

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

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SPECIAL MEETING  
December 1, 2021**

**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.

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, Selectman Bruce R. Glowac.

Others in attendance: Tracey Celentano, Kelly Sterner, Allison Abramson, and Elizabeth Reinhart.

**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 November 4, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes. Norman Needleman seconded the motion. All in favor.

**Informational Items, Communications and Correspondence**

There have been a few nice comments regarding Public Works. People recognize the demanding work of the crew.

**Public Announcements / Comment:** None

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Appointments and Resignations Board and Commissions**

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

**Animal Control Officer**

Harry Plaut

The Selectmen suggested listing all the open Town Boards and Commission positions in a press release and to include the volunteer application which can be found at

[https://www.essexct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhliif3116/f/file/file/application\\_to\\_volunteer\\_for\\_board\\_or\\_commission\\_fillable\\_4\\_13\\_18.pdf](https://www.essexct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhliif3116/f/file/file/application_to_volunteer_for_board_or_commission_fillable_4_13_18.pdf)

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The following are current board and commission openings:

- Conservation Commission – Alternate Member – R
- Conservation Commission – Regular Member - R
- Economic Development Commission – Regular Member - U
- Economic Development Commission – Regular Member - D
- Park and Recreation Commission – 2 Alternate Members - D
- Planning and Zoning Commission – 1 Regular Member – U
- Tree Committee – 3 Regular Members

### **Ordinance – Smoking**

A draft smoking ordinance was prepared by the Town attorney. The ordinance would expand the current smoking regulations to parks and Town owned property to make all Town parks and property non-smoking. The selectmen would like to ban smoking at all parks, especially during concerts. The Selectmen tabled this to the next meeting.

### **American Rescue Plan Funds (ARPA):**

#### **Tri-Town Youth Services**

There was discussion of using a portion of the Town’s ARPA funds to support Tri-Town Youth Services to help with the mental health issues with our youth. The amount requested is \$39,820 from Essex.

**Motion** was made by Norman Needleman to approve and recommend to Board of Finance an appropriation in the amount of \$39,820 to be allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds for the Tri-Town Youth Services, a local non-profit organization, in the acquisition of a per diem clinician to help keep up with the demand for mental health services of our youth due to the COVID pandemic. Funds are contingent on Deep River and Chester participating. Stacia Libby seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

#### **Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG)**

RiverCOG sent in a request asking Towns to set aside up to 15% of the county portion of their American Rescue Plan Act funds to allow for the development of regional approaches to projects that will assist towns. The three projects they are developing are:

1. ARPA bookkeeping and reporting
2. Regional Small Business Grants program
3. Regional Social Services Grants Program

#### **Fire Marshal Vehicle**

There was discussion of using a portion of the Town’s ARPA funds to purchase a Fire Marshal vehicle since it is used for public safety. The current vehicle is a 2006 Ford Expedition with 200,000 miles and has major frame and body damage due to extensive corrosion. The Selectmen looked over the three quotes that were submitted of currently stocked vehicles. There was concern over the amount of gas that would be needed for the operation of these quoted vehicles. The Selectmen requested quotes for vehicles that would require less gas to operate, which would be presented at the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

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### **Fire Department Radios, a Rescue Truck, and Air Packs with a New Compressor**

There was discussion of using a portion of the Town's ARPA funds to purchase radios, a fire rescue truck, and/or air packs. There is hope that funds for the air packs and radios will come from grants. The air packs quote included masks and two bottles and a new compressor for a total of \$650,000. Selectman Needleman recommended waiting until the spring to order the air packs in hopes the price will come down. The current rescue vehicle is more than 22 years old and is splitting at the seams due to the weight of the equipment inside the vehicle. Pricing is estimated to total \$775,000 dependent upon down payment and vendor. The BOS made a motion; however, it was retracted to be revisited with additional information and more defined pricing.

### **Thatchbed Island**

There was discussion on whether funds from ARPA could be used for saving a barrier island located in Essex. The Finance staff deemed ARPA funding for Thatchbed Island did not qualify under the 66 approved Expenditure Categories. There was further discussion regarding BRIA grant funding which requires a cost benefit analysis, which could be done if you were to analyze the cost of taking the dredging elsewhere or just moving it.

**Motion** was made by Stacia Libby to approve and recommend to the Board of Finance a special appropriation of an amount not to exceed \$10,000 to move Thatchbed Island. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion. All in favor.

**Schedule Public Hearing** None

### **Set Town Meeting**

**Motion** was made by Bruce Glowac to set a Special Town Meeting on Wednesday, January 5, 2021, at 4:45 pm in Conference Room A. Stacia Libby seconded the motion. All in favor.

### **TRAFFIC AUTHORITY**

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

### **Route 153 – Pavement Preservation Program and Installation of Centerline Rumble Strips**

The Town received a letter from the Department of Transportation regarding plans to resurface Route 153 from Westbrook to Essex that would also include installation of centerline rumble strips (CLRS). The letter from DOT requires a signature that the Town concurs with the installation. The Selectmen are not in favor of the installation of centerline rumble strips.

**Motion** was made by Norman Needleman to send a letter to the Department of Transportation that the Town of Essex does not want centerline rumble strips (CLRS) installed on Route 153 from Westbrook to Essex. 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

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**SELECTMEN GENERAL DISCUSSION:**

Security Cameras

Norman discussed quotes that were received for installation of security cameras in Town parks. The Selectmen decided they do not want to install cameras in the parks but would welcome Trooper Roberts and Park and Recreation Director Mary Ellen Barnes to attend a Selectmen's meeting if the cameras are necessary.

MIRA – Opt in or Out

The Town received a letter asking that each participating municipality indicate their interest in amending its Municipal Services Agreement (MSA) either by eliminating the "Opt Out Disposal Fee" or by increasing it based on current forecasts. The Selectmen will review this in more detail and decide later.

**Motion** was made by Bruce Glowac to adjourn the meeting at 6:12 p.m. Norman Needleman seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Maria P. Lucarelli