

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 24, 2022
Preston Town Hall - Lower Level**

1. Call to Order

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier called the meeting to order at 7:04 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Members

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier

Ken Zachem

Jerry Grabarek

Also Present

Kimberly Lang, Recorder

Andy Depta

3. Minutes

a. Approval of February 10, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes

Ken Zachem motioned to approve the February 10, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

b. Approval of February 10, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes

The following corrections were made:

- Heather Somers last name is misspelled
- No "e" at the end of Governor Lamont
- The municipal spending cap is 2.5%, not 2%

Ken Zachem motioned to approve February 10, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

4. Correspondence - None

5. Reports - None

6. Appointments and /or Resignations - None

7. New Business

a. Budget Preparation 2022-2023

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier shared the following budget concerns:

- CCM dues \$3362
- ECCD \$500
- Allocation to Historical Society \$2000
- And several other small areas the budget will remain flat
- Building Dept. Programs and Supplies an increase from \$1250 to \$1800 to allow for price increases. Also, Travel and Meetings will remain flat at \$3952.
- As requested by the Board of Finance, the CNR Line will have \$25,000 for 10-year Reval and \$5000 for POCD.

It was stated that the Grand List has seen a 4% increase from the prior year due to the real estate climate, new construction, closing out of permits, increase in the value of used vehicles, and campers have held their value and there are quite a few that are in the 3 established campgrounds in town - Strawberry Park, Hidden Acres, and Amos Lake.

b. Covid Update

The cases are coming down statewide although the state is still in the red. Uncas Health is looking at hospitalizations when making their decisions. Last week 130 were hospitalized, this week the number is down to 28, with none in ICU. Overall 75% have their initial vaccine, 70% are fully vaccinated, and 40% have received their booster. For the over 65 population rates are 100% initial dose, 98% fully vaccinated, and 78% have received their booster.

It was discussed that it is prudent that the town is consistent with the school which had recently decided to change its stand on mask-wearing.

Ken Zachem moved to recommended mask-wearing, not mandate, as of March 1, 2022, and to continue to monitor the situation to align with the school system. Sandra Allyn-Gauthier seconded the motion. Ken Zachem and Sandra Allyn-Gauthier voted in favor of the motion while Jerry Grabarek voted against it. The motion carried 2 to 1.

c. Troop E Update

It was reported that the new Commander at Troop E is Commander Al Gosselin who met with local leaders to discuss changes and concerns of the area towns. He spoke about the ongoing issue of speeding vehicles. He made suggestions to share with citizens to prevent car theft. He let the leaders know that they are willing to run data spreadsheets for towns. Senator Osten is hoping to secure funds through Rural Grant Programs for the area. They are offering

Ride Alongs once again. They are hoping to secure grants to reestablish and expand such programs as Drug Prevention, Crisis Intervention, DARE Program, DUI Grant Programs that will allow more than stationary checkpoints. The selectmen mentioned concerns for the high volume of traffic between Route 2 and 2A.

8. Old Business - None

9. Tax Refund

- a. Timothy S. Bartha - 4 Wilderness Acres - \$36.50
- b. Chelsea Groton Bank - 2020-01-0001381- \$2,156.55
- c. Chelsea Groton Bank - 2020-01-0000652 - \$681.58
- d. Overhead Door/88 Route 2A -2018-03-0053634 - \$17.92
- e. Overhead Door/88 Route 2A -2018-03-0053618 - \$151.72
- f. Overhead Door/88 Route 2A -2019-03-0053701 - \$12.85
- g. Easter CT Savings - 2020-01-0001769 - \$2335.70

Jerry Grabarek motioned to approve the tax refund for:

Timothy S. Bartha - 4 Wilderness Acres - \$36.50

Chelsea Groton Bank - 2020-01-0001381- \$2,156.55

Chelsea Groton Bank - 2020-01-0000652 - \$681.58

Overhead Door/88 Route 2A -2018-03-0053634 - \$17.92

Overhead Door/88 Route 2A -2018-03-0053618 - \$151.72

Overhead Door/88 Route 2A -2019-03-0053701 - \$12.85

Easter CT Savings - 2020-01-0001769 - \$2335.70

Ken Zachem seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

10. Public Comment

Andy Depta, 6 Young Court, stated that the door was locked making it difficult for the public to attend the meeting. He also questioned exactly what the resident troopers do for the town and what hours are they servicing the town. He also questioned the salt mix used on roads during winter storms and stated that during the last storm that he noticed that the mix wasn't spread evenly across the road making Waterson Road treacherous and wanted to know why the head of the department isn't checking that roads in town are properly serviced.

To address his comments and concerns -

Staff will be reminded to leave the front door unlocked now that covid concerns are lessening. The two Troopers work a total of 80 hours a week and any issues that occur outside of their purview and hours Troop E-services the town. And as for road conditions following a storm, it

was suggested that he call Jim Corley directly so that issues can be dealt with in a more timely manner especially when safety is concerned.

11. Adjournment

Ken Zachem motioned to adjourn at 7:50 P.M. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Lang

Kimberly Lang

Recorder