



SELECTMEN'S MINUTES  
MONDAY APRIL 19, 2021

Present: Parker Lord, John Kiker, Steven Mattson. Attending virtually were David Lahm, Mary Powell-St Louis, Diana Fiske, and Bob Cope.

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 P.M. and the minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

The board appointed Christine Darnell as a regular member of the Conservation Commission, along with Sue Cope and Jake Tiffany as alternate members of the same Commission.

The board discussed a continuation of the reopening of town facilities as COVID-19 cases slow in the region. The board agreed that, beginning May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Town Hall and Library will return to their normal hours of operations without the need for appointments while continuing the safety protocols of social distancing and mandatory mask wearing. The vault at town hall will continue to be available by appointment only all 5 days per week. The board also agreed to expand the Hamburg Recycling Center hours to 7 days per week. Monday through Thursday hours will be 8am to 2pm while Friday through Sunday hours will be 9am to 4pm. The Brush Hill Road Transfer Station is also available for recycling deposits 9am to 4pm on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.

The board also agreed to open town facilities for use by private organizations and in-person meetings of boards and commissions should the Chair decide to move back to in-person or hybrid meetings. Use of the facilities will be limited to 50% or less of the stated fire occupancy levels to assure social distancing. Mask use will continue to be mandatory. The meeting hosts will be responsible for adhering to these requirements. Reservations for the use of facilities will be required through the Town Clerk for the Town Hall, the Librarian for the Library rooms, and the Fire Chief for the Tiffany Room in the Hamburg station.

The First Selectman updated the board on the actions taken by the Board of Finance in their 2 meetings held since the last Board of Selectmen meeting approved the budget proposal. The Board of Finance took 3 actions that changed the budget for next year or the makeup of future budget proposals:

- The board voted to require health insurance cost sharing for future full-time employees hired after 7/1/21. This change will now assess a 15% cost sharing of health insurance costs from new employees. Present employees will not be subject to such cost sharing. The Board of Selectmen

was tasked with rewriting the Employee Handbook to reflect this and other changes before the new policy can take effect.

- Savings to the Open Space Reserve Fund for next year were reduced from \$467,000 to \$75,000.
  - The goal for the Open Space Reserve Fund was lowered from \$1,000,000 to \$500,000.
- Therefore, no additional contributions to the Open Space Reserve Fund will be included in future budget proposals as the lower goal has been satisfied.

Selectman Lord, Chair of the Open Space Committee, disagreed with this action as it reduces the potential for the Town to be a participant in negotiations for properties that may become available and may result in property tax increases to fund a major purchase beyond the level needed should the town have a larger reserve. Selectman Lord also observed that the Plan of Conservation and Development prioritizes Open Space protection, and this action goes against the plan's intent thereby conflicting with the direction of the residents.

With these modifications, the Board of Finance approved the budget for presentation to the voters at a Public Hearing scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup> and open, virtually, to all voters and residents.

The board continue its planning for the Annual Town Meeting tentatively scheduled for May 19. Following Region #18 passage of the school budget at referendum on May 3<sup>rd</sup> the town will communicate the details of the meeting, the agenda items and the final budget put forward for approval by the Board of Finance.

As part of this planning, the Board of Selectman approved, by motion from Selectman Kiker and second by Selectman Lord, 2 ordinances for town meeting approval. The first ordinance will make the Treasurer's position an appointed position rather than an elected position. This is being considered to allow for this important position to be filled by competent candidates from outside of Lyme should a resident not be available. The second ordinance adjusts the method for applying for mooring permits in the waters of Lyme to allow for an on-line application process.

The board then held a blind drawing for the 4 available mooring permits this year. 26 applications were submitted. The numbers drawn in order were #21, #14, #3, and #1. These results will be communicated to the Town Clerk and the Harbor Master for communication to the lucky and unlucky applicants.

The board was made aware of a CT Department of Transportation project that will affect traffic in Lyme this summer. The project replaces 2 bridges on Route 82 in Salem and will require a detour of Route 82 traffic onto Route 156 and Salem Road. Detours are scheduled to begin on June 19 and end on August 22. Selectman Kiker will communicate this on the town website and social media so residents will be aware.

The board was also updated on the on-going legal dispute with the Marchesi family concerning the terminus of Brockway Ferry Road. The plaintiffs have filed large discovery and interrogatory requests of the town that will require substantial effort to comply with and incur legal costs as the town defends the lawsuit ... again.

Following the agenda, the board opened the floor to questions from the guests. Mr Cope voiced his opposition to the reduced funding for the Open Space Reserve Fund and inquired as to the process that will be followed at the Public Hearing. Mr Lahm asked about publishing Zoom links with the agenda to make it easier to attend meetings. The board recounted examples how wide dissemination of Zoom links have resulted in “Zoom bombing” and the extra step is intended to reduce this potential. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:08 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Mattson  
For the Board of Selectmen