

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

Present: Ryan Curley-First Selectman, John Dillon, Michael Hernandez, Robert Hetrick, Jr., Shaun Manning, Michael Pelton, Jim Tripp

Others Present: Members of the Public and Media

1. FIRST SELECTMAN CALL MEETING TO ORDER

First Selectman Ryan Curley called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Buck-Foreman Community Room located at 265 Main Street, Portland, Connecticut.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVE MINUTES: (Regular)

Shaun Manning made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to approve the February 7, 2024 minutes, all were in favor, motion carried.

4. ACCEPT AGENDA

Shaun Manning made a motion to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Jim Tripp, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE: SWEARING IN OF POLICE SERGEANTS

Daniel S. Knapp and James Capella were sworn in by Ryan Curley as Portland Police Sergeants.

Portland received a Federal Highway Safety Grant allowing us to purchase two additional radar speed signs to be put on rural roads, Cox Road and Thompson Hill Road. They work to reduce the speed of vehicles. They came with a police enforcement package.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Elwin Guild, Middle Haddam Road, commented on the importance of the Rt. 66 Corridor Study and the recommendations. There is still no way for the public to access the study on the town's website. It is very important that the town residents can access the findings and recommendations. This is important for grant consideration. He hopes it will soon be available on the website.

Ryan added that for the enforcement grant there was a list of roads and Middle Haddam and Penfield were not on the list. It was a federal grant and they determine the definition of a rural road.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A) Monthly Report – Committee on Solidarity –

Liz Hibino reported on donations that were received and told of some upcoming events and activities of the Committee.

B) Update on EV Charging Station Study (Andy Bauer)

Andy Bauer told why there was a need for charging stations, the three types of charging systems, the costs, and the possible Portland locations. They are looking at Level 2 charging stations for Portland. Portland Automotive now has one. This is an emerging technology and Andy will give periodic reports of the progress.

C) Proposed Revisions to Policy on Fixing Real Property Assessments –

Wording has been included under Item 5 stating that the BOS has final authority over any and all fixed assessment schedules and any associated terms and conditions as suggested by Jim Tripp previously. Jim Tripp made a motion seconded by Shaun Manning, to approve the revisions to the Policy on Fixing Real Property Assessments, all were in favor, motion carried.

D) Appointments/Reappointments to Boards and Commissions

8. NEW BUSINESS

A) Certified Resolution: DECD.

Ryan explained the resolution. This is a new and updated master plan, asking for \$200,000 with a 10% match from the Town. Shaun Manning read the resolution and made a motion to accept it, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, motion carried.

WHEREAS, pursuant to **C.G.S. Section 32-763**, the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development is authorized to extend financial assistance for projects; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable and in the public interest that the **Town of Portland** make an application to the State for **\$200,000.00** in order to undertake the **Portland Downtown & Quarries Master Plan II** and to execute an Assistance Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Board of Selectmen that

1. it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the State financial assistance imposed by **C.G.S. Section 32-763**

2. the filling of an application for State financial assistance by the **Town of Portland** in an amount not to exceed **\$200,000.00** is hereby approved and that **Ryan J. Curley, First Selectman** is directed to execute and file such application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decision, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of **the Town of Portland**.

**B) Resolution: DECD Grant – Portland Downtown & Quarries Master Plan II
(Set Special Town Meeting Date – February 28, 2024)**

Ryan Curley read the resolution into the record.

**RESOLUTION
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Town of Portland, Connecticut**

February 21, 2024

DECD GRANT – PORTLAND DOWNTOWN & QUARRIES MASTER PLAN II

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) offers grants/financial assistance to municipalities for projects; and

WHEREAS, in order to undertake the project “Portland Downtown & Quarries Master Plan II” the Town of Portland will apply for a grant/financial assistance in the amount of \$200,000; and

WHEREAS, the Town needs to provide a local match of ten percent (10%) amounting to approximately \$20,000.00, which was previously set aside in Fund 08 under Building & Planning Departments – Project Match Grant Leverage Funds (08-141-000-89020); and

WHEREAS, Project Match Grant Leverage Funds line item has at least \$20,000 for the required match; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Portland Town Charter, Chapter V, Section 503(g), this action requires approval at a special town meeting of which has been scheduled for February 28, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Selectmen hereby finds that entering into an Assistance Agreement with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and providing the required match as imposed by C.G.S Section 32-763; and be it further

RESOLVED that Ryan J. Curley, First Selectman, is authorized to execute and file such application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an

agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decision, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of the Town of Portland.

The legal notice will be posted in the *Middletown Press*. Michael Pelton made a motion to set the special town meeting regarding the DECD Grant for February 28, 2024, in the Buck-Foreman Room at 7:00 p.m., seconded by Jim Tripp, all were in favor, motion carried.

C) Refunds of Excess Payments: None

9. STATUS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ryan reported on the following:

- A meeting was held with the Chamber of Commerce, representatives from surrounding towns and the DOT Commissioner regarding the removal of two stoplights on Rt. 9 north and diverting the traffic through Middletown. Concern was expressed for the businesses and the difficulty for emergency vehicles to traverse through Middletown. DOT presented results from the traffic study. Two workshops were held regarding this plan. John Dillon expressed concern as to whether they would leave the lights on Main Street Middletown as this would clog traffic even more. Ryan will continue to monitor this and if DOT can show that it will cut down on time, then it should be fine.
- A preliminary report has been received from GZA regarding the wells to be drilled, construction, permits and monitoring. The next step is well construction and permitting. The estimate for permitting and wells is \$1.4 million to \$1.9 million. Jim Tripp said that some elements would not cost what was forecast. Treatment should not cost what was forecast. They are looking for outside sources for funding. Ryan O’Halpin will give an update at an upcoming BOS meeting. They are talking of 1.2 million gallons per day.
- Ryan continues to encourage Portland businesses to apply for the revitalization grants available for businesses in Middlesex County. This is the second year of the program and it will continue for five years. \$200,000 is available for grants for five years.
- The budget season is beginning and the First Selectman’s budget is due on March 1st.
- The Land and Building Usage Assessment Committee will hold their first meeting on February 27, at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend.
- Two certified police officers were sworn in and two officers were promoted to sergeants.
- Peter Lipka will be the Technology Director replacing Dave Kuzminski who retired after 50 years of service.

Jim Tripp reported that Parks & Rec will hold the Easter Egg Hunt on March 23 at 11:00 a.m. with a rain date of March 24th. He also reported on the Water & Sewer meeting saying that the diversion report had to be renewed. Regarding the replacement of meters, it may be more cost-effective to have it done by an outside company.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

11. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Shaun Manning asked that the two new police officers be introduced at an upcoming meeting. He asked Ryan the status of the 48 Mac. Ryan said it is still on the radar.

12. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- **Ethics Ordinance**
- **Review Town Charter**

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION: STRATEGY ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING (J. MCQUADE)

At 8:23 p.m., Shaun Manning made a motion to enter the Executive Session on Collective Bargaining, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, motion carried. Atty. J. McQuade was invited to attend. At 8:33 p.m., the executive session concluded.

14. ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION: RATIFICATION OF TENTATIVELY AGREED COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH MEUI LIBRARY UNION

Shaun Manning made a motion to ratify the collective bargaining agreement with the MEUI Library Union, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, motion carried.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION: FIXED ASSESSMENT AGREEMENT

At 8:35 p.m., Jim Tripp made a motion to enter the Executive Session on the Fixed Assessment Agreement, seconded by Mike Pelton, all were in favor, motion carried. At 8:56 p.m. the executive session concluded.

16. ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION: FIXED ASSESSMENT AGREEMENT

No action taken.

17. ADJOURN MEETING

At 8:57 p.m. a motion was made by Shaun Manning to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Robert Hetrick, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk