

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

January 4, 2022

REGULAR MEETING

In Person

Board of Selectmen Attendance: First Selectman Paula Cofrancesco, Selectman Donald Shea, and Selectman Elizabeth Appel.

Also, in attendance: Town Counsel Barbara Schellenberg and Lina Frazer

Visitors: Susan Bradford, Sharon Huxley, and Richard Huxley

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Paula Cofrancesco called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 7:01 p.m. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed the December 7, 2021, meeting minutes and First Selectman Cofrancesco called for a motion to accept the minutes of December 7, 2021. Selectman Appel moved and Selectman Shea seconded. Voting: Cofrancesco, Shea, Appel. **Unanimous Approval.**

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION – TAX REFUNDS.

No Tax refunds for approval.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION – ARPA UPDATE

First Selectman Cofrancesco provided the Board with an update regarding the ARPA Funds. First Selectman Cofrancesco indicated that only two checks had been written during December, and one of those checks is currently outstanding. Once all checks have cleared and taking into account the money encumbered for the new ambulance and the equipment needed for it, there would be a balance of approximately \$213,000 remaining from the first tranche of ARPA funds. The second tranche is expected to arrive at the end of June 2022. Selectman Appel requested an itemized spreadsheet of ARPA funds spending, including a running balance. First Selectman Cofrancesco plans to provide more detailed information once a new Finance Director is in place.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION – CHARTER/COMMITTEE- UPDATE.

First Selectman Cofrancesco asked Selectman Shea for an update regarding the Charter Committee. Selectman Shea communicated that the Committee met the previous Tuesday, December 28, 2021. Additionally, Selectman Shea informed the Board that according to State law the Committee can take no action and is unable to report out until a public hearing is held. The Committee did elect a chairman and agreed to rotate the role of secretary. Selectman Shea also informed the Board that the Committee will meet the first and third Thursday of each month, and meetings will be open to the public. The date of the public hearing will be set and noticed in the Bethany Bulletin, on the Town Facebook page and Website.

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HOPP BROOK/BEACON FALLS DEVELOPMENT – UPDATE.

First Selectman Cofrancesco informed the Board that at this time no discussion is needed as there is nothing pending that will impact Bethany. Town Counsel, Barbara Schellenberg confirmed that they are waiting for a ruling on the second application for Beacon Falls, and she anticipates it may take few months.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN - UPDATE.

No update at this time.

STATUS OF AIRPORT HANGER - UPDATE.

First Selectman Cofrancesco communicated that eight (8) refund checks were issued for December. At this time there are still a number of refund letters that remain outstanding. First Selectman Cofrancesco did indicate that the technical deadline has passed but she will be waiting for the week just to avoid excluding any letters postmarked by December 29, 2021. First Selectman Cofrancesco and Board discussed possible options for any remaining funds.

SIMPSON PROPERTY - UPDATE

First Selectman Cofrancesco informed the Board that she is still waiting for the Survey and grant review to be finished, otherwise there is no update at this time.

TEXTILE RECYCLABLES COLLECTION – UPDATE

First Selectman Cofrancesco updated the Board that she has been in a number of meetings with representatives from SCRCOG regarding a DEEP grant. The final plan remains outstanding and First Selectman Cofrancesco is waiting for a more information from them to move forward with next steps.

REVITALIZATION OF BETHANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION- UPDATE

First Selectman Cofrancesco communicated to the Board that she has received interest from a number of individuals and has identified five (5) full members, and one alternate to act as members on the Bethany Economic Development Commission. The Commission members will be Tom Cavaliere, James Stirling, Janet Brunwin, Todd Bussert, and Joe Cafasso, with Sharon Huxley as an alternate.

WEBSITE AND IT- UPDATE

First Selectman Cofrancesco communicated to the Board that she received an update from Fran Doba regarding the completion of the fiberoptic replacement project which is now connected directly to the rack in the sever room. Novus Insight Computer Support Services will be reviewing the set up to ensure maxim output. Additionally, Will and Fran will begin training with Qscend shortly. The website framework is complete, and content is being migrated to the new page. First Selectman Cofrancesco anticipates the new website to be operational in the coming weeks. Ms. Doba has reached out to department heads for the any technology and licensing needs for the FY22/23 fiscal year.

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OTHER ITEMS OF BOS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

1. Selectman Shea commented on the relative success of the distribution of the Covid Testing Kits based on the public feedback he has been receiving. The Board then discussed ways to enhance internal communication among Board members for important updates.
2. Selectman Appel expressed a desire to have all meeting available via Zoom and First Selectman Cofrancesco confirmed she has reached out to representatives from SCRCOG regarding the OWL camera for a possible demonstration. She will work to confirm a date for this and begin troubleshooting ways to make meetings available on Zoom in the meantime.
3. First Selectman Cofrancesco reminded the Board of the change in the Board of Selectmen meeting schedule starting in February. The Board of Selectmen will go from meeting on the first and third Tuesday of the month, down to the first Tuesday of every month. It was noted that a special meeting can be called if any business arises that requires the Board's attention.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

There being no further agenda items for discussion First Selectman Cofrancesco opened the floor for public comment. The following spoke: Sharon Huxley.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:41 p.m. First Selectman Cofrancesco asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Shea moved to adjourn the regular meeting and was seconded by Selectman Appel. Voting: Cofrancesco, Shea, Appel. **Unanimous Approval.**

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Callery
Town Meeting Clerk