

**MINUTES OF THE SALISBURY BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021 – 7:00 PM
SALISBURY TOWN HALL, 5 BEACH ROAD
COLCHESTER ROOM**

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

ALSO PRESENT: Neil J. Harrington, Town Manager and Agnes Donovan, Secretary

I. Call to Order/Salute to the Flag

Chairman Abdulla 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 by Salisbury Cable TV and broadcast live.

II. Acceptance of Minutes

Minutes of February 8, 2021 (Regular Meeting) and Executive Session

Motion by Selectman Ray-Parrott, Second by Selectman McDonald; unanimously voted to approve the regular meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021 as written.

Motion by Selectman Ray-Parrott, Second by Selectman McDonald; unanimously voted to approve the Executive Session meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021 as written.

III. Public Comment - none

IV. Old Business

Vote to Approve Corrected Missing Info for Harbor Pizza, Restaurant Liquor License Application.

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to remove from the table the Vote to Approve Corrected Missing Information for Harbor Pizza Restaurant's Liquor License Application.

Chairman Abdulla explained that this item was tabled at the previous meeting because it was missing certain information, which needs to be included for the application to be re-submitted to the ABCC.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Condon; unanimously voted to approve the corrected/missing information for Harbor Pizza Restaurant Liquor License Application.

V. New Business

a. License Renewals:

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman McDonald; unanimously voted to renew a **Repair** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Valvoline Instant Oil Change – 191 Elm Street.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to renew a **General** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Andover Healthcare – 9 Fanaras Drive, The Catch-All – 2 Lena Maes Way, and Ramson Kennel – 29 Blacksnake Road.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to renew a **Parking Lot** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Broadway Parking – 12 Broadway.

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Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to renew a **Sunday** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Blue Ocean Music Hall – Seaglass – 4 Oceanfront North, and Surfside – 25 Broadway.

b. New Licenses

Motion by Selectman McDonald, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to schedule a Public Hearing for the **Class II** License application of Rob Roy Auto, 49 Main Street, on Monday, March 8, 2021 at 7:15 PM.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Condon: unanimously voted to approve a **General** license for Soulshine – 15 Main Street, Suite 210 -- contingent on the facility receiving BOH/Health Inspector's signature/approval, if necessary.

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott: unanimously voted to approve a **General** license to Studio 206 – 15 Main Street, Unit 206 -- contingent on the facility receiving the BOH/Health Inspector's signature/approval, if necessary.

c. License Amendments - none

d. Liquor License Renewals - none

e. New Liquor Licenses - none

f. Committee Appointments - none

g. Update/Presentations: School Committee/Assessor/Police Chief

School Committee Presentation

Linda Litcofsky and Caitlin Hunter represented the School Committee. Ms. Litcofsky advised the Board that Triton began the year fully remote to work through HVAC, COVID testing, and tracing issues. Triton then went into a hybrid mode from October through early December, followed by three weeks of remote learning after the Christmas break, returning to hybrid in late January. She stated that throughout the year there has been a remote academy for students who prefer being remote and this academy serves approximately 300 children from K-12th grade. Ms. Litcofsky stated that the next steps are still being determined.

Ms. Litcofsky advised the Board that Triton received a \$1.7 million grant which was used to provide Chromebooks to the students and set up internet hot spots where needed. Some of the money was invested in technology and IT staff to support students and parents. Other money will be for second year purchase of Chromebooks.

Ms. Litcofsky stated that all the school facilities were evaluated for safety and as a result of the evaluation repairs were made; plexiglass dividers were added; air exchanges were added; one-way corridors were implemented where appropriate; sanitizing stations were added throughout the

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buildings; furniture was changed, moved or stored as appropriate, and signage was added to accommodate six feet spacing. In addition, PPE was supplied where appropriate.

Ms. Litcofsky said Triton received a USDA reimbursement to provide nutritious meals to any child from 0 to 18 years of age, regardless of income. Triton also partnered with NRT for weekly delivery of these meals and supplied approximately 25,000 free meals to children.

Ms. Litcofsky stated that the budget has built in FY22 enrollment projections and assumes that students will be back in the buildings full time, but that it is tentative. The current draft of the FY22 budget reflects the “high-water mark” and the numbers for the final budget will come down. The budget includes a new Health and Wellness Coordinator position and two new IT positions. Ms. Litcofsky stated that the Triton Board will meet with legislators shortly and that unfortunately she is anticipating a budget assessment decrease in state and local revenues.

Assessor Presentation

Cheryl Gorniewicz, Director of Assessing, advised the Selectmen of the following:

1. Software Upgrade – The department just completed the Patriot Properties real estate and personal property software upgrade. The new version is far more detailed, for valuation purposes as well as for property history information, as it provides reporting, tracking and monitoring construction progress. This update will be helpful to the other departments, including the Building, Health, DPW and Sewer departments.
2. FY2021 Abatement applications – Ms. Gorniewicz said that FY2021 had a low number of abatement applications. She provided the data below for the past three years.

FY 2021	Real Estate - 9	Personal Property - 3
FY 2020	Real Estate - 30	Personal Property - 7
FY 2019	Real Estate - 26	Personal Property - 4

3. Appellate Tax Board Cases

Ms. Gorniewicz provided a status report the number and status of Appellate Tax Board Cases:

- 2018- There were 5 outstanding ATB cases, all from one owner. She said she will be meeting with the Town’s attorney to review these cases soon. She noted that the Town’s liability is minimal.
 - 2019 – No cases
 - FY 2020 - Four cases – Two are from one owner; one is a chain store who files in all communities, and she has received notice that one will be withdrawing.
 - FY2021 - None yet as we have not acted on any of the abatements.
4. Motor Vehicle Excise Tax – The annual motor vehicle excise commitment has been processed and the MV excise tax bills were mailed on February 3 and are due on March 5. She advised viewers that if they were expecting a bill and did not receive one, please reach out to the Tax Collector’s Office. She stated that people should not ignore an excise tax bill if one was issued to them. She stated that there is a process to abate all or a portion of an excise bill if you meet

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all of the State criteria. She noted that the burden of responsibility in on the taxpayer and if you do not pay the excise bill on time, interest and fees will be added beginning March 6, 2021.

5. Tax Exemptions – The deadline to file for an FY2021 Personal Exemption is April 1, 2021. Personal Exemptions may be granted for certain people who meet State mandated criteria. Generally, if you own a home in Salisbury that is your domicile (primary residence) and have been certified to be legally blind, are a veteran with at least a 10% service related disability, are a widow or widower (of any age), or are a senior over 70 years of age and meet certain criteria, you MAY qualify for a Personal Exemption on your Real Estate taxes.
6. Form of Lists were mailed in early February to existing businesses and are due back in the Assessor's Office by March 1, 2021. If you own or operate a business in a community, you are required to pay Personal Property taxes to that community for the business assets, including but not limited to inventory, furniture, fixtures, machinery and equipment. Failure to report these assets to the Assessors annually could result in the loss of valuation appeal rights. If you own and/or operate a business in Salisbury and did not receive a Form of List, you may reach out to the Town and you will be provided with one. The burden to report business assets is on the business owner and the Assessors' office is not required to send out the Form of Lists, but does so as a courtesy.
7. Sales - In 2020, there were 322 sales in town. This number does not include convenience transfers, which are transferring properties into trusts or transfer to a family member, or to a related business entity. There were probably another 350 of those. Ms. Gorniewicz stated the 322 true sales equates to 6.5% of the Town's real estate parcels. These sales reflect both first time sales of new properties and resales of existing properties. The sales in the first two months of 2021, for the most part, are higher than the FY2021 assessments, which reflect market value and market conditions as of January 1st, 2020 to present. She stated that this appreciation will likely be reflected in the FY2022 assessments.

Police Chief Presentation

Chief Fowler provided statistical comparisons from 2018 and 2019. He did say that this year's statistics are skewed in a lower direction due to COVID. He reported that compared to 2018 the number of log entries decreased by 2,515, equating to 11.5%; calls for service offense reports decreased by 57, equating to 5.5%; arrests decreased from 670 to 304, which was partly due to officer safety concerns during COVID, equating to a 55% decrease; and motor vehicle crashes decreased from 284 to 226, equating to a 26% decrease.

Chief Fowler gave the breakdown of opiate overdoses between 2019 and 2020. He stated that fortunately 20 out of 23 were non-fatal in 2020. He said the force still carries and administers Narcan.

2019 Year Totals		2020 Year Totals	
Heroin Overdoses	17	Heroin Overdoses	23
Non-Fatal	14	Non-Fatal	20
Fatal	3	Fatal	3

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Chief Fowler advised the Selectmen of personnel changes due to retirements:

- Lieutenant Robert Roy retired in September 2020.
- Sergeant Steve Sforza retired in November 2020.
- Herc, the Department's canine, is retiring this spring.
- Sergeant Richard Dellaria was promoted to Lieutenant replacing Lieutenant Roy.
- An Assessment Center exam was given and two promotions were made in February. Detective Keith Forget was promoted to Sergeant and Officer Craig Goodrich was promoted to Sergeant.
- Officer Brian Verney was selected as the Department's Detective in February.
- Reserve Officer Adam Lischinsky, a Salisbury resident and a three-year reserve officer, was appointed as a full-time officer.
- Officer Mike Tullercash will be the new dog handler and the Department will acquire a new dog in March 2021. The new dog will be in training initially as a patrol dog through June.

Chief Fowler then updated the Selectmen on COVID issues. He stated that the Department experienced six cases of COVID and all employees recovered with no effects. Vaccinations began in January for first responders and 93 percent of the employees are fully vaccinated. The Chief also stated that he leveraged grant money for PPEs, sanitizing equipment, and remote software, replaced all hand-held radios, and added hands-free equipment for the police station.

Next, the Chief spoke about the recent accreditation process. He advised the Board that the department has to be accredited every three years. There was a three-day on-site observation and evaluation of department policies, procedures and proofs on September 29th, 30th, and October 1st of 2020. The Chief explained that proofs are confirmation that proper policies and procedures are being followed. The results were reviewed by the Accreditation Commission and Salisbury was awarded full re-accreditation on January 20, 2021.

Chief Fowler also announced that the Department received a JAG Equipment Grant in the amount of \$37,000. With this grant the Department was able to replace bullet proof vests for all personnel at a cost of \$17,000, and the Department was able to launch a Body Worn Camera Pilot Program at a cost of \$20,000. In response to questions about the Body Worn Camera Program, the Chief stated that the officers were beginning see that these cameras are for the benefit of and can assist the police.

Chief Fowler reviewed the recent Massachusetts Police Reform Bill with the Board. He stated that the new law now requires a state-wide Mass. Police Officer Standard Training (POST) Certification program for all officers. The Chief stated that moving forward this required training could make it difficult to maintain part time officers. The law also addresses Use of Force policy changes and provides that no choke holds are allowed. The Chief said he wanted the Board to know that Salisbury has never trained for or allowed choke holds. Other provisions in the new law include a requirement for bias-based policing policy and training annually, as well as a facial recognition policy. Finally, he noted that that he had been selected by his peers to serve on the state's Body Worn Camera Policy/Committee.

In response to a question, Chief Fowler stated that the department has a mandatory wear vest policy. He also stated, for the benefit of those watching on cable TV, that Snow Emergency announcements

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are make on the Police Department and the Town's social media outlets. Providing this information to the public assists in getting and keeping the streets clear.

VI. Sewer/Water - none

VII. Correspondence - none

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 Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to ratify the signing of the following weekly warrants: W21-60 through W21-65.

XI. Executive Session - none

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:25 PM.

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

Minutes of February 8, 2021 Regular and Executive Session

Copies of licenses as listed

Town Manager's Report

Respectfully submitted:

Agnes Donovan, Secretary


Approved: _____



Chuck Takesian, Clerk

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Selectmen

From: Neil J. Harrington, Town Manager 

Date: February 22, 2021

Re: February 22nd Report to the Board

Outlined below is a summary of activities over the past two weeks. Please let me know if you have questions about any of these items.

1) Covid-19 Vaccination Update

As you know, a very successful vaccination clinic was held for Salisbury and Amesbury residents age 75 and older on Friday, Feb. 12, at the Holy Family parish hall. Thanks to the coordination work of Health Director Jack Morris, the diligent sign-up efforts made by Council on Aging Director Liz Pettis and her staff, and staff from the City of Amesbury, about 560 people received their first Covid-19 vaccine shot and scheduled their second shots for early March. Mr. Morris is now working diligently to receive enough vaccines doses from the State, so that these second doses can be administered. Additionally, by the end of next week, all of the firefighters, police officers and first responders within our local 8-community coalition who signed up will have received their second doses of the vaccine.

Since last Thursday, Feb. 18, the State has announced that anyone age 65 and older can now sign up for the vaccine in the next step of Phase 2 of the State's vaccine rollout plan at one of the State's "super sites" via a new web portal. Although there were major problems with the new website rolled out by the State's vendor, more than 60,000 people were able to sign up last week. In the interim, a hold-up in vaccine deliveries from the South apparently will be resolved by mid-week, so that vaccination appointments do not need to be re-scheduled. At this point, over one million people in Mass. have received a first dose of the vaccine, which has moved the State up to number 16 in the country in terms of the number of vaccines per 100,000 population.

As you know, at this point, the State is focused on the so-called super sites and will only authorize the release of vaccine doses to certain designated individual communities or regional groups. From what I understand, the State has indicated a willingness to allow for community coalitions, such as ours, to open vaccination sites as long as we can guarantee that we will be able to administer at least 750 vaccines per day, 5 days a week, in a safe, properly-staffed location. Additionally, these sites cannot be limited only to citizens in our coalition, but must be accessible to everyone eligible throughout the State. In the next few days, I will be discussing this idea with other local municipal leaders in our coalition to see if such an effort is possible.

2) Community Rating Service Notification

I am pleased to report that this past week I was notified that the results of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating Services finds have been completed, and the Town of Salisbury has retained its Class 8 rating. This means that property owners who have flood insurance policies through NFIP issued or renewed on or after October 1, 2021 will see a 10% reduction in their insurance premiums if their property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area and a 5% reduction if their property is in a B, C, X, D, AR and/or A99 zone. According to the letter I received, the Class 8 rating "is a result of the flood mitigation activities your community implements to protect lives and reduce property damage." This rating will be good for 5 years unless there are any noncompliance issues in town. This is a significant achievement for the Town that would not have been possible without the hard work of our Conservation Agent, Adriane Marchand, and the assistance of Building Inspector Scott Vandewalle. Congratulations for a job well done!

3) Welcome Center Update

While construction of the two new facilities has been delayed, as I reported at an earlier meeting, the contractor has succeeded in relocating the water line that ran underneath the Broadway Mall site, and is in the process of making adjustments to the sewer lines in the area. We have also worked out a solution to the Verizon electrical conduit that runs underneath the Broadway Mall building by re-designing the piling configuration for the building, so that this conduit does not need to be moved. Pilings for the parking lot building should be arriving soon, and installation should commence in early March.

In the meantime, I have met remotely with a group of beach merchants and residents to begin work on a staffing schedule and hours of operation for the two new Welcome Center buildings. This will require a commitment of additional financial resources by the Town, but this commitment goes hand-and-hand with our goal of making sure the bathrooms in the two new buildings are open when the public needs them (which means more hours per day and more days per year), that the restrooms are cleaned on a regular basis, and that the buildings do not fall into disrepair over time. The final component of this effort will be a widespread public information campaign to let residents and visitors know at what time of the year and for how many hours the facilities will be open.