

Selectmen's Minutes
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Stage, 30 Martin Street

October 4, 2021

Note: This meeting will be held in-person at the location provided on this notice. Members of the public are welcome to attend this in-person meeting. Please note that while an option for remote, audio-only attendance and/or participation is being provided as a courtesy to the public, the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast or its quality, unless otherwise required by law. Members of the public with particular interest in any specific item on this agenda should make plans for in-person vs. virtual attendance accordingly.

Call in Phone Number: 605-562-8401 Password: 8378315

Present: Acting Chairman Peter D. Phippen, Selectman Guy D. Bradford, Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki, Police Chief Paul Francis, Selectmen's Assistant Pamela J. Witham, John Bediz, Paul Fitzpatrick, Tina Lane, Adam Scott, and two others.

Present via Teleconferencing: Selectman Ruth Preen.

Acting Chairman Peter D. Phippen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the second floor stage conference area of the Town Hall.

Conomo Point residents John Bediz and Paul Fitzpatrick came before the Board to review their letter to the Board regarding the annual Conomo Point rent adjustments that are based on the CPI-U. Each year, in February, when the CPI-U is published for the past year, the Board uses that number to adjust the rents at Conomo Point, according to the lease agreements. This past year, the rents were increased by 0.5 percent. However, since that time the CPI-U has been steadily increasing and is currently at 4.3 percent. Mr. Bediz and Mr. Fitzpatrick would like the Board to consider making a one-time adjustment next February to ensure a smaller rent increase. The Board decided to take the matter under advisement until it is closer to February 2022, since the CPI-U will continue to fluctuate. The Board will also review the history of CPI increases with respect to leases and may seek advice from Town Counsel. Mr. Bediz and Mr. Fitzpatrick thanked the Board and left the meeting.

At 6:05 p.m., a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to open a Public Hearing regarding a request for a new license by Adam Scott to store flammable/combustible liquids at 1 Laurel Lane (Map 209, Lots 29/30). Adam Scott was present, along with two of his co-workers, to answer any questions or concerns. A notice of the public hearing was published in the newspaper and also sent to all abutters. Mr. Scott has received sign-offs from the Fire Department, the Planning Board, and the Conservation Commission. A map of the site was displayed. Following a short discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to close the hearing. The Board was in agreement and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the request for a license for above ground storage of 60,000

gallons of propane, 110 gallons of methanol, and empty propane tanks at 1 Laurel Lane. Mr. Scott and his co-workers left the meeting.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the weekly warrant in the amount of \$154,714.18.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the minutes for the Selectmen's September 27, 2021, Open Meeting.

Police Chief Paul Francis joined the Board to review the resume of Matthew Lipinski, who is being considered for appointment to the position of Part-Time Police Officer. Mr. Lipinski had worked for the Essex Police Department in the past and Chief Francis spoke in support of his reappointment. Subsequently, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to appoint Matthew Lipinski to the position of Part-Time Police Officer, with drug and medical testing at the discretion of Chief Francis. Chief Francis thanked the Board and left the meeting.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to accept the resignation of Allison Williard from the Finance Committee.

The Board reviewed letters of interest from Joshua Franklin and Christopher Wolf regarding the two vacancies on the Finance Committee. After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the appointment of Joshua Franklin and Christopher Wolf to fill the two vacancies on the Finance Committee and to finish out the respective terms of the two members who resigned (Chris Wolf – 6/30/2024 and Joshua Franklin - 6/30/2022).

The Agreement between the towns of Hamilton, Essex, Manchester, and Wenham for Public Health Services via the State's Public Health Excellence Grant Program has not been received and discussion was postponed until the next meeting.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to ratify Acting Chairman Phippen's signature of grant paperwork for a State legislative earmark of \$20,000 for marsh and riverway restoration projects.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to accept and sign the paperwork for an award from SeniorCare in the amount of \$1,500.00 in Title IIIB funding to the Essex Council on Aging for outreach.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to ratify the approval of a One-Day Wine and Malt License for Essex County Greenbelt, Jane Rumrill, for use on Saturday, October 23, 2021, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., within the confines of 82 Eastern Avenue.

The Board was reminded that their next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting will take place on Monday, October 18, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Stage Conference Area at the Town Hall at 30 Martin Street.

The Fall Town Meeting is scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m., Monday, November 15, 2021, in the gymnasium at the Essex Elementary School on Story Street.

The Zoning Board of Appeals will meet tonight at 7:00 p.m. to discuss variance requests for a proposed cell tower off Eastern Avenue and the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on a Special Permit application for the proposed cell tower this Wednesday. The Planning Board hearing may be continued, at the request of the applicant, since the applicant will likely opt to wait for the ZBA decision and, if the variances are approved, the required appeals period, before presenting its Special Permit application.

Mr. Zubricki began the presentation of his Town Administrator's Report for the period September 25, 2021 through October 1, 2021, regarding the following:

Old Police/Fire Station Demolition Project Update: Mr. Zubricki reported that the asbestos abatement has been completed. The final sign-off by the 3rd party that everything has been completed properly is expected. The Building Inspector will likely issue the demolition permit this Wednesday. All other sign-offs from the Conservation Commission, the Board of Health, and the Historical Commission have been received. It is anticipated that demolition will begin sometime this week and be completed by early November.

Possible Change of VOIP Service Provider for Non-Public Safety: Mr. Zubricki said that the VOIP telephone vendor at the new public safety building offers more services for a lower cost than the one currently used at the Town Hall. The new vendor has proposed to install their equipment at the Town Hall and Senior Center. The Town could lease the equipment, pay for the equipment and installation in one lump sum, or lease the equipment until such time as the Town is ready to pay it off. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to switch to NetTelOne and select the lease option.

Finance Committee Meeting Summary: The Finance Committee met recently and Mr. Zubricki reviewed Finance Committee Chairman Ben Buttrick's summary of the meeting. The Committee had approved all the proposed financial articles for the Fall Town Meeting, with a few questions and provisions and suggestions.

Continued Review of Draft Fall Town Meeting Warrant: Mr. Zubricki reviewed the updated draft of the Fall Town Meeting Warrant and those present discussed the articles and the corresponding monetary summary. They also discussed the Community Preservation Committee proposed article, which had been planned as a general article with a specific Town Meeting handout. Instead, the Board would like to have each of the three projects that have been recommended by the Committee handled as three, separate articles. The warrant will be closed and finalized at the next Board meeting on October 18.

Possible Participation in the National Opioid Settlement: A national group has been formed, consisting of members from several states as part of a court action called the National Opioid

Settlement to make monetary awards to local communities included in the group. Town Counsel has advised registering for the group to obtain more information and Mr. Zubricki has submitted the paperwork for the Town's registration. Once more details are known, the Board will have the chance to opt into the settlement, if desired.

Local Rapid Relief Grant Program Public Forum Summary: With the help of this grant program, Manchester and Essex have been made aware of six different areas of focus to help local businesses recover from the recent pandemic. A virtual public forum was held recently to explore these areas and get public feedback. Providing decorative public lighting in the downtown area had support from the Essex contingent of the grant team and the Board indicated that the Town should start with that effort. The Selectmen were in agreement and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to seek grant funding for decorative lighting of downtown public areas.

There was no public comment.

There being no further business before the Board, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Documents used during this meeting include the following: None.

Prepared by: _____ Attested by: _____
Pamela J. Witham Peter D. Phippen