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TOWN OF SALISBURY  
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## **BOS – Minutes – 1.8.2024**

The Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting minutes of January 8, 2024.

Present: Curtis Rand, First Selectman; Christian Williams, Selectman; Katherine Kiefer, Selectman; Emily Egan, Secretary; members of the press and public.

The meeting was **called to order** at 5:00pm.

K. Kiefer made a motion to **approve the agenda**. C. Williams seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

C. Williams made a motion to **approve the minutes of the December 4, 2023 Regular Meeting**. K. Kiefer seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Due to the higher volume of attendees at this meeting, C. Rand mentioned that this is not a public hearing on agenda item #6b. – *Discussion and possible action on a request from the Salisbury Affordable Housing Commission to refer a Salisbury Housing Trust proposal to build 2 single family homes on the so-called Grove Street School lot to Planning & Zoning for an 8-24 review*. C. Rand requested that public comment be limited to two minutes per comment at the end of the meeting and to not repeat comments we have already received correspondence on.

### **Old Business:**

- a. C. Rand reported that he received an email from an engineering firm contracted by the CTDOT, and that our application for a TRIP sidewalk grant is in process, yet the estimate may be too low for what we proposed. This grant will help fund the connection between the new sidewalk installed from Lincoln City Road to Brook Street and from Library Street to Vincent Preserve on Route 44. The Selectmen will wait for further correspondence and report to Salisbury Pathways Committee once they have more information.
  - o The Town was awarded another SHPO grant, in the amount of \$9,000, to conduct the final structural study on the former CNE Railroad Station building on Ethan Allen Street, in advance of possibly moving the building back on its site. This is the second grant we have received from SHPO; the first being \$18,000.
- b. The Selectmen reopened discussion of creating a homestead exemption and other techniques for property valuations. K. Kiefer mentioned understanding the homestead act from Massachusetts and is willing to work with our legislature on this idea. Maria Horn, our Representative, mentioned that it is a topic up for discussion at the state level and she will continue to work on it as well.

### **New Business:**

- a) The Selectmen discussed policies for boating access for lakes in light of the invasive species, CT River Hydrilla that has been found in East Twin lake. There has been communication with Twin Lakes Association, the State Department of Fisheries (statewide issue), including how members of all the lakes in Salisbury and beyond must work together to figure out plans for access and treatments of invasive plants for 2024. There is no policy in place to control access on the town lakes; the Selectmen will work on creating a policy after meeting with the state departments of Fisheries and Boating.
- b) The Selectmen discussed the request from the Salisbury Affordable housing Commission to refer a Salisbury Housing Trust proposal to build 2 single family homes on the so-called Grove Street School lot to Planning & Zoning for an 8-24 review. C. Rand mentioned the Town has received over 85 emails, both opposed and in favor of this topic, seemingly 3-1 in favor of the housing. C. Rand made a few points to share:

- Neighborhoods are precious, including those in villages with long-term neighbors who may have left due to escalating property valuations and generational changes.
- The Board of Selectmen salute the Salisbury Housing Trust (SHT) for keeping at this problem in spite of these challenges, and our board acknowledged the SHT efforts to bring young families back to Salisbury.

C. Rand shared a conceptual drawing of two houses of the lots to give an idea of what the SHT proposes, including retention of the town parking area, 2 houses in the middle of the parcel, and dedicated open space on the western area of green. The Selectmen held off on any action until after public comments.

- c) The Selectmen motioned, seconded and approved the following tax refund as recommended by the Tax Collector: January 2024 – National Iron Bank, Craig Davis Escrowed Account, \$908.33.

**Public Comments:** There were multiple public comments, almost exclusively relating to the SHT proposal.

- A request that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) move this along in the process to the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) for an 8-24 Review to assure that two affordable homes on this parcel are consistent with the town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)
- Encourage everyone to keep an open mind about all this, there are good reasons for citizens to oppose this, and asking that the comments from the actual neighbors be listened to.
- Thanked the Selectmen for really trying to think hard on something that satisfies all the feedback that has been given. The conceptual drawing might not be accurately showing the two lots.
- Long Pond invasives - appreciative of the efforts being made to protect Long Pond.
- Urge the BoS to move this process on; too many years of talking about getting things built and not as many building them. There is a pathway to create more affordable housing and still be considerate of all the neighbors.
- Mention that the SHT is willing to work with the neighbors and get suggestions on how this can work for everyone. Urge the BoS to send this to PZC to figure out a way to make this work.
- Strongly in favor; two houses fits well into the neighborhood. Suggested that this does not need to be decided on tonight.
- Thoughtful consideration to issues presented to the town. There have not been many opportunities to get existing housing to transfer to the Salisbury Housing Trust and we don't want to pass on opportunities when presented.
- This property is already being used for parking by The White Hart employees, it is not a vacant lot. We are already limited on parking in the village center.
- With all the public comments, either for or against this project, the question before the Board of Selectmen is to approve passing this along to the PZC for purposes of having them give the proper approvals under the Town's regulations for the potential use of the property. Once that occurs, there will be a lot of time for proper discussion of the plan and thoughts as to how that should be done.
- Neighbors of the property were not aware of this proposal, as it has been suggested. This lot is too small and the people who we are hearing from are immediately affected by this and they are asking to please not start crowding out these areas of Salisbury.

K. Kiefer made a motion to approve the request from the Salisbury Affordable Housing Commission to refer a Salisbury Housing Trust proposal to build 2 single family homes on the so-called Grove Street School lot to Planning & Zoning for an 8-24 review. C. Williams seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

### Selectmen's Reports

K. Kiefer asked the Selectmen, what the Town is doing about speeding? How many tickets does the Resident Trooper give out per month? C. Rand mentioned we may end up with cameras at some point. Speeding is definitely an issue we are facing.

C. Williams reminded everyone that the Ski Jumps will take place on February 2, 3 & 4.

**Adjourn:** 6:08pm