



Salisbury Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2021

Approved

Selectman Brett Walker, Chair	Present
Selectman John W. Herbert	Present
Selectman Jim Hoyt	Present
Town Administrator April Rollins	Excused
Municipal Assistant Kimberley Edelman	Present

Attendees: Marcia Murphy, Harvey Peters and Gayle Landry attended the meeting in person at the Town Hall. Karen Currier and Jen Hoyt attended via Zoom.

1) Open Meeting

Chairman Brett Walker opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

2) Meeting Minutes

Chairman Walker made a **motion** to accept the meeting minutes of Wednesday, May 19, 2021. Selectman Herbert **seconded**. The **motion passed** with all in favor.

Chairman Walker made a **motion** to accept the meeting minutes of Friday, May 21, 2021. Selectman Herbert **seconded**. The **motion passed** with all in favor.

3) Signatures

Chairman Walker noted that the Board reviewed Accounts Payable and Payroll Registers.

They reviewed and signed an Intent to Cut for Tax Map 236, Lot 15.4.

They reviewed and signed an Intent to Excavate for Tax Map 219, Lot 43.

They also reviewed and signed the MS-535 Auditor's Financial Report of the Budget.

4) Department & Committee Updates

a. Transfer Station

It was noted that Transfer Station Attendant Tyler Proulx was scheduled to begin his Solid Waste Operator's Training on June 9, 2021.

5) Old Business

a. **American Rescue Plan Act – Update / Webinar**

Chairman Walker noted that he had attended a recent NH Municipal Association (NHMA) webinar about the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. There was not a lot of new information shared. The NHMA is waiting for the State to put together a portal so Towns can request funds. It was noted that the State had received the ARPA funds, which he believed was on May 10. The State has 30 days to distribute funds, however he believed there was a stipulation that States can request extensions.

6) Selectmen's Reports

Selectman Herbert shared that a couple of citizens had commented to him about the demo pile on the property across from MacDuffies on Route 4. The old house which had been demolished was piled up near the road. He didn't know what authority the Selectboard had to request that the owners clean up the demo pile. Just sitting there, he felt it was a potential health hazard. If nothing else, wildlife was going to move in.

Chairman Walker noted that the pile had been sitting there for a while.

Selectman Hoyt noted that there were several properties in Town which had accumulated a lot of stuff. He felt if one property was addressed, others would need to be, as well. Selectman Herbert agreed there were other properties of concern, but this one in particular he had been approached about. Selectman Hoyt noted that if not cleaned up, maybe it could be fenced.

Chairman Walker said he was going to research to learn what authority they have and what action they can take.

Selectman Hoyt shared that the building was torn down without knowing if there was asbestos in it. Therefore, the pile of debris could potentially be hazardous. Usually, before you take down a building, you have an abatement company come in to identify hazardous materials, especially older buildings. He believed that hadn't been done.

7) Public Comments

a. **Property Valuations**

Marcia Murphy asked about assessments. She wondered if a property was one of the 20% getting assessed, did the taxes for that property increase immediately or on the 5th year. Chairman Walker pointed out that 20% of the Town did not get reassessed every year within the 5 year assessment cycle. However, each year, a random draw of houses were selected to review. When that happens with a given property, the assessed value may be adjusted up or down.

Ms. Murphy expressed concern about the market values of homes in the current market. Selectman Herbert explained that there was a factor that was applied to all properties. Chairman Walker believed assessed values were being adjusted downward. He noted that tax cards don't get changed every year. The equalized value was part of the whole formula.

Gayle Landry noted that the current equalization rate was 88%. A new equalization rate would be received from the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) sometime in the summer. Basically, in the real world, you want assessments to be at 100%. If it gets there after a reval, the assessments go up but the taxes go down. The Town needs to come up with the same amount of money in the end.

Chairman Walker noted that there were many moving parts to property taxes, including equalizations, school budgets, etc.

Gayle Landry noted that during revals, one third of the property values drop, one third stays the same, and one third goes up.

Marcia Murphy also shared that she had been asked about the contract with the assessors, Cross Country Appraisal Group (CCAG), and whether their compensation was linked to the Town valuation. Chairman Walker assured her that was not the case.

Marcia Murphy asked if the DRA also reviews some assessments. Gayle Landry replied that they do that in the 5th year. Also, all property owners had an opportunity to file for an abatement.

Chairman Walker added one of the biggest misconceptions property owners have is that if their property valuation doubles, their property taxes would double. That's not the case. It's about the budget and what proportion each property owner pays. He added that if you want an accurate assessment, let the assessors in.

b. Small School Study

Marcia Murphy added a *Small Schools Study Public Listening Session* is going to be held on Tuesday, June 8, from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Merrimack Valley High School.

The primary focus will be to gain feedback from the Salisbury and Webster communities in regards to their elementary schools.

Secretary's Note: Audio is being livestreamed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04BwADF8ofEt>

8) Adjournment

Chairman Walker noted that a nonpublic session had been scheduled, but was no longer needed.

Chairman Walker made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 pm. Selectman Hoyt **seconded**. The **motion passed** with all in favor. The next scheduled meeting is for June 16, 7 pm at the Academy Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberley Brown Edelmann
Recording Secretary

These meeting minutes were reviewed and accepted on June 16, 2021.

Selectmen, Town of Salisbury