

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

Tuesday, June 2, 2020

7:30 p.m. – Remotely via Zoom

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey; Selectman Priscilla Pavel; Two Members of the Press; 5 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 May 19, 2020 Board of Selectmen Meeting. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to add the following item to the agenda: Popple Swamp Rd. / Nash Pond Project. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded the addition, and the motion passed unanimously. Also, at the suggestion of Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey, public comment will be made available at the beginning of Board of Selectmen meetings.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway discussed the increase in testing for Covid19, and the State is seeing lower percentage rates of positive infections, however State health officials remain concerned about a possible second wave of infection. First Selectman Ridgway also noted that masks made by Cornwall residents and donated to Waterbury were sent to a rural nursing home that was in need of masks. Furthermore, Congresswoman Johanna Hayes wore a Mask made in the Northwest Corner during a recent Congressional session in Washington D.C. Next, First Selectman Ridgway encouraged residents who are in need of mental health support to contact Cornwall Social Services who can inform residents of the resources available. After some discussion regarding safe reopening of the Town Tennis court, First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to re-open the Town Tennis Courts owned by the Hubbard Family under the supervision of Park and Recreation Commission and Todd Piker's tennis program. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded, and the motion unanimously passed. Next, the Board of Selectmen discussed the plan to safely open Hammond Beach. The Board discussed several safety measures for consideration in the plan, including but not limited to: mask / face covering requirements; grid system to ensure social distancing between family units; sign-in sheet; time limits when busy; and, additional signage to communicate rules. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to open Hammond Beach on June 20<sup>th</sup>, in consultation with CIRMA Risk Management and The State of Connecticut. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

HOUSATONIC RR SPRAYING: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway discussed the No Spray Zone Request that was approved by the State DOT. He noted that there is a gap in the No Spray Zone from Route 128 going North up to Tarradiddle Lane, and that the Town's request would be amended to include this area in West Cornwall Village.

HAZARD MATERIAL EQUIPMENT: The Board of Selectmen discussed the hazard material equipment needed by the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department for containment of potential spills into Cornwall waterways. The equipment, which includes "Booms" used to contain spills of hazardous material, costs approximately \$4,000.00. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to

allocate \$4,000 from the Town's contingency fund to pay for the equipment in the event that the CVFD doesn't have enough money left in their budget cover the expense of said equipment. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

**ASPHALT BIDS:** First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved request bids for approximately 11,053 tons of asphalt work on Cream Hill Road. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

**HOUSING PLAN:** Selectman Priscilla Pavel moved to execute the following resolution authorizing Cornwall's application for Housing planning grant funds (approx. \$11,000) from the Connecticut Department of Housing:

RESOLVED, that the Cornwall Board of Selectmen may apply for and accept planning grant funds to prepare and adopt an Affordable Housing Plan under the provisions of § 8-30j of the Connecticut General Statutes ("CGS").

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Gordon Ridgway, as First Selectman of The Town of Cornwall, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Cornwall and to do and perform all acts and things which he deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents.

Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

**FAÇADE PROGRAM:** The Board of Selectmen discussed the STEAP Façade Grant Program. Out of the \$120,000 Grant, approximately \$60,000 has been distributed, and approximately \$10,000 in administrative fees have been spent, which leaves around \$50,000 remaining for businesses or non-profits. The disbursements for approved projects are set at 80% of the first \$10,000 in cost for improvements and repairs. The remaining \$50,000 needs to be distributed to approved projects this year. Applications are available online at [www.cornwallct.org](http://www.cornwallct.org).

**WEST CORNWALL FIREHOUSE PROPERTY (VILLAGE):** The Board of Selectmen discussed a request by the Farnsworth's / West Cornwall Bookstore to test the old West Cornwall Firehouse lot for potential underground hazards and to see if a well is a possibility. The Farnsworth's are interested in purchasing the lot from the Town. First Selectman Ridgway moved to grant the Farnsworth's request to test for underground hazards. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

**TAX REFUND REQUEST:** First Selectman Ridgway moved to refund a tax payer \$67.13 for overpayment of real estate taxes. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

**POPPLE SWAMP NASH POND PROJECT:** The Board of Selectmen discussed the dip / low spot which periodically floods on Popple Swamp Road. The project is re-establishing the pond at the former Nash property. The owner of the adjacent property has offered to raise the road, increase the pipe size and install a fire hydrant. The road may need to be closed for up to a month. First Selectmen Ridgway noted the project could help prevent future flooding of the road, and increase fire protection for the neighborhood via the new hydrant. First Selectman Ridgway then moved to grant contractor, Lee Remmick, permission to proceed with the upgrade subject to plans with the Cornwall Wetlands Commission, Bridge Expert Roger Kane, and Cornwall Highway Dept. Foreman Jim Vanicky. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded. Next, Cornwall Land Use Administrator Karen Nelson, noted that at the latest Wetlands Commission meeting they discussed the original permitting for Nash Pond. She also supported the upgrade because the existing dip in the road presents potential safety issues and stated that the Wetlands Commission is "all behind [the upgrade]". Karen further noted that the land owner has submitted plans, and that those plans have been approved by the Wetlands Commission. The motion unanimously passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Ruth Epstein from the Waterbury Republican said the meeting “was very succinct and clear tonight.”

EXECUTIVE SESSION: EMPLOYEE STIPENDS, PANDEMIC DUTY: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to adjourn the regular session of the Board of Selectmen and enter into an Executive Session regarding Employee Stipends for Pandemic Duty. The motion was seconded by Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey and unanimously passed. The Board of Selectmen entered Executive Session at 8:25 PM. After discussion, First Selectman Ridgway moved to further explore potential stipends related to pandemic duty. The Motion was seconded by Selectwoman Kotchoubey, and unanimously passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Berry  
Administrative Assistant  
Town of Cornwall