

Minutes of EAST LYME BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING - 09/21/22

Date and time: 09/21/22 7:00 PM to: 09/21/22 9:30 PM

Present: Brooke Stevens, Recording Secretary, BOS Members Present:, Kevin Seery, Ann Cicchiello, Dan Cunningham, Bill Weber, Anne Santoro, Rose Ann Hardy

CC: Also Present: , Kevin Gervais, Finance Director, Scott Fraser, Town Treasurer, Jerry Lokken, Parks & Recreation Director

Location: EAST LYME TOWN HALL UPPER MEETING ROOM

Link: <https://app.meetingking.com/meetings/385697>

Topics

1. Call Meeting to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Note Mr. Seery called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1-1. Additional Agenda & Consent Calendar Items

Note There were none.

1-2. Delegations

Note Pat Larkin of 14 Oak Hill Drive was in attendance and explained that he's currently a member of the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission. He said he wants to make a few remarks regarding Darrow Pond, and said some of the following:

Back in 2020 the Commission began discussing the idea of using part of the Darrow Pond property for town recreation.

A survey was created, and the public provided input on what uses would be beneficial to them, and how they would like to see the property utilized.

The item was on the Selectmen's agenda on February 17th of 2021.

It was discussed with no action taken and it has not appeared on any follow up agendas since.

There is a conservation easement for 200 of the 300-acre property, and the Commission is requesting that the Town make the 100 acres not covered by the easement, the charge of Parks & Rec.

The Town appropriated \$20,000 of ARP funds to develop a Master Plan and Parks & Recreation received a bid for \$22,000.

Prior to signing the contract, the Commission decided it would be best to seek Town authorization for control of the 100 acres.

They feel it wouldn't be prudent to invest the Town's money for a Master Plan, unless they have control of the land, and are asking for the Board's support.

1-3. Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting of September 7th, 2022

Note MOTION (1)

Ms. Santoro moved to approve the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes of September 7th, 2022, as submitted.

Mr. Weber seconded the motion.

FILED

September 26, 2022 AT 8:25 AM/PM

Brooke Stevens ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Note Ms. Santoro said a motion was omitted from the minutes, which took place after the Executive Session adjourned, and the Commission Members returned to the Regular Meeting session. She added it should be Motion (10), it authorized the First Selectman to enter into the collective bargaining agreement between the Town of East Lyme and the Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU), and the vote was unanimous, 5-0.

Note Ms. Santoro said 4a., Ex-Officio Reports, says "Ms. Santoro" when it should say "Ms. Cicchiello." Ms. Santoro noted she didn't have an Ex-Officio Report that evening but it's an easy mistake since her first name is Anne and Ms. Cicchiello's first name is Ann.

Decision MOTION (2)

Ms. Santoro amended her motion and moved to approve the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes of September 7th, 2022, as corrected.

Mr. Weber amended his second.

Motion carried, 5-0-1.

Ms. Hardy abstained from the vote due to her absence from the September 7th, 2022, meeting.

1-4. Consent Calendar

Note See attached Consent Calendar.

 [Untitled document \(4\).pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (3)

Ms. Santoro moved to approve the Consent Calendar for the Regular Meeting of September 21st, 2022, in the amount of \$606.72.

Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

2. New Business

2-1. Discussion - Supplemental American Rescue Plan Funds Allocation

Note Mr. Seery explained that the East Lyme Historical Society received \$22,000 from the American Rescue Fund to improve handicapped accessibility on the first floor of the planned Historical Museum, located at 171 Boston Post Road. He said the quote they received requires an additional \$16,264.

Note The Board discussed how \$5,206.44 was never appropriated, how they haven't yet received the last amount due from the federal government which amounts to \$1,793,013.52, and how \$43,000 of ARP funds were returned since it was not needed for the purchase of the garbage truck, as originally thought.

Note Ms. Santoro explained that the general idea for any unused funds, was that they wait until 2023 to 2024, at which point the lay of the land in terms of actual ARP costs will be clearer.

Note Ms. Cicchiello asked if this is a time sensitive issue and Mr. Seery observed that the facility would remain unused and the cost for labor and materials, will likely go up.

Note Ms. Santoro said the Town has a 3-bid policy and that it would be helpful to receive additional quotes.

ask Mr. Seery said he will check with Norm Peck to determine if other quotes have been sought and will ask that they seek additional ones if they have not.

Owned by Kevin Seery

Note Mr. Weber said his concern would be that it doesn't seem appropriate that the first organization that comes back is given additional funds after overspending. He said he's part of the American Legion, and due to rising prices, they started cutting things out.

Mr. Weber acknowledged that this really isn't an apples-to-apples comparison since ADA accessibility isn't really in the same category, and obviously can't be eliminated. He said this might result in other organizations returning to ask for more money as well but doesn't know the answer of how to address this.

Note Mr. Seery said this is the only organization they've heard back from and pointed out that the request is for a Town resource, which will be located in a Town building. He said he's in favor of bringing this item forward after some additional research.

Note Ms. Santoro noted the library has a survey on their website to help determine what residents would like to see in the Historical Museum, and suggested they do their best to let Town residents know about this.

Note Ms. Hardy asked if there is any plan to follow up with non-government groups that received ARP funds, and Mr. Seery detailed how all groups are required to supply documentation to the Finance Department.

Task Ms. Hardy asked if Kevin Gervais, the Finance Director, could follow up on when the additional funds will be released by the government.

Owned by Kevin Gervais, Finance Director

Note Ms. Hardy agreed that the Town policy of obtaining 3 bids should be met, and added that handicapped accessibility should be a high priority.

Note Mr. Cunningham concurred and said he's in favor of funding this if needed after seeing additional quotes.

Note Mr. Seery said there is a space constraint in the library and this facility is needed to house important Town artifacts, and this work will at least allow them to have an operational place in which to work. He said he will pass on all the concerns and recommendations discussed, to Mr. Peck.

2-2. Authorize First Selectman to Open Bank Accounts

Note Mr. Seery explained that Kevin Gervais, the Finance Director, and Scott Fraser, the Town Treasurer, are looking to establish relationships with some banking institutions that offer far more competitive interest rates than we are currently receiving.

Note Mr. Gervais said some of the following:

They're looking to open an account with another financial institution.

When he brought it to the Town Clerk she asked where his resolution was, and they looked back and could not find a resolution that gave the First Selectman the authority to open bank accounts.

This is why they're here tonight.

They want to open an account with a regional bank that is offering the best interest of rate, which is comparable to the CT STIF rate.

STIF stands for short term investment fund.

Currently, the rate is 2.39%.

It'll likely keep going up, which is not great if you're trying to buy a home but it's great if you're trying to maximize interest on a good amount of cash, which is what they're trying to do.

Currently, our interest income line in the budget is \$20,000.

They're really looking to blow that revenue line sky high.

Every month they can have more cash sitting in a STIF account or higher yield interest account.

They're talking about several million dollars, so this will yield several 100,000 dollars of interest.

He and Mr. Fraser have met with 5 financial institutions and Newtown Savings Bank has offered the best rate.

Every penny is FDIC insured.

This is solely for a better interest rate.

They're not looking at the moment to move accounts payable, payroll, or operating accounts.

This is just establishing a relationship to get a better investment rate for the cash they have sitting there.

This resolution is not just for Newtown Savings Bank, it gives Mr. Seery the authority to open accounts with other financial institutions.

This will also be useful if they go to RFP in the spring, for the majority of their other banking services.

Note The Board further discussed the request and Mr. Fraser commented that he doesn't want to sit on this given rising interest rates.

Note Mr. Gervais clarified that the Board of Finance has been informed about this, but that this is not an item under their jurisdiction; they're not incurring any additional fees, this is strictly just finding the best investment vehicle.

Decision MOTION (4)

Ms. Santoro moved to authorize the First Selectman to open new bank accounts for the Town of East Lyme and authorize the First Selectman and or the Treasurer to transfer money between accounts maintained by the town of East Lyme. The First Selectman, or individual acting as First Selectman, is hereby authorized, for and on behalf of the Town of East Lyme, to sign orders or checks in accordance with State law, for payment or withdrawal of money from said account(s) and to issue instructions regarding the same and to endorse for deposit, negotiation, collection or discount by the Financial Institution any and all checks, drafts, notes, bills, certificates of deposit or other instruments or orders for the payment of money owned or held by said municipality;

And further, the endorsement for deposit may be in writing, by stamp, or otherwise, with or without designation of signature of the person so endorsing; and any one of the persons holding the offices of First Selectman and/or Treasurer of this municipality is hereby authorized to make oral or written requests of the Financial Institution for the transfer of funds or money between accounts maintained by this municipality at the Financial Institution.

Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

3. Old Business

3-1. Schedule Town Meeting - October 5th, 2022 - NSEP Grant Appropriation

Mr. Seery reminded the Commission that the Board of Finance approved the NSEF Grant appropriation last week, so it now needs to be sent to Town Meeting.

Decision MOTION (5)

Ms. Santoro moved that Notice is hereby given of a Special Town Meeting of the Town of East Lyme to be held on October 5th, 2022, at 7:00 P.M. (E.T.) at the East Lyme Town Hall Upper Meeting Room for the following purposes:

1. To consider and act upon a special appropriation in the amount of \$25,948.80, to cover the cost of purchasing the listed equipment for the Emergency Operations Center.

Quantity- 1

Item to be purchased- Trailer-Mounted Message sign (2 of 3)-

Details- The unit is essential for directional messaging at major evacuation route intersections. One additional unit will be requested in our 2024 NSEF Grant application.

Cost- \$16,625.00.

Quantity- 1

Item to be purchased- EOC Operations Computer Workstation

Details- This position is responsible for sharing vital event information to the EOC Command Staff during drills and real-world emergencies. The old unit has reached the end of its usable life.

Cost- \$2,481.00.

Quantity- 30 36" Reflective Rollup traffic directional signs & stands

Details- The signs are essential for directing vehicles out of Town during an emergency evacuation.

Cost- \$5,842.80.

Quantity- 50 36" Traffic Cones w/ reflective collars & E.L.E.M Identification markings

Details- Essential for traffic management during drive-thru distribution events as well as evacuation management.

Cost- \$1,000.00.

TOTAL of 1st Special Appropriation Request for 2023 Equipment: \$25,948.80.

Balance remaining of 2023 Grant Appropriation: \$19,176.20.

2. To transact any other business proper to come before the meeting.

Dated at East Lyme, Connecticut, this 21st day of September 2022.

EAST LYME BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Ms. Cicchiello seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

3-2. Discussion and Possible Action - Darrow Pond

Mr. Seery noted that this has come before them previously, but there was some concern about parking, road access, and use; the study is to determine what the exact nature of use might be. He added that he did some research and reviewed the minutes of a public hearing that took place in February of 2013, and he detailed some of the discussion that took place at that public hearing.

Mr. Seery agreed with the sentiments of the 2013 Darrow Pond Subcommittee, that the property is underutilized and underappreciated by the Town. He noted the property will be able to accommodate pollinator pathways and local wildlife.

Mr. Seery observed that access to the Darrow Pond property from Mostoway Road is very tight and the property isn't maintained by Public Works, but a bit of maintenance is done by Parks & Recreation.

He spoke with Attorney O'Connell, who instructed that if they're interested in making the property the charge of Parks & Recreation, they should request that the Town Attorney prepare a resolution for the Board of Selectmen that places the designated area of Darrow Pond under the control of Parks & Recreation.

Note: Jerry Lokken, the new Parks & Recreation Director, introduced himself and said that he and Mr. Larkin are in attendance to answer any questions the Board might have. He added that they would like to move this project forward and come up with something that serves the community and its visitors.

Note: Ms. Hardy asked if Mr. Lokken thinks this is something the Department can take on without additional staffing.

Mr. Lokken replied that they already do limited maintenance, but if the results of the Master Plan come up with certain amenities that need to be added there, that's the time when he'll be able to answer to that question. He said if the property gets developed in some way, he thinks it's a reasonable expectation that there might need to be additional resources put into maintaining whatever it is.

Note: The Board further discussed the property and how if they act tonight, it's solely to request the drafting of a resolution for their consideration and review.

Decision MOTION (6)

Ms. Santoro moved to request that the Town Attorney prepare a resolution for the Board of Selectmen that places a designated area of the Darrow Pond property under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Ms. Cicchiello seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

3-3. Discussion and Possible Action - Charter Revision

Note: Mr. Seery said they have a draft for the charter revision here, and this is just for discussion tonight because he just received the draft today from the Town Attorney.

Note: Mr. Seery said they previously discussed utilizing 9-11 electors to serve on the Charter Revision Subcommittee; he thinks Bill Weber made a good point having served on a previous charter revision, that when it comes to the committees, it's good to have those extra couple of people. He added that he thinks it would be more comprehensive if they utilize four republicans, 4 democrats, and 3 unaffiliated or independent party electors. Mr. Seery noted they can only have 3 currently serving elected officials on the subcommittee.

Note: The rest of the Board agreed, and Mr. Seery said that he and Ms. Santoro can consult the Republican party for recommendations and asked that Ms. Cicchiello and Mr. Cunningham consult the Democratic Party, while Ms. Hardy seeks any unaffiliated or independent electors that might be interested.

Note: The Board discussed how they should strive for diversity and ask interested parties to provide letters of interest. The Board also discussed the level of time commitment that might be involved for participants.

Note: The Board Members agreed to bring back the results of their inquiries to the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

Note The Board briefly reviewed the draft of possible charter revision topics to investigate, which include but are not limited to, the following:

Consider possible elimination of the automatic budget referendum.

Possible merging of the Planning Commission and Zoning Commission.

Possible amendment to section (2.7) to four-year terms for the Selectmen, and two or four-year terms for the First Selectman.

Possible removal of Town Clerk and Tax Collector from elective offices to administrative positions.

Possible exemption from the residence requirements for certain appointment offices such as emergency management.

Eliminate references to constables and Special Constable because they do not exist anymore.

Consider the possible amendment of section 634 to provide that if the Board of Finance doesn't act on a request for special appropriation transfers of funds within 30 days, the result is an automatic approval.

Consider possible amendment of section to provide that projects funded entirely by grants from the State of Connecticut that do not require an appropriation of Town funds, need not be approved by the Board of Finance or a Town Meeting.

Consider the possible amendment of section 61 to provide that the current dollar threshold of \$10,000 for special town meetings be raised.

Consider the possible addition of an appointed officer to assist the First Selectman in the performance of his or her administrative duties.

Consider the possible amendment of section 342 to eliminate newspaper publication when allowed by law and substitute electronic or website notice.

4. Ex-Officio Reports

Note Mr. Weber said the two meetings he was scheduled to attend were cancelled.

Note Ms. Cicchiello reported some of the following:

She attended the Harbor Management Commission meeting and they're trying to determine 3 names to submit to the Governor for the new Harbor Master.

They discussed increasing mooring permit fees to help fund program software and administrative assistance for the Harbor Master.

Note Ms. Santoro reported some of the following:

She attended the Public Library Board of Trustees meeting a week ago.

Lisa Timothy has submitted her Annual Report to the State Library.

Patron traffic has been increasing to almost pre-Covid levels.

There's a new Head of Reference Librarian named Kathy Shields.

There will be a ceremony at the Children's Museum when the plaque commemorating the original location of the library arrives.

There's a Public Survey on the Library website to assist in the creation of the Historical Museum.

The patron privacy policy is being updated.

Note: Mr. Cunningham reported some of the following:
He attended two of Education meetings.
They're struggling with a \$500,000 deficit associated with healthcare costs.
A new maintenance truck is needed, and they will be using money left over from LEARN to purchase a new truck and replace a hot water heater.
Staffing has been an issue and they've had difficulty finding good, qualified people.
The Board was recognized by the Connecticut Association Board of Educators and received an award.
He also attended the WELSCO meeting.
They will be purchasing oyster seed and an eelgrass planting project is underway in the river.
He also attended Dave Putnam's final Parks & Recreation meeting before retirement.
It was a bittersweet meeting.
They had a great summer season.

Note: Ms. Hardy said she has no report this evening.

4-1. First Selectman's Report

Note: Mr. Seery reported some of the following:
Tomorrow he, Joe Bragaw, and Mr. Lokken will be meeting to discuss how best to utilize our resources.
An offer has been made to hire someone as an IT Director and they're waiting to hear back.
The HR Director interviews will begin next week.
Deena Barry has been working as the HR Assistant and has been doing a fantastic job.
John MacDonald is the NFD Chief once again.
He thanks Jim Barone for his years of service and contributions.
Sift Bakery is scheduled to open in 3 weeks.
The stop sign at Grand Street and Smith Street is being looked at, and a four way stop sign is being considered.
A vintage car show was held last week, and they had a great turnout.
The application for a grant for sidewalks on East Pattagansett has been submitted.
On October 27th, 2022, at the high school, there will be a Route 161 Corridor Presentation.
The VFW has dedicated a field in Sue Kumro's name.
This Saturday is the Oyster Festival.
A Cornhole Tournament will be held at the VFW on Sunday.
The Vintage Market will be held on Main Street on October 8th, 2022, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

5. Communications

Note: There was none.

6. Public Comment

Note: There was none.

7. Selectman's Response

Note: There was none.

8. Executive Session

Decision MOTION (7)

Ms. Santoro moved to enter Executive Session at 8:37 p.m. for the purpose of discussing Real Estate matters (Hathaway property), and Personnel matters- Fire Fighters Union/Police Union.

Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

Note The Board exited Executive Session at 9:22 p.m., with no action taken.

9. Adjournment

Decision MOTION (8)

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the September 21st, 2022, Board of Selectmen at 9:22 p.m.

Ms. Cicchiello seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

Note Respectfully Submitted,
Brooke Stevens, Recording Secretary Pro Tem

New Tasks

Task Mr. Seery said he will check with Norm Peck to determine if other quotes have been sought and will ask that they seek additional ones if they have not.

Owned by Kevin Seery

Task Ms. Hardy asked if Kevin Gervais, the Finance Director, could follow up on when the additional funds will be released by the government.

Owned by Kevin Gervais, Finance Director

**Board of Selectmen Consent
Calendar September 21, 2022
Agenda Item #1e**

Name	List#	Reason for refund	Amount
Elkins Margaret	70112 M 21GL	Adjustment	\$ 6.91
Hughes Rosemary	6276 R 21GL	Adjustment	\$ 143.04
Lee Jin A	160166 M 21GL	Adjustment	\$ 10.49
Martin Amy	170314 M 21GL	Adjustment	\$ 41.29
Putnam Stephen M	200931 M 21GL	Adjustment	\$ 6.70
Secchiaroli Michelle	230502 M 21GL	Adjustment	\$ 13.44
Secchiaroli Michelle	230503 M 21GL	Adjustment	\$ 10.58
Walters Ashley L	517585 M 19GL	Adjustment	\$ 362.25
Zumba Telma	300143 M 21GL	Adjustment	\$ 12.02
Total			\$ 606.72