

Disclaimer. Please note, these Minutes have yet to be approved. Check with the department or Town Clerk for updated versions.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
August 2, 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.

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 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 July 5, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Informational Items, Communications and Correspondence

The Selectmen took a moment to remember Fred Szufnarowski who died on July 16, 2023. He was an Inland Wetlands Commission member.

Public Announcements / Comment: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Capital Committee: Mr. Glowac reported the committee would like a meeting with Mr. Needleman to go over the list in detail.

Short-Term Rental Ordinance: Mr. Needleman announced a second public hearing will be set. There was discussion of holding 3 public hearings to gather as much input as possible. There was discussion that people are renting out bedrooms for the night and serving breakfast. The Town does not allow bed and breakfasts.

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NEW BUSINESS:

Appointments and Resignations Board and Commissions

First Selectman Norman Needleman appointed Caroline Field as a regular member of the Inland Wetlands Commission filling an unexpired term ending December 2023, which will need to go to a Town Meeting.

First Selectman Norman Needleman appointed Thomas Soboleski as a regular member of the Conservation Commission filling an unexpired term ending December 2025, which will need to go to a Town Meeting.

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 Selectmen suggested having the Town Clerk investigate 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/file/application_to_volunteer_for_board_or_commission_fillable_4_13_18.pdf

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.

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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.

Mr. Needleman stated that we can and we should be charging for electricity per kilowatt hour and charge for idle time if the vehicle is parked for a significant length of time after being fully charged. Mr. Needleman suggested that Ms. Libby form a subcommittee consisting of the Finance Director Tracey Celentano, Public Works Director Ryan Welch, and Resident State Trooper Mark Roberts and bring to the Selectmen’s meeting a list of recommendations and suggestions.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to table this discussion until the next Selectmen meeting. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Appropriation - Essex Ambulance Association

Essex Ambulance Association is requesting an additional \$46,851.19 from the Town of Essex to cover the shortfall on the retrofit and the new ambulance. The Selectmen agreed to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance an amount not to exceed \$55,000.00, but suggest the funds come from two different accounts:

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance an appropriation in the amount of \$15,000.00 to the Essex Ambulance Association from the general fund to cover the shortfall on the retrofit. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to recommend to the Board of Finance an appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$40,000 to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds to cover the shortfall on the new ambulance. Norman Needleman seconded the motion. All in favor.

Hope Partnership – Tax Relief Request

HOPE Partnership sent a letter to the Selectmen requesting relief from property taxes associated with some of their affordable unit properties. The Selectmen would like to look into this a little more.

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.

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Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Transfers

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend the 2022/23 Budget year fye Transfers in the amount of \$45,855.60 from Board of Finance Contingency to be distributed according to the following chart. Stacia Libby seconded the Motion. All in favor.

| Org # | Department | Primary Cause(s) | Recommended year end transfer |
|-------|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 10404 | Tax Collector | Payroll / Office Supplies | \$ 1,335.88 |
| 10407 | Town Clerk | State of CT Fees to State | \$ 9,249.05 |
| 10410 | Conservation Commission | Grounds Maintenance & Repair | \$ 2,399.46 |
| 10414 | Building | Fees to State (offset by higher than budgeted fees) PT Payroll (Retirement - Cross Training) | \$ 9,953.76 |
| 10415 | Central Services | Building Maintenance - AC Handler Replacement (Finance, EOC & Police) | \$ 6,761.07 |
| 10417 | Inland Wetlands Commission | Part-Time Payroll (Board Clerk) | \$ 402.31 |
| 10425 | Water | Public Safety Contracts - CWC Rate Increase | \$ 3,382.21 |
| 10426 | Harbor Patrol | Additional Shifts (PT Payroll) - Extra Boat Traffic & Fuel & Oil | \$ 9,108.70 |
| 10458 | Tree Committee | Allocation - Immaterial Amount | \$ 5.00 |
| 10461 | Public Restrooms | Electricity - Eversource Rate Increase/Electric Vehicle Charging Station | \$ 3,256.41 |
| 10465 | Ambulance/EMT Services | Emergency Medical Services (Rounding) | \$ 1.75 |
| | | | <u>\$ 45,855.60</u> |

Encumbrances

Transfer Station Waste Processing Removal Encumbrance Request

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to Board of Finance the encumbrance of a sum not to exceed \$7,000 for Leaf Screening at the Transfer Station. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Capital Sidewalk & Road Reconstruction Encumbrance Request

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to Board of Finance the encumbrance of a sum not to exceed \$35,770 for the completion of paving projects. Said sum to be encumbered from Capital Sidewalk Installation / Reconstruction \$25,000 and Capital Road Reconstruction \$10,770. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Park & Recreation Mowing, Park Operations, Maintenance & Repair Encumbrance Request

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to Board of Finance the encumbrance of a sum not to exceed \$8,000 for the maintenance to be completed at the following parks: Grove Street, Main Street, Hubbard, and Comstock. Said sum to be encumbered from Mowing \$7,900 and Park Operations, Maintenance & Repair \$100. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

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Required Supplemental Appropriations

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance the 2022/23 Budget year fye required supplemental appropriations in the amount of \$69,342.00 to be distributed according to the following chart. Stacia Libby seconded the Motion. All in favor.

| Org # | Department | Primary Cause(s) / Offset (if applicable) | Original Budget Appropriation | Actual | Variance with Budget prior to year end appropriation |
|-------|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------|--|
| 10406 | Legal Services | Inlands Wetlands Commission - Legal Case | \$ 66,000 | \$ 107,727 | \$ 41,727 |
| 10450 | Highway/Public Works | Road Maintenance & Repairs | \$ 963,478 | \$ 991,094 | \$ 27,616 |

\$ 69,342

Supplemental Appropriations

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance the 2022/23 Budget year fye special/supplemental appropriations in the amount of \$1,100,000.00 to be distributed according to the following chart. Bruce Glowac seconded the Motion. All in favor.

FYE Supplemental Appropriations - Proposed

Fiscal Year Ending 6/30/2023

| | <u>Amount</u> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Fire Department Sinking Fund | \$ 200,000.00 |
| Bridges/Infrastructure Sinking Fund | 300,000.00 |
| Ambulance Association Sinking Fund | 50,000.00 |
| Technology Sinking Fund | 50,000.00 |
| Capital Designated Fund | 75,000.00 |
| Sidewalks & Roads (Capital & DPW)* | 350,000.00 |
| Other Post Employment Benefits | 25,000.00 |
| Police Equipment Sinking Fund (ACO) | 50,000.00 |
| Total Appropriations | <u>\$ 1,100,000.00</u> |

Amended and Restated Ordinance for the Town of Essex Pension and Retirement Plans

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to table this item until the Town attorney has a chance to review the ordinance. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Set Public Hearing – Public Informational Meeting

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to set a Public Informational Meeting for Wednesday, September 6 at 6:30 to discuss the Short-Term Rental Ordinance Draft. Copies of said Ordinance are on the Town Website and on file in the Town Clerk's office. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

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Set Town Meeting

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to set a Special Town Meeting on Wednesday, September 6, 2023, at 4:50 pm in Conference Room A. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Public Comment / Announcements:

There was discussion of using any remaining ARPA funds for Town road improvements.

There was discussion of looking at the sustainability of Essex Ambulance Association over the next 10 years and ways the Town can help keep the Association sustainable and operational.

There was discussion on the continuation of the Tri-Town Animal Control Officers. There is a need for a mutual aid agreement between Towns.

SELECTMEN GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 p.m. Norman Needleman seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria P. Lucarelli