

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
February 23, 2016
MINUTES**

Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Laura Garay; Members of the Public: Jim Jerram, Maureen Jerram, Jack Casey, Daria Hart, Donna LaPlante, Dan LaPlante, Polly Pobuda, Paul Pobuda, Bill Baxter, Denton Butler, Beth Phillips, Linda Goff, Tim Goff, Mary Lou Rayno, Jay Bailey, Robert Bailey, Tom Buzzi, Troy LaMere; Member of the Press Kathryn Boughton (Republican- American); Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Dan Jerram called the Meeting to order at 7:05 PM. He announced that the Board of Selectmen would call a recess to their Regular Meeting so that they could attend the Special Town Meeting called for that same evening.

MOTION: by Garay to recess the Regular Board of Selectmen meeting at 7:06 PM to attend the Special Town Meeting; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

(Note: Minutes for the Special Town Meeting are filed with the Town Clerk)

MOTION: by Kennerson to reconvene the Regular Board of Selectmen meeting at 7:25 PM, seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

First Selectman Jerram noted that, if there were no objections, he would like to move approval of minutes to the end of the meeting ; no objections.

Set time and date of Special Town Meeting:

MOTION: by Kennerson to hold a Special Town Meeting on March 3, 2016 in the Senior Center at 7:00 PM.

Unanimous.

Set time and date of Advisory Referendum:

MOTION: by Kennerson to schedule an Advisory Referendum to be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2016, with voting to occur between the hours of 6:00 AM and 8:00 PM and voters voting at the usual polling places; to vote on the question , "Should the Bakerville School be closed?", seconded by Garay.

It was noted that the Special Town Meeting would adjourn to referendum. It was also noted that this is a non-binding advisory vote that is being conducted in order for the public to express their opinion regarding the decision that was made by the Board of Education to close Bakerville School.

Unanimous.

Approve Call of Special Town Meeting and Notice of Referendum:

First Selectman Jerram read the Notice of Special Town Meeting and Notice of Referendum into the record.

MOTION: by Kennerson to approve the Notice of the meeting and referendum as read; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

First Selectman Jerram noted that there were several people in attendance and stated that he would entertain comments from the public at this time.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Concern was expressed by several members of the public regarding capacity in the Senior Center. Concern was also expressed that parking would not be adequate for the anticipated number of attendees. Members of the public asked if the Meeting could be held at Ann Antolini School instead. The Selectmen agreed to look into changing the location of the Special Meeting to Ann Antolini and noted that the Call of the Meeting would be changed to reflect that location. Denton (Bud) Butler, Chairman of the School Building Committee was present at the meeting and left the room to see if he was able to contact Antolini School Principal Amanda Shaw to check on availability of the school for the meeting. He announced that he was able to speak with her and she verified availability. The Selectmen agreed to set the location as Antolini School and will publicize the location as such.

General discussion of the format of the Town Meeting ensued, with First Selectman Jerram clarifying that the meeting is intended to be an opportunity for those who still have questions to ask them and have them be answered. He stated that it is not intended to be a forum for presenting information with the intent of garnering support. He commented that this is an issue where there are two types of voters “heart” voters and “head” voters. He noted that everyone is entitled to vote based on their own style.

Tim Goff asked the Board what their thoughts were on the issue of closing the school. First Selectman Jerram replied that he had no response at this time, adding that he was hopeful that the elected leaders would listen to the voice of the community. There are many people out there that haven’t expressed an opinion and we haven’t heard from them; therefore it is difficult to know what the result of the advisory referendum will be.

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Linda Goff stated that those who have orchestrated this movement to be heard will abide by the decision if the vote favors closing the school; however, she commented that “if it is decided that it should be kept open and the Board of Education doesn’t keep it open, there will be trouble.”

Jack Casey replied to her comment, stating that he hopes that there is a plan if the vote is to keep it open, the leaders will listen.

Daria Hart commented that, in all fairness to the Board of Education, the people of the town need to keep in mind that this is an advisory vote and although, she, too would hope that the Board would listen if keeping the school open is the people’s choice – it is advisory only.

Jay Bailey stated that the school is a ‘part of the structure’ of that side of town; closing that school “messes with the dynamics of that side of town – it’s more than just a school to them.”

Tim Goff asked the Selectmen if they had any plans for the use of the school. Mr. Jerram replied that he has done some outreach, but there isn’t any plan in place at the moment.

At this point in the meeting, there were additional comments related to the Bakerville School issue and the topic then turned to miscellaneous commentary regarding water and sewer:

Jay Bailey stated that he and his son, Robert, had attended the recent Board of Finance meeting to address them regarding their concerns with water and sewer rates and the debt service related to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Mr. Bailey stated that the Board of Finance told them that they needed to take their concerns to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Bailey commented that it is his belief that the Town should pick up the cost of the infrastructure and the operations costs should be borne by those who use the systems.

First Selectman Jerram replied that the Water Pollution Control Authority, the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen had come to an agreement a few years back to restructure the payment schedule of the debt service associated with the construction of the sewer plant. The “split” was modified with the caveat that it would be reviewed in 5 years.

Robert Bailey asked what steps could be taken to gain additional financial assistance. Selectman Kennerson replied that if a plan was put together and presented to the Board of Selectmen that seemed reasonable, they might consider it and take it to the Board of Finance for discussion. However, she cautioned that a plan that put 100% of the debt service on the town as a whole would not be considered.

Member of the Public Mr. Jim Jerram commented that he had not been aware that there was any reconfiguration/modification of the debt service and stated that he was not in agreement with that course of action; adding “we should not have to pony up to pay for the downtown.”

The First Selectman responded that the debt service modification was part of the budget that was voted on and agreed to by the public.

Operations Updates:

First Selectman Jerram informed the Board that the informational flyer for the Advisory Referendum has been approved by the Board of Education and will go to the printer for publication and mailing.

The Roundtable event was well attended and was well received by those present. Jerram noted that it was interesting that the topic of water quality at West Hill Lake/Pond became a large discussion item. He stated that this is obviously an area of concern that will need follow up.

Jerram stated that he will be connecting with Planning and Zoning Chairman Ted Stoutenberg regarding establishing an implementation committee to address the goals of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Mr. Jerram announced that Land Use Administrator candidate Ruth Mulcahy met with the Chairmen of the P&Z, Inland Wetland, and Zoning Board of Appeals and that they all provided good feedback.

The budget process is in progress. Jerram noted that there are 15-20 line items that need some “firming up.”

Stanclift Cove tree issue is being addressed. Barkhamsted and New Hartford are working together to bring this issue to a result that will be satisfactory with the MDC and have the area safe for the summer. Town forces will be used to assist in this effort and keep costs down.

Selectman Laura Garay commented that she thought the Roundtable event was very successful and she would like to see more of these types of meetings in the future.

Resident and Stanclift Cove Board member Daria Hart thanked the Board of Selectmen and especially First Selectman Dan Jerram for the support given to Stanclift Cove. She commented how much it meant to the Authority to have the Selectmen from both towns attend their meeting and help them with a plan to remove the trees.

Appointments to Boards and Commissions:

First Selectman Jerram informed the Board that he had 2 candidates to recommend to the Board for appointment to the Recreation Commission. He had contacted the Chairman of the Recreation commission and there is no objection to the candidates. Jerram explained that Arnold Helt “grew up at the camp.” His father was a long time caretaker of Brodie Park. Jerram noted that there is no one who has greater historical knowledge of the park. Arnie and his family (children and grandchildren) are long time users of the Park and he will be a valuable member to the commission. The second candidate is Ed McCann who is a neighbor to the Park, owning property adjacent to the Park. He is also a recreation director for the City of Waterbury.

MOTION: by Kennerson to appoint Arnold Helt to fill a vacancy as a member of the Recreation Commission, term to expire 12/31/2019, seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

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MOTION: by Kennerson to appoint Ed McCann to fill a vacancy as a member of the Recreation Commission, term to expire 12/31/2019, seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

Mr. Jerram stated that Laura White, former Clerk to the Assessor, has volunteered to fill the vacancy on the Board of Assessment Appeals. Jerram stated that there is no conflict with a town employee serving in this capacity and commented that her past experience in the Assessor's office provides her with the knowledge needed to hear appeals.

MOTION: by Kennerson to appoint Laura White to fill a vacancy as a member of the Board of Assessment Appeals, seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

Mr. Jerram stated that there are currently 5 candidates for 3 vacancies on the Economic Development Commission and that one of those candidates is checking with his compliance department at work to see if there is any conflict with seeking this appointment. Jerram noted that there continues to be vacancies on several boards and commissions.

Request for Tax Refunds:

MOTION: by Kennerson to approve the request for tax refunds as presented by the Tax Collector (Lynne Dezzani – due to vehicle sold; \$410.60; Community Systems Inc – due to non-profit status \$55.91; Community Systems Inc. – due to non-profit status \$118.07), seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

Executive Session for the purpose of discussion related to strategy/negotiations for sale of town owned assets:

MOTION: by Kennerson to enter into Executive Session at 8:40 PM for the purpose of discussion related to strategy/negotiations for the sale of town owned assets; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

First Selectman Jerram invited WPCA Chairman Denton (Bud) Butler into the Executive Session.

Jerram, Garay, Butler, Kennerson entered into Executive Session.

MOTION: by Kennerson to end Executive Session at 10:05 and reconvene the regular meeting of the Board; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

No action taken during Executive Session.

Budget 2016-2017:

The Selectmen reviewed the budget that they are working on. They discussed the various line items and noted that an additional \$90,000 will need to be added to cover Bakerville School expenses if the decision to close Bakerville School remains as is. They decided to meet again on Thursday, March 10 to finalize the proposed budget. At that time, they will make a formal recommendation to adopt the budget that will be presented to the Board of Finance at their workshop on Saturday, March 12, 2016. Mr. Jerram noted that the draft budget figures at this time with the Bakerville School maintenance costs included will put the budget at a 2.2% increase.

Any Other Business:

MOTION: by Kennerson to proclaim March 12, 2106 as Girl Scout Day in accordance with the Proclamation read by First Selectman Dan Jerram; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to revise the Call of the Town Meeting to reflect the location change to Antolini School as discussed earlier in the meeting; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to approve the Minutes of the Special Board of Selectman meeting dated February 9, 2016 as presented; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to adjourn at 11:00 PM; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant