

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 26, 2011**

Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Tom Klebart, Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward
Selectman Bruce Gresczyk (in at 7:40 PM)

Several members of the public were in attendance for the Annual Budget Meeting, including Reggie Smith Jr., Dan Janco, Annie Witte, Ben Witte, Alesia Kennerson, Donna LaPlante, Dan LaPlante, Steve Tuxbury, Lila Tuxbury, Noel Gauthier, Mrs. Gauthier, Bud Butler, Daria Hart, Maria Moore and others.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Mr. Jerram announced that Selectman Gresczyk had called and was running late but would be present as soon as he was able.

Mr. Jerram announced that he would, if there were no objections, recess the meeting in order to allow the Selectmen to partake in the Annual Budget Meeting. Following the conclusion of that meeting, the Board of Selectmen would reconvene and return to their agenda. The meeting was recessed at 7:01 PM.

(please refer to the minutes of the Annual Budget Meeting as recorded by the Town Clerk for the specifics of the meeting.)

First Selectman Jerram reconvened the Board of Selectmen meeting at 7:24 PM.

Minutes:

tabled until later in the meeting

Guest Speaker State Senator Kevin Witkos:

First Selectman Jerram introduced Senator Witkos to those assembled and explained that Senator Witkos had asked to be present at this meeting in order to update residents of New Hartford on the status of the state budget.

Senator Witkos explained what was being discussed at the state level with respect to the budget. He stated that neither the Democrats nor the Republicans want to see aid to municipalities cut. He pledged that he would act on behalf of the interest of the municipalities he serves. Senator Witkos assured those present that he and other republicans had looked at the proposed budget line by line to see exactly which line items were worthy of increases and which line items should be faced with additional cuts. He noted that the "hard work is yet to come." First Selectman Jerram thanked Mr. Witkos for his attendance at this meeting and added that "it's great to have this kind of interaction with our legislators."

Minutes:

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Jerram to accept the minutes dated April 18, 2011 as presented.

AYE: Gresczyk, Jerram

ABSTAIN: Klebart

Motion carries.

Operations Updates:

First Selectman Jerram announced that Stone Construction was back on site at the sand/salt shed facility on Industrial Park Road in order to begin the shotcrete process.

Jerram stated that he was in the midst of doing a road analysis in order to determine priorities for improvement projects for the next fiscal year.

The search for a used road grader continues; Dan Janco had recently done some investigation into possible machines for consideration for which First Selectman thanked him for his input.

Union negotiations with Town Hall employees continues, no agreement as of yet.

The Winchester Road Bridge contract has been formally executed; a nominal increase will apply to the original quote to compensate for extension of the paved area included as part of the project.

The Street Sweeper is "limping along" – it needs repairs, but the mechanic advises against putting a lot of money into it.

He will keep it functioning without it being too costly.

FEMA representative has been in contact with bookkeeping. They reviewed paperwork and the representative outlined what will be needed in order to apply for reimbursement. On average, 75% of approved eligible costs are reimbursed. Mr. Jerram noted that the Annual Budget process has been questioned and asked if the Selectmen would like to have discussion of the process as an agenda item for the next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Klebart replied that he would like to have a discussion regarding this item; adding that he questioned the legality of the current process. He stated his opinion that residents should have the right to reduce expenditures. Selectman Gresczyk stated that Attorney Pickard had opined that the ordinance which automatically sends the budget vote to referendum is illegal. Gresczyk noted that Statutes give the Board of Selectmen the right to take any issue to referendum and further stated that it should not be an ordinance that does that. Selectman Klebart interjected that he believed that there were times when the budget did not need to go to a referendum and that the expense of always going to referendum could be reduced if a budget were voted on at a Town Meeting. Mr. Jerram stated that he liked going to referendum as it afforded the general public a greater opportunity to cast their vote. The Board agreed to table their discussion of the procedure in place and to include the topic as an agenda item of their next meeting.

Mr. Jerram informed the Selectmen that the scour report on the Gillette Road Bridge over Bakersville Brook has been completed and forwarded to the State. Jerram noted that this report had been due several years ago and that the town is now in compliance with DOT with respect to this matter. He noted that non-compliance could jeopardize state funding.

Appointments to Commission on Aging:

MOTION: by Klebart, second Gresczyk to appoint Patricia Petrella as a member of the Commission on Aging, term to expire 12/31/11.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Klebart to accept the resignation submitted by Linda Sheffield resigning her position as an alternate member of the Commission on Aging and appointing her to fill a vacancy as a regular member of the Commission on Aging, term to expire 12/31/11.

Unanimous.

Appointment of Deputy Emergency Management Directors:

First Selectman Jerram noted that Emergency Management Director Jim Farkas had made a recommendation to appoint Bruce Lockwood as a deputy EMD. Bruce is a professional consultant from Canton and has offered his services, at no charge, to the Town of New Hartford. This appointment would be a “win- win” as it would benefit New Hartford with valuable expertise and would also benefit Mr. Lockwood as he maintains community outreach and service for his own personal resume. Additionally, Mr. Farkas has requested that the Board also appoint Kevin Parcell of New Hartford to serve as a second deputy EMD. Mr. Jerram informed the Board that Emergency Management Director Farkas has indicated that as his children get older and their lives lead them in different directions, it is likely that Mr. Farkas and his wife will re-locate. It would therefore be beneficial to have an additional resident be versed in the operations of the emergency management office.

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Klebart to appoint Bruce Lockwood of Canton as a deputy to the Emergency Management Director.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Klebart, second Gresczyk to appoint Kevin Parcell of New Hartford to serve as a deputy to the Emergency Management Director.

Unanimous.

Selectman Gresczyk commented that Mr. Parcell is a great person and he will serve the town well.

Requests for Refunds of Taxes:

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Klebart to approve 6 request for refund of taxes as presented by the Tax Collector totaling \$6,354.26.

(Refund of Real Estate Property Taxes in the amount of \$4214.28 to First American Tax Svc for Burton B and Valerie Bruce; Refund of real estate property taxes in the amount of \$67.51 to Roxanne Carroll, Refund of Real Estate Property Taxes in the amount of \$1737.96 to First American Tax Svc for David and Cecile Emond, Request for Refund of Motor Vehicle Property Taxes to GMAC in the amount of \$45.65, Refund of Motor Vehicle Property Taxes in the amount of \$187.94 to CAB East LLC, Refund of Motor Vehicle Property Taxes in the amount of \$100.92 to GMAC.)

Unanimous.

Any Other Business to Come Before this Board:

No other business discussed.

Correspondence:

First Selectman Jerram stated that a local resident (Barbara Coppinger) had sent a thank you note to the Town Highway Department for a job well done throughout the winter. She expressed her thanks to them for their diligence in keeping the roads passable under such difficult circumstances this past winter season.

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Klebart to adjourn at 8:05 PM.

Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant