

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

Tuesday, March 3, 2020

7:30 p.m. - Town Hall

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey; Selectman Priscilla Pavel; Transfer Station Manager, Ted Larson; Transfer Station Assistant, Will Berry; Economic Development Commission Chair, Janet Carlson; Park and Recreation Chair, John Sanders; Terry Burke of Discover Connecticut Bicycle Tours; One member of the Press; One member of the Public.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

MINUTES: Selectman Priscilla Pavel moved to approve the minutes from the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting held on February 18, 2020. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to add three items to the agenda: 1) Coronavirus Update; 2) Thomas Eucalitto appointment to Planning & Zoning Commission; 3) Letter from the Little Guild. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

COMMUNICATIONS: 1) Terry Burke of Discover Connecticut Bicycle Tours requested permission to utilize local roadways for the Annual Discover Connecticut Bicycle Tour sponsored by Bike Walk Connecticut and the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. The bicycle tour is tailored to showcase Connecticut communities' cultural, historic, and scenic attributes. Also, the tour will raise funds for educational / advocacy projects focused on making Connecticut communities safer and more attractive for cyclists and pedestrians. The event will be held on Sunday July 19, 2020. The ride (not a race) begins and ends in Falls Village. In Cornwall, the Tour will use Route 7, Lime Rock Station Rd., Music Mountain, Cream Hill Road, River Road, and Route 128. There will be 4 routes available, ranging from 13 miles to 47 miles in length. A few hundred riders are expected for the event. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway signed the authorization for the Bike Tour with approval from Selectman Priscilla Pavel and Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey.

STEAP FAÇADE GRANTS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway presented a status update on the Small Town Economic Assistance Program Grants. There are \$70,000 dollars remaining that needs to be spent by the end of 2020. The Town is now accepting applications which can be found at Town Hall or online at www.cornwallct.org. The STEAP Grants cover 80% of the first \$10,000 in repair costs for barn facades and other commercial or agricultural structures visible from the roadside. The grants can be used towards windows, paint, signage, or other façade related items.

COMMUNITY EMAIL: Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey reported that several hundred people have signed up to receive the community email newsletter. The Board of Selectmen will accept submissions from the public to be considered for inclusion in email newsletter; however, it is intended for informational purposes – opinions and sales submissions will not be published. Send submissions for the newsletter to mkotchoubey@gmail.com. An internet link to the email subscription page for the newsletter can be found at www.cornwalct.org.

M.I.R.A. UPDATE: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway provided an update on MIRA (Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority), and noted that the solid waste disposal fee is soon to increase from \$90.00/ton to \$93.00/ton. First Selectmen Ridgway then discussed the Board of Selectmen's response to the MIRA Statement of Interest regarding the Town's potential future commitment to MIRA. The Board of Selectmen is open to committing to a long-term regional solution; however, the Town has asked MIRA to come up with a price per ton that is closer to the current market price than MIRA's suggested future amount of \$145 per ton. First Selectman Ridgway noted that most towns have responded to MIRA in the negative regarding the proposed \$145/ton fee, and stressed that Cornwall will continue to push for efficiency and cost effectiveness by seeking strategies aimed at reducing the amount of waste Cornwall produces. Next, the current recycling market was discussed. Ted Larson and Will Berry of the Cornwall Transfer Station noted that Cornwall recycles more material than it throws away, and is the only town in the region to recycle plastic bags.

BUDGET 2020 / 2021: The Board of Selectmen discussed the status of the FY 2020 / 2021 budget. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway noted that a draft of the town budget has been submitted to the Board of Finance, and that Cornwall Consolidated School will submit a draft budget during the second week of March 2020. The Cornwall Board of Finance is scheduled to meet Thursday March 19, 2020. Janet Carlson, Economic Development Commission Chair, presented to the Board of Selectmen regarding the EDC's annual budget request. Several goals were laid forth including: 1) buy & hire local campaign; 2) year-round farmers' market support 3) website upgrade; 4) social media tracking; 5) hire local interns; 6) public speaker events; and, 7) Cellular/Fiber connectivity efforts. Also, the EDC is considering contracting with an outside consulting firm. The next steps are gathering data related to web-traffic at www.explorecornwallct.com and additional information regarding the proposed services provided by the consulting firm. Next, John Sanders, Parks and Recreation Commission Chair, presented on the need for additional fencing along the soccer fields in order to prevent soccer balls from entering the bushes, and thereby mitigating the risk posed by ticks. Northwest United Soccer Club will cover the cost of the fence. First Selectman Ridgway proposed that a temporary, but re-usable, barrier be investigated. One that could be taken down at the end of the soccer season, and moved to allow for thorough mowing.

NHCOG RESOLUTIONS: The Board of Selectmen considered a Regional Incentive Program Resolution received from the Northwest Hills Council of Governments regarding construction of the Litchfield Hills Animal Shelter in Torrington. The Resolution memorializes the Board's endorsement in support of the Litchfield Hills Animal Shelter as a State sponsored Regional Performance Incentive Program. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey moved to pass the Resolution. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

CORONAVIRUS/COVID 19 UPDATE: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway gave an update on the current health threat posed by Covid 19, also known as the Coronavirus. The Torrington Area Health Department (TAHD) published a press release this week with recommendations in response to the health risks posed by Coronavirus. The press release can be found online at www.cornwallct.org, and was sent to local news outlets by TAHD. First Selectman Ridgway emphasized the importance of providing accurate information to people in Cornwall. EMS Captain Joyce Hart and First Selectman Gordon Ridgway will attend a Coronavirus meeting with TAHD officials in Torrington On Thursday, March 5, 2020.

THOMAS EUCALITTO APPOINTMENT: Thomas Eucalitto, a new Cornwall Resident who is working to start a new farm in town, volunteered to take a position on the Cornwall Planning and Zoning Commission. Gordon Ridgway moved to appoint Mr. Eucalitto as an alternate member of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

LETTER FROM THE LITTLE GUILD: The Board of Selectmen considered a request for financial support from the Little Guild, an animal shelter located in Cornwall. Selectman Priscilla Pavel supported fulfilling the request for \$2,000 and noted that the Little Guild provides a valuable service to the Town. First Selectman Ridgway also noted The Little Guild saves money for the Town by providing shelter for stray animals. The Board of Selectmen agreed to provide \$2,000 to the Little Guild for FY 2020 / '21 out of the Town's dog fund.

TAX REFUND: The Board of Selectmen reviewed two tax refund requests: 1) \$4,316.12 overpayment due to a double payment, and 2) \$91.86 due to excess payment. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to refund both amounts as requested by Jean Bouteiller, Cornwall Tax Collector. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

The Board of Selectmen then reviewed items for Bill Payment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Berry
Administrative Assistant
Town of Cornwall