

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

Tuesday, September 7, 2021
7:30 p.m. – Town Hall

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey; Selectman Priscilla Pavel; Ted Larson; Will Berry; one member of the press; 9 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 August 17, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

COMMUNICATIONS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway reported a communication was received from Bruce Bennett regarding the Cogswell Bridge guiderail. First Selectman Ridgway noted that the Board will include Cogswell Bridge as an item on the agenda for the Board of Selectmen meeting scheduled for Sept. 21, 2021.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to add 1) Affordable Housing Plan Forum; 2) Town Offices Repair; and 3) Re-evaluation process. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

STORM IDA: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway discussed the effects of Storm Ida, noting that 4.5 inches of rain fell in Cornwall during the storm. There was damage to several driveways in Cornwall, and some rocks were dislodged from the retaining wall of Mill Brook near the intersection of River Rd and Rt 128 in West Cornwall.

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: First Selectman Ridgway provided an update on the Coronavirus Pandemic. Covid case numbers have been going up in Cornwall and in the region. The school is open and will stay prepared as people start spending more time indoors. The Cornwall Covid /American Rescue Plan Group will meet again on Wednesday, Sept. 15 to discuss how the Town will spend the recovery funds. Also, First Selectman Ridgway asked that people wear masks while attending the AG Fair.

WEST CORNWALL WASTE WATER PROJECT UPDATE: First Selectman Ridgway reported that 3 million dollars has been included in the proposed federal budget, and we are now awaiting a vote on the budget in the Senate and House of Representatives. First Selectman Ridgway also discussed moving forward with a contingent funding referendum vote in the Fall of 2021. The referendum would only authorize the Town to move forward if Congress votes to approve the proposed federal budget granting Cornwall three million dollars for the project. First Selectman Ridgway suggested November 20, 2021 as a target date for a vote on the referendum with a Town meeting held two weeks prior to the referendum. Selectman Priscilla Pavel moved to proceed with steps needed to carry out a vote on a funding referendum in November 2021. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

HOUSATONIC CAMERA CLUB: The Board of Selectmen recently received a letter from Cornwall resident Lazlo Gyorsak requesting \$1000 from the aluminum can recycling fund for the Housatonic Camera Club. The Board discussed the benefits of having Cornwall captured in photographs and providing opportunities for young residents to get involved in photography. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to grant the request. Selectman Priscilla Pavel seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

TRANSFER STATION UPGRADE: First Selectman Ridgway provided an update on the Transfer Station upgrade and noted the bid request language was nearly finalized, and the bid documents would be sent to contractors soon.

FUEL BIDS: First Selectman Ridgway informed the Board that we had received two bids for fuel oil: one from Bantam Wesson and one from Quinoco. Both bids were for \$2.599 per gallon of fuel oil. First Selectman Ridgway moved to stick with Quinoco and accept their bid of \$2.599 per gallon. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

CENSUS TRACK: First Selectman Ridgway discussed the 2020 Census. Cornwall had the second highest 10-year growth in Litchfield County behind Salisbury. The Board of Selectmen then discussed signs of growth in town. Selectman Priscilla Pavel announced that the Cornwall Association will be having a tea for newcomers in Cornwall at the Library on Saturday October 16, 2021 – 3:00 PM.

TAX REFUND RECOMMENDATION: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to grant four requests for tax refunds due to overpayment on motor vehicle taxes as recommended by Cornwall Tax Collector Jean Bouteiller. The total amount of the requests was \$261.05. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN FORUM: First Selectman Ridgway announced that there will be an Affordable Housing Plan Public Forum on October 20, 2021 to discuss the draft plan. First Selectman Ridgway also thanked the Affordable Housing Plan Steering Committee for their work crafting a draft housing plan.

TOWN OFFICE UPGRADE: First Selectman Ridgway recently received a memo from Jim Terrall who recommends putting new shingles on the roof of the Town Office Building due to deterioration of the existing shingles. Jim Terrall has quoted \$7,600 to replace the shingles. First Selectman Ridgway moved to proceed with Jim Terrall for \$7,600 to replace the shingles on the Town Office Building. Selectman Priscilla Pavel asked if the Town has looked into any other type of roofing besides shingles. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey suggested looking into which type of roof would be the most energy efficient and have the best longevity. The motion was tabled for further consideration.

RE-EVALUATION PROCESS: First Selectman Ridgway announced that Assessor Barbara Bigos has completed the revaluations on property in Cornwall and will be sending out a letter to property owners. Cornwall property owners will get a letter informing them of the new assessed value of their property. There is a two-stage appeals process: 1) appeal directly to the assessor, and 2) appeal to the Board of Assessment Appeals.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Berry
Administrative Assistant
Town of Cornwall