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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 13, 2023**

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

Norman Needleman called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

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

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

Others in attendance: Finance Director Tracey Celentano, Kelly Sterner, Attorney David Royston and a few residents of Essex Glen Drive.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to approve the agenda with two additions under New Business to add 7E Thatchbed Island and 7F Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve the November 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Informational Items, Communications and Correspondence

Public Announcements / Comment: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Capital Committee: Mr. Glowac reported the committee just met to discuss an alternate location for the police department and emergency management department. The committee will be finalizing numbers for the bond.

Merit Service Retirement Plan

The Board of Selectmen at their October 25, 2023 meeting made a motion to approve the adoption of the amendment to the multiplier from \$16.65 to \$23.00. Unfortunately, the limit would exceed the allowable limit and this change would cause the plan to not qualify as a LOSAP and would be subject to all the 457 rules resulting in immediate taxation of all plan participants. But if the town raises the multiplier from \$16.65 to \$20.75 the plan would stay compliant and would keep it as a tax-free benefit for the volunteers.

Peter Decker reported tonight there had been some confusion and it was determined that if the annual benefit does not exceed \$2,500 then changing the plan would be allowed. The original proposal was to go to \$23 per year of service. Mr. Decker stated that now the Town has more information, a new plan proposal will be presented to the Selectmen for their approval, and to set a public hearing and a town meeting. The goal is to have the plan updated in 2024.

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Motion was made by Stacia Libby to table the Merit Service Retirement Plan agenda item until the next Selectmen's meeting. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Signage

Selectman Stacia Libby reported she met with Public Works Director Ryan Welch on creating welcome signs for the Town of Essex. Ms. Libby reported they will be obtaining three quotes and will present the sign ideas to the other Selectmen at a future meeting.

250th Anniversary

Selectman Libby reported she met with Melissa Josefiak of the Historical Society for their initial planning meeting for the 250th Anniversary. They will meet again after the first of the year.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appointments and Resignations Board and Commissions

Representative South-Central Emergency Medical Services Council

Norman Needleman re-appointed Judith Reynolds as the Representative for the South-Central Emergency Medical Services Council with a term January 1, 2024 to January 1, 2025.

Norman Needleman reported the following Board of Selectmen appointment:

Tree Committee

Gillian Carson

Norman Needleman re-appointed Caroline Fountain as the Animal Control Officer with a term January 1, 2024 to January 1, 2025.

VACANCIES:

Park & Recreation Commission

Vacancy (alternate)

Vacancy (alternate)

Conservation Commission

Vacancy

Vacancy

Vacancy

Vacancy (alternate)

Gateway Commission

Vacancy

Vacancy (alternate)

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 Selectman Needleman know if you are interested in representing the Town of Essex or call 860-767-4340 x 112 for more information.

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Gateway Commission

The Town is looking for two representatives, a regular and an alternate for the Gateway Commission. The commission meets once 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 at <https://ctrivergateway.org/about/>. Please let Selectman Needleman know if you are interested in representing the Town of Essex or call 860-767-4340 x 112 for more information.

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

American Rescue Plan Funds:

The remaining balance is \$111,084. These funds must be committed by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026.

Public Hearing None

Set Town Meeting

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to set a Special Town Meeting for Wednesday, January 3rd, 2023 at 4:45 pm. Stacia Libby seconded the motion; it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to cancel the December 20, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved. All in favor.

Thatchbed

Jeff Going presented a proposed restoration project which includes installing tubes, back fill, and seeding for Thatchbed Island. Mr. Going reported the project needs to be endorsed by both the Board of Selectmen and the Harbor Management Commission. DEEP would like to ensure the Town is being kept informed of the project and included in all communication. The plan is to have tubes on the back side of the island summer of 2024.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to endorse the proposed Thatchbed project and to send a letter of endorsement to DEEP. Stacia Libby seconded motion. All in favor.

Public Comment / Announcements: None

TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

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

Essex Glen Drive

Land Use Official Carey Duques reported that the Planning and Zoning Commission at their November 8, 2023 meeting recommended that the Essex Board of Selectmen place the acceptance of Essex Glen Drive as a Town Highway on the Board of Selectmen agenda and then place it onto a Town meeting to

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accept Essex Glen Drive as a Town Highway. This recommendation was based on a November 2, 2023 letter from Bob Doane indicating that all the requirements of the regulations had been met.

The Selectmen discussed this recommendation at their November 15th meeting and stated that before making any decisions they would like to see the Essex Glen Declaration and then tabled Essex Glen Drive to the December 15th meeting. The Selectmen want to make sure all details are worked out and an agreement is in place prior to the road being transferred to the Town, so that in 10 years nothing unexpected comes up. The Selectmen stated that the upkeep of the landscaping is a concern. The Town is accepting a road at a condominium complex and we want to make sure that condominium association is going to continue being responsible for the landscaping. We need to be clear of all expectations. At the November 15th meeting, Ms. Duques reported there is a detention pond and it needs to be determined who would be responsible for that.

On December 3, 2023 Attorney Royston e-mailed the Selectmen a copy of his e-mail to the attorneys for Essex Glen and the Owners Association to clarify the Essex Glen Road acceptance situation is separate and distinct from the Special Exception that allowed the condominium development. Attorney Royston advised that the acceptance and the conveyance of the road is separate and distinct from the Special Exception requirements for the 26-unit condominium.

This evening Attorney Royston reported that the Essex Glen Drive items have all been completed according to the approved subdivision plans. Public Works Director Ryan Welch has inspected Essex Glen Drive and the cleaning of the catch basins still needs to be completed. Attorney Royston repeated that the acceptance of the roadway and the condominium driveway and landscaping are unrelated. Attorney Royston requested the Board of Selectmen set a Town Meeting to accept the road. Selectman Glowac inquired about the little driveway to the right at the top. Attorney Royston stated that driveway is the condominium driveway and will not be a Town road. There was discussion that the property is part of a subdivision and there are 3 lots. The third lot is at the end of the cul-de-sac, is vacant and available for development.

There was discussion on the draft Essex Glen Drive Town Road Maintenance Agreement. (Copy in Town Clerk's Office). The agreement would allow the condominium association to perform maintenance work within the road right of way and within the two detention basins. Attorney Royston stated that the draft Agreement he provided to the Selectmen was an incomplete version and should be disregarded. The completed draft agreement would be distributed to the Owners Association and Ryan Welch for comment and then provided to the Selectmen acting as the Traffic Authority at their January 3, 2024 meeting for their consideration. The Selectmen stated the conveyance of Essex Glen Drive to the Town of Essex would need to be voted on at a Town Meeting which was set for January 3, 2024 at 4:45 pm.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve and recommend the acceptance of Essex Glen Drive to a Town Meeting as proposed, subject to the cleaning of the catch basins. Stacia Libby 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 Bruce Glowac to adjourn the meeting at 5:34 p.m. Norman Needleman seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria P. Lucarelli