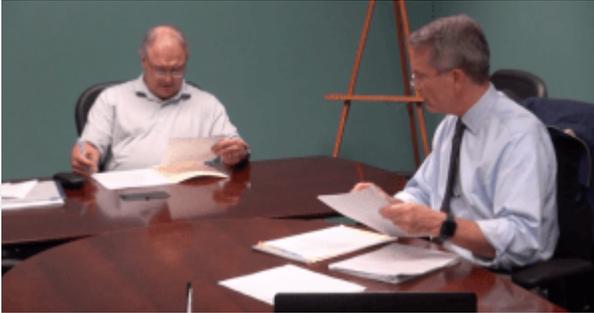


Board of Selectmen Meeting of Sept. 17, 2020



The Board of Selectmen met on Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020, for its regular meeting. In accordance with longstanding practice, the board acted on only pro forma, clearly non-controversial, or time-sensitive matters because Selectperson Kristi Sogofsky was not able to attend.

The board approved the minutes of the Sept. 3 meeting. The board approved several tax refunds as recommended by the tax collector. The board adopted a resolution authorizing the first selectman to take such action as may be necessary in order for the town to participate in the grant program of the state Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

The board awarded the bid for the revaluation to be conducted over the next year to Municipal Valuation Services, LLC which was the low bidder.

The first selectman gave an update on the coronavirus. He is studying two new executive orders by the governor. The first one appears to say that people returning from hot spot states who test negative shortly after returning need not quarantine for 14 days. The second order addresses fines for non-compliance with protective requirements. He reports that our schools are doing reasonably well and they will re-assess the instructional plans on Oct. 2.

There has been a small uptick in Covid-19 cases in town. In the past eight or nine days, there have been six new cases. The town is now officially part of the Westport Weston Health District. A new sanitarian has been hired and will work in Easton for at least two days per week. The Senior Center is offering some outdoor programs.

The board heard public comment from five people. One speaker asked what transpired at a meeting Sept. 17 between Rob Maquat, chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, and First Selectman Dave Bindelglass regarding the proposed pathway from Flat Rock Road to Silverman's Farm. The first selectman responded that Justin Giorlando, the land use director, was also at the meeting. They reviewed the state engineering report that indicates the cost of the project may be 50% more than originally anticipated.

This speaker also asked what is happening with the proposed land use ordinance. The first selectman said it was not on the agenda today because one of the members of the board could not be present and this issue always benefits from input from the full board.

A second speaker recited the pledge of allegiance. The speaker also thanked the president and the attorney general for their efforts. The speaker is glad the attorney general is investigating states that are not re-opening after the pandemic shutdowns. There is fear-mongering related to the pandemic, only 6% of "Covid-19" deaths are truly Covid-19, and 94% are related to other conditions, the speaker said. The speaker said Governor Lamont's "illegal" executive orders 9A&B indicate that Nov. 9 is the release date and not next February.

(Author's note: So as not to permit inaccurate information to potentially confuse the public, it is noted that no reputable scientists, no reputable health care organizations or entities, no reputable health research organizations, and no reputable news media sources agree that only 6% of the just over 200,000 deaths from Covid-19 in the United States as of today are, in fact, from Covid-19. The figures referenced by the second speaker above come from far right-wing outlets and are a gross mischaracterization of

the facts.)

A third speaker observed that she passed kids at a bus stop in Westport being picked up by parents and none were wearing masks and they were huddled close together. There were about 15 people present. The first selectman agreed that reminding people to wear masks at bus stops is a good idea, although Easton buses are much underutilized at present. This speaker also asked why taxpayers contacting town boards or commissions often receive no response. The speaker cited unanswered emails to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Finance.

The first selectman suggested people copy him on such emails. The speaker said the pathway is going to cost \$180,000 for a half-mile. She doesn't think this is a good idea at a time when people are out of work, having a hard time paying bills, and stressed due to the pandemic. She wants to have the promised town meeting decide whether to build the pathway. The first selectman assured the speaker that the issue would be presented to the town meeting.

A fourth speaker asked if the first selectman could say, generally, where the six new Covid-19 cases in Easton came from. The first selectman said they apparently did not come from our schools. While he could not be more specific, he said most of the new cases in Connecticut are coming from colleges and universities.

The fifth and final speaker offered happy New Year greetings to the board. He expressed concern that the chair of P&Z wants to rush the approval of the pathway. He thinks it would harm the quaint look of our town and that there is not majority support for it. He wishes the pathway was narrower because he is concerned that people will drive down an 11-foot wide pathway. He also reports that the wires on the tree he told the board about at a previous meeting have now, finally, been removed.

The first selectman says that we have intervened in the DPUC process regarding the performance of the electric companies during the recent storm. The speaker wonders if

the town could charge or tax the water company if it removes water from Easton's reservoirs as proposed. The first selectman said that while the notion of charging or taxing the water company is not feasible, he, State Rep. Anne Hughes, and Redding First Selectperson Julia Pemberton have met and are planning to seek intervenor status in the administrative proceedings on this matter. Several speakers thanked the first selectman for engaging in a dialogue in response to the various public comments.

Lessler expressed his appreciation and thanks to the Masons and the Easton Volunteer EMS for the town party and fireworks on Sept. 12. First Selectman Bindelglass agreed and also thanked the Fire Department for the 9/11 memorial display on this, the 19th anniversary of the attacks. He also recommended people watch the CBS interview of Eunice Hanson on the Sept. 11 attacks. He also has a link to it on his weekly message for Sept. 18.

Videos of Board of Selectmen meetings may be viewed [here](#).