

**MINUTES OF THE SALISBURY BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2017 – 7:00 PM
SALISBURY TOWN HALL, 5 BEACH ROAD
COLCHESTER ROOM**

PRESENT: Selectmen Wilma McDonald, Chairman; Freeman J. Condon, Chuck Takesian, and Ronalee Ray-Parrott

ABSENT: Selectman Richenburg

ALSO PRESENT: Neil J. Harrington, Town Manager and Janet Flannery, Secretary

I. Call to Order/Salute to the Flag

Chairman McDonald called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Colchester Room, Salisbury Town Hall. She then announced, per the Open Meeting Law, that this meeting is being recorded and broadcast live.

II. Acceptance of Minutes

Minutes of February 13, 2017

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; voted to approve the Minutes of February 13, 2017 as written. VOTE: 3 yeas – Selectman Takesian abstained.

III. Old Business - none

IV. New Business

a. License Renewals – none

b. New Licenses - none

c. License Amendments - none

d. Committee Appointments - none

e. Update/Presentations: Town Clerk/Assessor

Town Clerk Melinda Morrison reported that activity in her office has slowed down considerably since the Presidential election. The turnout was 4,810 voters, or 74%, which was just a little higher than prior elections, and she noted that early elections will continue for every statewide election from this point on. She also noted that the 2017 census forms were sent out in January, which included dog license renewals that are due April 1st and that a rabies clinic will be coming up soon. Her office is presently working on the resident listings and getting caught up with various projects. The annual town election is Tuesday, May 9th for 1 Selectman and 3 School Committee members. The last date to take out papers is March 17 by 5PM and they must be returned by April 4th by 5PM. Town Meeting is May 15th; the warrant closes April 14th and must be posted by April 28th.

Chief Assessor Cheryl Gorniewicz reported that the actual 3rd Quarter tax bills went out on December 31st and were due February 1st. There were only 41 real estate abatement applications and 2 personal property abatement applications, which is about 1% of the total taxable accounts. Of the 41 applications, 12 were from 1 condo complex owned by 1 individual, where all the units are rented; 6 were from 1 commercial condo owner and 5 from another owner. Overall, there were only 18 real estate owners who applied for abatements.

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In 2016 there were 590 building permits issued, all of which require inspections from her department as well as data entry. In addition to the 590 permits, there are carryover permits from a prior year and cyclical inspections required by the State. All of those equal about 500 inspections each year to meet the requirements within the 9-year cycle. There are special projects that are assigned to her department which requires additional administrative work by her support staff who are also busy with customers most of the day, on the phone and with online inquiries. Due to the increased workload, she feels there may be a need to request additional personnel.

The last topic Ms. Gorniewicz covered was State Owned Land (SOL). This year will be the last time that it will be valued using the current methodology, which does not reflect the true market value in Salisbury. The final 2017 value will become the base year value for SOL in all communities that have SOL. Salisbury's value is currently valued at around \$27M, which is a result of a settlement between the town and the DOR the last time that SOL was valued by the State. The State had valued our land at \$5M, the Town appealed it and the settlement was for \$27M. However, in her opinion the true market value is closer to \$70M, but the State has put many restrictions on the land and they don't agree. Ms. Gorniewicz has researched all other significant SOL communities and all with waterfront land or land near a body of water and she believes she can show that Salisbury's SOL is valued under a stronger hand than other comparable properties. She urged the Board to look up Horseneck Beach State Reservation in Westport; that location is comprised of 474 acres and valued at \$84M and our reservation is comprised of 433 acres and originally valued by the State at only \$2.6M. In 2014, Horse Neck Beach was valued at \$70K/acre, which is 367% higher than our \$15/acre. She has asked to meet with the Bureau of Local Assessment to discuss their valuation of our State Owned Land in the hope that they will be able to explain why these 2 properties are not valued similarly.

f. Vote to Approve 2017 Taxi Cab License for Port Taxi as issued by the Town Clerk

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to approve the issuance of the 2017 Taxi Cab license for Port Taxi by the Town Clerk.

g. Vote to Support the Submission of the 2017 CDBG Grant

Before any discussion began, Chairman McDonald recused herself and left the room. Vice Chairman Takesian then took the gavel.

Planning Director Lisa Pearson then addressed the Board to discuss the possible items she would be including in the submission of the Community Development Block Grant for 2017, which is due March 10, 2017 for a total of \$800,000.00. The priority items are as follows:

- Social Services: She has received three proposals -- one for the Boys & Girls Club Scholarship Program, one for the Pettengill House Emergency Assistance Program and another from the YWCA for their Preschool Assistance Program. She recommends including these in the grant.
- Infrastructure: Presidential streets project Phase I, which includes Washington and Hayes Streets.

She recommends that the Town not apply for any housing rehab funds this year because there are limited funds available to include that, but next year since funds would be more limited, she feels that would be a better time to do so.

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Selectmen Condon, Ray-Parrott and Takesian commended Ms. Pearson for her hard work and effort and they supported her suggestions for the priorities to be include in her submission.

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to approve Ms. Pearson's submission of the 2017 CDBG grant as presented by her this evening.

Chairman McDonald returned to the meeting at this time and the gavel was passed back to her.

h. Vote to Schedule an Ascertainment Hearing on the Comcast License Renewal

The Town Manager informed the Board that he had begun the process of preparing to negotiate a renewal of Comcast's cable license with the Town. He had spoken with Attorney Peter Epstein, who advised him that the first step in the process is for the Board to hold an ascertainment hearing. He recommended that the Board vote to set a date for the hearing this evening.

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to schedule the Ascertainment Hearing for the Comcast license renewal on March 13, 2017 at 7:30 PM.

V. Comments by Visitors - none

VI. Sewer/Water

VII. Correspondence

Notice from Xfinity re: the discontinuance of the Esquire and Esquire HD channels as of March 14, 2017.

VIII. Hearings - none

IX. Town Manager's Report

Mr. Harrington gave a brief overview of his written report, a copy of which is available in the Selectmen's office.

X. Selectmen's Report

a. Ratification of Signing of Weekly Warrants:

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to ratify the signing of the following weekly warrants: W17-128 through W17-135.

b. Subcommittee Reports

Lafayette Corridor Sewer Extension: Selectman Condon reported that there was no update. The Town is waiting for the next round of State infrastructure grants to be announced..

Police Station: Mr. Condon reported that construction is completely done. Hopefully the full Certificate of Occupancy will be issued by the Building Inspector and all employees of the Police Department will be moved in soon. He commended and thanked Chief Fowler, Henry Richenburg, and Larry Cuddire for all their hard work. He noted that this project was quite different from building

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the library because of the special police needs and requirements, and he stated that the whole town should be proud of this new station.

XI. Executive Session - none

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Selectman Ray-Parrott, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:55 PM.

Documents provided at the meeting and on file in the Selectmen's Office:

Minutes of Feb. 13, 2017

Copies of licenses as listed

Town Manager's Report

Respectfully submitted:

Janet E. Flannery, Secretary

Approved: _____
Ronalee Ray-Parrott, Clerk