

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 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 regular hybrid meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. with Selectmen Jeffrey Zullo, Dan Morosani, John Bongiorno and Denise Raap present. Jodiann Tenney arrived at 5:52 p.m.

Motion: J. Zullo moved to add an executive session after Correspondence. J. Bongiorno seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved and J. Bongiorno seconded a motion to adopt the regular 12/5/23 meeting minutes. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Public Requests/Comments: None

Selectmen's Requests: J. Bongiorno requested a future recurring agenda item for Public Safety. This would alert the public so they would know to come. D. Raap informed him that she has set aside a special Board of Selectmen's meeting for Jan. 23 or Jan. 30 dedicated to public safety. J. Holm, Resident State Trooper, will have a report ready.

D. Morosani gave an update on the data gathering for the first responder benefit overhaul. He is about half-way done with the data gathering on calls and should be done at the end of the year. The Pension Commission will reach out to Hooker & Holcombe to get the valuation process started.

First Selectman's Update Report: D. Raap has an agreement with the Post Office and Lex. Litchfield to have the postal workers park temporarily in the municipal parking lot. Northwest Community Bank will be the steward of the \$1 million grant for the Bantam Falls upgrade project. D. Raap gave an update from the Capital Committee's work, with all departments having presented with a total request of \$3.1 million. We are hoping to pare it down to \$2.5 million and hoping to avoid bonding this year. She then updated the storm damage with trees down and on wires, poles leaning and people stuck at home with a tree over wires and lots of water, and they are still working on it. Discussion followed about poor or no cell coverage on Route 8. D. Raap then said towns are looking into passing ordinances regulating or banning AirBnB usage. Planning and Zoning is addressing it at its next meeting. Regarding the special meeting for public safety, D. Raap said she would like to have it scheduled earlier on January 23, 2024.

Motion: J. Zullo moved to set a special Board of Selectmen meeting for Tuesday, January 23, 2024. J. Bongiorno seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed. The only agenda item will be public safety, with our two resident troopers invited. Troop L said that for them to answer any questions, they must have them ahead of time. D. Raap asked that any questions be brought to her at the January 2 meeting or emailed to her ahead. J. Zullo insisted that both resident troopers be present with data for the full year of 2023. She then announced that training has to be done for anyone using CJIS documents such as the background reports required for pistol permits. Criminal Justice Information Services Security and Privacy training is an online platform with test following. Both she and Ann Combs passed it and can again be able to process pistol permits after an interruption of about a week. She then said she will be posting for the Executive Assistant position in January. She has been taking on the HR responsibilities since September with Ann's help. There have been some changes with this position that will be discussed in executive session. Revaluation letters have been mailed and are a reapportionment of the valuations

across the town based on the market changes over five years. This reapportionment has no impact on the Town tax revenue. She is applying for a grant from DESPP for the removal of PFAS in the firefighting foam. She needs information from the fire companies to complete this. *[J. Tenney arrived here at 5:52 p.m.]*

Resignations

a) Danielle Muecke from Beautification Commission, effective 12/6/23: received and noted

Interviews, Appointments & Reappointments

a) Lauren Sage for Traffic Safety Community Action Group, alternate member, term 1/2025: Ms Sage said she attended a meeting about a year ago. J. Tenney said she had no knowledge of her interest and had another interested party. L. Sage said it is important to have a resident of Bantam on the committee who can find solutions to problems in Bantam. J. Zullo said this is a seven-member board with two alternates, but the Board can vote to add another alternate position.

Motion: J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen appoint Laren Sage to the Traffic Safety Community Action Group as an alternate member, for a term through 1/2025. J. Bongiorno seconded, all voted aye and the motion passed.

Motion: J. Zullo moved that the Board of Selectmen add an alternate position to the Traffic Safety Community Action Group to be filled at a later meeting so we will now have 7 regular and 3 alternate members on the Traffic Safety Community Action Group. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes: 12/11/23 Board of Finance; 12/12/23 Capital

Sustainable Litchfield Update: J. Zullo reported no meetings since Dec. 5th.

WPCA Liaison Update: J. Zullo said Eversource did not approve the interconnect agreement, but it has just been approved and signed yesterday. The Phase I environmental study has been completed and the Alta site survey will be done this month by Hrica. Pull testing that tests the strength of the ground for anchoring the racking will be done, permits will be complete by 2026, rain garden construction will be done after winter, and rebuilding of the drain canal in April. The panels should be installed by early May.

J. Bongiorno was away for his first meeting with the WPCA but said there are differences of opinion on the way the WPCA annual report is written and information given. WPCA member Christian Bratina sent several emails to John on his dissatisfaction and explained the way it should be done. J. Zullo noted it is up to the Board to direct the content of the report, and if they do not direct the Superintendent correctly, he will deliver the report as he has before. J. Bongiorno assessed the working relationship between the WPCA and the Superintendent and public as being difficult. He applauded Ted Donghue for his excellent work and dedication. J. Tenney said Christine Harding spent her time as BOS Liaison on the WPCA by trying to get everyone to be civil to each other.

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

Beautification Commission: 2 regular member 2/2025, 2/2026; 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 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
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: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to approve the tax refunds in the total amount of \$8,459. J. Tenney seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Old Business

a) Approve Updated Sandy Beach Lease: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to approve the Sandy Beach Lease and J. Bongiorno seconded. Mr. Bongiorno noticed there are some responsibilities that are not well defined. In addition to the \$2,773.26 annual rental, there is an escalator so the rental can go up every year. We pay Sandy Beach Commission and they pay White Memorial. Sandy Beach Commission also carries workers comp insurance and collects all the revenue. We carry liability insurance. D. Morosani asked if admission could be free for first responders, and D. Raap said that would be something that could be agreed upon with the Sandy Beach Commission outside of this lease. J. Bongiorno was also concerned about maintenance of the beach and grounds and was told Sandy Beach Commission has the responsibility and does a good job. We also have more accountable controls now with Sandy Beach, as we give them a yearly budget. **Vote:** Upon voting on the motion, all voted aye and the motion carried. This will be forwarded to our Annual Town Meeting in January.

b) EV Car Charger Contract: J. Zullo said Energy Solutions Corp. (ESC) is the chosen contractor to develop the EV charger program and is a State bidder, and we have a State grant. In meetings with Public Works, they wanted to relocate the charger planned for the Intermediate School to the municipal lot so that they will have a fast charger and two level 2 chargers with two ports on each charger; however, they need to be sure that Eversource will fund two level 2 chargers at one location. Right now the proposal is \$18,431 over the grants and rebate. They will wait for the Eversource updates so a summary can be presented at the January 2nd meeting. One option is to eliminate one of the level 2 chargers, which will help us break even. ChargePoint is a national vendor they are leaning toward. D. Morosani questioned the path taken if that company fails, and J. Zullo said they are a national network and was sure another company would absorb them. Tesla is not an option as they only develop their own, and grant monies did not go for Tesla. J. Zullo said the Board needs to decide whether we want additional level 2s at the municipal lot or bring it under budget with the elimination of one level 2. He thought we should identify the annual operating costs, apply to each charger, and realize the revenue against it. We cannot make a profit for the first three years, but we can break even. D. Morosani then asked for consideration for a Northfield location, such as the firehouse. They agreed to eliminate the LHS location and find the best cost location.

New Business

a) Town Tech Committee: J. Bongiorno said he did not have time to put together his presentation, but he will have it for the next meeting. D. Raap noted the Verizon VOIP phone system does not work well, and suggested using cell phones instead. J. Bongiorno suggested "Teams" on the computer. D. Morosani suggested Google VOIP. The merits of 5G vs fiber was discussed.

Correspondence: None

Executive Session: Motion: J. Zullo moved to go into executive session at 7:03 p.m. for three items: 1) Personnel, 2) Personnel and 3) Real Estate. J. Bongiorno seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. All Selectmen attended. Out of executive session at 7:36 p.m. with no action taken.

Adjournment: Motion: J. Zullo moved to adjourn at 7:36 p.m. and J. Tenney seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.



Denise Raap, First Selectman