

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REVISED MEEING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 20, 2020
8:30 A.M. – ZOOM MEETING
In accordance with Governor’s Executive Order 7B**

First Selectman Matthew Hoey called the public hearing and meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Present: Board Members: Matthew Hoey, Charles, Havrda, Susan Renner, Louis Federici and Sandra Ruoff

Town Officials: Finance Director Maryjane, Malavasi, Human Resources Director Mitch Goldblatt, Town Engineer Janice Plaziak, Parks and Recreation Director Rick Maynard, Attorney Chris Hodgson, Police Commission Chair Bob Welsh, and Fire Commission Chair Ken Wilson, Jr.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Havrda led the pledge.

2. Public Hearing to obtain comments on programs that shall be included on a list pursuant to Chapter 228a of the Connecticut General Statutes, Neighborhood Assistance Act, prior to submission of such list to the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services.

Mr. Hoey noted that they received three applications from the Women & Family Life Center, SARAH Foundation and Green Planet Company.

Meghan Scanlon from the Women & Family Life Center said this is the first year they made the decision to go for program service outside of energy savings due to the last several months dealing with the pandemic and seeing the needs of the families they are serving. She added that they work closely with Guilford Social Services to link people to their resources. They have seen an increase in the long term effects pandemic and are looking to meet capacity with their Guided Assistance Program by increasing staffing. This program helps with things such as housing and food insecurity, underemployment or job loss and childcare and access to affordable childcare. They have been dealing with the impacts of domestic violence as well, but this has become incredibly intensified the last several months. Knowing this is not going away anytime soon and with

unemployment ending, they are looking to meet capacity with this program. This funding will allow them to move a second social worker to full time.

Mr. Hoey noted that revenue sources are less than total expenditures, so existing staff will be utilized for services.

Ms. Scanlon said they are not adding additional staff, but looking to move up existing staff.

Several board members noted the applications they received were blank. The clerk said she could email them to the board following the meeting.

Ken Alberti from the SARAH Foundation explained that their residential program is their longest standing program. It is important for their residents to be able to keep activities consistent. When they lose power in their homes they have to move folks into hotels for a period of time. This is disruptive to day to day care. They have some hospital beds and other equipment they need to have operating. They have a few homes with small generators, but are looking to upgrade those to full home generators with this funding. Routine and consistency critical. They are hoping to do two homes so it would be a total of \$40,000.

Chris Widmer, Green Planet Company Director, explained that they are a non-profit housing developer doing affordable home ownership. Great Hill Cottage Community is a 15 acre parcel development planned for north of 95 on State Street. There will be ten cottages, smaller in size at 1,300 to 1,700 square feet. They are requesting NAAP funding to help fund the certification of these homes through DEEP's Net Zero Energy program. Each will be designed and built to those standards with the ultimate outcome and will be energy ready. Their agency is working with a licensed certification company that certifies the project at the end. Funding through NAAP will pay for their service and some administration cost for that.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Renner and seconded by Mr. Federici, the board voted unanimously to close the public hearing at 8:44 a.m.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

3. Public Forum (limited to 3 minutes on agenda items)

Human Rights Commission Chair Jo Keogh asked if the board would add an application from Eric MacDonald to join the Human Rights Commission.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Havrda and seconded by Ms. Renner, the board voted unanimously to add to the agenda the appointment of Eric MacDonald to the Human Rights Commission for a term to expire June 30, 2024.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

4. Approve minutes of:

1. July 6, 2020 - Regular Meeting

Mr. Federici said with regard to the fingerprint system the police were buying in item 6, the deputy chief was following up to see if the state would provide reimbursement.

Mr. Hoey said he has not had a follow up conversation about that yet.

Mr. Federici said there was also a question about a possible de-escalation clause for the chip sealing.

Mr. Havrda said they got that information from Ms. Millman after the meeting so he should have an email with regard to that.

Mr. Hoey said it works both ways based on spot market pricing.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Havrda and seconded by Mr. Federici, the board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2020 Regular Meeting as presented.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

2. July 13, 2020 - Special Meeting

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Federici and seconded by Ms. Renner, the board voted to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting as presented.

Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Renner and Federici

Opposed: None
Abstaining: Havrda and Ruoff

5. Finance Director (Maryjane Malavasi):

1. Receive monthly report from Finance Director.

Revenues

Ms. Malavasi explained that these are preliminary June 30 figures since there will still be more transfers and movement. Overall it is a much better financial picture at the end of the fiscal year than anticipated in April. Thanks to reopening the town was able to meet and exceed the revenue budget by \$1.1 million. They anticipated a surplus anyway due to tax revenues and ECS money being over budget. Most of departments exceeded their budgets. They did look at tax revenue as of July 13 and compared it to the prior year collection and this year is only 15% less. They brought in more than enough revenue to continue to pay the medical benefits fund and pension contribution and are still anticipating another \$19 million at the end of month in bank escrows.

Mr. Hoey said when they adopted the 90 day deferment program, the concern was the impact to cash flow. He asked the community to continue to pay on time if they could afford to and obviously this is a community that has heeded those words or just wants to pay taxes on time. Being down only 15% is what they anticipated would happen. There is no danger of having a cash flow problem.

Mr. Hoey said golf course revenues are at 96% and on target. They had \$45,000 in receipts in month of June. Golf is new pandemic sport.

Mr. Havrda said disc golf booming too.

Expenditures

Ms. Malavasi said some departments are showing overages, but they will make transfers at the end of the year. The ones that remain over, she will come to the boards of selectmen and finance at the second meeting in August to cover from other budget lines or use money that is set aside in fund balance. The BOE is anticipating a \$200,000 surplus. Police anticipate a surplus as well. The legal surplus will be carried over into next year since there will be additional negotiations. Public Works will have some savings. There is a significant savings in the street light line of \$170,000 due to the town's purchase of street lights. Fire hydrants is showing a savings due to a merger. Overall, she is anticipating a \$485,000 surplus on the expenditure side.

Mr. Hoey noted there will be somewhat of an offset when additional fire hydrants from the water project come online.

Mr. Federici said the golf course is hitting its revenue budget, but it is also under on expenditures.

Mr. Hoey said they delayed opening due to COVID-19 and opened slowly, but are up to full complement for staff. He added that they had a successful ratings call with Fitch who reaffirmed the town's AAA rating prior to the bond sale in August.

Mr. Hoey noted that with regard to the pension status, they are close to where they were prior to the coronavirus at \$68 million.

Ms. Malavasi added that they recouped what they lost and are only down a little lower due to benefit payouts.

Mr. Havrda asked what the general number was that they are working towards. Mr. Hoey said it is 6.5%. They brought it down a quarter of a point every year for the last four years and will continue to do so, because they need to be in mid to low fives eventually. The time of 8% returns is well passed.

Mr. Goldblatt said four to five years ago they had been on high side. Now they have made changes year after year and it puts them in a good position in relation to their peers. They will hopefully continue to follow the recommendations of actuary and this will keep them solvent.

Mr. Havrda asked how it is working out with lump sums versus pension benefits. Mr. Goldblatt said really the only lump sum options right now are on the Board of Education side. The last two they did have, agreed to split the lump sum over two years. The retirements on the town side are monthly pension payouts.

Medical

Ms. Malavasi said they are continuing to see low claim numbers, which is the effect of COVID-19. People are not going in for elective surgeries and the mindset for medical is different these days. She added that without a crystal ball, she is not sure how it will affect the future. They don't know if next year it will bounce up, but either way they have money in fund balance. There have been \$2.5 million less in claims this year. There has been the same effect on catastrophic claims. The stop-loss is at 76.7% The last few years have been over that. She is not sure if it is COVID or HSA related. The consultants feel COVID is a big driver. They

did not hit the premium this year, but did go over the 76% threshold. Revenue is steady with an estimated fund balance at the end of the year just shy of \$6.5 million.

Mr. Havrda said aches and pains don't go away just because you push things off.

Mr. Federici said he did not think it was a bad outcome not to hit that number. They have hit it many times. To miss in one given year is not a bad outcome. He questioned why the administration number varies and why it was higher in June than the previous month. He also questioned why they are still paying an affordable care tax if they switched to high deductible health plans.

Ms. Malavasi said she is not sure why the admin cost is high there, it includes the cost of stop-loss. She added that they pay a percentage basis, not everything is a flat fee, which is why it varies.

Mr. Goldblatt said the stop loss is like an insurance policy. If you take it out and exceed premium, you get paid out for what was spent, but the rate also goes up. If you miss a couple of years those rate increases might come down as well. Not hitting it is not always a bad thing.

Ms. Malavasi said they continue to pay the affordable care tax and just received email last week on it. She thought it was coming to an end, but it is being extended.

Mr. Goldblatt said that tax will go to 2030, it was a trade-off for the Affordable Care Act when the Cadillac tax was repealed. This tax is far less than what Cadillac tax was, but everyone pays it.

There was discussion about the medical account surplus. Mr. Hoey said that while it continues to give them the opportunity to do something with that surplus, he would refrain from doing anything for several months to see if there is bounce back in terms of medical claims.

6. Town Engineer (Janice Plaziak):

1. Discuss and take possible action on extra work for preliminary design phase of the Route 77 Pedestrian Improvement Project.

Ms. Plaziak explained that this project extends five blocks north of Route 77 from just south of highway to hopefully Hubbard Road, but at least enough to service the police department, racquet club and arts center. The plan is to have sidewalk access connecting Adams to those areas.

Preliminary design was completed by Tighe and Bond. They have a \$250,000 contract with them for design services. They are still in the preliminary design phase. Ms. Plaziak said that plans were designed to incorporate a signal at the I-95 southbound ramp to aid in pedestrian crossings. A signals is warranted there anyway with regard to traffic alone.

She added that the DOT reviewed plans and refused to allow for a signal to be installed, so this predicated the need to change project and this is where the extra work came in. Ms. Plaziak noted that instead of staying on east side of 77 to avoid pedestrian crossings at the interchange, they are looking to extend the sidewalk on west side. There are some challenges to this including an embankment and poles, but that is where DOT wants the town to put it. The total cost of the redesign is \$20,150.46. In the contract with Tight and Bond there is an extra work amount budgeted for \$25,000 for the overall project. To keep moving forward they need to do the redesign and be ready to finalize the design to go to public information.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Havrda and seconded by Ms. Ruoff, the board voted unanimously to approve the extra work for preliminary design phase of the Route 77 Improvement Project in the amount of \$20,156.46

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

7. Parks and Recreation Director (Rick Maynard):

1. Consider and take possible action to contract with Bartholomew Contract Interiors (BCI) under State Contract #12PSX0307 for the replacement of carpet in the Menunkatuck and Faulkner Rooms of the Community Center.

Mr. Maynard said the board approved in the budget \$12,000 for carpet replacement at the Community Center. The Faulkner Room carpeting is 27 years old. They replaced Menunkatuck once, but due to a lot of meetings, it is worn and there are stains. BCI under state contract is \$11,917.75. Now is a good time to do it, because the building is quiet and there are not a lot of meetings. During this down time they have redone the floor in the Guilford and Leete rooms and are taking advantage of the time since they don't have a lot going on in the building. Once they order it will still take 4-6 weeks to get the carpet so sometime in August will get it done.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Havrda and seconded by Ms. Ruoff, the board voted unanimously to contract with Bartholomew Contract

Interiors (BCI) under State Contract #12PSX0307 in the amount of \$11,917.75 for the replacement of carpet in the Menunkatuck and Faulkner Rooms at the Community Center.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

8. Consider and take possible action on programs to be included on a list pursuant to Chapter 228a of the Connecticut General Statutes, Neighborhood Assistance Act as a result of earlier public hearing.

Ms. Renner said she didn't feel prepared to take action when they did not have two of the documents. It was suggested they be emailed now so the board could take action later in the meeting.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Hoey and seconded by Ms. Ruoff, the board voted unanimously to table action until later in the meeting.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

9. Appointments and Resignations:

1. Act on resignation received from Susan Gillie from the Tree Advisory Board.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Ruoff and seconded by Mr. Havrda, the board voted unanimously to accept the resignation received from Susan Gillie from the Tree Advisory Board with appreciation and regret.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

2. Act on appointment of Gregory Broderick as an alternate to the Guilford Lakes Golf Course Commission to fill a vacancy for a term to expire September 30, 2020.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Federici and seconded by Mr. Havrda, the board voted unanimously to appoint Gregory Broderick as an alternate

to the Golf Course Commission to fill a vacancy for a term to expire September 30, 2020.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Federici and seconded by Ms. Ruoff, the board voted unanimously to appoint Eric MacDonald to the Human Rights Commission for a term to expire June 30, 2024.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

10. Requests for Use of Town Property:

1. Act on request from the North Guilford Congregational Church to place a sign on the Green advertising its Old Fashioned Country Emporium taking place August 15, 2020. (Sign Placement 8/1-8/15)

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Renner and seconded by Mr. Federici, the board voted unanimously to approve the request from the North Guilford Congregational Church to place a sign on the Green advertising its Old Fashioned Country Emporium taking place August 15, 2020. (Sign Placement 8/1-8/15)

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

11. Correspondence

1. Public Works Monthly Report
2. Building Department Monthly Report

12. Old Business

Mr. Federici said Ms. Plaziak sent him summaries last week with proposed changes for the town hall south fees and he sent those to the committee. He needs to discuss these with Ms. Millman and Mr. Hoey and hopefully it will be on the agenda in two weeks.

13. New Business

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Havrda and seconded by Ms. Renner, the board voted unanimously to add to the agenda the appointment of John Wettemann as an alternate to the Agricultural Commission to fill a vacancy for a term to expire September 29, 2020.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Renner and seconded by Mr. Havrda, the board voted unanimously to add to the agenda the appointment of Paul Wettemann to the Agricultural Commission to fill a vacancy for a term to expire September 29, 2022.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Ruoff and seconded by Mr. Havrda the board voted unanimously to appoint both Paul and John Wettemann to the Agricultural Commission for the terms outlined.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

14. Public Forum (limited to 3 minutes on any issue)

Jeff Hocking a resident of 32 years and veteran of the police department spoke on behalf of himself and many other pensioners. He noted that previously the board denied their request for a Cost of Living Increase due to the uncertain economic climate. He added that since then at two different meetings it has been noted that the town is finishing the fiscal year very well and that the pension has bounced back and is doing well. In addition, the town has given employees 2.25% raises for the coming year. He added that this is a double standard. The Board of Selectmen said they could always open discussion regarding a COLA increase when times are better and he is asking the board to reopen the issue in August and award police pensioners the same increase employees were given. Mr. Hocking's full statement is attached to these minutes.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Ruoff and seconded by Mr. Havrda, the board voted unanimously to enter into executive session at 9:49 p.m.

to discuss the contracts for the Assistant Chief of Operations for the Fire Department, Deputy Police Chief Contract and the DEEP Consent Order. The board invited Mr. Goldblatt, Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Wilson in for the first item. The board would be inviting Mr. Goldblatt, Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Welsh for the second item and would invite Town Engineer Janice Plaziak in for the third item.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Ruoff and seconded by Ms. Renner, the board voted unanimously to return to public session at 10:49 a.m.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

15. Discuss and take possible action on contract for the Assistant Chief of Operations for the Guilford Fire Department. (Executive session may be required)

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Havrda and seconded by Ms. Ruoff, the board voted unanimously to approve the contract for the Assistant Chief of Operations for the Guilford Fire Department.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

16. Consider and take possible action on contract for Deputy Police Chief Warren Hyatt. (Executive session may be required)

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Havrda and seconded by Ms. Renner, the board voted unanimously to approve the contract for Deputy Police Chief Warren Hyatt and noted that he will move to the Chief position on August 11, 2020.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

17. Consider and take possible action on Connecticut DEEP Consent Order and authorize first selectman to sign. (Executive session may be required)

Mr. Hoey said they have had ongoing negotiations with DEEP over two years on five notices of violations on projects throughout town that impacted wetlands and an agreement has been reached with DEEP. The details will be made public in a future hearing.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Federici and seconded by Mr. Havrda, the board voted unanimously to approve the Connecticut DEEP Consent Order and authorize the first selectman to sign.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Renner and seconded by Ms. Ruoff, the board voted unanimously to remove item number 8 from the agenda for programs to be included in the 2020 Neighborhood Assistance Act Program.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Havrda and seconded by Ms. Ruoff, the board voted unanimously to include applications submitted by the Women & Family Life Center, SARAH Foundation and Green Planet Company for inclusion in the 2020 Neighborhood Assistance Act Program.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Motion: Upon a motion made by Mr. Federici and seconded by Ms. Ruoff, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Respectfully submitted,

Traci K. Brinkman

Clerk
Board of Selectmen

July 20, 2020

RE: Public Comments at Selectman Meeting 7/20/2020 at 8:30 am

To the Board of Selectman,

My name is Jeffrey Hocking, I am a lifelong resident of Guilford and a thirty-two year Veteran of the Guilford Police Department, retiring in 2012. I am speaking on my behalf and also many other Pensioners, some who were able to attend this virtual meeting and many that were not.

My comments today are titled “What a difference two weeks makes”.

On June 1, 2020 at the Board of Selectman meeting there was a unanimous vote to deny the Police retirees a COLA. Prior to the vote a picture of doom & gloom was painted with talk of Covid-19, a struggling economy, stock market uncertainty, Pension Fund uncertainty and year end budget uncertainty.

Just two weeks later on June 15, 2020 at the Board of Finance Meeting I listened as a totally different picture was painted. Matt Hoey talked about how good the Pension Fund was doing, up \$2 million from July 2019 to June 2020, a strong finish to the year. Bob Hartmann, Finance Board member and former Pension Board member, talked about how it was a really good month for the Pension Fund. He stated that the 60/40 distribution that the fund works with has proven to perform well even in trying times. I would suggest that one of those trying times is one from which we recently came through. It was also announced that the undesignated fund balance was over \$10 million, the medical insurance fund had a surplus of \$6 million and that the budget was expected to end the year with a \$700,000 surplus. Matt Hoey further reported that multiple Departments were just given 2.25% raises for the upcoming Fiscal Year starting July 1st, including the Fire Department, the Fire Chief and the GEA/GSA which comprises the bulk of the Town employees. It was also noted that the Police Department contract was about to be settled, with no details available due to the fact that it hadn't been agreed to yet and that the Teamsters (Public Works) was also in negotiations.

On June 1st before the denial vote it was stated that the economy was struggling, the pension funds were down and there was budget uncertainty. So much that the Board of Selectman couldn't consider a COLA for the Police retirees. Two weeks later a much different picture was painted and in fact apparently well

enough to give 2.25% raises to many of the Town employees. They were not denied or asked to wait a year or two until things were better, there seems to be a double standard here. The cost to fund these unbudgeted 2.25% raises according to Mitch Goldblatt is \$220,800. The Board of Selectman after their denial on June 1st said that they could always unilaterally re-open the discussion of a Police COLA when times were better. It appears to me that in just two weeks from that denial things were much better.

I would ask that the Board of Selectman reopen the matter in August and award the Police retirees the same 2.25% raise that you just awarded the Town employees. This is even less than the lower of the two Millman recommendations of 2.5% and would cost less than the original \$40,000 figure, probably about \$36,000. This would also be for a 2 year period whereas the Town raise funding is just one year and that number will grow again in July 2021.

I have polled the majority of the Police Pensioners and their names appear at the end of this letter. They are in support of this letter and would also request the Board of Selectman award the group a 2.25% COLA raise this year.

Thank You for your time and we look forward to the Board of Selectman doing the right thing.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Hocking
Guilford Police Pensioner
(203) 214-4670
Email: babson55@yahoo.com

This letter was read by and approved by the Pensioners listed below:

Steve Renchy
Eric Robinson
Victor Duphily
Patrick Leary
William Coale
Edward Bohan
Robert Norman
Dan Leary
Donald Thompson
Fred Hill

Robert Robinson
Bruce Denison
Larry Ruggiero
Charles Korn
Richard More
Al Magriz
Robert Dube'
Douglas Jowett
Linda Bouchard
Sandra Brooks

Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes of July 20, 2020

Jackie Cipollini
Scott Gardner
Geoff Pothin
Bill Maisano

Mike Denison
Carl Jordan
Jeff Saddig
Mike Iadaresta