

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2023 ~ 5:30 P.M.
IN-PERSON AT TOWN HALL ANNEX, 80 DOYLE RD., BANTAM, AND
REMOTE MEETING BY LIVE INTERNET VIDEO STREAM AND TELEPHONE**

Call to Order: First Selectman Denise Raap called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. Selectmen present were John Bongiorno (left at 7:53 p.m.), Jeffrey Zullo, Jodiann Tenney, and Denise Raap. D. Morosani arrived at 5:33 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

a) Regular 10/17/23: Motion: J. Tenney moved and J. Zullo seconded a motion to approve the 10/17/23 meeting minutes. All voted aye except J. Bongiorno, who abstained because of absence, and the motion carried.

b) Special 11/1/23: Motion: J. Zullo moved and D. Raap seconded a motion to approve the 11/1/23 meeting minutes. J. Zullo and D. Raap voted aye, J. Tenney and J. Bongiorno abstained because of absence, and the motion carried. *[Dan Morosani arrived here at 5:33 p.m.]*

Public Requests/Comments: Patricia Peiffer, 8 Torrington Road, spoke about the traffic plan and took exception to the signalization component. Another gentlemen from Torrington Road thanked the Traffic Committee for all its hard work and changes that have been made. He thought the plan should be broadly conceptual at this point with a registered traffic engineer involved. He asked that the Selectmen work with the Committee on the volume of traffic and speed of the drivers. The document needs further editing and should include comments from the Historic District Commission.

Burke Gibney said there is a conceptual plan that has not been engineered, although Ed Fabbri has done a lot of work on this, as it is his field. He sees no conflict with Planning and Zoning and sees no reason to consult with the Historic District Commission.

Selectmen's Requests: J. Bongiorno requested a Town Tech committee be formed to keep track of all our PCs and wireless in all the different buildings and firehouses. J. Tenney welcomed the two new board members, Dan Morosani and John Bongiorno.

First Selectman's Update Report: D. Raap welcomed the new board members and said she looks forward to working with the whole group. She then said Rocco Carting has applied to operate in town for residential trash pickup upon approval by the Selectmen. There are now adequate parking spaces for the contractor workers for the new hotel offsite from the municipal lot. The Capital Committee met and reviewed the Fire & EMS Commission submissions. Those left for presentation are the Public Works requests and the Park and Recreation Department. The Holiday stroll is set for Dec. 3rd at 2:30 with tree lighting at 5:15 p.m. The Jingle Bell Run is Dec. 2nd at 10:00 a.m. at LIS. The Holiday Bazaar is at the Bantam Annex, 9-2:00 p.m. on Nov. 25th. Breakfast with Santa is at the Bantam Firehouse on Dec. 17th from 9-12:00 p.m. D. Morosani added the Northfield Firehouse breakfast also on Dec. 17th from 7:30 a.m. to 2:10 p.m. with Santa there as well.

Resignations

- a) Francis Carpentier, from Pension Commission and Capital Improvements Committee, effective 11/9/23
- b) Chad Mitchell, from the Milton Historic District Commission, effective 12/31/23
- c) Jaime Makuc, from the Litchfield Prevention Council, effective 11/6/23
- d) Amanda Glover, from the Traffic Safety Community Action Group, alternate, effective 11/3/23
- e) Patricia Peiffer, from the Traffic Safety Community Action Group, alternate, effective 10/24/23

- f) Joanne M. Moore from RSD 20 Board of Education (requires Town Meeting within 30 days)
- g) Remove Colleen Kinkade from Litchfield Prevention Council

All resignations were received and noted.

Interviews, Appointments & Reappointments

- a) Appoint Amanda Glover to the Traffic Safety Community Action Group, regular member, term 1/2025
- b) Appoint Patricia Peiffer to the Traffic Safety Community Action Group, regular member, term 1/2025

Motion: J. Zullo moved to appoint Amanda Glover and Patricia Peiffer as above for terms ending 1/2025. J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

- c) Reappoint Michael Cicchetti to IAB for Bantam Lake Jambs, term 11/2025
- d) Reappoint Matthew Blasavage to IAB for Bantam Lake Jambs, term 11/2025

Motion: J. Zullo moved to reappoint Michael Cicchetti and Matthew Blasavage as above for terms ending 11/2025. J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

- e) Reappoint Timothy Benjamin to Bantam Lake Authority, term 12/2026: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to reappoint Timothy Benjamin as above for term ending 12/2026. J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

- f) Reappoint Jordan Richards to Conservation Commission, term 12/2026
- g) Reappoint Cleve Fuessenich to Conservation Commission, term 12/2026

Motion: J. Zullo moved to reappoint Jordan Richards and Cleve Fuessenich as above for terms ending 12/2026. J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

- h) Reappoint Jennifer Parsons to Sandy Beach Commission, term 12/2026
- i) Reappoint Andrew Parker to Sandy Beach Commission, term 12/2026

Motion: J. Zullo moved to reappoint Jennifer Parsons and Andrew Parker as above for terms ending 12/2026. J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion passed.

- j) Interview Margaret Goodhouse for the Traffic Safety Community Action Group, alternate, term 1/2025: Ms Goodhouse spoke about the importance of the Traffic Safety Group, and has witnessed changes and wants to focus on safety. She feels there is a lot of excellent work that has been done, and the plan is a place to start. J. Tenney said Margaret has been to several meetings and the public information session, and is thankful to have her be a part of it. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to appoint Margaret Goodhouse as above as an alternate member, for term ending 1/2025. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

- k) Interview Ken Merz for Water Pollution Control Authority, term 1/2029: Ken Merz has attended a meeting and has a home on Bantam Lake. He is concerned about the aging plant and would like to help with his experience as an engineer, attorney and accountant. He has worked in the construction industry for over 50 years. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to appoint Ken Merz as above, for a term ending 1/2029. D. Morosani seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes: 11/13/23 and 10/16/23 Board of Finance; 11/8/23 and 10/11/23 Inland Wetlands Commission, 9/26/23 Conservation Commission; 11/9/23 Borough/HDC Consolidation Study Committee; 11/14/23 Capital Improvements Committee

Sustainable Litchfield Update: J. Zullo said they are working hard on the gold certification. They have been meeting with Brett Seamans and the contractor on the EV car chargers. The site analysis is complete and they are waiting for the costs. We have about \$240,000 and some money in ARPA to cover the cost. Money will have to be appropriated via Town Meeting, with reimbursement after. There may be a \$20-\$30,000 balance to pay. Locations are the municipal lot (fast charger with two ports and a level 2 charger), the Town Hall, Greenway behind 28 Russell St., LIS lower lot and LHS (each level 2 with two ports).

WPCA Liaison Update: The 2022 WPCA Annual Report was tabled until the next meeting, as Ted Donoghue could not be present. J. Zullo said there were delays on the solar project with the developer and with Litchfield. The project site is now ready, but the interconnect agreement is still in the approval phase. Mobilization is expected by March 6th. The conduit installation would follow, and they are expected to go live on May 22nd. The plantings are all in place.

Appoint BOS Liaison to WPCA, term 1/2028: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to appoint John Bongiorno as the Board of Selectmen's liaison to the WPCA for a term ending 1/2028. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

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
Conservation Commission: 1 alternate member 12/2024
Economic Development Commission: 2 regulars 6/2025, 6/2026
Inland Wetlands Commission: 2 alternate members 6/2024
Litchfield Arts Council: 1 regular member 8/2024
Litchfield Housing Authority: 2 members 8/2023, 8/2024
Litchfield Prevention Council: 2 regular members 6/2024, 6/2025; 3 alt. members; 2 6/2026, 1 6/2025
Milton Historic District Commission: 2 regulars 1/2024, 1/2028; 3 alternates; 2-1/2024, 1-1/2025
Park & Recreation Commission: 1 alternate member 6/2025
Pension Commission: 1 regular 2/2024; 1 alternate member 3/2025
Sandy Beach Commission: 1 regular member 12/2025
Social Services Board: 2 regular members 2/2024, 2/2025
Town Facilities Review Committee: 1 BOF Member 3/2026; 1 BOE Member 3/2026; 2 alternates 3/2026
Traffic Safety Community Action Group: 1 alternate member 1/2025
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

Transfers: **Transfer #2 - \$1,500 for Grant Writing Services for FEMA Grant, from 01-1903-51703 Contingency to 01-2201-52111 Other Professional Services:** J. Zullo moved to revise the motion of approval for Transfer #2 for grant writing services for a FEMA grant, with source of funds from Contingency and destination 01-2201-52111 Other Professional Services. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Old Business

a) P&Z 8-24 Review for Gift of 12.42 Acres on Pitch Road: Realtor Ted Murphy reviewed the property south of the Recycling Center. The Town owns almost all the land around the Recycling Center, and this would increase the Town's reach as a 12.42 acre gift from John and Mary Ann Gay. It is a rocky, mountainous area with a shooting range nearby. Zoning has approved the 8-24. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the gift of 12.42 acres on Pitch Road and forward it to a town meeting for approval. J. Tenney seconded. J. Bongiorno asked about liability and was told it would be covered through our Town liability policy. Upon voting all voted aye and the motion carried. J. Zullo said this should go to the Board of Finance before Town meeting.

b) Traffic Committee - Approval of Proposed Concept for West Street Reconfiguration: J. Tenney, Chairman, explained the components of the draft letter for the State DOT Commissioner. Ed Fabbri came up with the concept sketch that went into the letter. They want the entire area between the Congregational Church and Stop and Shop on Route 202 looked into and considered by the State.

Motion: J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the proposed recommendation of the Traffic Safety Community Action Group and authorize the First Selectman to submit the letter to the DOT Commissioner. J. Tenney seconded the motion. In discussion, D. Morosani spoke to Ms Peiffer's comments and thanked the community for its engagement. He liked the Meadow Street proposal, and summarized his three main thoughts. 1) Flow coming from 118 westbound should have the right of way; 2) improve speed from 63 north to 63 south through town; reroute through South St. extension and then left on 202, not going through the center of town; and 3) stop the bypassing of 202 by going through the center of town. He shared the value of roundabouts clearing traffic without lights. He also stated that we need to get the Borough's approval if we should need to lop off a small portion of the Green. J. Bongiorno asked about the possibility of one-way traffic from 202 up through Town eastbound with the concurrence of the Borough. Ed Fabbri noted that the merchants on West St. would be against it. J. Zullo said we must insist on ongoing dialog and engagement with the State.

Amendment: J. Zullo moved to add to the first motion that the Board of Selectmen further authorize the First Selectman to add to the letter that the Town of Litchfield wants to engage in a meeting to review this letter and their analysis soon in order to understand their process and have an open dialogue. J. Tenney seconded the motion.

Vote: All voted aye to amend the motion, and it passed. Voting on the original motion as amended, all voted aye and the motion carried.

P. Peiffer mentioned that drivers are accelerating on the corner at the Congregational Church after much stop and go through town.

c) Review Recommendations from the Merit Service Pension and Retention Committee: J. Campbell referred to the pension document drafted and would like to get an idea of pricing. J. Zullo said the Pension Commission should handle this. D. Morosani said they are proposing the pension go from \$15/mo. from 1990 to a proposed \$35/mo. to account for inflation, with a revalue of the pension accruals every five years thereafter. This needs to be sent to the actuarial firm, Hooker and Holcomb, and then to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance, and then to the Pension Commission for its consideration. D. Morosani then said another consideration is to extend the years of service beyond 30 years to 45 years.

Motion: J. Zullo moved to send to the Pension Commission and Board of Finance to analyze the impact of Items 1 and 2 of the 11/17/23 memo from the Fire and EMS Commission outlining proposed changes to the Litchfield first responder incentive plan. They are:

- 1) Revaluation of pension accrual from \$15/month per year of service to \$35/month, and a specific provision for future revaluation by the Pension Commission at 5-year intervals.
- 2) Increase in number of accruable pension years from 30 to 45. Currently serving first responders who have already completed more than 30 years of service will be credited with the additional years they have served at the \$35/year rate and continue to accrue pension benefits up to the new 45-year maximum.

J. Tenney seconded the motion. She then asked if there is a minimum number of calls to be eligible for the pension. J. Campbell answered by explaining how they must earn 100 points per year. J. Zullo asked for some data from peer communities to judge the fairness of our offers. Upon voting, all voted aye and the motion carried.

J. Zullo suggested tabling Items 3 (pay-per-call incentive plan) and 4 (additional privileges). J. Zullo said we need a dollar value for the Board of Finance and Pension Commission on Items 1 and 2. For pay-per-call and additional privileges we need an estimated dollar value. We should keep a placeholder in our budget for the town pension funding line item so we can start this in 2024. He also noted that the additional privilege of head-of-line for Town-sponsored affordable housing is illegal.

Motion: J. Zullo moved to table Item 3 to a future meeting and for Dan Morosani to work with the Chiefs of Service and the Fire and EMS Commission to identify the numbers on Items 3 and 4. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed.

d) Borough/HDC Consolidation Study Committee Update: Chairman Jon Tarrant summarized the work of the Committee from its inception and good progress until the summer of 2023 when the HDC and Borough interceded saying that any attempt to consolidate the Borough would result in the loss of the HDC as well. They are now in the midst of a conflicting legal opinion battlefield. He has decided to suspend meetings until January with the traffic safety project taking the forefront. He said progress has been minimal since September of 2022 when the Committee started its work. In talking with Borough and Town residents, he has found that the consensus is that people want the HDC but not the Borough. They will work to keep the HDC in place and work with the Borough to go forward. In the meantime they await the response from our town attorney and a State employee who also offered an opinion.

New Business

a) Servpro - LVA Flood Losses: LVA Chief Pudlinski recounted the damage to the LVA building as a result of the flooding on 9/11/23. The water came into the basement from the catch basins and was classified as toxic category 2 gray water. The Town insurer, CIRMA, said the deductible for flood damage is \$50,000. J. Pudlinski said he could not go into the basement without a respirator. Servpro came to clean up and has sent a bill that included tax. Chief Pudlinski is in discussions with Servpro to try to negotiate the price lower. They are asking the Town for assistance in the amount of \$9,989.31 to cover medical items lost (\$3,183.00) and the Servpro bill (\$6,806.31). **Motion:** J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen authorize up to \$9,989.31 in reimbursement to LVA, with funding to come from Contingency and go back to LVA. J. Bongiorno second the motion. Upon voting all voted aye and the motion passed.

b) Frontier Contract: John Morosani, Chairman of the Litchfield Broadband and Wireless Commission, and introduced John MacDonald from Frontier. He said the Commission received \$60,885 to put a muni wifi network on the green that would accommodate up to 500 people connecting to wifi. Frontier's bid was \$138,954, with monthly recurring charges on a 60-month basis of \$1,770/month. They got a grant from Seherr-Thoss for \$67,477, with \$10,592 left to request from Capital. Frontier will install a dedicated fiber line into the Town Hall, and from there fiber will be connected to the poles to pick up the access

points around the green. Frontier will then manage the connection to be sure the network is running and to troubleshoot problems. J. Zullo suggested using existing ARPA funds.

Motion: J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the Frontier contract using current funding from ARPA, the grant from Seherr-Thoss and \$10,592 from additional ARPA funds, and take to town meeting for approval as well as the recurring 5-year contract. J. Bongiorno seconded the motion. It will go to the Board of Finance and to the Annual Town Meeting in January. The recurring expenditure would be built into the budget. Upon voting all voted aye and the motion carried. J. Tenney asked for the ARPA balances at the next meeting.

c) Approval of LHS Solar Screening Invoice: Motion: J. Zullo moved to approve the solar screening invoice for \$11,000 to be funded by a non-profit of \$1,500 and by the Public Works operation budget. J. Tenney seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

d) Approve 2024 Selectmen's Meeting Schedule: D. Raap explained that there are three dates that do not work at the Annex meeting room, so the Board preferred meeting at the Litchfield Firehouse on those dates. J. Zullo asked that a monitor be installed in the Annex meeting room so the board can see people who are speaking on Zoom. D. Raap said it could be put into the new budget. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to approve the 2024 Selectmen's meeting schedule as amended and J. Tenney seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

e) Fire & EMS Commission Request to Approve Purchase of Northfield Fire Truck (Capital): see f)

f) Fire & EMS Commission Request to Approve Additional Funds for Northfield Fire - \$32,000: J. Zullo suggested approving the total amount of \$882,463, as the budgeted amount of \$849,784 is in place in Capital, and we can figure out the \$32,000 in the next 600 days. **Motion:** J. Bongiorno moved to approve the funding for the firetruck of \$882,463 and to purchase the fire truck at the total cost, knowing that we have 600 days to come up with the remaining \$32,678.76. J. Tenney seconded the motion. S. Fogarty said he would take it to the Capital Committee. Upon voting all voted aye except abstention by D. Morosani, and the motion passed. *[J. Bongiorno left here at 7:53 p.m. and the Board took a 5-minute break].*

g) Town Facilities Review Committee Presentation - Recommendation for Architectural Firm for Annex Plan: Barbara Putnam, Chairman, and Sam Olmstead reported on progress of the Committee since its inception in 2020. Focusing on the Town Hall and the Bantam Annex, they did a survey for public opinion. They are hiring a consultant who can evaluate the Annex building how the community wants to use it. In the RFQ process, they chose TLB Architects from Chester, CT at a \$150,000 contract amount. S. Olmstead said the Annex is not being put to its highest and best use and needs improvements. With this study plan, mechanicals can be replaced in a thoughtful, cost controlled way. This is a credible and reasonable firm. J. Zullo said we really need a baseline to start from. Also the programming and public hearings are necessary. Funding from fund balance was recommended by Mr. Olmstead, leaving the Annex fund to support the Annex operations. D. Raap said there is an extra \$200,000 left over from the schools' capital nonrecurring fund that can be used. D. Morosani questioned the cost for a public outreach line item of \$40,000. B. Putnam said she liked this firm because of its great public outreach. J. Zullo suggested a minimum of five public meetings be included in the contract.

Motion: J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the recommendation of the Town Facilities Review Committee to contract with TLB Architects for the Bantam Annex architectural and engineering analysis in the amount of \$150,000 including reimbursables and that the contract include a minimum of five public charette meetings during the process; and forward this to the Board of Finance and Town Meeting and evaluate sourcing from Capital Nonrecurring. J. Tenney seconded the motion.

Discussion: Burke Gibney detailed action on the three firms discussed and why they picked TLB. D. Morosani said the Annex could be a great place for a public pool and was happy the whole site is being considered. S. Olmstead said he would forward the RFP so everyone could see what was included. Options can be estimated by a third party at a later date.

Vote: All voted aye and the motion carried.

h) Sign Two (2) Town Meeting Calls for 12/6/23: Motion: J. Zullo moved and J. Tenney seconded a motion to adopt the first special Town Meeting call at 7:00 p.m. to elect a member for the Region 20 Board of Education. All present voted aye and the motion carried. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved and J. Tenney seconded a motion to adopt the second special Town Meeting call at 7:30 p.m. to act on various budget line item transfers and to redirect ARPA funds. All present voted aye and the motion carried.

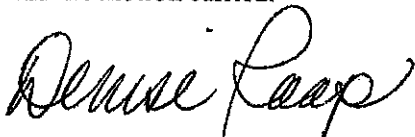
i) Disband Affordable Housing Steering Committee: Motion: D. Raap explained that this committee was formed to be able to create the Affordable Housing Plan that was submitted to the State in November. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to disband the Affordable Housing Steering Committee, and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Correspondence

a) CT Siting Council Notice of Proposed Solar Electric Generating Facility in Torrington: received and noted.

b) Bantam Lake Protective Assn. Letter to DEEP Re Bantam Lake Pollution: received and noted

Adjournment: Motion: J. Zullo moved to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.



Denise Raap, First Selectman



Robyn Ryle <rryle@townoflitchfield.org>

Draft Meeting Schedule

1 message

Michele Murelli <murellimichele@gmail.com>

Tue, Dec 5, 2023 at 12:17 PM

To: Lisa Losee <LLosee@townoflitchfield.org>, townclerk@townoflitchfield.org

This is the draft of EDC's meeting schedule for 2024. Thought I'd send it over, if it changes when we meet next week, I'll notify you.

Michele

Draft 2024 meeting schedule:

January 31

February 28

March 27 (Restaurant Week 2024 tentatively March 22-29)

April 24

May 29

June 26

July 31

August 28

September 25

October 30

November 20* (Thanksgiving is November 28)

December 11* or 18*