

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

Tuesday, January 18, 2022  
7:30 p.m. – Via Zoom

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Selectman Priscilla Pavel; Selectwoman Janet Carlson; one members of the press; ten members of the public.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

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

COMMUNICATIONS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway reported that Sharon Hospital continues to seek a modification on the hospital's 'certificate of need' in order to discontinue maternity services.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: First Selectman Ridgway reported that Cornwall continues to see its highest covid infection rate of the Pandemic. First Selectman Ridgway has set up an email account – [Cornwalltestquestions@gmail.com](mailto:Cornwalltestquestions@gmail.com) for residents to send inquiries regarding covid tests supplied by the State. Also, N95 masks are available at the post offices and the Cornwall Library.

OPTIMUM FIBER OPTICS: The Board of Selectmen discussed Optimum's recent announcement of plans to install "fiber-to-home" internet connections in Cornwall. Selectwoman Janet Carlson asked about Optimum's suggested timeline and expected area of coverage. First Selectman Ridgway stated that Optimum expects a 'full-scale initiative' to replace all their coaxial cable with fiber. First Selectman Ridgway stated the work is likely to begin when the weather gets better. Although an exact completion date is not known, First Selectman Ridgway anticipates a 1-2 year timeline.

ARPA FUNDS: The Board of Selectmen discussed grants that were awarded by the Cornwall American Rescue Plan Act Committee. Awards went to Cornwall non-profits and businesses totaling approximately \$100,000. First Selectman Ridgway discussed a list of purposes for the ARPA Funds.

TOWN BOARD MEETINGS VIDEO FORMAT, ZOOM ETC.: The Board of Selectmen discussed creating a town YouTube page and streaming town zoom meetings from Zoom onto YouTube, and archiving the videos on YouTube. Rocco Botto also discussed the proposal and how streaming Zoom onto YouTube would work.

WINTER STORMS / EVERSOURCE BROWN-OUTS: First Selectman Ridgway discussed a recent communication from Eversource notifying the Town of possible rolling brown-outs this winter due to potential shortages of natural gas used by Eversource to generate electricity.

PLANNING OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE 1/27/2022, 7:00 PM: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway offered a reminder that the Special P&Z POCD Annual Update meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 7:00 PM via zoom.

BUDGET MEETING: First Selectman Ridgway stated that Budget letters have been sent out to Town Departments requesting FY 2022 / 2023 budget request information, and discussed the budget worksheets. The Board scheduled a Special Board of Selectmen budget meeting for Monday, January 24, 2022 at 7:30 PM via Zoom.

NHCOG MEETING REVIEW: First Selectman Ridgway reported that the recent NHCOG meeting included a discussion regarding the Council of Small Towns' support for the idea of using State infrastructure funds to renovate the garbage incinerator in Hartford. The incinerator is currently scheduled to shut down in the summer of 2022, and towns will need to begin hauling municipal solid waste out of state. First Selectman Ridgway indicated his intention to advocate for State funding to renovate the regional incinerator.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Bill Berry of West Cornwall commented on the proposed municipal YouTube page / streaming service and asked if it would affect residents' ability to attend town committee meetings, and asked what problem the proposal would address. First Selectman Ridgway and Selectwoman Carlson noted that members of the public could continue to attend meetings via Zoom. Also, First Selectman Ridgway noted that some town committee meetings have not been recorded, and it could make it easier for committee chairs to post town videos on the website. Caroline Nastro of Cornwall also commented on the town YouTube channel proposal, and noted that public comment will not be possible via the YouTube stream, which could cause confusion when public comment is listed as an agenda item. Caroline Nastro also asked what problem the town YouTube would address. First Selectman Ridgway stated that he has heard the town YouTube would allow the town to store videos in one place and make access easier.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Berry  
Administrative Assistant  
Town of Cornwall