

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
March 15, 2017**

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

Norman Needleman called the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve the Agenda with one addition. Add item 7D. Special Appropriation. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to approve the March 1 Meeting Minutes. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Informational Items, Communications and Correspondence: None

Public Announcements / Comment:

David Giuffrida, P.E., Vice President of Operations of Middlesex Hospital presented to the Selectmen the proposed plans for the old Shoreline Clinic located at 260 Westbrook Road in Essex. One proposal is possibly moving Middlesex Occupational Health from 192 Westbrook Road into 260 Westbrook Road. Another possibility is to include a Physical Rehabilitation Center with some of the space in the building and / or to use some of the space as a Primary Care Facility. At his time, they are just not sure. They are trying to best maximize the interior space for the most services.

The proposed plans for the building and property not only include a new roof and painting, but will also include beautification of the property with new plantings and grass areas. The plan is to repurpose any equipment already on site and purchase new equipment as needed. The renovations will include a fairly intensive interior renovation.

The anticipated time line is to have the design completed before October with an anticipated occupancy in June. The biggest problem is that the hospital does not have endless capital.

There was discussion on the proposal that Towns be allowed to levy property taxes on nonprofit hospitals. The First Selectman reported that the property tax, based on the assessment of this property, would be approximately \$52,000.

There was discussion on the gates that were recently installed on the property. It was reported that items were being removed from the property and the gates were protecting the building and preventing any further items being removed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Capital Building Committee

Mr. Glowac reported that there was nothing new to report.

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

Evans Lane Dispute – “Pending Litigation” for FOIA Purposes

Norman Needleman stated that despite the best efforts of counsel and the Town of Essex Board of Selectmen, the parties have not agreed to the Settlement Agreement that was approved by the Board of Selectmen on February 21, 2017. The Settlement Agreement was forwarded to counsel for the parties on February 22, 2017, advising them of the Board of Selectmen approval.

In light of the failure of the parties to agree to a settlement agreement of their dispute as to the status of Evans Lane, in whole, or in part as a public highway, counsel has recommended the Board of Selectmen to pursue a Declaratory Judgement.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to move to vacate and rescind all prior instructions to counsel regarding Evans Lane. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to move to direct Town Counsel to commence a Declaratory Judgement action to determine the status of Evans Lane as a public highway as shown as on Town Assessor Records extending westerly to the Wildwood Condominium property. Mr. Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

The Penkofflidbeck's thanked the Board of Selectmen and thanked Town counsel for all their hard work.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appointments and Resignations Board and Commissions

There was discussion on Tri-Town Youth Services. The Town would like to be more involved and would like representation on Tri-Town's Board. The Town of Essex is looking for two volunteers. Anyone wanting to serve on Tri-Town's Board should contact the Selectmen's Office 860-767-4340 x 112.

Street Light Request – South Winds Street Light

There was a discussion on a request for an additional street light on Route 153 and South Winds Drive. The Selectmen tabled this until additional information was provided to the Selectmen.

Budget Meeting 2017 - 2018

There was discussion that the final health insurance numbers were still not available. The original Selectmen's Budget proposal included a 10% premium increase. Initial Anthem rates provided to our insurance broker indicate the increase could be less than 5% however several questions remain before the final rates will be released. Nonetheless, our broker feels comfortable with a reduction to a 5% premium increase.

There was discussion on considering a small inflationary adjustment for both the Essex and Ivoryton Libraries. The libraries are experiencing higher costs for their services and have lost funding from the state for several critical items including internet service and inter-library loan transportation.

Motion was made by Stacia Libby to include an inflationary adjustment of 2% for both libraries. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Motion was made by Bruce Glowac to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance a Board of Selectmen's Budget for Fiscal Year 2017 – 2018 in the amount of \$7,895,608 which represents an increase of 3.19% over the current fiscal year. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

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

Supplemental Funding - Technology - Electronic Document Management System (EDMS)

There was discussion on the new Town of Essex Electronic Document Management System (EDMS). The EDMS system will allow all of the Town's records to be stored electronically and will improve accessibility. There is a participation (signup) fee of \$5,000 for municipalities with a population under 10,000.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance a funding request in the amount of \$5,000 for the Electronic Document Management System (EDMA). It is recommended that said funds be transferred from the Board of Finance Contingency account (10409-508400) to the Technology Support account (10475-504200-453). Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

Public Announcements / Comment: None

SELECTMEN GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Connecticut Water – 2017 Public Fire Protection Charges

There was discussion on the increase for the public fire protection charges as approved by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). The Selectmen would like to arrange a meeting with PURA to discuss the significant rate increase.

Housing Needs Survey – Planning Commission

The Selectmen discussed a survey that will be distributed throughout the Town by SurveyMonkey and in hard copy form. The Selectmen all agreed the survey looks good and can be sent out.

STEAP Grant

There was discussion that the Town's next STEAP Grant application target funds to be used for public safety. An upgrade of the existing communication system to high band is the Town's high priority. Priority will be given for applications for projects that benefit two or more eligible municipalities. Applications are due by April 17, 2017.

Tax Freeze

There was discussion on the Town is looking at other options for freezing and / or abating personal property taxes for Essex residents. More information is forthcoming.

Entertainment (Admissions) Tax

There was discussion on the proposed admissions tax that could be payable when an admission charge is collected. This tax may impact the Ivoryton Playhouse, the Connecticut River Museum, and Valley Railroad. There was discussion on whether non-profits would be subject to this tax.

AppGeo – Town of Essex Infrastructure Data Collection Status Report, March 10, 2017

There was discussion on the attribution of the infrastructure data that has been collected over the last six (6) months. Overlay updates included data layers for roads, sidewalks, parking, curbs, guardrails, fences, sports fields, signs, street furniture, and hydrants.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria P. Lucarelli