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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 15, 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.

First Selectman 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 (virtual).

Others in attendance: Tracey Celentano, Ryan Welch, Carey Duques (virtual), Courtney Harris (virtual), Michael Furgueson, Scott and Kristen Benson, 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 Stacia Libby to approve the January 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

**Informational Items, Communications and Correspondence** None

**Public Announcements / Comment:** None

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Capital Committee:**

Selectman Glowac reported the committee is discussing improvements to the dog pound. There was also discussion of hiring someone to work on determining the values of Town buildings. Town Engineer Bob Doane is putting together a bid package for a 24 x 36 building that will be located at Hubbard Field. This building will eliminate the two buildings currently at Hubbard Field. The new building will have two handicap bathrooms and a loft area for storage.

**Short Term Rental Ordinance**

Selectman Needleman reported that short term rentals are increasing in Essex. The Selectmen are working with an attorney in writing an ordinance. There are questions about how to handle pre-existing short-term rentals. Some of the items being discussed is having a 28-day minimum rental.

Fred Weber reported that he feels that renting his property is safer for the Town. His rentals are run through a large company and the company does all the background checks of both the renter and the host. Mr. Weber stated that these short-term rentals bring in tourism to the Town and his clients are

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typically families looking to rent a 2 to 3 bedroom home with a kitchen and a yard. He is offering something a hotel is not able to.

Mr. Needleman stated there were 18 short term rentals a year ago and there are now more than 24 and probably more that we do not even know about. Neighbors are suddenly seeing strange new cars and activity in their neighborhood, and they are concerned.

Mr. Needleman stated that in the absence of guidelines and regulations, and the increase in short term rentals, there has been an increase in calls from concerned neighbors. The Town is working on setting up guidelines and guardrails. Mr. Needleman stated that it is his job to work with the Town attorneys on an ordinance and to work on updating the zoning regulations. The Town will do its best to accommodate everyone.

Carey Duques further stated there are neighbor concerns regarding parking as well as neighbors not knowing who is in their neighborhood.

Mr. Glowac mentioned that the Selectmen started talking about short term rentals months ago. The topic has gotten hotter, and we need to expedite this. Mr. Glowac suggested having the draft ordinance completed within 4 to 6 weeks and to set the public hearing in April or May.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Appointments and Resignations Board and Commissions**

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](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](https://www.essexct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf3116/f/file/application_to_volunteer_for_board_or_commission_fillable_4_13_18.pdf)

### **Board and Commission Vacancies**

Conservation Commission – 2 Regular Members

Conservation Commission – 2 Alternate Members

Park and Recreation Commission – 2 Alternate Members

### **American Rescue Plan Funds:**

Novus Insight, Inc., the Town's managed service provider for IT services, is recommending the Town improve resistance to cyber-attacks. Novus is proposing procuring Microsoft 365 Business Premium Licenses, refreshing an old firewall, deploying drive encryption on all vulnerable computer hard drives (laptops especially), and incorporating next generation End Point Detect and Respond (EDR) monitored by a 24/7 security operations center (SOC) and performing a file server migration to the cloud.

**Motion** was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance an appropriation of a sum not to exceed \$17,500.00 to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds to Technology for the one-time cyber security technology projects and performing a file server migration to the cloud, contingent on operating costs not increasing. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

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### **Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission Permit Fees and Rates**

The Essex Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission (EIWWC) has reviewed its enforcement procedures and has considered making the process more efficient and effective and to deter against violations of the regulations. The Commission has determined that one factor would be the ability to collect enforcement fees for violations. The Commission requests/recommends that the Board of Selectmen approve the schedule of municipal fees

The proposal is to impose a corrective action fee, for violations which would equal double the normal application fee plus \$100. The Commission believes this would create an incentive to have people call the Town first before doing work within an area regulated by the EIWWC. The idea is the corrective action fee, combined with a Cease and Correct issued by the Town would require the owner to respond to the Town. Given that Essex's fees are lower than other Town's fees the EIWWC does not believe this is a huge impact to property owners, nor would it be charged to those who file permits before doing work.

Selectman Glowac stated that although he is against raising fees, he understands the proposal of the corrective fees and the Town attorney has also recommended and stated this is the best mechanism.

Ms. Duques stated the Town could impose a cease and desist and then waive the fee if the property owner works to correct the violation. The Town is not trying to generate revenue, just trying to get better behavior and raise awareness about needing permission before doing work in and around wetlands.

IWWC Chairman Michael Furgueson stated that once a cease and desist is issued, there is nothing in place to get people to comply or to start corrective actions. There was discussion that sometimes applications come in after the activity has been completed in a wetlands area. Sometimes people didn't know to look at the GIS map and see where the wetlands boundary lines are.

**Motion** was made by Bruce Glowac to approve the proposed EIWWC fees. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

### **Sinking Fund Request – Technology**

The Selectmen moved this sinking fund request to ARPA Fund Request.

**Public Hearing** None

**Set Town Meeting** None

### **TRAFFIC AUTHORITY**

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

### **Crosswalk Request**

There was discussion of installing a crosswalk at the intersection of Summit Street and Main Street in Ivoryton. Residents are reporting it is difficult and dangerous to cross the street due to speeding.

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The Selectmen suggested, prior to installation of the cross walk, that Public Works Director Ryan Welch and Resident State Trooper Mark Roberts look at this location to determine if this is feasible.

**Motion** was made by Norman Needleman to table this item to the next Selectmen's meeting. 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

**Public Comment / Announcements:** None

**SELECTMEN GENERAL DISCUSSION:**

**Electric Vehicle Charging Station**

There was discussion that the Electric Vehicle Charging Stations in the parking lot at the Essex Post Office have been free to anyone who uses them while shopping or dining in the area of Main Street in Essex. There has been no time limit. There have been reports of the same cars parked there for extensive hours and with the significant increase in electric costs, the Selectmen would like to revisit the length of time that free charging would be offered. There was discussion of changing it from free charging for any duration to free charging for the first hour. Public Works Director Ryan Welch reported that he is in charge of the vehicle charging stations and would look into changing the duration of free charging time.

**Motion** was made by Norman Needleman to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Maria P. Lucarelli