

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
October 5, 2021 — 5:00 PM
Town Hall
MINUTES**

Members Present: First Selectman Kevin Cwikla; Selectmen Kathleen Smith, Glen Coutu, Robin Chesmer, and Betsy Petrie-McComber

Others Present: Jay Schall (Fire Chief, LVFD); Kelly Lawer (Tax Collector/Lebanon Green Tree Replanting Committee member); Bernard Dennler (Office Manager to First Selectman)

1.0 Call to Order

First Selectman K. Cwikla called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

2.0 Public Forum

There were no public comments.

3.0 Correspondence

3.1 Monthly Letter from Troop K

The monthly letter had not yet been received.

4.0 Financials

4.1 Monthly budget reports

The Selectmen reviewed the monthly budget reports. K. Smith asked about insurance in account 418 which is at 51 percent. B. Petrie said the account is frontloaded.

5.0 Fire Department Report

J. Schall said there were 87 calls in September, the most in the history of the LVFD in a one-month span. He said LVFD covered all calls but there were some re-tones. He said 2021 is likely to have the most calls ever in a calendar year. He said they are able to cover the calls but they need to plan for the future. He said they are in a better position than many other departments in the area. He said there were no COVID positive transports in the last two weeks. Cases appear to be declining now in Lebanon after spiking in late August and early September. He discussed the vaccination rate for the department. He said the responding staff is now 88 percent vaccinated.

6.0 Consent Agenda

G. Coutu MOVED to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

6.1 Approval of Tax Refunds

BONITZ-MOORE HEATHER	\$20.85
BUMGARNER CARROLL L & MARYANN C	\$29.53
BUMGARNER CARROLL L & MARYANN C	\$36.09
GUARANTEED RATE, INC	\$57.24
HIRTH DONALD R & BETTY P	\$6.73
HYANDAI LEASE TITLING TRUST	\$322.06
KRAUSE JOHN & TYSON FREDERICK	\$211.64

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LAMB WILLIAM J	\$28.71
TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	\$248.10
TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	\$262.13

6.2 *Approve Proclamation Declaring October 31, 2021 as Governor Jonathan Trumbull Chapter DAR Day*

6.3 *Appointment of Ellen Macauley as member of Economic Development Commission with a term to expire 02/01/2023*

6.4 *Reappointment of Deputy Fire Marshal Mark Waters, term to expire 10/01/2022*

6.5 *Approve Minutes of the September 28, 2021 Special Meeting*

K. Smith SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

7.0 New Business

Discuss and act upon:

7.1 Hire of a Temporary Finance Consultant

K. Cwikla said V. Belles had left the position of Senior Accountant in the Finance Office and was hired as Business Manager for Lebanon Public Schools. The Finance Office is without a lead person until the vacancy can be filled. V. Belles is willing to provide temporary part-time assistance until the vacancy in the finance office is filled to cover essential processes and duties if she is paid the same hourly rate she receives for her work at the Lebanon Public Schools — \$43.27. B. Petrie said she thinks it is a robust pay rate but that the town needs to be able to perform the work until the vacancy is filled.

R. Chesmer asked if there are any alternatives to filling the work part time until a new employee is hired. K. Cwikla said there are no alternatives. It is a two-person office and there is not anyone else qualified to perform that work. Interviews are underway to fill the vacancy as soon as possible. B. Petrie said the work has to get done. K. Cwikla said the previous school Business Manager had provided support to the Town when there was a vacancy in the Town Finance Office. The Selectmen discussed whether V. Belles would be considered a school employee and the Town would pay the school for her time or if she would be a Town employee while performing Town work and paid directly. K. Cwikla said she would be a Town employee, not to exceed 15 hours per week.

K. Smith MOVED to hire Valerie Belles as a temporary finance consultant at an hourly rate of \$43.27, not to exceed 15 hours per week, effective October 1, 2021. B. Petrie SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

7.2 Request from Uncas Health District for ARPA Funding Allocation

The Selectmen reviewed the request. B. Petrie noted Uncas had received an earlier allocation from COVID relief funds received prior to ARPA. K. Cwikla said he was not expecting action tonight. B. Dennler said Director of Health Patrick McCormack will come to a future meeting.

NO ACTION TAKEN

7.3 Location of New Town Tree on Green

K. Lawer spoke representing the Lebanon Green Tree Replanting Committee. The committee proposed planting of a new Christmas tree on the Green due to library construction in the general vicinity of the flagpole. K. Cwikla said they need to preserve the viewscape of the Green which the tree would obstruct if it was in the same location as the flagpole. K. Lawer said the tree could be placed east of the flagpole so it does not obstruct the view of the Green. G. Coutu suggested that the new tree could be replaced periodically if height is an issue. K. Lawer suggested trimming could help. K. Smith spoke in favor of preserving the view by placing the tree east of the flagpole. The Selectmen also discussed running underground electrical to the tree which would also be available for other events. They agreed there is not a need to run water to the tree. B. Petrie said Jim Russo of the Library Building Committee had asked for guidance from the Tree Committee on where they plan to place the new tree.

B. Dennler noted the Selectman's Office is working to plan the December Tree Lighting for this year. The existing tree will be used for the 2021 Tree Lighting Ceremony.

R. Chesmer said they should take a site walk as a Board of Selectmen. B. Petrie said it should be held ASAP. K. Smith proposed they meet next Tuesday before the special meeting on the CEN proposal. She suggested seeing if Jim Russo is available on Tuesday at 4:30 PM.

NO ACTION TAKEN

7.4 Approve Funds from TIP for Replacement of Town Sign

K. Smith said one of the Town entrance signs displaying the Town name and motto has been missing and needs to be replaced. The Selectmen reviewed a quote from SignProfessionals, the company which originally provided the signs.

B. Petrie MOVED to approve up to \$1,200 from TIP for the replacement of a Town Sign at the Franklin entrance to Lebanon. K. Smith SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

K. Smith MOVED to add to the agenda item 7.5 "Discuss and Act Upon: Authorize the First Selectman to Sign a Contract with InvoiceCloud." B. Petrie SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

7.5 Authorize the First Selectman to Sign a Contract with InvoiceCloud

K. Lawer spoke as Tax Collector about replacing the Tax Office's electronic payment service Point and Pay with InvoiceCloud. By moving to InvoiceCloud, residents would have more payment options for residents such as pay-by-phone, PayPal, and Venmo. Paperless billing would be an option for residents if they choose to enroll in it. Point and Pay charges a 2.5 percent processing fee to Lebanon users for online/credit card payments. InvoiceCloud would charge 2.95 percent. K. Lawer said their original contract proposal had a processing fee of 3.5 percent which she refused.

She said although InvoiceCloud's processing fee is slightly higher, the features it offers are commonly requested by residents in the office and are not offered by Point and Pay. She said the office gets calls weekly requesting the ability to pay by phone which they cannot do with

Point and Pay. InvoiceCloud serves 71 Connecticut tax collectors including Columbia and Franklin. InvoiceCloud would provide two card readers which would be the first chip and PIN devices in the tax office. It also interfaces automatically with QDS whereas Point and Pay only runs an update once per night.

The system could go live October 15 if the contract is signed. That would give time to work out bugs before January billing.

K. Smith MOVED to authorize the First Selectman to sign a contract with InvoiceCloud for electronic tax payment services in the tax office. B. Petrie SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

8.0 Old Business

Discuss and act upon:

8.1 Update on Library Building Project

K. Cwikla said he had signed the grant contract and expected the first funds to be dispersed soon.

NO ACTION TAKEN

9.0 Approval of Minutes

9.1 Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of September 14, 2021 Regular Meeting — B. Petrie not present

G. Coutu MOVED to approve the minutes of September 14, 2021 Regular Meeting as amended to clarify that the group identified as "Axis" is actually "Access Community Action Agency." K. Smith SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED 4:0 with B. Petrie abstaining

- b. Minutes of the September 17, 2021 Special Meeting — G. Coutu not present

G. Coutu MOVED to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2021 Special Meeting. B. Petrie SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED 4:0 with G. Coutu abstaining

10.0 Executive Session

B. Petrie MOVED to enter Executive Session inviting attorney Catherine Marrion to participate by phone. K. Smith SECONDED.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

10.1 Executive Session: Strategy and Negotiations regarding Lebanon Green Litigation

Executive Session began at 5:50 PM. The Selectmen returned to public session at 6:50 PM.

11.0 Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard W. Dennler III

Office Manager to the First Selectman