

# BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on Tuesday, January 17, 2023

	<u>Selectmen</u>	<u>Others</u>
Present	Y Gordon M. Ridgway (First Selectman) Y Priscilla Pavel Y Janet Carlson Sanders	Barbara Herbst - Clerk Pro-tempore citizens local press

Call to Order

7:35 p.m.

Minutes

Minutes for the January 3rd meeting were provided to all members via email as well as were available at the meeting.

**Motion**

**Janet Carlson** Made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.  
**Gordon Ridgway** Seconded the motion.

**Motion passed unanimously**

Communications

The West Cornwall Covered Bridge has reopened. Scott Thibault with the DOT has worked diligently to expedite the restoration work. The structural repairs have been completed however the repainting will not happen until April.

DOT will pursue financial recovery of the costs of the repair from the MV operator. Options for additional signage and or other deterrents are being researched to reduce the likelihood of a reoccurrence. The structure was turned over to State control back in 1960 +/-.

Additions to the Agenda

None

# 1 Budget

**Budget 2023-2024 Schedule to Update**

First Selectman Ridgway read a letter that was sent to all departments and organizations, said letter is appended to these minutes.

General discussion ensued and included the following talking points;

- a) Cornwall enrollment at HVRHS and year over year fluctuations.
- b) Projected \$450,000 increase to Cornwall from Region 1 assessment for FY '24.
- c) 2.9.23 is the date Region One will present the preliminary proposed FY '24 budget to the BoF.
- d) Employment of a multi-faceted approach for keeping the budget impact to a minimum.
- e) 1.31.23 for a Special Meeting of the BoS to collaboratively review the proposed budget.

# 2 Composting

**Composting with the Conservation commission**

Heidi Cunnick started the discussion with a brief overview of the goals of the Conservation Commission regarding composting. The overview included the following points;

- a) The Library will be hosting a Forum / Panel Discussion on Composting, the date will be 4.22.23 which also happens to be Earth Day.
- b) A successful Local Composting Program will require participation from Municipal Administration, Individuals, and Education Professionals.
- c) The goal is to have something "substantially working" by April 30th 2023.

The Transfer Station Manager also gave a brief overview of the process necessary to implement a Local Composting Program. The overview included the following points:

- a) DEEP approval is required and is obtained through an application process.
- b) A containment system consisting of a slab floor, walls and a covering is necessary to discourage bears, vermin and other small wildlife from access.
- c) An electric fencing system may also be necessary.
- d) To go from food scraps to usable compost takes approximately 6 months.
- e) A variety of items may be added to the food scraps and can include wood chips, leaves, dirt, water, shredded paper, and shredded cardboard.  
The materials get turned (mixed up) on a regular basis. A compost heap is monitored to note
- f) what food scraps have been added, temperature of the heap, and any odor emanating from the heap.

Other area Municipalities have composting programs in place and a visit to these transfer g) stations is in the works so Cornwall can learn from their neighbors.

Kate Freygang provided a general update of Cornwall's progress and participation in the Sustainable CT program. The goal of the Sustainable CT program is to create resilient towns. Cornwall has finished the first phase of air quality monitoring

### # 3 Optimum Fiber

#### **Casey Cook: Optimum Fiber**

Casey Cook shared "Good News", there is progress, and "Bad News", the progress is very slow. Currently, Optimum is running fiber lines in Torrington. Stamford CT is a sister community in this process so some outreach to participants there revealed that installation may be free however there are no specifics on the pricing structure for the monthly services.

### # 4 Assistant

#### **Board of Selectmen Administrative Assistant position**

First Selectman Ridgway shared that three individuals were interviewed for the position. All interviewees were well qualified and the interviews went very well.

**Gordon Ridgway** Made a motion to offer the position to Jane Hall.

**Priscilla Pavel** Seconded the motion.

#### **Motion passed unanimously**

#### **Motion**

### # 5 CEDC

#### **Economic Development Commission Business Meeting January 26**

There will be a Business Meeting of the CEDC on January 26th, 2023. Information will be posted on the website. This is a wonderful opportunity for Cornwall businesses to network, share ideas, and information.

### # 6 POCAD

#### **Plan of Conservation and Development Update - Meeting January 30**

A special POCAD 2020 Update Meeting will be held Monday, January 30 at 7 P.M. via zoom. Planning and Zoning will host an open discussion on progress towards Cornwall's 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development. A zoom link and detailed agenda will be posted on the town website, CornwallCT.org. This meeting will be informative and provide an introduction and presentation by P & Z on the progress of the POCAD as well as provide presentations or written correspondence or other media from Town Organizations and Partners as named in the Town Plan.

### # 7 COST

#### **COST Town Meeting January 11 - Review issues**

The annual COST Town Meeting was held on January 11 at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. First Selectman Ridgway and Selectwoman Janet Carlson attended. This meeting provided municipal leaders with an opportunity to network, exchange ideas, and problem solve in a collaborative environment as well as learn about the new legislative agenda.

The Governor, Attorney General, and the Lieutenant Governor made presentations or addressed the attendees on the following matters;

- a) The need for rural healthcare and how the current administration is addressing this issue.
- b) Infrastructure program presentation.
- c) Housing in Connecticut.
- d) Energy needs in Connecticut
- e) Fiscal Health in Connecticut.
- f) Garbage in Connecticut.
- g) Opioid settlement funding and the usage of said funding in Connecticut.
- h) Maria Horn was recognized for her excellent work putting forth legislation.

### # 8 Budget

#### **More Budget**

No additional discussion was had on this issue that wasn't covered in item #1.

**# 9 Public Comment****Public Comment**

**Nancy Berry** shared that the \$450,000 additional expenditure for education is a good problem to have because it means there are more young people and children in Cornwall! Also, she shared that she spoke to some surveyors and they told her they were working for Frontier and measuring to install fiber cable. This may mean Cornwall residents will have more options. The composting is exciting and a wonderful program for Cornwall to participate in.

**Riley, reporter for Lakeville Journal** asked when the \$450,000 would come due and will that make taxes go up. Regarding the Administrative Assistant, what is the pay range and the start date?

**Adjournment****Motion**

**Gordon Ridgway** Made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Priscilla Pavel** Seconded the motion

**Motion passed unanimously**

8:55 PM

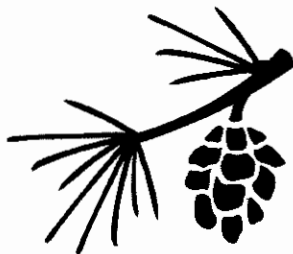
Submitted:

Barbara E. Herbst, Clerk pro tempore

Note:

Minutes remain "Draft" until approved at the next regular Selectmen's meeting. See future minutes for any corrections.

# Town of Cornwall



BUDGET UPDATE

January 12, 2023

Dear Cornwall Preparer,

We have just learned that Cornwall's share of the Region #1 budget for next year is estimated to increase by over \$450,000. This is due in part to the enrollment fluctuations of graduating seniors and incoming freshmen. Cornwall enrollment is up over 30% while other Region 1 towns are significantly less.

This MAJOR shift represents a 6% increase to the Town budget which is currently \$7.5 million dollars. This tuition increase is likely to maintain pressure on Cornwall's budget process going forward.

Additional inflationary pressures on the budget include but are not limited to Health Insurance increases, rising fuel costs and contractual (binding) increases.

We are asking budget requesters to trim their requests, consider deferring capital projects and to look for additional sources of funding such as grants.

The Town Administration is requesting a collaborative approach to address these inflationary pressures which include but may not be limited to

- a) trimming budget requests
- b) carefully considering deferment of any non-essential Capital Projects
- c) utilization of financial reserves
- d) a small tax increase

Thank you in advance for your assistance and please stay in touch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Pryor".

Joseph Pryor  
Chairman, Board of Finance  
Town of Cornwall

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon M. Ridgway".

Gordon M Ridgway  
First Selectman  
Town of Cornwall