

**MINUTES OF THE SALISBURY BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
MONDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2023 – 7:00 PM  
SALISBURY TOWN HALL, 5 BEACH ROAD  
COLCHESTER ROOM**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Ronalee Ray-Parrott, Selectmen Michael Colburn, Chuck Takesian and Terry Marengi, Jr.  
**ALSO PRESENT:** Neil J. Harrington, Town Manager, and Adrienne Linnell, Executive Assistant  
**ABSENT:** Selectman Donna Abdulla

**I. Call to Order/Salute to the Flag**

Chairman Ray-Parrott 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: Regular Session of October 16, 2023.**

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the October 16, 2023 meeting.

**III. Public Comment**

Chairman Ray-Parrott reminded everyone that public comment per Board policy is a three-minute limit per person. She asked that those who share comments state their name and address before they speak.

Karen O'Reilly of 14 Beach Road addressed the board regarding the Whittier Tech project proposal. She is an employee of Whittier Tech and has two children that graduated from a vocational high school. She stated that she was there to impress upon the Board of Selectman how important the future of Whittier Tech is to the community's workforce, giving examples of the different skills students can learn at the Tech's day, night and summer programs.

Heidi Riccio of 554 North End Blvd. also addressed the Board about the proposed Whittier project. She said she is the superintendent for Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical High School. She expressed how she definitely sees the value in vocational education. She told the Board how she went through the same process 10 years ago getting a brand-new facility and received full support from all the cities and towns that Essex Tech services. She stated that vocational education is important for the current and future workforce in Massachusetts and that Whittier need a new facility. Finally, she stated that if a district wide vote is scheduled, she will support it as a taxpayer but also as a resident.

Patty Sullivan of 28 12<sup>th</sup> Street addressed the Board, also stressing how important Whittier Tech is to our community. She stated that she has been going to Whittier Tech for years to get her car fixed. She would like the Board and the whole community to see the value of Whittier Tech and how it benefits the community and economy. She stated that not everyone can afford to go to college, but if you are able to learn a trade you have a pathway to success. She strongly suggested that it is time for the Whittier communities to invest in the students.

Trisha Fleming of 129 Atlantic Avenue addressed the Board, stating that she is an employee at Whittier Tech and has been for the past 10 years. Before that she worked for Greater Lawrence Tech for 14 years, where they built a new school building. She expressed that Whittier has a robust night school

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and provides many services to the community and she knows a new building would be an asset to everyone.

Jim Scully of 13 12<sup>th</sup> Street addressed the Board, saying that he was a superintendent of schools for over twenty years and he was involved with several building projects, and he understands how towns can worry about where the money will come from but ultimately it was always wiser to build a new building rather than repairs on the current one.

Chuck Shaw of 13 Old County Road addressed the Board. He stated that he runs six automotive dealerships and they take all their body shop and auto technicians from technical schools. He is also on four high school advisory boards at technical schools in New Hampshire. He stated that he doesn't know the numbers (cost) but the education that students receive from technical schools is valuable because many of them can't afford to go to college and they learn valuable skills at Whittier Tech. Often when students graduate he helps them get into a community college and his place of work offers tuition reimbursement for them. He strongly urged the Board to support the Whittier project.

**IV. Old Business –**

- a. Vote to Approve Assignment of Host Community Agreement Between the Town and Ganesh Wellness, Inc. - continued to be tabled. No action necessary
- b. Vote to Approve Amended Host Community Agreement for Recreational Marijuana Retail Business at 191 Lafayette Road – continued to be tabled. No action necessary

**V. New Business**

**a. License Renewals:**

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to renew a **Class I** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Wall's Ford – 2 Merrill Street.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to renew a **Class II** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Bill's Auto Sales – 60 Main Street.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to renew a **Class III** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Hotrods Vintage Auto Recycling - 137 Lafayette Rd.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to renew **Repair** licenses, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original licenses and all subsequent renewals, for: Harry's Auto Repair – 27 Elm Street, Bill's Auto Service – 32 Pike Street, Vinnie's Garage – 29 Bridge Road, Bob Fuller Truck & Repair Service – 74 Main Street, Coastal Collision and Accessories – 191 Elm Street, Cassidy Autobody- 25 Locust Street, Great Bay Autobody-Marine Co – 162 Bridge Road.

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MONDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2023 – 7:00 PM  
SALISBURY TOWN HALL, 5 BEACH ROAD  
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Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to renew an **Entertainment** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Black Bear Campground -- 54 Main Street

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to renew a **Common Victualer** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: MAPOW Thai Restaurant – 147 Bridge Road

**b. New Licenses:**

**Special Event Permit:**

\*Wild Turkey Trot sponsored by Winner's Circle Running Club – November 23, 2023 – Ghost Trail & neighboring roads. Time: 7:00 AM -12:00 noon

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to approve.

\*Santa's Helper Winter Hay Ride – Event to be held in conjunction with annual tree lighting on Nov. 28, 2023, from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Marengi; voted to approve (on the condition proper insurance required is proven), with 3 in favor and 1 abstention (Mr. Colburn).

\*42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Winners Circle Running Club Hangover Classic 10K/5K – January 1, 2024 from 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM (see map attachments)

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to approve.

c. License Amendments: None

**d. Liquor License Renewals:**

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to renew **Liquor License** renewals for: The Gourmet Pantry – 160 Beach Road, Mobil Mart – 66 Main Street, R and L Liquors – 105 Elm Street, Gulf Express – 5 Bridge Road, Stateline Liquors – 45 Toll Road, Mike's Package Store – 121 Bridge Road, Carousel Lounge – 20 Ocean Front South, The Hungry Traveler – 98 Beach Road

e. New Liquor Licenses: None

f. Committee Appointments:

**Rent Control Board –**

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to appoint Julie Doughman Johnson to a one-year term expiring on 6/30/2024; AJ Pappas to a two-year term expiring on 6/30/2025; and Warren Worth to a three-year term expiring on 6/30/2026.

g. Update/Presentation: Fire Chief

**Fire Chief** Scott Carrigan gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Board on a study that was performed for the purpose of evaluating the Town's current emergency medical services delivery model and investigating the feasibility of providing municipal, fire-based BLS/ALS ambulance services. The Chief provided the Board with a full copy of the study, which is 65 pages, and made a PowerPoint presentation of the main points of the study, after which he took questions from the Board.

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MONDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2023 – 7:00 PM  
SALISBURY TOWN HALL, 5 BEACH ROAD  
COLCHESTER ROOM**

The Chief noted there were definitely some holes in the current ambulance operation as it relates to response time, and there were provisions in the existing contract with Atlantic Ambulance that should be improved. There has also been an upward trend in mutual aid responses from surrounding communities in recent years that needs to be examined. In terms of running a municipal ambulance service, the Chief suggested that this model had the potential to be more responsive to the needs of the community, but there were several financial obstacles to going in this direction, including significant start-up costs of purchasing ambulances and hiring several new firefighters, identifying locations to accommodate them, obtaining proper licensing from the State, purchasing new equipment, meeting mandated training requirements, assuming responsibility for billing, etc. Based on the study's estimates of potential revenue to be gained, the Town would not break even in the initial years of running a municipal ambulance service. The Board thanked the Chief for his presentation and agreed to keep this topic open for future discussion.

h. Vote to Approve the 2024 Election & Town Meeting Schedule

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Marengi; unanimously voted to approve the 2024 Election & Town Meeting Schedule, as presented by the Town Clerk.

i. Discussion of Proposed Whittier New Building Project

The Town Manager explained to the Board several letters that were received on this topic and which included in their meeting packets, including letters from the Rowley Board of Selectman to the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA) and an update from Whittier Superintendent Maureen Lynch, with new information on the projected costs per community following the MSBA's recent decision to allocate additional dollar amount towards the project. He also noted that there was a draft of a letter from the Mayor of Amesbury about the Whittier project that resulted from a recent meeting of Town Managers and Mayors on the Whittier project. This group decided to draft the letter and distribute it to the various selectmen and city councilors in the Whittier district for their consideration, so that they could decide if they'd like to sign on to the letter. He also noted that there had been outreach to legislators representing communities in the Whittier district. Mr. Harrington then reminded everyone that there is no vote regarding the Whittier project tonight; it is just a discussion item on the agenda. He also stated that the estimated cost for Salisbury previously was set at around \$24 million, which since has been reduced with the additional state revenue to \$21.6 million.

Selectman Colburn expressed concerns about the projected financial cost to Salisbury residents, stating he believes Whittier is putting the cart before the horse by attempting to schedule a district-wide vote in January before the member Towns have decided whether they can afford the project.

Selectman Takesian said he agreed with Selectman Colburn's point. He also stated he doesn't disagree with anyone's comments regarding the need to support Whittier Tech he believes vocational education is necessary. He said he did not understand why Whittier decided to cancel its the town-by-town public informational meetings because he believes the District should allow the public to be well-informed and ask as many questions as necessary before any

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COLCHESTER ROOM**

district-wide votes are taken. He also stated that he knows Whittier needs a new building; however, they need to find a way to be able to fund it.

Selectman Marengi said he agrees with Selectman Takesian. He expressed concern that Whittier was withdrawing from giving the public opportunities to discuss options, and he wondered if there is a way to reduce the cost. He said he doesn't want to miss out on the State funding contribution for the project, but he'd like more information and is also concerned why Whittier cancelled the town information meetings.

Selectman Ray-Parrott said she agrees with the other Selectman and stated that no one is against the new building, but there are significant concerns about the cost and where the money will come from. She agreed that vocational schools are the backbone of the State's workforce. She referenced the Town Managers and Mayors meeting and said she understood they are to trying to get the State to add more money.

**VI. Sewer/Water - None**

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**VII. Correspondence - None**

**VIII. Hearings – Tax Classification Hearing**

Motion by Selectman Colburn, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to open the Public Hearing at 7:26 PM.

Director of Assessing Jonathan Greeno gave a PowerPoint presentation on the four options which the Board would be required to vote on as part of the requirements for setting the tax rate for FY2024. When discussing whether or not to adopt an Open Space Discount, Mr. Greeno stated the Board of Assessors had determined that no property in Salisbury meets the strict definition of Open Space; therefore, there are no properties in this class and the Board of Assessors has recommended that the Selectmen vote not to adopt an Open Space discount. He then reviewed the impacts of adopting a Residential Exemption and the Small Commercial Exemption. The final item presented to the Board was a review and discussion of setting the Tax Rate Factor recommendations. There were no comments or questions from the public. Following this presentation, the Selectmen took the following votes:

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted NOT to adopt an Open Space Discount for FY2024.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted NOT to adopt a Residential Exemption for FY2024.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to NOT adopt the Small Commercial Exemption for FY2024.

**MINUTES OF THE SALISBURY BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
MONDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2023 – 7:00 PM  
SALISBURY TOWN HALL, 5 BEACH ROAD  
COLCHESTER ROOM**

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman; unanimously voted to set a single Tax Rate with a Factor of 1.00 for FY2024.

Motion by Selectman Takesian; Second by Selectman; unanimously voted to close the Public Hearing at 7:48 PM.

**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 Takesian; Second by Selectman Abdulla unanimously voted to ratify the signing of the following weekly Warrants: W24-42 through W24-55.

Selectman Takesian noted that there is an upcoming meeting focusing on efforts to save the "Pink House" on Plum Island from potential demolition and locals elected officials are being asked to write letters of support. He noted that the property is owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which is proposing to tear the building down, and he suggested that the Board should get behind attempts to preserve this structure. His comments were echoed by Selectman Colburn. Mr. Takesian then moved that the Board write a letter of support to the Fish and Wildlife Service, with copies to our state and federal legislative delegations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Colburn and adopted unanimously. Mr. Harrington said he would meet with Mr. Colburn and Mr. Takesian to take their input on what specific points should be made in the letter.


**XI. Executive Session - None**

**XII. Adjournment**

Motion by Selectman Takesian, second by Selectman Colburn; unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:07 P.M.

Documents provided at the meeting and on file in the Selectmen's Office:  
Minutes of October 16, 2023, Town Manager's Report

Respectfully submitted:  
Adrienne Linnell, Executive Assistant

Approved:   
Donna Abdulla, Clerk