

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
November 1, 2023**

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

Norman Needleman called the meeting to order at 5:02 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 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 October 25, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Informational Items, Communications and Correspondence

Selectman Needleman reported that he met with a local church that received a notice that they are renting out their parsonage and the property is no longer tax exempt per State Statute Sec. 12-81. The statute is clear that if you are not using your church property to further the mission, the property is taxed.

Public Announcements / Comment: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Capital Committee: Mr. Glowac reported nothing new since last week's report.

Selectman Needleman inquired if plans to upgrade or relocating the police department to another location could be investigated by the Capital Committee. The Selectmen would like to set up a meeting on Wednesday, December 13th at 4:00 pm in Conf. Room A to discuss the Police Department Project and options.

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NEW BUSINESS:

Appointments and Resignations Board and Commissions

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to recommend the following **Board of Selectmen appointments** to the Annual Town Meeting on November 20. Norman Needleman seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Harbor Management Commission

Susan Malan
William Herlihy (alternate)

Park & Recreation Commission

Anthony Mosa
Brette Fitton
Daniel Needleman
Vacancy (alternate)
Vacancy (alternate)

Zoning Board of Appeals

Philip Schaller
Susan Feaster (alternate)
George Wendell (alternate)

Planning and Zoning Commission

Russell Smith
Peter Fleischer
Mark Reeves

Norman Needleman reported the following **First Selectman appointments** that will go to the Annual Town Meeting on November 20:

Conservation Commission

James O'Brien
Vacancy
Vacancy
Vacancy (alternate)

Economic Development Commission

James H. Vineburgh
Brian Weinstein
Peter Decker

Inland Wetlands Commission

Carolyn Field
Ernest Cook

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Gateway Commission

Vacancy

Vacancy (alternate)

Norman Needleman reported the following **Board of Selectmen appointments:**

Tree Committee

Robbie Marshal

Vacancy

Norman Needleman reported the following **First Selectman appointments:**

Essex Housing Authority

Richard Stebbins

Retirement Board

Stacia Libby

Mary-Louise Polo

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.

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/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 \$161,084. These funds must be committed by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026.

Public Works Grounds Maintenance - Trees

Mr. Needleman reported there are several unsafe dead trees in town.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance an appropriation in the amount of \$50,000 to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds (ARPA) for the Public Works Grounds Maintenance - Trees. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Draft Lofts Tax Credit Agreement

Attorney David Royston sent to the Board of Selectmen an amended Draft Lofts Tax Credit Agreement. The Selectmen would like the agreement to be sent to Hudson, Kilby and McCauley, LLC's office for review.

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.

2024 Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve the 2024 Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

2024 Holiday Schedule

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to approve the 2024 Town of Essex Holiday Schedule. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Public Hearing None

Set Town Meeting None

Public Comment / Announcements: None

SELECTMEN GENERAL DISCUSSION:

There was discussion that the Halloween Parade was a success.

There was discussion that both Deep River and Chester will have brand new Selectmen because the current Selectmen are not running for another term.

Kelly Sterner reported on the status of Digitization Project in the Land Use Office. The first batch of files was sent out, scanned and have been returned. The second batch went out and are expected back before Thanksgiving. The third and final batch of files will go out and are expected back by the end of the year. Although the first batch has been loaded into Permit Link, the Town is waiting to go live once all three batches are scanned and loaded and the Town will go live all at once.

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Paul Fazzino is finalizing the emergency radio tower, upgrading emergency equipment, and installing the generator. The rest of the grant funds will be used to purchase radios for the Essex Fire Department, Essex Ambulance Association, and three for the Essex Town Hall.

Bruce Glowac reported the Essex Foundation will be expanding their daffodil planting. One location is on the Essex Land Trust property on Main Street in Ivoryton right next to the Lutheran Church and the other location is the parcel of land on Main Street in Ivoryton right next to Walnut Street all along the wood rail fence.

Centerbrook Meeting House

First Selectman Needleman recused himself from the meeting house discussion. Selectmen Glowac and Libby reported they had received the draft agreement from Campbell Hudson's office today. Selectmen Libby and Glowac and the Board of Finance are in support of the possibility of the Town acquiring the Centerbrook Meeting House. The only expected expenses would be fuel, upgrading the kitchen, and the walkway and stairs need to be redone. The operating expenses are anticipated to be \$15,000 for the rest of this fiscal year and \$30,000 annually for future years. This would need to go to a Public Hearing and a Town Meeting. The Selectmen would like this added to the December 13, 2023 Public Hearing at 4:45 pm and to the Special Town Meeting immediately following the Public Hearing.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 p.m. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria P. Lucarelli