman's Update Report: D. Raap said application time has closed for the Park and Rec/Human Services positions. They have received 32 applications for the full time position and have vetted them to 13 qualified applicants. She then noted she has met with Park and Rec members regarding the re-engineering of the Community field on one survey and has received a quote from Cardinal Engineering of \$66,000. With added projects, the entire property would have to be brought up to ADA standards. R. Alexe asked to see the survey to see what the project includes. D. Raap then announced that our Assistant Assessor has taken another job in Middlebury. She felt we have to think of offering pay bumps when classes have been taken to encourage good people to stay. Stoneybrook Golf Course is having its

reopening on Friday. The EDC is holding a restaurant week beginning 3/24/23. Finally, she received a letter from the Siting Council announcing a public Zoom forum for the Mason Hill cell tower application.

Resignations

a) Barbara Putnam from Conservation Commission, alternate member, effective 3/10/23: received and noted

b) Abby Conroy from Inland Wetlands Commission and P&Z, effective 3/21/23: received and noted

Interviews, Appointments & Reappointments

a) Reappoint Jack Hodges to Fire & EMS Commission, Northfield Fire, term 4/2024

b) Reappoint John Campbell to Fire & EMS Commission, Bantam Fire, term 4/2024

c) Reappoint Sean Fogarty to Fire & EMS Commission, East Litchfield Fire, term 4/2024

d) Reappoint Michael Castelli to Fire & EMS Commission, LVA, term 4/2024

Motion: J. Zullo moved to reappoint Jack Hodges, John Campbell, Sean Fogarty and Michael Castelli to the Fire & EMS Commission for terms ending 4/2024. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

e) Appoint (Reappoint) BOS Rep. to Fire & EMS Commission, term 4/2024: Motion: J. Zullo moved and D. Raap seconded a motion to reappoint Jonathan Torrant to Fire & EMS Commission, BOS Rep, for term ending 4/2024. All voted aye and the motion carried.

f) Reappoint Elizabeth Callahan to Local Emergency Preparedness Committee, term 4/2025: (deleted)

g) Reappoint Paul Gibb to Local Emergency Preparedness Committee, term 4/2025: (deleted)

h) Appoint Barbara Putnam to Conservation Commission, regular member, term 12/2025: Motion: J. Zullo moved to appoint Barbara Putnam to the Conservation Commission as a regular member, with term expiration of 12/2025. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed.

Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes: 3/13/23 Board of Finance; 3/8/23 Inland Wetlands

Sustainable Litchfield Update: J. Zullo said there has not been a meeting since the last report. They do have a subcommittee meeting on Thursday to prepare the submittal for the Climate Leadership Initiative that is due 4/4/23. April 22nd is the Earth Day event, with posters and online info out to the community.

WPCA Liaison Update: J. Zullo said the WPCA met last week and approved the grease trap for the courthouse hotel, and the Woodard & Curran project is in place.

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 1/2025

Cable TV Advisory Council: 2 members, 1 BOE rep, both 6/2023

Capital Improvements Committee: 1 Citizen at Large 11/2023

Conservation Commission: 2 alternate members 12/2024

Economic Development Commission: 1 regular 6/2025; 1 alternate 6/2023

Inland Wetlands Commission: 1 regular member 6/2023; 1 alternate member 6/2023

Litchfield Arts Council: 1 regular member 8/2024

Litchfield Housing Authority: 1 member 8/2023

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

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: 1 alternate 3/2024
Town Facilities Review Committee: 1 BOF Member 3/2026; 1 BOE Member 3/2026; 3- 3/2026
Veterans' Advisory Committee: 2 regular members 8/2023, 8/2025
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) Rowing Club Lease Update: D. Raap said she met again with Ray Schmid and Gianni Perugini of the Park and Rec Commission, as they and the Park and Rec Coordinator oversee the Town Beach. The current lease, initiated in 2009, was \$10/year. They believe it should be higher and have come up with a new lease figure of \$150/ month, or \$1,800/year. They felt this was fair because the Litchfield Hills Rowing Club also sublets to Taft and now also to Westover School. They also felt members who are not residents would have to pay a yearly beach pass fee of \$20. The Rowing Club had proposed \$800/year to cover half the fees of the port-o-lets and the dumpster, but D. Raap said the \$800 does not cover those charges. J. Zullo felt it was reasonable, and J. Torrant said it is a good attempt at a catch-up for the years it was \$10. She then proposed a ten year lease with two five-year renewable extensions, including a cost of living increase or 3% annual escalator built in. She will bring this to the Town Counsel for review. J. Torrant said that he has no sympathy for them, as when he was there with a Park and Rec member cleaning up, there was no evidence that the rowing club does anything to help. Ms Raap said she likes having them there, as it is a great opportunity for students to learn to row. Her children rowed and J. Zullo said his daughter did as well. After approval by the Selectmen and Board of Finance, it will have to ultimately be approved by Town Meeting.

b) Approve WPCA Solar Project (tabled 3/7/23): J. Zullo said Planning and Zoning has approved the project. He described the features on the site plan 1.07 acres in total, with .7 acres of panels. There will be drainage work and a rain garden. It will probably be about 8.5 cents/kwh.

c) Greenway Ingress/Egress Agreement (tabled 3/7/23): Motion: J. Zullo moved to table this item until it is ready for discussion. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

New Business

a) Award Bid for Water Testing: R. Alexe, Public Works Director, explained the benefits of using the services of Analytical Consulting Technology, Inc. (ACT) for \$21,007.40 per year for a two-year contract. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the water testing bid with Analytical Consulting Technology, Inc. (ACT) in the amount of \$21,007.40. J. Torrant seconded, and noted they are not the low bidder. R. Alexe said Naomi Boccio has been very impressed with them, and the comparison to last year's bid is a 10.8% savings this year. These reports are complex and essential for DEEP reporting. Upon voting all voted aye and the motion carried.

b) Award Bid for Snow Plowing at Bantam Annex: R. Alexe noted the specs have increased to include more sidewalks and the back of the building, and fuel costs have caused the bids to be higher. As much as Towne & Aurell, the local contractor and incumbent, has offered to match Deacon's price, their price as a local business can be within 10%, which brings it to Deacon's price. J. Torrant and D. Raap thought Town Counsel should be consulted about accepting T&A's offer, and perhaps the motion could reflect it contingent upon M. Rybaks's opinion. **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to award the Bantam Annex snow removal bid to the local bidder, Towne & Aurell Excavating, who has agreed to meet the low bidder price of \$24,000 if it is found to be legal by our Town Counsel. J. Zullo seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

c) Award Bid for Public Works Mechanics Bay Ceiling: R. Alexe said they have mold in the ceilings in the repair shop and have money in the budget for repairs, insulation and painting. **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to award the Public Works mechanics bay ceiling replacement bid to Scholar Painting & Restoration in the amount of \$51,320, with project to be funded from CIP FY 22/23 account #67-9930-61465 with current balance of \$79,713.32. J. Zullo seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

d) Award Bid for Refuse and Recycling Pick-Up: R. Alexe said there are two bids: one from USA Hauling and one from Dimension in California. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to approve the refuse and recycling pick-up contract and award the two-year contract to USA Hauling, the overall lowest bidder per the quoted contract. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed.

e) Award Bid for Demo and Non-Processibles: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to award the two-year contract for the demo and non-processible waste hauling to sole bidder USA Hauling at \$111 per ton at a significant increase (12.1%) from last year. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

f) Award Bid for Earth Materials: R. Alexe explained the materials and asked the Board to consider all three bidders for availability and efficiency. **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to award the bid to all three bidders, O&G Industries, Stone Construction, and Mountain Top Trucking for approval of a two-year contract for earth materials. J. Zullo seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

g) Award Bid for Pavement Markings - Parking Lots: R. Alexe said there is a new bidder, I Line LLC, that he interviewed, who has done mostly commercial work rather than municipal. They are the low bidder, but prices have increased for the paint. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to approve the bid for pavement marking for parking lots and award the bid to I Line LLC in the amount of \$30,200 per year for a two-year contract. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

h) Litchfield Volunteer Ambulance Building Status - John Pudlinski: J. Pudlinski, Chief of LVA, gave the history of water damage in their building. CIRMA insurance paid for that, and they tried to take care of the issues but are just buying time. Water still comes through the concrete floor, so it has to be sealed. Alan Landau of Engineered Coatings worked with the engineer and has given them a price of \$10,000 to seal the floor. There is \$52,500 left in Contingency. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve an emergency funding of \$10,000 for the LVA flooring project funded from Contingency. J. Torrant seconded. J. Torrant asked that a new LVA facility be planned by October for presentation to the Capital Improvements Committee. J. Zullo suggested two or three facilities be proposed. J. Pudlinski thought they should go first to Litchfield Fire Co. Upon voting, all voted aye and the motion carried.

i) Award Bid for Tree Work: R. Alexe said Harwinton Tree has maintained the same price. The two other competitors' prices are not up to par. **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to award the two-year tree work contract to the lowest bidder, Harwinton Tree Service, through 6/30/25. J. Zullo seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Correspondence: None

Adjournment: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. and J. Torrant seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.



Denise Raap, First Selectman