

Borough of Litchfield
Board of Warden & Burgesses
Special Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 20, 2023

Present: Gayle Carr, Acting Warden; Roberta Witty, Senior Burgess; Lara Hillman, Burgess, Peter Vermilyea, Burgess

Also Present: Nancy Southard, Treasurer

- I. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by G. Carr
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** P. Vermilyea moved to approve the minutes from the February 15th meeting with two corrections. L. Hillman seconded. G. Carr, L. Hillman and P. Vermilyea voted in favor. R. Witty abstained. The motion passed.
- III. **Tax Collector's Refund Requests/Recommendations: if any.**
There were no refund requests.
- IV. **Treasurer's Report:**
 - a. **Monthly Financial Statements, Payments of Bills, and Treasurer's requests, if any.**
R. Witty made a motion to approve payment of the monthly bills in the amount of \$17,810.76. L. Hillman second the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
- V. **Special Items**
 - a. **Report by Cardinal Engineering Re: Sidewalks Survey and Materials**
This item was tabled.
- VI. **Communications**
 - A. Judith Acerbi wrote to inform the board of her resignation, with regrets, from the Historic District Commission, effectively immediately.
 - B. Elizabeth King from Eversource wrote to the Board to say that the Board's preference for new streetlights had been received and an order placed.
 - C. G. Carr reached out to Michelle Murelli from Art Tripping to inquire about the discount being offered to vendors for the June 10th craft fair. Ms. Murelli replied that she is able to offer a discounted fee because of a grant Art Tripping has received.
- VII. **Public Participation**
 - A. Applications
The Litchfield Economic Development Commission made a request to open the information booth from May 1 to November 1, 2023. The booth will be staffed from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Thursdays through Sunday. It will be unstaffed the other days unless additional volunteers can be found. The booth will also be open on Memorial Day and Independence Day. G. Carr stated that Patrick Muecke was in contact about spraying the booth to deal with what is on the roof. G. Carr will investigate if changes needed to be made to the EDC's insurance; EDC is an agency of the town and has signed a hold harmless form.

The Partners for Health and Sustainable Community, Inc., doing business as Litchfield Hills Farm-Fresh Market filed an application for a peddler's license.

The request was from the farmer's market to be held in the upper parking lot of Center School from June 17th to October 17th. R. Witty made a motion to approve the request subject to terms and conditions, which L. Hillman seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. G. Carr will get a revised agreement to Partners for Healthy Sustainable Community for signatures.

B. Public Comment

Rich Morin asked questions and expressed concerns about the February minutes and an email response he received from the Board.

VIII. New Business

A. America 250th

Alice Ridgeway is chairing Litchfield's committee for the 250th anniversary of American independence. The first meeting was held on March 15th. G. Carr and P. Vermilyea attended on behalf of the Board. The questions for organizations to consider is What do groups have to offer? What might groups and organizations want to do? Organizations can do something on their own or partner with other organizations/groups.

B. Attendance Requirement/Removal of Members

G. Carr noted that there is no means of removing an elected official from office in Connecticut; it may be possible, however, to remove appointed officials. Attorney Steve Byrne reported that there is no state law on the subject. Borough ordinances would have to be amended to address the address. Attorney Byrne believes that the Board has this power. G. Carr will draft a proposed ordinance for the Board to discuss.

C. Outdoor Dining

Governor Lamont's emergency orders on restaurant outdoor dining expire on April 30, 2023. The Town's Planning and Zoning Commission is meeting on March 20th to discuss the issue. If either the town or the borough votes to end restaurant outdoor dining, it will cease on public property in the borough. There are restaurants in the borough with outdoor dining on private property and others that currently have outdoor dining on private property. Current borough ordinances state that sidewalks cannot be obstructed. This item will be discussed at a future meeting, after the town's Planning and Zoning Commission has met.

D. Trash in Public Lot

First Selectman Raap reached out to G. Carr about trash collection in the municipal lot behind the shops on West Street. Businesses used to have individual dumpsters. However, on the Borough's request the businesses contracted for a shared compactor. This needed to be moved due to the upcoming Courthouse construction project; it was moved to the only other location with appropriate electricity. Russ Barton has made a request to move the dumpster because it interferes with plans of the West Street Grill for outdoor dining behind the building. G. Carr will speak with Mr. Barton.

E. Email Notification/Borough Outreach

The Board will investigate including a flyer in the tax bills asking borough residents for email addresses and phone numbers so that notifications can be sent out about elections, the annual meeting, and meeting cancellations.

IX. Old Business

A. ARPA

L. Hillman reported that she has registered as the point of contact, and recently received an email that the reporting period is between April 1 and April 30. The login process is now working, and progress is being made on the report.

- B. Heritage Plan
No report
- C. Preserving Aging Records
No report
- D. Borough Location during Renovation
G. Carr met with the Zoning Enforcement Official to file a site plan and permit application to put a public administrative facility in the Pilgrim House at the Congregational Church. The facility will have a room for an office and a meeting space. G. Carr will talk with the Congregational Church about attaching bulletin boards to the parking lot side of the building. It is hoped that the move will take place in May.

X. Committee Updates

- A. Budget
R. Witty reported that there have not been any changes to the draft budget except for the request made at the February meeting for money for the Beecher Memorial restoration. Requests have been made to take money from the general fund to use sidewalks and to lower the mill rate.
- B. Sidewalks and Monument
G. Carr reported that the bricks on the West and South Street sidewalks are becoming increasingly problematic. A company like Lavieri that does stamped asphalt may come to talk with the Board. P. Vermilyea reported that due to the efforts of residents there has been an improvement in keeping the sidewalks clear of snow and ice this winter.
- C. Trees
No report
- D. Beautification
No report
- E. Website
No report
- F. Use of Green/Business Survey
R. Witty reported that requests have been made to the committee to hold a Farmer's Market on the Green. R. Witty said that she would look into this. P. Vermilyea said that this was brought up several years ago and that parking could be a problem.

XI. Acting Warden's Report and Requests

G. Carr gave an update on the Courthouse construction project. She met with Raz Alexe and representatives of the construction company and developer. The sidewalk in front of the former courthouse will need to be closed and pedestrian traffic rerouted so that machinery can be brought in to clean the clock tower and allow for it to be inspected. It was estimated that this would take approximately 65 days; G. Carr said it could take no more than 65 days. Large sections of the municipal parking lot will be shut down during construction.

XII. Adjournment

L. Hillman made a motion to adjourn, which P. Vermilyea seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20.