

Town of Seymour
Board of Selectmen
MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at 7:00pm
Norma Drummer Room, Seymour Town Hall

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Rory Burke, Richard Buturla, Veronika Jelenik (Voices), Robert Koskelowski, Timm Willis, Benito Urgiles

Item #1 – Call Meeting to order

First Selectman Kurt Miller called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

Item #2 – Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone saluted the Flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item #3 – Public Comment

None

Item #4 – Approve Minutes from September 17, 2019 Regular Meeting

Motion to approve Minutes from September 17, 2019 Regular Meeting

Motion: Annmarie Drugonis Second: Al Bruno

Vote: 6 – Yes 0 – No 1 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes Robert Findley – Abstain Annmarie Drugonis – Yes Kurt Miller - Yes
Al Bruno – Yes Robert VanEgghen – Yes Stephan Behuniak – Yes

Item #5 – First Selectman's Report

1. Attended a Mass Causality Incident Table Top exercise with our first responders. Exercise went very well and our first responders did an exceptional job as always being prepared and with their responses. We will be holding another live exercise in the next few weeks for continued practice.
2. Police Union contract negotiations are ongoing. I expect to have updates in the next few weeks for this board to review.
3. Met with the towns of Ansonia and Derby to explore the potential of regionalization. We are in the process of reviewing the needs of each community and their strengths and weaknesses to determine what opportunities may be available. We are targeting 7/1/2020 for some of these changes to take place if possible.
4. I will begin the process for the FY 21 budget in the next few weeks. As we have in past years, we will be holding an offsite planning meeting in early December with the senior staff and key financial vendors. This meeting has been extremely

beneficial to our long term planning. I will provide more updates as we firm things up.

5. In conjunction with the Valley Indy, I will be holding live event to discuss the Community Center project. This event will begin with a short presentation, followed by a moderated discussion and question and answer period with Eugene Driscoll. The event will be next Tuesday, October 8th at 8 pm. This will lead into the Town Meeting which will be held the following week. I will also be attending a Senior Citizen luncheon being held the end of the month.

Item #6 – Discussion with Fire Marshal Timm Willis

- Timm has been with the Fire Marshal Department for over 10 years; 6 months as the Fire Marshal; also have recently hired Robert Rockwell as Deputy Fire Marshal who is doing a fabulous job.
- Over the past 90 days we have 31% of residential inspections done; goal is 100% per State mandate – while this is not possible, we'd like to be as close to this as possible.
- Also, we have done over 70 initial inspections over the last three months (this does not include the re-inspections which could be four or five times before complete). This is an impressive amount of inspections.
- Over the next few months we will be looking at facilities in town with commercial cooking; the places with liquor licenses are required to call and be inspected; some that don't have liquor licenses are sometimes behind. We will be making an effort to get these inspections done.
- Also, following up on the re-inspections.
- Deputy Fire Marshal Rockwell came to us with 30 years of experience and is doing a phenomenal job. We are working as a team and Timm is learning from him every day. Timm thanked the Board for hiring him to the position.
- Short-Term Goals
 - Upgrading our software – we haven't had an upgrade since 2008 or maintenance over last five years. We haven't had to pay anything on it, but also, we have not been getting out of it what we could. We reached out to one vendor for a quote; it would be a substantial up-front cost. Probably would be \$5,000 - \$10,000 with an annual upkeep cost. This would allow us to work with our calendar, schedule re-inspections for us – to help move us forward and increase productivity.
 - Improving our relationship with the Fire Department – Deputy Fire Marshal Rockwell has assisted with pushing this. We also want to make sure that any software that we do get is compatible with the Fire Department software. They are also looking for new vendors for software. We need to make sure that if they are not the same vendor, they are at least compatible.
 - Keep up with our goals on re-inspections
 - Try to get more volunteers certified and volunteering; costs the Town nothing.
 - New vehicle – the current vehicle is 11 years old and the maintenance costs are rising.
- Long-Term Goals
 - Receive some clerical assistance – even a floater – for four to eight hours per week – would be very beneficial and free up Timm to do more of the “fire marshal” work and less “paperwork”.
 - Interlocal Agreement – has now been signed, with the assistance of Town Counsel, by six of the seven communities; just one new fire marshal is a little slow signing. Hopefully will be up & running with this agreement very soon.

- I am always available for you to stop in or call with any questions you may have or to see what we do day-to-day, come out on inspections, etc.
- Questions/Discussion
 - Rob VanEgghen asked (given the situation in Naugatuck last week with blasting) if Timm had given any blasting permits. Timm said he has two outstanding – one at Haynes (600 Derby Avenue – the quarry operation) – they blasted yesterday for the first time in six weeks. They usually blast from 15-18 days. They are well under regulations (even though received complaints. Another permit is out – on George Street – issued last week, they thought they were done but still need to do a small shot (utility shot) just to bring in some stuff on the back of their property.
 - Rob also asked if Timm has any special requirements for Seymour or if they are done on a job-by-job basis. Timm said that the requirements are nothing more than the state mandates. All permits issued do require a seismic reading report to be sent to the Fire Marshal. There is no timeline on this – just as long as the report is received in a reasonable amount of time. Every case is different. Timm said that he does encourage as much distance as possible for the blasts.
 - Trisha Danka said that she is elated to have Timm in this position; his professionalism, enthusiasm and ability to be a great leader and also be a valuable member of a team is going to mean great things for this Town. Thank you. Timm said he could not do it without the support of Deputy Fire Marshal Rockwell and the members of this Board.
 - Bob Findley asked (regarding the software) if Timm would be working with the Town I.T.Department. Timm said that he has had conversations with them; a lot of the issues are more geared toward the “fire” side; there are really only a few vendors for this. Before any decisions are made, we will have discussions with Rob Dyer.
 - Kurt Miller said as early as next year we have the vehicle and software built into the Capital Plan. Also, adding a position (the floater or clerical assistant) will need to be addressed in the near future. This would free up Timm tremendously to do more re-inspections and other “fire marshal” work.

Item #7 – Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding Valley Fire School Resolution

- City of Derby, Ansonia, & Shelton will be presenting to their alderman, and then to the Governor:

**RESOLUTION
SUPPORTING THE VALLEY FIRE CHIEFS REGIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL**

WHEREAS, fire training for our volunteer fire fighters is necessary for them to safely and properly respond to calls under all conditions in order to protect members of the public experiencing danger, distress and tragedy; and

WHEREAS, the Valley Fire Chiefs Regional Training School is a worthy, necessary and important investment for the safety of the residents of the Town of Seymour and for the safety of the public living in the entire southwestern Connecticut region; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a permanent location for the Valley Fire Chiefs Regional Training School is necessary to provide professional, technical, affordable, convenient and varied courses for our volunteer fire fighters; and

WHEREAS, a fire training school is necessary to maintain, train and draw new volunteers to not only protect the public but to keep the essential service of volunteer fire fighting in place for the Town of Seymour and the entire southwestern Connecticut region; and

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut has invested over two million dollars for the purchase of land, geologic and soil testing and architectural renderings for a new Valley Fire Chiefs Regional Training School in Beacon Falls; and

WHEREAS, the bid process for construction of the School has been completed for a second time; and

WHEREAS, funding for the School is required through approval by the State of Connecticut Bonding Commission.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seymour Board of Selectmen supports the construction and permanent establishment of the Valley Fire Chiefs Regional Training School at the proposed location in the Town of Beacon Falls in order to ensure the proper emergency response training for our volunteer fire fighters to protect the public safety for not only the people of the Town of Seymour but for the entire southwestern Connecticut region.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Seymour Board of Selectmen support the placing of the funding for the School on the next State of Connecticut Bond Commission's agenda and recommends that the Bonding Commission approve the funding as soon as possible so that the Valley Fire Chiefs Regional Training School may be permanently located in the Town of Beacon Falls in the immediate future.

Dated at Seymour, Connecticut and adopted by the Seymour Board of Selectmen on this 1st day of October 2019.

Motion to approve the above Resolution as presented

Motion: Robert VanEgghen

Second: Bob Findley

Discussion: Trisha Danka asked where the Fire School is located now. Kurt Miller said all over. They use different locations.

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Anmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

Item #8 - Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding 38 Nichols Street Blight Fine

- Kurt Miller reviewed the details: Benito Urgiles purchased 38 Nichols Street when it was a blighted property and planned to live in it. He got called out of the country for a family emergency. He has been working very diligently on fixing up the house to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy. The blight has been gone for a long time now. This Board had previously given him until 10/1/2019 to obtain the Certificate of Occupancy.
- Mr. Benito Urgiles, 22 Oakley Street, New Haven, was present at the meeting and said he has an appointment tomorrow with the Building Inspector for the Certificate of Occupancy. He brought pictures of

the house to show the finished project. Mr. Urgiles thanked the Board for opportunity to work with him to fix up the house and remove/reduce the blight fine.

- Kurt Miller also noted that he has completed the requests we asked of him. The blight was on the property when Mr. Urgiles purchased it. Also, the Building Inspector, Jim Baldwin is very happy with the progress. Kurt Miller said that we will put this item on the agenda for the October 15th meeting and we can vote to remove the fine at that time (when the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued). At that time, we will make the decision about what to do with the fine on the property. Initially, we had frozen the fines while Mr. Urgiles worked on the property.
- Kurt Miller said that the main thing is that the house was fixed up. We are very pleased with the way the house looks. That is the goal of the Blight Program – to take these old beat-up houses and turn them into houses people can live in again. Mr. Urgiles was planning to live in the house, but his wife got a job in Clinton so they will stay in New Haven. Trisha Danka said that Mr. Urgiles has done a great job and should not worry about the fine. We will contact you in a few weeks once the Certificate is received.

Item #9 - Discussion & Take Possible Action Regarding New England Mountain Bike Association Agreement

- Town Counsel Richard Buturla has been working with Oxford Attorney Kevin Condon to get this organized. We wanted to get Seymour's end of this firmed up.
- Mr. Buturla said that they had a presentation, did some research, received some documents from NEMBA, and talked to Kevin Condon about signing an agreement. Rather than wait for them to do an agreement, we decided to draft an agreement so that at least they can get started on the Seymour part of the trails. This is a REVOCABLE LICENSE AGREEMENT for the Seymour portion of the Keith Mitchell Preserve and they are required to put up insurance to insure their activities on the property. Mr. Buturla said we should first have a motion to approve the Revocable License Agreement and to authorize the First Selectman to enter into it.
- Questions:
 - Trisha Danka asked if the Town has any liability? Rich Buturla said that there will ALWAYS be a chance that the Town could get sued. But there are many immunities and various defenses available to us should that occur. Trisha asked if it is your opinion that the Town will be ok doing this? Rich said that it is up to the Board if they are comfortable allowing this recreational activity in the Town. Rich said that NEMBA will be providing an insurance certificate showing the Town as co-insured. So, we have a little bit added protection.
 - Richard Buturla said that there is an "Oxford component" and they are not there yet with the agreement/motions from their Board. We have already pushed far ahead with the "Seymour component" paperwork. Also, there is some DEEP land that is included in this project which has not been addressed.
 - This Agreement would allow NEMBA to do the work on the trails in Seymour. Should the deal fall apart, we can revoke the license.
 - Rob VanEgghen asked what would happen if the organization disbands three years down the road and there are created trails that no one is managing. What if someone gets hurt, is this totally on the Town if we leave them open? Richard Buturla said that there are various defenses that we can explore should the need occur. In his tenure, Mr. Buturla does not recall the Town of Seymour or the Insurance Carrier paying out on any claims having to do with recreational activity. Rob asked, if the Agreement passed tonight, would they start work on the trail tomorrow? Kurt Miller said not likely. Rob asked if it would be better to wait to approve until Oxford is ready or approve tonight? Rory Burke said that if the Agreement is approved on our end it might "push" Oxford a little to get theirs completed.

Item #12 - Appointments

Appointments October 1, 2019 Board of Selectmen Meeting

Name	Board	Type	Term	Expiration Date	Party
Rory Burke	Regional Brownfields Partnership	Appointment	2 years	10/01/2021	N/A
Darrick Lundeen	Fire Investigator	Appointment	N/A	N/A	N/A
Roderick White	Fire Investigator	Appointment	N/A	N/A	N/A
Phillip Hawks	Fire Investigator	Appointment	N/A	N/A	N/A
James Tortora	Fire Investigator	Appointment	N/A	N/A	N/A
Brian DeGeorge	Fire Investigator	Appointment	N/A	N/A	N/A

Motion to approve the above appointments dated 10/1/2019 as recommended by the First Selectman

Motion: Annmarie Drugonis

Second: Bob Findley

- Kurt Miller said the "Fire Investigator" appointments are from the Towns that we entered into the Interlocal Agreement with recently

Vote: 7 – Yes 0 – No 0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes Robert Findley – Yes Annmarie Drugonis – Yes Kurt Miller - Yes
Al Bruno – Yes Robert VanEgghen – Yes Stephan Behuniak – Yes

Item #13 – Tax Refunds/Abatements

Motion to approve attached Tax Refunds Report dated 10/01/19 from Tax Collector as presented by Sue Boland

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Annmarie Drugonis

Vote: 7 – Yes 0 – No 0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes Robert Findley – Yes Annmarie Drugonis – Yes Kurt Miller - Yes
Al Bruno – Yes Robert VanEgghen – Yes Stephan Behuniak – Yes

Item #14 – Transfers

None

Item #15 – Correspondence

- Check Register was attached.
- Received letter from Toni Cassidy at the Seymour Oxford Food Bank:

Dear Mr. Miller,

We'd like to give a big thank you to Alex and Tom for taking care of us during the whole process of adding air conditioning to the Seymour Oxford Food Bank, from beginning to end. With the summer heat, the unit has been most appreciated. It not only keeps our volunteers cool but it helps preserve the fresh produce and breads that we receive as donations. The clients also enjoy coming in from the heat to a cool environment to shop.

Again, thank you for everyone's efforts in creating a comfortable area for both the volunteers and clients of the food bank with air conditioning. We all appreciate it!

- The Tree Warden has been placed on Administrative Leave. Kurt Miller asked Richard Buturla, Town Counsel to write an opinion regarding what next steps the Board can and should take, depending on the outcome of the investigation. Kurt wanted the Board to be aware of this situation. If anyone has any questions, please direct them to Mr. Miller, as personnel matters are not discussed publicly.

Item #16 – Public Comment

None

Item #17– Selectmen's Public Comment

- Stephan Behuniak –
 - Thank you to Timm Willis for coming in and giving a great report
 - Thank you to Chris Pelosi for reaching out next day after the last meeting to discuss/correct the changes to the Human Resources Manual
 - Once again, it is very disappointing that the WPCA does not accept online payments
- Rob VanEgghen – none
- Al Bruno – none
- Annmarie Drugonis –
 - This past weekend I took part in the MISSION 22 walk (13km) in Naugatuck to bring awareness to Veteran Suicide. They closed down the whole downtown area in Naugatuck, and there were vendors there. On June 5th and 6th we will have "22 Hours for 22" at Seymour at the high school, to bring awareness for Veterans Suicide. We will be walking for 22 hours straight. There will be teams, 22 people on each team. Each person would walk an hour. Kurt Miller has pledged to walk for the 22 hours. Our goal is to raise \$22,000 so we will sell hour-blocks to walk. If anyone would like to be on this committee, please let me know. Hoping that the Fathers Club can sell food and get the high school students clubs involved as well. I am hoping that this will bring awareness of Veterans Suicide to Seymour and hope to encompass the whole Valley.
 - It was amazing to hear about how coming home after they serve affects the veterans and their families.
 - Good Luck to the runners this weekend for Seymour Pink 5k run.
- Kurt Miller said that the Public Works department has been out preparing the course for this run. The Demmings have expressed their appreciation and thanks for the support received from this Board over the past 10 years. Also, we have had discussions with WPCA about getting payments online in the near future.
- Bob Findley –
 - Looking forward to the Seymour Pink event this weekend

- Thank you to Timm Willis and all the presenters who have come in to update us on their departments
- Trisha Danka
 - Thanks to Chris Pelosi for meeting with us and making the changes to the manual so quickly and for keeping an open mind
 - Again, would like to commend Timm Willis. All the employees at Town Hall work hard, but it is very easy to get disillusioned after a while. It is incredibly important that we look for the same qualities that Timm has: his enthusiasm, sense of pride in his work, that's what gets things done. This is what the public would really like to see in our employees. Whether it's a matter of helping employees that are here see the positivity or new people coming in, this would really help everyone.

Item #18 – Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:56pm

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Annmarie Drugonis

Vote: 7 – Yes

0 – No

0 – Abstain

Trisha Danka – Yes

Robert Findley – Yes

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Kurt Miller - Yes

Al Bruno – Yes

Robert VanEgghen – Yes

Stephan Behuniak – Yes

Submitted by:

Monica Dimon

Monica Dimon

Recording Secretary

Reviewed by:

W. Kurt Miller

W. Kurt Miller

First Selectman