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MINUTES
Ordinance Committee
Public Hearing
Tuesday, February 17, 2026 – 6:00 PM
Norma Drummer Room – Seymour Town Hall

Members Present: Annmarie Drugonis, Trisha Danka, Bob Findley and Phil Wilhelmy
Others Present: Town Counsel, Richard Buturla; CAO, Kurt Miller; Mike Kearney, Paul Wetowitz, Brandon Dos Santos, Patrick Keough

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 regarding the following potential Ordinance changes:

- a) **Disabled Veterans Exemption**
- b) **Firefighters**

Disabled Veterans Exemption:

First Selectwoman Annmarie Drugonis read the proposed ordinance aloud. Trisha suggested removing repeated use of the word “such” throughout the document. Town Counsel, Richard Buturla explained that the ordinance is a technical document reflecting the maximum tax exemption allowed under Connecticut state law for veterans with a 100% service-connected disability, including qualifying residences such as condominiums and up to two acres of land. He noted that partial disability exemptions are not included because they are not authorized by state statute. The ordinance also includes Gold Star spouses and represents a local-option exemption, similar to versions adopted by other municipalities.

Town Counsel, Richard Buturla suggested that the Assessor prepare a simple fact sheet and application outlining the required documentation.

Mike Kearney of Mountain Road, speaking on behalf of disabled veterans, asked about the difference between an exemption and an abatement. Richard explained that an abatement is typically temporary, while the exemption established by the ordinance would supersede an abatement. He noted that the VA must certify a veteran as 100% disabled and suggested Mike follow up with the Assessor regarding his specific exemption.

Firefighters:

First Selectwoman Annmarie Drugonis reviewed prior discussions regarding the proposed firefighter ordinance revisions.

Paul Wetowitz, 56 Davis Road, encouraged the Board to consider two-year terms, noting he agreed with comments made by Brandon at the previous meeting.

Patrick Keough, 11 Deer Run Drive, stated there had previously been discussion about creating a formal document summarizing feedback. He noted that Brandon had presented notes from the Fire Commissioners and Fire Department at the prior meeting. Brandon confirmed the group met to review feedback and that the information had been presented previously.

Discussion followed regarding membership requirements for town employees joining the either one of the fire houses, including appearing before a board, completing interviews, and serving a 90-day probationary period, as required by department bylaws. It was noted that individuals must meet all applicable standards and minimum requirements. Brandon noted the Great Hill Hose Company members suggested including training with one of the town's two firehouses to ensure familiarity with equipment and procedures.

Additional discussion focused on the importance of the fire department operating collaboratively across both firehouses as one department.

The Board and speakers also discussed term lengths for Fire Chiefs and Fire Commissioners, with Patrick Keough, Brandon Dos Santos and Paul Wetowitz again encouraging two-year terms. Paul noted that shorter terms can help prevent stagnation in volunteer departments and provide incentives for members to advance into leadership roles.

Motion to table the Firefighter Ordinance

Motion: Phil Wilhelmy

Second: Bob Findley

Vote: 4-Yes

0-No

0-Abstain

Annmarie Drugonis – Yes

Phil Wilhelmy – Yes

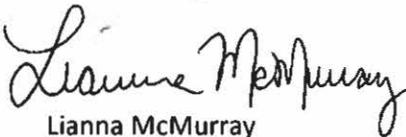
Trisha Danka – Yes

Bob Findley – Yes

ITEM #4: Adjournment

First Selectwoman Drugonis adjourned the meeting at 6:59 PM

Submitted by,



Lianna McMurray
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by,



Annmarie Drugonis
First Selectwoman