

Town of Seymour  
Board of Selectmen  
MINUTES

Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 7:00pm  
Norma Drummer Room, Seymour Town Hall

**Members Present:** Trisha Danka, Annmarie Drugonis, Kurt Miller, Al Bruno, Rob VanEgghen, and Stephan Behuniak

**Members Absent:** Robert Findley

**Others Present:** Rory Burke, Richard Buturla, Veronika Jelenik (Voices), Robert Koskelowski, Chris Pelosi

**Item #1 – Call Meeting to order**

First Selectman Kurt Miller called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

**Item #2 – Pledge of Allegiance**

Everyone saluted the Flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Item #3 – Public Comment**

Robert Koskelowski – 130 Pearl Street

- Would like the Board to reconsider the Bonding Package for November (over \$21million)
- The Community Center originally opened in April 2004 as the Senior Center. The sign that was originally up on the building with the name of the Grant and the First Selectman at the time has been taken down. That sign should be still up there. Not many questions were asked about this at previous meetings.
- The \$1.4million for communications should be borrowed under short term borrowing so that we are not paying this out over 20 years.
- Community Center – about 8-9 years ago a study was done to estimate the cost to bring the current Community Center up to code. At current rates, the cost would be about \$10million (instead of the \$15million for new). Leasing the property should not be an option.
- Bonding for the roads – we still haven't paid off the principal from the last borrowing (the \$10million). Just interest payments.
- In 1999-2000 we went through a financial crisis in this Town; and we had to raise the taxes 3 mils to make up the deficit. If we go through with this bonding, we will have more debt than what our budget is. We are still paying for the High School renovations, Chatfield-LoPresti renovations, and other projects.
- Filing for FOI requests are very difficult – financial information requested was not provided (in a timely manner). Questions asked are not answered.
- We should ask our elected officials about our financial status. We are ranked 40<sup>th</sup>/169 highest mill rate in the state. We are overtaxing the public.

**Item #4 – Approve Minutes from September 3, 2019 Regular Meeting**

Motion to approve Minutes from September 3, 2019 Regular Meeting

Motion: Annmarie Drugonis

Second: Al Bruno

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

#### Item #5 – First Selectman's Report

1. Met with Boy Scout Cody Kellogg at the Seymour Library to see the Eagle Scout project that he has done. He was able to do a great deal of landscaping around the flag pole next to the building. The project came out fantastic and is a great addition to the library. I look forward to having Cody join us at a meeting in the near future when he is awarded his Eagle Scout.
2. Joined IT Director Rob Dyer on a CCM panel to discuss Cyber Security for Towns and Cities. Rob and I had the opportunity to not only discuss what Seymour has put in place over the last few years to help keep our data more secure, but to also talk about the advantages of merging functions with the Board of Ed and the benefit that provides to the tax payers.
3. Met with folks from the YMCA to see if there is any potential fit with them and the town to collaborate on the new community center. This was just a preliminary discussion and one that I expect will continue in greater detail should the vote pass in November.
4. Met with Mary McNelis to discuss the new town wide quarterly mailer that will be going out. We expect to have the test draft done for mid-November with the first quarterly edition going on in early January 2020.

**Item #6 – Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding 2019 Emergency Management Performance Grant**  
Annual Grant from Homeland Security. Tom Eighme sent this out and is available for questions. Kurt Miller read the Resolution into the Minutes:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen may enter into with and deliver  
(name of governing body)

to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of  
Emergency Management and Homeland Security, any and all documents which it deems to be  
necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that W Kurt Miller as First Selectman of  
(name and title of officer)

Seymour

(Name of governing body)

is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the  
Board of Selectmen

(name of governing body)

and to do and perform all acts and things which he/she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry  
out the terms of such documents.

Motion to approve the above Resolution as presented

Motion: Annmarie Drugonis

Second: Al Bruno

#### Discussion:

Annmarie Drugonis asked Kurt Miller to send the e-mail from Tom Eighme with responses to questions to all Board members.

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danko – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

#### **Item #7 – Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Human Resources Rules & Regulations**

- Chris Pelosi was present to answer any questions
- When Chris started back in July, he promised to do a policy review & development – specifically New Human Resources Policies that provide some level of control, consistency, and structure across Town departments while ensuring compliance to employment legislation and informing employees of their responsibilities along with the Town’s expectations.
- Trisha Danka had a few questions that she discussed with Chris. First, with the hiring practices – the verbiage should include Chris as being included in the interview and selection process since we now have an HR Department. Secondly, to remove any reference to “just cause”. Section 10, pg.8, B. 3. Al Bruno agreed that we should eliminate “just cause”.
- Richard Buturla said that they would be reviewing this document with our labor lawyers to make any necessary changes. When you have an at-will, non-collective bargaining unit employee, you do not want to give “just cause” protection. Statutorily, there are some non-union employees have “just cause” protection.
- Hiring Procedures – page 3, section 4. Trisha’s concern was that nowhere in here does it say specifically that the HR Director will participate in each of the interview. It doesn’t exclude him, though. Should the HR Department expand to include more people, we don’t want to put anything in the regulations that would require the HR Director to take part in EVERY interview. Chris suggested that we put in the words “as needed”. Trisha feels that we should have someone from the HR Department be involved in the interviewing/hiring process.
- Annmarie Drugonis would like to see something in here addressing annual training required for each position. (For non-union) There should be proper safety training for each position. Kurt Miller said that Chris, himself, and Rory Burke are discussing closing Town Hall until 9:30am on two Wednesdays per month to have different training sessions for employees (for example, sexual harassment, etc.)
- Stephan Behuniak asked if we should have the Town website listed in the Recruitment, Section 2. Also, on Page 3, Section 4, #8, can we change the wording from “may” to “shall”. That the Board of Selectman (the appointed authority) shall have opportunity to interview (for supervisory or management position). Stephan said that we would be at least allowed the opportunity to sit in on the interviews.
- This document will be “cleaned up” and sent back to us at our next meeting and vote on it at that time. A copy of the document will be sent a week in advance of the meeting for the Board members to review and can be voted on at the next meeting.

**Motion to add to the Agenda: Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Ordinance Amending Section 15-13(c)**

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Annmarie Drugonis

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

**Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Ordinance Amending Section 15-13(c)**

We did this ordinance amendment back in the springtime. But upon further review, we believe there was a “Scrivener’s Error” in there. Richard Buturla said that there was a date of May in there, but they were given until December to submit the paperwork. (The paperwork has actually been submitted for Porta-Door). We should authorize the correction and accept the Porta-Door 10/1/16 Grand List personal property declaration.

Kurt Miller read the Ordinance: *Section 15-13(c) of the Seymour Town Code is hereby repealed and re-enacted as amendment as follows notwithstanding Section (b) effective for the October 1, 2016 Grand List only. The deadline to meet with the Board of Selectmen shall be prior to December 1, 2019 at a regularly scheduled meeting. Such meeting shall be public.*

Motion to approve the correction as presented

Motion: Al Bruno

Second: Annmarie Drugonis

Discussion: Now we would add to the agenda and make a motion to accept Porta-Door personal property assessment. (for assessment date 10/1/2016)

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

**Motion to add to the Agenda: Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Porta-Door Personal Property Declaration for the October 1, 2016 Grand List in Compliance with Section 15-13(c) of the Seymour Town Code**

Motion: Al Bruno

Second: Annmarie Drugonis

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

**Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Porta-Door Personal Property Declaration for the October 1, 2016 Grand List in Compliance with Section 15-13(c) of the Seymour Town Code**

All the paperwork will be checked for accuracy and be presented at the next meeting. We can vote on this at that time.

**Motion to add to the Agenda: Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Town Owned Property at 128 West Street**

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Annmarie Drugonis

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

**Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Town Owned Property at 128 West Street**

- Tremendous amount of interest in purchasing this house
- Richard Buturla recommended making a formal referral for an 8-24 Review to the Planning & Zoning Board
- There is a State Statute that when a municipality sells a municipally owned property it must be posted & there has to be a public hearing. There is an exception for foreclosures. This property was acquired through the "tax sale" by the Tax Collector. So, we should set a Public Hearing after the 8-24 is complete.
- Kurt Miller asked if we then do an auction, use a realtor, or accept sealed bids. Richard Buturla said any is fine. We need to find out what our cost is. Then we can move forward with soliciting bids. With the sealed bids we can do a floor price with the right to reject any offer. Foreclosures are usually conducted by court-appointed attorneys and bidders are required to bring a deposit by bank or certified check. Then goes back to the court for approval.

Motion to request an 8-24 Referral from the Planning & Zoning Commission on 128 West Street to allow potential sale to the public

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Annmarie Drugonis

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

#### Item #8 - Appointments

Motion to approve the below appointment for 9/17/19 as recommended by the First Selectman:

#### Appointments September 17, 2019 Board of Selectmen Meeting

| Name         | Board            | Type          | Term    | Expiration Date | Party |
|--------------|------------------|---------------|---------|-----------------|-------|
| Judy Simpson | Culture and Arts | Reappointment | 3 Years | 10/4/2022       |       |
| Kelly Wrogg  | Culture and Arts | Appointment   | 3 Years | 10/4/2022       |       |

Motion: Annmarie Drugonis

Second: Stephan Behuniak

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

#### Item #9 – Tax Refunds/Abatements

Motion to approve attached Tax Refunds Report dated 9/17/19 from Tax Collector as presented by Sue Boland

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Annmarie Drugonis

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

#### Item #10 – Transfers

None

#### **Item #11 – Correspondence**

- Check Register was attached.
- Letter from Robert Koskelowski, Board of Police Commissioners, regarding the Negotiations of the Police Contract, which reads:

The Police Commission along with the Board of Selectman voted and approve in December and January the changes in the Police contract on your recommendation. It stated very clear that after the Board approved your recommendation only changes would be Dot the I's and cross the T's. and correct any wording not substance.

You have now opened up full negotiations making many changes which could cost the Town much more money in a number of areas. As one Police Commissioner I am asking you a second time if you continue negotiation making changes in the current approve contract that you have a Commissioner in negotiations to assist.

We have to put Patrolman not Detective in statewide this coming January because that was approve after your negotiations, now we have an extra Detective who should have been put in statewide that was the reason to promote an officer to Detective. Because of this it will cost the Police department extra money in man power and overtime.

#### **Item #12 – Public Comment**

None

#### **Item #13– Selectmen's Public Comment**

- Stephan Behuniak – none
- Rob VanEgghen – none
- Al Bruno – the town looks very clean; have received many positive comments; Tony DePrimo, keep up the good work! Looking forward to the Pumpkin Festival this Sunday!
- Annmarie Drugonis –
  - Congratulations on our bond rating AA+! 2000-2006 we had an A-; 2007-2008 we had an a+; from 2009-2013 we had an AA-; Kurt Miller took office in 2011, so he took our rating from an AA- to an AA+ since 2011. Also, we have not raised the mill rate in four years.
  - Congratulations to the Seymour Football Team on their win over St. Paul's.
  - It is against the law to drain your pool water into the sewer drain - \$500 fine from DEEP. You also cannot push your leaves or snow into the street per Seymour Town Ordinance.
  - Public Works is doing a great job. Meeting last Monday with Oakridge Management.
  - Bulk pickups will continue until the end of October. Then Public Works will pick up your leaves (IN BROWN PAPER BAGS) starting in November.
- Pumpkin Festival on Sunday – looking forward to it!
- Trisha Danka
  - Bond Rating – Great job! Thanks to Doug Thomas for his taking care of all the paperwork!
  - Thanks to all the volunteers that helped out at Chatfield Park and the Seymour Land Trust.
  - Looking forward to the Pumpkin Festival!

- Kurt Miller –
  - Town's Bond Rating is a AA+ and we have received the GFOA for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the last FOUR years. The professionals feel that Seymour is in EXCEPTIONAL financial shape.
  - Communications Equipment – Bond will be for 10 years, not 20 years.
  - The "Lease" discussed in regard to the Community Center was actually for a "Lease-Purchase".
  - The sign taken down from the Community Center was done when the new signage was put up, and Kurt got a call from the former First Selectman whose name was on the sign thanking him for taking it down (finally) since he has not been in office for 15 years.
  - FOI Requests – all FOI Requests are handled according to State Statutes. FOI is not an opportunity to just ask questions.
  - With regard to not paying principle on our previous Road Bond, this is factually incorrect. Two years ago, we received a \$1.9million cut in municipal funding in the middle of a budget year. This Board was very "hands-on" in working with the Board of Finance in coming up with a solution to move the town forward without increasing taxes or implement a special tax. We went through different scenarios and restructured and re-funded our debt to provide us that flexibility.
  - Any of the financial documents are available for review.

#### Item #14 – Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:55pm

Motion: Annmarie Drugonis

Second: Al Bruno

Vote: 6 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danko – Yes

Robert Findley – N/A

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller – Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

Submitted by:



Monica Dimon  
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by:



W. Kurt Miller  
First Selectman