



TOWN OF OLD LYME

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Board of Selectmen

Minutes – Regular Meeting

3 July 2023, 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Hall of the Memorial Town Hall

Call-In Phone: 1-605-472-5727 Access Code 3819718

NOTE: The meeting was hybrid, but there were technical issues a few minutes after the start that prevented those on the phone from participating, and only a partial recording was preserved.

Call to Order - First Selectman Griswold called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He instructed those in the audience that public comment would be limited to 3 minutes per person due to the number of people in attendance and the meeting will conclude at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance - First Selectman Timothy Griswold, Selectman Matthew Ward and Selectwoman Martha Shoemaker.

1. Approval of Minutes: 5 June 2023 (Reg.), 10 May 2023 (Spec.), 11 May 2023 (Spec.), 19 May 2023 (Spec.) and 22 June 2023 (NAA Public Hearing)

Selectman Ward made a MOTION to approve the 5 June 2023 regular meeting minutes and Selectwoman Shoemaker SECONDED the motion. Discussion: Selectwoman Shoemaker asked that on page 2, New Business Item C, be amended to read “Suzanne Thompson was officially hired as the part-time Assistant to the Tax Collector”. VOTE: First Selectman Griswold and Selectman Ward voted for the motion and Selectwoman Shoemaker abstained. The MOTION PASSED, as amended.

Selectwoman Shoemaker made a MOTION to approve the 10 June 2023 special meeting minutes and Selectman Ward SECONDED the motion. Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED.

Selectman Ward made a MOTION to approve the 11 June 2023 special meeting minutes and Selectwoman Shoemaker SECONDED the motion. Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED.

Selectman Ward made a MOTION to approve the 19 June 2023 special meeting minutes and Selectwoman Shoemaker SECONDED the motion Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED.

Selectwoman Shoemaker made a MOTION to approve the 22 June 2023 minutes of the Neighborhood Assistance Act Public Hearing and Selectman Ward SECONDED the motion. Discussion: None. First Selectman Griswold and Selectwoman Shoemaker voted for the motion and Selectman Ward abstained. The MOTION PASSED.

Selectwoman Shoemaker made a MOTION to amend today's agenda by moving Public Comment Item 3 to be Item 2. Selectman Ward SECONDED the motion. Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED.

2. Communications:



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1. Rules for Use of Town Property – Restrict Political Displays/Activities – David Griswold and Sloan Danenhower. First Selectman Griswold said that there should be a process or policy governing the use of the Town Hall property by members of the public. In addition, he believes it is inappropriate that political signage be allowed, with limited exceptions. He referenced the tent that the Democratic Town Committee erected before the Memorial Day Parade which had the words Democratic Town Committee emblazoned on its side. Selectwoman Shoemaker said a committee should be formed to work on this.
2. Unauthorized Placement of Witness Stones on Town Triangle (Old Shore Rd. & Buttonball Rd.) – John Griswold & Rob Haff
3. Problems Following the Installation of the Witness Stones – Barry Harrison
4. Inappropriate Book in the Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library – Stephen Spooner and others. First Selectman Griswold said this topic is not within the Board of Selectmen’s jurisdiction.

First Selectman Griswold read letters that were submitted on the above topics, and they will [be included in minutes and posted on the Town website \(Board of Selectmen | Old Lyme, CT \(oldlyme-ct.gov\)\)](#). A letter from Mary Jo Nosal was also mentioned.

3. Public Comment

Due to the technical difficulties, some public comment was not recorded.

George Frampton, 12 Tantummaheag Rd.: asserts that the Town has been withholding documentation that would indicate that Richard Lord was absolved from responsibility of maintaining Tantummaheag Rd., so essentially it became abandoned in 1727.

Carolyn Miranda: is happy the beach handicapped access mats were installed at the end of Hartford Ave. However, vehicular access from handicap parking is far away and there is a gap between the pavement surface and the mat that could be problematic for wheelchairs.

Caroline Wakeman, Chair of the Witness Stone Project: said issues were raised but it is important to address one of the concerns. She believes the Witness Stone Committee did receive approval for the installation of the Stones on the Black Hall Triangle.

Robert Haff: Co-author of the Witness Stone letter: was not aware that the location was pre-approved. First Selectman Griswold added that there is not a formal approval process and, while approval to locate the Stones on the triangle was requested, it was not granted. Mr. Haff is in favor of the Witness Stone Project, and he plans to bring the issue before the Black Hall Association and the Griswold Point Association. His primary concern is safety. The triangle is small, and the numerous “No Parking” signs prohibit parking in the area. The abutting property owners were not contacted, as was done during the first and second installations. He believes the triangle is not the right location and he proposed three other locations: the 36-1 Buttonball Rd. Open Space parcel, the State rest area between Old Shore Rd. and Rte. 156 and the newly acquired Open Space parcel at 21 Buttonball Rd. related to the new development. The Stones should be where people can park and spend time.

Jeri Baker: Urges the Board to get advice from Town Counsel governing the use of the Town Hall property. The Senior Center had similar concerns 6 years ago and the Board of Directors looked at not



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infringing on freedom of speech but curtailing political activities related to campaigning. Would the restrictions mean the Town's political parties could not dish out ice cream at the summer concerts? Evaluate if the activity is supporting the community. She thinks the Democratic tent was there to show support for Memorial Day and was not a political activity.

Isabelle Barber: Wonders what we are doing here today, what are we arguing about? Old Lyme is such a white, non-inclusive town and now there is a problem with Witness Stones? Take a look at yourselves and the demographics of the town. There are more Griswolds in town than people of color. You do not want to talk about the book banning issue? It came from the Republican Town Committee. If you want to protect children, build a sidewalk to the beach, teach children appropriate sex education in the schools. Make it so kids can come back to the town after they graduate from school to a place where they can actually afford to live. There are ways to protect kids and pedestrians and build an inclusive town.

Deborah Lang Froggatt: Some Town officials signed the letter about banning books. Wonderful that so many people are interested in the wonderful collection the library has. She had a career as a librarian, and she applauds parent's interest in encouraging reading. Encourage children to access information and resources, whether it be books, online or through social media. Lack of access is a social justice issue. There was a case in Utah where a citizen brought a lawsuit to ban the Bible. She referenced the letter written by pastors of the First Congregational Church. She supports the staff of the library as trained professionals.

Matthew Griswold X: is embarrassed that his Griswold cousins want to get the Witness Stones further away. He gave a brief history of Griswold land. Maybe if his cousins want to move the Stones, they should be at the entrance of the town dump. He is embarrassed. He only heard about the issue this morning. The Black Hall triangle is not ideal. He said his father was a country doctor and treated about 13 people who died on that dangerous section of Old Shore Rd.

Steven Wilson: The signers of the letter about the inappropriate book included many people who are not Republicans. The letter does not recommend banning books, but the signers found the content objectionable and believe it cannot be shared publicly because it is considered offensive. He did not sign the other letter because it defends LGBTQ rights and that was not the issue. Libraries are important, invaluable resources. Librarians are thoughtful. He looked in the tween/teen section and the books in question are in the minority. The issue needs to be addressed and the Board of the library will address it. People are curious to see what else the library has to offer. Opportunity exists to discuss what is acceptable in the town. Books in question should be moved to the adult section where they belong. The librarians are not being bullied.

Martin Griswold: Read his letter out loud regarding the placement of the 8 Witness Stones. His family is in full support of the Project and the placement of the Stones. He never noticed activity before or after that would be a safety concern. One cannot change the past and he believes it is important that the stones be in a place that can be viewed by all.

Dwight Ely: shared the concerns of Barry Harrison, who lives directly across the street from the triangle where the Witness Stones are located. Mr. Harrison wrote that he has noticed safety issues, people parking in the road, dogs roaming off their leash leaving dog feces, debris, near accidents and noise, including loud music. Barry supports the Stones, but not at that location. He is disturbed that the installation happened without approval. Suggests moving them to the State Rest Area off Route 156.



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4. Appointments:

Tom Gotowka (D) Board of Directors – Ledge Light Health Dist. - 3 Yr. Term to 30 Jun 2026
Selectwoman Shoemaker made a motion to approve the appointment of Tom Gotowka to the Board of Directors – Ledge Light Health Dist. - 3 Yr. Term to 30 Jun 2026 and Selectman Ward seconded the motion. Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED.

Jane Folland (U) Board of Directors - Lymes Senior Ctr. – 3 Yr. Term to 30 Jun 2026
Kathy Lockwood (D) Board of Directors - Lymes Senior Ctr. – 3 Yr. Term to 30 Jun 2026
Joan Bonvicin (D) Board of Directors - Lymes Senior Ctr. – 3 Yr. Term to 30 Jun 2026
Christine Gotowka (U) Board of Directors - Lymes Senior Ctr. – 3 Yr. Term to 30 Jun 2026
Selectman Ward made a MOTION to approve the above appointments and Selectwoman Shoemaker SECONDED the motion. Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED.

5. Old Business:

Project Updates:

- i. Halls Rd. Improvements – No Update
The Zoning Commission is not taking up the Overlay District at this point.
- ii. Sound View Sewers – No Report
Waiting on confirmation from DEEP about the \$14 to \$17 million forgivable loan. There have been various phone calls to get clarity but nothing to report. Expecting repaving of 156 from Halls Rd. to Cross La. this year.
- iii. Senior Ctr. Expansion – Old Lyme Voters Approved 385 to 54
Will put out an RFP for a construction manager, followed by RFP for the general contractor. The Senior Center Director is working on securing alternate space to use while construction occurs.
- iv. Ferry Road Sidewalk – DOT Approved STEAP Grant 1 Year Extension (Aug 2024)
Extension of the grant has been approved to August 2024. Planning to go out to bid next month.
- v. Swan Brook Outlet – Outflow Pipe Cleanout & Inspection
Still trying to minimize the accumulation of sand in the crib and the pipes. This will require periodic cleanouts and possibly installing a metal plate over the end of the west pipe.

Tantummaheag Landing – No Response to Town’s Settlement Proposal – Proceed with Plan

A Town proposal was submitted to the Framptons but we have not heard back. Town needs to decide next steps.

36-1 Buttonball Rd. – Minor trail work was performed. During fiscal year 2024, the group will be working on a dock permit to be submitted to the DEEP.

Shoreline Gateway Committee – Update

Selectwoman Shoemaker noted the group will present its findings in August.

6. New Business:

a. New, Free Property Check Service Provided by Town Clerk

Vicki Urbowicz, Town Clerk, announced there is a new, free property and mortgage fraud protection service provided by COTT business systems. After you sign up, any recording that is filed with the Town



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Clerk on your property will generate a notification to you. More information is on the website. The Town paid an initial fee for this service and will pay a small annual fee.

- b. Staff Changes: Elizabeth Hoffmann was hired as Asst. to the Building Official and it was also noted that Suzanne Thompson, who had been serving on a temporary basis in the Tax Department, has been hired permanently.

c. Proposed Steering Committee for the McCulloch Affordable Lots

Michael Fogliano, Chair of the Affordable Housing Commission, gave an update. He requests a committee be formed to oversee the development of the two proposed affordable houses. He sent a charge to the committee to the Selectmen for review last week. After the charge is adopted, the members can be appointed. One person has already expressed interest in serving on the committee. The project is being called "McCulloch Family Affordable Homes."

Selectman Ward made a MOTION to create a Steering Committee for McCulloch Family Affordable Homes and Selectwoman Shoemaker seconded the motion. Discussion: Will Mr. Fogliano oversee this Steering Committee? He replied that the Committee will serve mostly in a coordinating role. Most of the decisions will be in the hands of the partner organization, Habitat for Humanity. The Steering Committee will communicate with town officials, marshal resources, and possibly receive donations. He proposes three voting members: one with building experience, another with fundraising experience and a third with community engagement and grant writing experience. Supporting ex-officio members might be one of the Selectmen and a member of the Board of Finance. First Selectman Griswold asked if there is a closing date on the two lots scheduled? Mr. Fogliano needs to consult with Town Counsel on this. Habitat will prepare a budget and will form a project team. There being no further discussion, the MOTION PASSED.

d. Proposed Building Committee for the Boughton Rd. Emergency Operating Center Expansion

Emergency Management Director Dave Roberge was not able to attend tonight's meeting to discuss the expansion of Boughton Road Emergency Operations Center, but he will work to formalize a building committee (need a charge to committee, the number of committee members, etc.). The Selectman may need a Special Meeting to discuss this. Selectwoman Shoemaker asked if we have heard from Senator Murphy's office about the grant? First Selectman Griswold replied that the paperwork is expected to come to the Town.

e. FFY 22 State Homeland Security Grant – Memorandum of Agreement

First Selectman Griswold noted that Old Lyme is part of Region 4 of the statewide Homeland Security system. The Federal Fiscal Year 22 Homeland Security Grant covers the regional needs to buy equipment, such as electronic signs and the like. While the equipment is not owned by the towns, it is available to the towns. The Chief Executive Officer of each member town needs to sign the Memorandum of Agreement. \$2,188,219.00 is available to the region for purchases. This is an annual process.



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Selectman Ward made a MOTION to authorize the First Selectman to sign the paperwork for the grant and Selectwoman Shoemaker SECONDED the motion. Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED

7. Other Business:

Selectwoman Shoemaker noted that there are two jobs openings that need to be posted on the website: Part-time Facilities Director (25 hours/week) and a part-time Land Use Administrator. She also reported that she and Selectman Ward met with a Human Resources consultant, Sheila McKenzie-Bell of Shoreline HR Consulting Services. Ms. McKinley-Bell is willing to work for the Town as a contractor and she provided a statement of work for review. A 6-month contract (July 15 2023 through January 14, 2024) is proposed. This timeframe will take us through the municipal election and the new administration can decide how to proceed. First Selectman Griswold asked how many hours will be provided and was told 8-10 hours a week for 6 months.

Selectwoman Shoemaker made a MOTION to authorize First Selectman Griswold to sign the contract after meeting Ms. McKinley-Bell and Selectman Ward SECONDED the motion. Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED.

Selectwoman Shoemaker also noted there has been some interest in the Finance Director position. Lastly, she reflected on the many issues coming before the Board today. She believes a lot could have been avoided if people had talked and listened to each other. The Board of Selectmen does not serve as the parents of the Town to solve these types of problems. Selectman Ward added that discussion needs to be had. Everyone is entitled to their opinions.

8. Adjournment

Selectman Ward made a motion to adjourn at 7:06 p.m. and First Selectwoman Shoemaker SECONDED Discussion: None. The MOTION PASSED

Respectfully submitted by
Suzanne McAuliffe and Jennifer Datum