

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

Tuesday, May 18, 2021
7:30 p.m. – Remotely via Zoom

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey; Selectman Priscilla Pavel; Will Berry and Ted Larson – Transfer Station; one member of the press; six members of the public.

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

MINUTES: Selectman Priscilla Pavel moved to approve the minutes from the May 4, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

COMMUNICATIONS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway reported the hiring of Rob Phillips by the NHCOC to replace Director Rick Lynn who is retiring this year.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: First Selectman Ridgway moved to add Bridge Repair and MS Donation to the agenda. 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 and noted that CDC has announced that mask wearing is not required outside, but that places can set their own policies. Town Hall and Offices will continue to require masks, and First Selectman Ridgway asked that people continue to do business with the Town remotely when possible. Also, the Transfer Station will continue the “three cars at a time” limit, and keep the swap shop closed until the Fall. First Selectman Ridgway emphasized that we are not out of the Pandemic yet and there are a good number of people not vaccinated, especially children. First Selectman Ridgway discussed the transfer station and asked residents to try and use the TS during off peak hours.

MEMORIAL DAY UPDATE: First Selectman Ridgway provided a run-down of Memorial Day: CVFD Fire Trucks will proceed through Town beginning at the North Cornwall Cemetery at 9:30 AM and then heading to Cornwall Hollow, then West Cornwall Village at 10:00 AM for a wreath tossing ceremony at the Housatonic River by the Covered Bridge. Next the fire trucks will drive to Cornwall Bridge, and finally to Cornwall Village where the roll-call, speaker, and Taps will be performed.

HAMMOND BEACH: The Board of Selectmen discussed Hammond Beach, and decided to schedule opening day for June 18th. Selectwoman and Hammond Beach Director Marina Kotchoubey discussed opening Hammond Beach and noted that she is investigating the possibility of providing swim programs for kids. Although the Pandemic style grid system used last summer will not be used this year, First Selectman Ridgway stated that families should socially distance from each other while at the town beach. Beach Pass prices and hours of operation will be the same this year as last year.

HOUSATONIC RAILROAD SPRAYING: The Board of Selectmen discussed attempts to limit herbicide spraying along the Rail Road in West Cornwall. The Board discussed concerns regarding spray-drift that has killed a significant number of trees that could cause damage to the tracks if they were to fall. The Board is also concerned with spraying in proximity to the residential areas near

the tracks. Selectman Priscilla Pavel noted that wells in West Cornwall are close to the tracks in places and residents lose plants every time the spraying occurs.

TRANSFER STATION UPDATE: First Selectman Ridgway reported that local architect Lisa Keskinen will draw up a design for a new Transfer Station office. Next, The Board of Selectmen discussed purchasing new comingle recycling bins. Will Berry of the Transfer Station noted that the current bins have cracks in the bottom and broken glass falls out onto the ground when the bins are moved for unloading. Transfer Station Manager Ted Larson stated that the new bins will be easier and safer to move. The Board discussed using money from the contingency fund to help pay for the 2 bins, which will cost \$3,200 a-piece. First Selectman Ridgway moved to purchase two new comingle recycling bins at a price of \$3,200 per bin. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded, and motion unanimously passed.

TOWN MEETING – May 21, 2021: First Selectman Ridgway provided a reminder that a Town Meeting will be held on May 21 at 7:30 PM. The only agenda item will be to approve the municipal budget for fiscal year 2021 / 2022.

HOUSING FORUM – May 24, 2021: First Selectman Ridgway reported that there are ten presenters scheduled to speak at the May 24th Housing Forum. The Board then discussed some items related to the forum.

HIGHWAY UNION NEGOTIATIONS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway discussed upcoming negotiations regarding a contract renewal between the Town and the Highway Union. First Selectman Ridgway noted that the Town has a good relationship with the Union.

DOT: CROSSWALKS, BIKEWAYS PLANS (UCONN): First Selectman Gordon Ridgway reported on a recent NHCOC meeting, at which the DOT Deputy Commissioner was in attendance. The DOT has some projects coming out of UCONN / DOT to increase crosswalks and bikeways. First Selectman Ridgway will be following up with the DOT to get more information on potential projects.

BRIDGE REPAIR: The Board of Selectmen discussed a quote provided to Roger Kane from Hammonasset Construction to repair two bridges – one on West Rd and one on the North end of Popple Swamp Rd. The work involves some masonry work on both bridges and repainting the guiderail on the West Rd. First Selectman Ridgway moved to authorize Roger Kane to proceed with bridge work as quoted by Hammonasset Construction. The Board discussed the price, and Priscilla Pavel inquired about the contingency of 10% of the \$11,350 quoted price. The 10% contingency amount was discussed. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

MS DONATIONS: The Board of Selectmen discussed a request from Jennifer Kenniston of Cornwall for a donation of \$1000 from the “bottle fund” to Multiple Sclerosis research, through the annual MS Walk. First Selectman Ridgway stated it was a worthy cause and made a motion to grant the request. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Susan Edholm of Cornwall Bridge asked if Cornwall Bridge was included in the Town’s no-spray request to the Railroad. First Selectman Ridgway noted that Cornwall Bridge was included in the original letter to the Rail Road and that he would follow up to make sure the areas where the tracks are close to homes in Cornwall Bridge be included in the no-spray zone request.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Berry
Administrative Assistant
Town of Cornwall