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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
August 23, 2023**

Present: Norman M. Needleman, First Selectman
Stacia R. Libby, Selectman
Bruce M. Glowac, Selectman

Norman Needleman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Selectman Needleman welcomed everyone to the Board of Selectmen in person and remote public access meeting via Zoom.

In attendance: Selectman Norman M. Needleman, Selectman Stacia R. Libby, and Selectman Bruce M. Glowac.

Others in attendance: Tracey Celentano, Andrew Kressley, Marialina Dominguez, and Kelly Sterner.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to approve the agenda. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve the August 2, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve the August 11, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Informational Items, Communications and Correspondence

The Selectmen received a letter from a resident requesting a noise ordinance. They are requesting the town fire horn at the Ivoryton Firehouse stop and for later garbage pickup because it is being picked up at 5 am in their neighborhood. Neighbors are requesting an ordinance to mandate garbage pickup at a later start time. The Selectmen mentioned that MIRA shuts down at 2:30 pm and transfer station shuts down at 3:30 pm, so garbage haulers are starting earlier to offload at these two facilities before they close for the day.

Chief Andrew Kressley and the Selectmen reported the standards set forth by the National Fire Protection Association state that any fire department must have two separate and distinct dispatch circuits. Essex uses the horn and cell phones, as text messages don't count and many crew members do not have a radio. The Selectmen stated the horn only rings when there is a fire.

The Selectmen mentioned there is a rumor that Bokum Center is under contract but nothing has been filed with the Town yet.

Public Announcements / Comment: None

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OLD BUSINESS:

Capital Committee: Mr. Glowac reported the committee met with Mr. Needleman and they went over the list and the items were prioritized. It was determined that the bridges were not as bad as originally thought. The list is still a work in progress and the committee will meet again next week. Mr. Needleman suggested adding the fire house roof onto the list because it is 30 years old.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appointments and Resignations Board and Commissions

First Selectman Norman Needleman appointed Kathleen Sullivan Sealey as an alternate member of the Inland Wetlands Commission filling an unexpired term ending December 2024, which will need to go to a Town Meeting.

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to accept the resignation of Phyllis Pratt O'Neil from the Tree Committee. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion, all in favor. Motion carried.

The Board of Selectmen appointed Jaqueline Hubbard as the Central Regional Tourism District for a three-year term to become effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026.

Board and Commission Vacancies

Conservation Commission – 2 Alternate Members

Park and Recreation Commission – 2 Alternate Members

Gateway Commission – 1 Regular Member

Gateway Commission – 1 Alternate Member

CT Water's Customer Advisory Council (CAC)

Connecticut Water & Marine Water is asking the Town to appoint a resident of the community who is a customer of Connecticut Water to serve on CT Water's Customer Advisory Council (CAC). The purpose of the council is to enhance communications with their customers and communities. The meetings are held every 3 to 6 months via Zoom. Please let Selectmen Needleman know if you are interested in representing the Town of Essex or call 860-767-4340 x 112 for more information.

Gateway Commission

Selectman Needleman reported he is looking for two representatives, a regular and an alternate for the Gateway Commission. The commission meets one day a month on the fourth Thursday at 7 pm at RiverCOG or via Zoom. Meetings typically last between 1 to 2 hours. At the meeting, the commission members review all referrals. Additional information on this commission can be found <https://ctrivergateway.org/about/>. Please let Selectmen Needleman know if you are interested in representing the Town of Essex or call 860-767-4340 x 112 for more information.

There was discussion about the possibility of being able to appoint alternates to the Board of Assessment Appeals, by editing the ordinance. The Town Clerk is investigating this possibility.

Open Town Board and Commission positions can be found at https://www.essexct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf3116/f/uploads/boards_and_commissions_website_30.pdf

The application to join a Board or Commission can be found at: https://www.essexct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf3116/f/file/application_to_volunteer_for_board_or_commission_fillable_4_13_18.pdf

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American Rescue Plan Funds:

The remaining balance is \$301,840. These funds must be committed by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026.

The Transfer Station Wall Refacing Project needs an additional \$12,000 to complete the project.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve and recommend to Board of Finance an appropriation in the amount of \$12,000 to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds to Municipal Property Improvements. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (EVC)

Presently the Town of Essex offers free electric vehicle charging. There was discussion about the possibility of limiting the amount of “free” time allowed to charge an electric vehicle on the Town owned electric vehicle charging stations. The consensus is that Town should be charging for electricity per kilowatt hour and charging for idle time if the vehicle is parked for a significant length of time after being fully charged.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac that effective October 1, 2023 the Town of Essex will allow 1 hour of free charging. After 1 hour of free charging, the rate will be \$1 per kwh. After 4 hours of charging, the idle time rate will be \$2 an hour. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Sinking Fund Request – Essex Fire Department

Essex Fire Department is requesting an additional \$10,106.50 from their sinking fund to cover the shortfall on the upgrade costs for going from 30-minute air packs to 45-minute air packs which are in stock.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance the appropriation of a sum not to exceed \$11,000.00 to upgrade from 30 to the 45-minute air packs. Said sum to be taken from the Essex Fire Department Sinking Fund. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Hope Partnership – Tax Relief Request

HOPE Partnership is requesting tax relief from property taxes associated with some of their affordable unit properties. The Selectmen invited Tony Lyons, Karla Lindquist, and Jessica Sypher to the next Selectmen’s meeting on September 6, 2023 at 5 pm.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to table this request until the next meeting. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Private Duty Rate Increase – October 1, 2023

Finance Director Tracey Celentano reported the Town is currently losing money on private duty. The Town does not charge anything for the vehicles, which are kept running during the events. The Town would like to break even.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to increase the Extra Duty rate to \$77.50 effective October 1, 2023. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

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TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to enter Traffic Authority. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

No Parking Here to Corner Sign

There was discussion of moving the “No Parking Here to Corner” sign on Sunset Terrace further away from the corner because cars pulling out from Abby Lane and taking a left cannot see oncoming traffic. Cars parked there are causing a sight line issue, which is unsafe.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to have public works move the sign 15 feet. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to exit Traffic Authority. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to move out of traffic authority at 8:03 pm. Bruce seconded the motion. All in favor.

Public Hearing None

Set Town Meeting None

Public Comment / Announcements:

River Road Sidewalk Project

Public Works Director Ryan Welch reported the work on River Road Sidewalk Project has started. The project will start from Heritage Cove and move on down to the bridge. Mr. Welch reported that the road will open, but only one lane of traffic sometimes. Please use caution and allow yourself a little extra time going through this area during the project. Mr. Needleman ask Mr. Welch to spray paint or put in stakes where the sidewalk is going to be installed so that property owners can get an idea of exactly where the sidewalk will be located. Mr. Welch reported he would take care of that. He also reported the Police will be out helping with traffic during project. Everyone is very excited.

Hubbard Field Project

Mr. Needleman requested a meeting be set in the middle of September to talk about the Hubbard Park Project.

Police Accreditation

The Police Officer Standards and Training Accreditation Division completed a Tier I Accreditation file review of Essex Police Department today and presented to the First Selectman their findings. The Essex Police are in progress to meet POSTC State Accreditation Standards for Tier 1. The Town did very well and is making great progress to achieve full accreditation status by 2026.

SELECTMEN GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Norman Needleman seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria P. Lucarelli