

MINUTES
Ordinance Committee
Tuesday, February 3, 2026 – 6:00PM
Norma Drummer Room – Seymour Town Hall

Members Present: Annmarie Drugonis, Bob Findley, Trisha Danka and Phil Wilhelmy (6:05 PM)

Members Absent: Phil Wilhelmy

Others Present: Town Counsel, Bryan LeClerc ; CAO, Kurt Miller; Paul Wetowitz, Brandon Dos Santos, Gene Atkins, members of Great Hill Hose Co., Fire Commissioners

ITEM #1: Call meeting to order

First Selectwoman, Annmarie Drugonis, called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

ITEM #2: Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone saluted the flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #3: Public Comment

Paul Wetowitz (56 Davis Rd.) spoke about the proposed fire department ordinance changes, specifically Section 6-21 regarding the appointment of fire chiefs. He thanked Chief Chris Edwards for raising the issue and said limiting the Fire Commissioners to only a three-year appointment option could be problematic long-term. He believes commissioners should have more flexibility in appointment terms. Paul stated he plans to submit his own proposed ordinance revision for this section and referenced his review of Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 98, Section 7-48, along with Charter Sections 6.5–6.8 and Ordinance Chapter 1.

Brandon Dos Santos (14 Forest Road Extension), President of Great Hill Hose Company, shared feedback gathered from a company meeting held approximately three weeks ago regarding the proposed fire department ordinance changes. He said the two primary areas of concern are Section 6-22 (enlistment qualifications for volunteers) and Section 6-21 (officers and members).

He explained that Great Hill Hose members do not object to town employees serving as members of the fire department, but they believe those employees should join one of the two fire houses to build relationships with members and receive important training. He suggested waiving social participation requirements (such as company events) for town employees while still requiring them to affiliate with a fire house.

He also stated that Great Hill Hose members strongly feel three-year terms for Fire Commissioners are too long, noting concerns about the time commitment associated with serving in the role.

ITEM #4: Discussion and possible action

- a) Senior Citizen Tax Incentive
- b) Disabled Veterans Exemption
- c) Firefighters
- d) Sidewalks

Senior Citizen Tax Incentive: The legislation will be resubmitted tomorrow. We are seeking legal guidance and clarification on this matter.

Motion to table

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Bob Findley

Vote: 4-Yes

0-No

0-Abstain

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Bob Findley – Yes

Trisha Danka – Yes

Phil Wilhelmy – Yes

Disabled Veterans Exemption: they discussed Derby’s Go Start Exemption that was just passed. They plan to discuss this further at the next meeting.

Motion to table until February 17th

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Bob Findley

Vote: 4-Yes

0-No

0-Abstain

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Bob Findley – Yes

Trisha Danka – Yes

Phil Wilhelmy – Yes

Firefighters: Committee members discussed Section 6-21 and the length of terms for fire chiefs. Bob asked whether a compromise could be reached since different groups have suggested different term lengths. Trisha said she does not support a one-year term, and both she and Bob suggested a two-year term as a possible middle ground.

Gene Atkins (3 Forest Road), who has been involved with the fire department for 57 years, explained the current process. Each year, the Board of Fire Commissioners reviews the chief’s requirements and interviews candidates. He noted that chief terms have historically varied based on circumstances and performance, but chiefs are reviewed annually regardless of term length. He said the role of chief includes mentoring others and preparing future leadership. Historically, two-year terms have been common, with flexibility maintained through the annual review process.

Discussion continued about term lengths for both fire chiefs and fire commissioners. Paul Wetowitz suggested a compromise of two-year terms with optional one-year extensions. Edward Willis (15 Sanford Street) explained that chiefs have historically served varying lengths of time depending on commissioner decisions and departmental needs, and that the system has worked without issue.

The group discussed what would be best for the town, including concerns raised during public comment and possible ordinance revisions.

Motion to set a Public Hearing for the Ordinance Committee on Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Bob Findley

Vote: 4-Yes

0-No

0-Abstain

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Bob Findley – Yes

Trisha Danka – Yes

Phil Wilhelmy – Yes

Sidewalks:

Motion to table

Motion: Trisha Danka

Second: Bob Findley

Vote: 4-Yes

0-No

0-Abstain

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Bob Findley – Yes

Trisha Danka – Yes

Phil Wilhelmy – Yes

ITEM #5: Public Comment

None.

ITEM #6: Adjournment

Annamarie adjourned the meeting at 6:58 PM

Submitted by,



Lianna McMurray
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by,



Annamarie Drugonis
First Selectwoman