

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CORNWALL BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Thursday, Aug 13, 2020
7:30 p.m. – Remotely via Zoom

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey; Selectman Priscilla Pavel; Emergency Management Director Diane Beebe; Social Services Director Heather Dinneen; Two Members of the Press; Four Members of the Public

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

MINUTES: Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey moved to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2020 Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Bill Berry of West Cornwall thanked the Highway Department crew for their long hours and professional work in removing downed trees all over Cornwall immediately following Tropical Storm Isaias.

COMMUNICATIONS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway reported that Optimum and Frontier are still out for some residents.

TROPICAL STORM ISAIAS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway provided a re-cap of Tropical Storm Isaias that hit Cornwall on August 4, 2020. He described Isaias as a major storm which had people cut off, and caused safety concerns. First Selectman Ridgway noted that the Cornwall Road Crew work was extensive, and that there were significant delays regarding the restoration of electricity by Eversource. The Board of Selectmen discussed steps to prepare for future storms. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey noted that future communications channels in the aftermath of a major storm should be expanded by increasing the reach of the Board of Selectmen's subscriber-based email, and by posting flyers at the Post Offices and Town Hall. First Selectman Ridgway also suggested posting flyers at the Cornwall Country Market. Selectwoman Kotchoubey emphasized the diligent work done by the Cornwall Highway Department clearing the roads. Cornwall Emergency Management Director Diane Beebe discussed the aftermath of Isaias and noted that the storm moved slightly to the West as it approached Connecticut, and thus Cornwall got hit hard by the stronger winds on the East side of the storm. Social Service Director Heather Dinneen discussed future use of a Robo-call system during emergencies. She was impressed at how people came together to help out their neighbors. Heather then gave a re-cap of work done by the food pantry volunteers who helped 104 residents in the aftermath of the storm.

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: First Selectmen Gordon Ridgway thanked the National Iron Bank in Cornwall Bridge for their gift of cleaning supplies and N95 Masks. He also discussed the Zoom meeting with school officials regarding opening CCS on September 8, 2020. Finally, the First Selectman touched on concerns related to social distancing and the November election, and plans for formulating a Town meeting process during the Pandemic.

FAÇADE GRANTS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway discussed recent STEAP Façade Grants which pay for 80% of the first \$10,000 towards business façade repairs in Cornwall.

FARNSWORTH PROPERTIES: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway discussed the Fire at the Farnsworth House in West Cornwall and that it could now be a possible site for the waste water

treatment equipment. He also noted that the Farnsworth's are interested in purchasing the Firehouse Lot next to their book store in West Cornwall Village.

OPTIMUM UPDATE: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway gave a recap of a conversation with the Optimum Government Relations Agent that was facilitated by State Representative Maria Horn.

FIREHOUSE FIRE: First Selectman Ridgway reported on the Boat Fire that occurred at the West Cornwall Volunteer Firehouse. The Boat is an important service to have, and need to be replaced. A claim with the Town's insurance carrier has been submitted to CIRMA.

CYBER SECURITY: First Selectman Ridgway noted that there is a real concern posed by hackers, but Cornwall is working with the State and will be up to date on cyber security procedures for the upcoming Presidential Election in November.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Leila Hawken of the Lakeville Journal asked the Board of Selectmen how things are going since Tropical Storm Isaias. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway emphasized being ready for the next storm and that Cornwall needs to take measures to become self-reliant when there are long power outages.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - WEST CORNWALL FIREHOUSE LOT: At 8:41 PM First Selectman Ridgway moved to enter into an executive session. The motion was seconded by Selectman Priscilla Pavel and unanimously passed. The executive session ended at 8:53 PM. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey made a motion to offer to sell the 0.2 acres "Firehouse Lot" in West Cornwall Village to the Farnsworths for \$500 through a Town Meeting. The motion was seconded by Selectman Priscilla Pavel and unanimously passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Berry
Administrative Assistant
Town of Cornwall