

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

Tuesday, January 5, 2021
7:30 p.m. – Remotely via Zoom

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey; Selectman Priscilla Pavel; Ten Members of the Public; Two Members of the Press.

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

MINUTES: Selectman Priscilla Pavel moved to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Selectman Priscilla Pavel reported that there is an article in the January edition of Main Street Magazine featuring West Cornwall Artist, Richard Griggs. Joanne Wojtusiak commented on the Internet Committee's recently published survey and asked that the raw data be made available to the public.

COMMUNICATIONS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway reported that the new CornwallCT.org website is up and running, and thanked Rocco Botto of the Cornwall Web Committee for his work developing the new website.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to add three items to the Agenda: 1) Council of Small Towns (COST) annual meeting. 2) The Little Guild Animal Shelter Funding Request, & 3) Platform Tennis. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway provided an update on the Covid-19 Pandemic: The Covid case numbers are fluctuating, the Virus is still around, and there were a couple new cases in Cornwall this week. People should continue to take all precautions. Also, vaccines are now available to hospital workers and medical first responders. Cornwall EMS first responders are scheduled to get vaccinated on January 6, 2021. The Selectmen's office will publicize information regarding vaccination phase 1b, but shots are being provided by the State of Connecticut. People can find out information regarding vaccines from the State at www.ct.gov/coronavirus.

PROPERTY TAX EXTENTIONS: The Governor has granted property Tax Extensions. It's the same 3-month extension that was made available for tax bills due in the Summer of 2020. The link to the tax extension application form can be found at <https://cornwallct.org/government/forms-documents/>.

INTERNET SURVEY: Gary Steinkohl of the Cornwall Internet Committee reported that 140 people had filled out the survey, and Gary urged everyone in Cornwall to fill out the survey in the weeks to come. The Internet Committee hopes to have a suitable number of responses by this Spring.

VACANCIES: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to appoint Sean Quinn to the Cornwall Conservation Commission. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

BOTTLES – FOOD & FUEL FUND: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to dedicate up to \$1000 from the aluminum can redeemable-fund to the Food and Fuel Fund. Selectman Priscilla Pavel Seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

TOWN HOUSING PLAN GROUP: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway noted that as part of the Housing Planning Grant from the State, Planning Consultant Janell Mullen will be working with a new Town Housing Plan Group. First Selectman Ridgway has asked the following people to serve on this new committee and they have agreed: Mag Cooley, Heather Dinneen, Anna Timmell, Janet Carlson, Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey, Will Evans, Sanah Petersen, and Ingrid Ellen. Jannell Mullen reported that she is looking forward to working with the Housing Plan Group to expand on the Plan of Conservation and Development to a picture of what Cornwall's housing needs are, and to devise a plan to bring more affordable housing in Cornwall. The plan would eventually need to be considered by the Cornwall Board of Selectmen. First Selectman Ridgway hopes to schedule the first meeting of the Cornwall Housing Plan Group in February of 2021. Selectman Priscilla Pavel also commented on the current housing situation in Cornwall, and she suggested the Group could look at the former bake shop for sale on Rt. 7 next to Kugeman Village.

COUNCIL OF SMALL TOWNS ANNUAL MEETING: COST legislative update January 13, 2021 from key legislators regarding issues important to small towns.

LITTLE GUILD FUNDING REQUEST: Request for \$2000 per year for operating expenses of the Little Guild Animal Shelter. First Selectman Ridgway made a motion to allocate \$2000 to the Little Guild from the Dog Fund generally paid for with dog licenses fees and to approve of \$2000 for the Little Guild in the 2021 -2022 budget. Selectman Priscilla Pavel Seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

PLATFORM TENNIS: The Board of Selectman discussed a request to install a platform tennis facility at Foote Field. First Selectman Ridgway suggested getting the Park and Recreation Commission's input, and looking to see how other Town's manage their platform tennis courts. Priscilla reported that a Platform Tennis courts would cost a little over \$100,000 to construct. Selectman Priscilla Pavel agreed that the idea should be sent to Park and Recreation to get their input. First Selectman Ridgway noted that anything that would cost this amount of money would need to be also be approved by the finance committee and voted on by the public at a Town Meeting. Selectwoman Kotchoubey noted that recreation is really important, however it is not a small amount of money, and it would need to be a Town wide decision whether or not to proceed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Joanne Wojtusiak discussed the housing planning process. Caroline Nastro discussed internet options available to students and libraries. Caroline also discussed proposing a future agenda item to include a presentation from CTAC Chair Steve Simonin.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Berry
Administrative Assistant
Town of Cornwall