

**Board of Selectmen  
Regular Meeting  
December 18, 2018**

**Minutes**

**Present:** First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Eric Claman; Member of the Press Kathryn Boughton (Republican-American); Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

**Operations Updates:**

*Conservation Easement:*

First Selectman Jerram stated that he has been in discussion with the Town Attorney regarding the conservation easement for the Helen Butler Trail. He has concerns with the easement that has been proposed by the Land Trust and he has asked the Attorney to prepare a simplified easement. Attorney Roraback replied that much of the easement language is “boilerplate” and needs to be included for tax exempt purposes. Mr. Jerram does not want the easement to be so restrictive that it limits rights of the townspeople. For example, the current proposed easement limits the number of benches on the trail and also does not allow the use of pavement as a trail surface. Mr. Jerram asked the Selectmen to give a final review of the document and offer comments and suggestions to him to submit to the attorney.

*Tax Collector Ordinance:*

Mr. Jerram stated that he has also asked the attorney to complete the requested proposed ordinance to appoint a Tax Collector. This ordinance needs to be presented at a Town Meeting prior to the retirement of the Tax Collector. Jerram repeated that this proposed ordinance changes the position of tax collector from an elected position to an appointed position. He stated that appointing a tax collector insures that qualified individuals with the proper training assume that role. He further stated that the current Assistant has the qualifications to become the next tax collector. She has done an excellent job, is personable and should be the successor to the current tax collector.

*MIRA:*

Mr. Jerram informed the Board members that he had received an update on the status of the mechanical failure affecting MIRA, the trash to energy plant that acts as depository for trash from RRDD. He has been advised that MIRA is pursuing a claim, but there may still be need for member towns to pay a special assessment to cover expenses. However, it may not be as much as what was once originally thought.

*Region 7 Budget:*

First Selectman Jerram informed the Board that the enrollment projections for the next year at Regional show that Barkhamsted and Norfolk will have increased membership, while New Hartford will see a decrease. Health Care costs for the district may increase between 2% and 4%.

*New Hartford Budget:*

Jerram indicated that current revenues look good. Short term interest was projected at \$20,000 and \$50,000 has already been received. Sale of used equipment has resulted in \$20,000 of additional

unanticipated revenue. Mr. Jerram stated that there are 3 line items that are currently slightly over, however, all departments are within budget. Revaluation shows a 2% increase, but Jerram cautioned that this is very preliminary and there may be additional adjustments.

*Staffing Changes:*

The First Selectman remarked that there have been several staff changes this past year. The Land Use Administrator position will require a memorandum of understanding that the hours will be slightly different from other union positions. His hours will be reduced to allow for funds to be available for expenses incurred for training needed for the new hire. A new Senior Director has been hired. She will be getting acquainted with the Seniors and will develop programming that suits the interests expressed. The highway overtime budget has incurred expenses due to ‘small storms that hit at the wrong time of day.’ Jerram stated that “winter drives the budget.”

*Carpenter Road Bridge:*

Work is continuing at the Carpenter Road Bridge site. The water level remains extremely high. The bridge deck needs to be lifted by the end of the year. The engineer has notified the State that the water levels continue to remain high and it could impact progress.

*Additional Full Time Position:*

Mr. Jerram updated the Selectmen on the addition of a full time position to Town Hall staffing. He stated that additional responsibilities will be added to the assistant bookkeeping position. The position will be called administrative office assistant. A variety of tasks will be assigned to this position and the individual will be cross trained to assist in other departments, when needed. This position will also include being trained in assisting the Tax Collector. When the current Assistant Tax Collector becomes the Tax Collector, there will no longer be an assistant. However, this does not mean that there will not be any help provided to the tax collector, it just will not be a defined part time position. A vacancy will be created in the Registrars office when the current Registrar resigns; which is necessary to take on the fulltime position. The Registrars appoint Deputy Registrars and the Deputy will automatically move to Registrar until the next election.

*Capital Plan:*

The Selectmen reviewed the capital plan. The First Selectman stated that some headway has been made with keeping the fleet of vehicles in shape. The oldest vehicle is approximately 13 years old. Selectman Claman asked what the downtown improvements capital line item is used for. Jerram replied that eventually, sidewalks will be needed on an area along Route 44 in the area of the Citgo Station. The Highway Department has prioritized their needs—they would like a wash bay as their top request, followed by one loader and an additional large plow truck. Jerram stated that a wash bay should be funded over two years. Construction could begin in the spring of 2020 and completed during the summer of 2020; straddling over 2 fiscal years. The Selectmen did not make any formal endorsements of the plan; they will continue to review at the next meeting.

**Appointments to Boards and Commissions:**

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Karen Gauthier and Laura Garay to serve as members of the Commission on Aging; terms to expire December 31, 2021.; seconded by Claman.

Unanimous.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Paul Mahoney and Tony Mitchell to serve as members on the Conservation Commission; terms to expire December 31, 2021; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Jerry Ecklund to serve as a member on the Historic District Commission; term to expire December 31, 2023; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint James Hall, Gerard Tabaka and Karl Hermonat to serve as members on the Inland-Wetlands Commission; terms to expire December 31, 2021; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Jean Darlington, Karen Griswold-Nelson, and Seth Warner Jr. to serve as members on the Open Space Preservation Commission; terms to expire December 31, 2021; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Brenda Schaufler to serve as member of the Board at Regional Refuse Disposal District #1; term to expire December 31, 2021; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Mary (Sue) Hall to serve as a member of the Town Hill Cemetery Association; term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Wes Marsh and Polly Pobuda to serve as members on the Water Pollution Control Authority; terms to expire December 31, 2021; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous.*

First Selectman Jerram stated that there were 2 other Commissions where appointments are needed; Economic Development Commission and the Recreation Commission, but they would not be addressed tonight.

Selectman Claman asked why no action was being considered with respect to reappointing Mark Russo to the Economic Development Commission. Mr. Jerram acknowledged that Mr. Russo has done a nice job as Chairman on the Commission, but he (Jerram) was uncomfortable with his reappointment due to commentary recently made by him on Social Media. Jerram stated that Mr. Russo had, through his comments, implied that the Tax Assessor was not assessing everyone in the same manner. Jerram explained that Russo implied that the Assessor targeted certain individuals and overlooked others. The First Selectman defended the Assessor and stated that Mr. Russo was totally inappropriate in his

commentary as he was implying that unethical procedures were being practiced and further stated that Mr. Russo should apologize for his statements. Jerram stated that free speech is one thing, but to “cast a stone publicly is not appropriate.”

Selectman Kennerson read aloud a statement she had prepared (attached) regarding this matter.

Claman questioned if Mr. Russo had broken any policy when he commented on Social Media; adding that he felt that without any formal policy in place, it seemed unreasonable to withhold an appointed position when an individual has performed their duties well. Selectman Claman stated that he would like to see Mr. Russo reappointed to the Economic Development Commission based on the merits of his service, defending Mr. Russo’s comments as exercising his right to Freedom of Speech.

**Tax Refunds:**

***2017 Grand List:***

Daimler Trust/Mercedes Benz Fin Svc USA	\$259.14
Services Unlimited of New Hartford	\$23.00
Services Unlimited of New Hartford	\$6.64
Timothy Lyman	\$13.62

***2016 Grand List:***

Chad Rindflesh	\$5.08
Power Access Corp	\$307.91
Robert 7 Gale Morse	\$11.00
Toyota Lease Trust	\$401.73
Toyota Lease Trust	\$233.09
Toyota Lease Trust	\$299.58
Toyota Lease Trust	\$144.18
Toyota Lease Trust	\$271.34
Michael E. Hiles	\$64.79
Cab East LLC	\$203.33
Cab East LLC	\$155.93
Cab East LLC	\$398.95
Vault Trust	\$283.11
Ahjung & Bok U. Lim dba Cappy's Cleaners & Tailoring	\$38.33
Jeffrey or Nancy Linton	\$16.65
CAB East or Ford Motor Company	\$139.18
D and D Landscape Services for Derek Genetti	\$41.48
Dand D Landscape Services for Derek Genetti	\$10.65

*Minutes Board of Selectmen December 18, 2018 p 5*

D and D Landscape Services	\$15.29
Frederick Wierdsma	\$267.18
Frederick Wierdsma	\$68.12
Mark Marchetti	\$7.48

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to accept, as presented by the Tax Collector, the refunds for Grand List 2016 and 2017; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to adjourn at 9:10 PM; seconded by Claman.

*Unanimous.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*

*Attachments:*

*Statement prepared by Alesia Kennerson re: Support for Tax Assessor*