

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
CORNWALL BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Tuesday, February 7, 2017 - 7:30 p.m. - Town Hall

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, Selectman Richard Bramley, Selectman Heidi Kearns, five citizens, one reporter

First Selectman Ridgway called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

MINUTES: Selectman Kearns made the motion to approve the minutes of January 17 and January 31, 2017 as presented. Selectman Bramley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: First Selectman Ridgway made the motion to add to the agenda Cornwall Bridge Cross Walk, Bend Project, Farmer's Market on the Green, Delinquent Taxes. Selectman Kearns seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS: First Selectman Ridgway reported he had a communication from Eversource to Tree Warden Fred Scoville concerning the vegetation management program coming to town. The tree trimming will be mostly of routes 45 and 7 in Cornwall Bridge, area of Popple Swamp Road and Allen Road near Mohawk State Park. The Board discussed this. Citizens can expect this in the coming season.

Selectman Kearns brought forth a communication from ConnDOT concerning installation of centerline rumble strips along sections of state road in town. The Board discussed this.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Comments were received from those present concerning The Bend, the Covered Bridge meeting, and FOIA mandate of commission/board minutes.

RAILROAD SPRAYING LEGISLATION: First Selectman Ridgway reported on his morning in Hartford with Representative Ohler giving testimony in support of HB 5873 which requires railroad companies to file vegetation management plans in towns they pass through. The Board discussed this.

WEST CORNWALL COVERED BRIDGE MEETING: First Selectman Ridgway reported the meeting hosted by the Department of Transportation concerning the rehabilitation of the Covered Bridge was well attended. Representatives from DOT spoke about their plans and the schedule for work which is dictated by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's concerns for bats and fish stress which limits work to the months of mid-October, November, December, January, February which is further limited by cold weather impact on concrete and laminating wood. DOT wants a month to close the bridge for the work. The Board discussed this. Some pre-engineering work will be done this winter. The Board discussed what work needs to be done in the rehabilitation which will be above and not in the water.

200<sup>Th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOREIGN MISSION SCHOOL: First Selectman Ridgway reported he had received a letter from Mr. Ben Gray and Amy Johnson requesting use of the

Town Hall space for exhibits and meetings next June 17 and 18 in celebration of the 200 anniversary of the Foreign Mission School. Descendants of John Ridge and Heneri Opukahaia will gather in Cornwall to bear witness to the anniversary. First Selectman Ridgway had met with some descendants last month. The Board discussed the celebration. First Selectman Ridgway made the motion to offer the use of the Town Hall for their performance and festivities and to take an active part as much as possible in the celebration. Selectman Bramley seconded. Selectman Kearns inquired who will pull the insurance certificate for the use of town property. This was discussed. First Selectman Ridgway mused the town will be celebrating the anniversary also as it is a part of Cornwall's history. The Board discussed past similar celebrations and the coverage of town insurance and discussed who may be coming. Motion passed unanimously.

**WATER UTILITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE:** First Selectman Ridgway gave the history of WUCC and the preservation of water supplies. The Board reviewed maps submitted by Aquarion of their proposal of ESA holdings in town. The Board discussed these ESA holdings. Selectman Bramley made the motion the Board agree with Map A, the Cornwall Village area, but oppose Map B, the West Cornwall village area as this area is being studied at present and has not been designated. Selectman Kearns seconded. The Board discussed this and made note this does not preclude Aquarion from the West Cornwall area when it comes time to designate. Motion passed unanimously.

**GRAND LIST ANALYSIS:** First Selectman Ridgway reported Assessor Barbara Bigos has gone through revaluation and done a good job. The Board reviewed the Grand List analysis prepared by Ms. Bigos. There has been a decline in real estate values, an increase in personal property, some increase in tax exempt properties, all resulting in a 3.6 % decrease in the Grand List.

**CORNWALL FINANCIAL MODEL:** First Selectman Ridgway reported on the idea of a financial model combining the intersecting pieces of the budget to look at how all the parts fit together and what fund reserves the town has in light of the state's financial status and the mandates, obligations and state revenue cuts for towns. The Board discussed this. The model will offer guidance as the Board goes through the budget process.

**BUDGET 2017/2018:** The Board reviewed and discussed the most recent worksheet of budget numbers. The Board reviewed and discussed the overall increase to the organization line and organizations that requested an increase. Selectman Kearns made the motion to send this budget of February 7, 12:28 as approved tonight to the Board of Finance. Selectman Bramley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**CORNWALL BRIDGE CROSSWALK:** First Selectman Ridgway reported he had spoken to the state and other towns who have cross walks with blinking lights such as at Mountainside in North Canaan. First Selectman Ridgway will put together a proposal budget for the installation of such a light at the crosswalk in Cornwall Bridge.

**THE BEND:** First Selectman Ridgway reported he had met with Eversource representative concerning the possible purchase of the Bend property in West Cornwall and have exchanged appraisals and concerns. The Board discussed what actions need to be taken, whether to purchase

or lease, approvals needed. Selectmen Kearns expressed her concern to be sure the town is not buying a Brownfield site.

**FARM MARKET ON THE GREEN:** First Selectman Ridgway reported he had received an application from the Cornwall Co-op Farm Market for use of the town green and the town hall for a farmer's market from May to October on Saturdays. The Board discussed this. Selectman Kearns requested a site plan for the vendors and parking location be submitted. First Selectman Ridgway will request it of the co-op.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** The Board received questions and comments concerning the Bend appraisals and Phase I study and whether The Bend is a Brownfields site, and concerning the use of the town green – whether it will be exclusive, the impact of tax exempt properties on the Grand List and Aquarion ESA.

First Selectman Ridgway made the motion to go into executive session to discuss the Bend property in West Cornwall and delinquent taxes. Selectman Kearns seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The Board went into executive session at 8:55 p.m.

The Board came out of executive session at 9:15 p.m. No action was taken.

BILLS were paid in the usual manner.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Hart, Administrative Assistant