

*Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting  
Minutes*

*October 26, 2021*

**Present:** First Selectman Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Laura Garay; invited Guest Nancy Scheetz; Farmington Valley Visiting Nurse Association; Board of Finance Chairman Regina Wexler, Board of Finance member Bart Baxter; Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

**Presentation by Nancy Scheetz re: Farmington Valley Visiting Nurses Association:**

Mr. Jerram welcomed Nancy Scheetz, Executive Director of the Farmington Valley Visiting Nurse Association (FVVNA) to the meeting and explained that Ms. Scheetz was asked to present information regarding the services provided by the FVVNA to the Board.

Ms. Scheetz thanked the Board for inviting her to the meeting. She stated that there are seven towns that currently contract with FVVNA for their public health nursing services. They provide wellness services such as blood pressure clinics, blood glucose clinics, flu vaccine clinics and offer educational programming at Senior Centers, Town Halls and even Libraries. Farmington Valley Visiting Nurse Association employs physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech therapists as well as nurses. Ms. Scheetz stressed that the FVVNA works closely with the town to meet the needs of the residents. There is a homebound program available that provides health supervision to those that cannot leave their home. A skilled clinician provides support and supervision and helps to keep the patient from having to return to the hospital for routine care. FVVNA alerts the town to those folks who are homebound so that the town is aware of their situation in the event of an emergency.

Selectman Garay asked if foot clinics are offered by FVVNA. Ms. Scheetz replied that they have stopped providing this service due to the prohibitive costs associated with the service. Foot care is best provided by a licensed professional due to the potential of complications that can arise.

The Selectmen thanked Ms. Scheetz for being present at the meeting and providing them with information.

**Operations Updates:**

*Asset Sale Update:*

First Selectman Jerram informed the Selectmen that the past two weeks has been mostly devoted to researching easements so that the sale of the water and wastewater assets can move forward. The records for Pine Meadow Farms are incomplete due to the fact that easements were never obtained for the sewer and water lines that exist within the development. This needs to be completed before a sale can be finalized.

*Sidewalks:*

Sidewalk repairs are being completed in many areas throughout the downtown area.

*Management Plan – Butler Trail:*

Mr. Jerram met with members of the Land Trust and the Open Space Commission at the Butler Trail to review the management agreement that is in effect. An annual review of the agreement is required. There are some areas of erosion that need restoration. This will be addressed. Mr. Jerram commented

that Jean Darlington (a member of the Open Space Preservation Commission) has done a lot of volunteer maintenance on the trail and he is very appreciative of all of her efforts.

*Town Clerk:*

The First Selectman stated that Lynn Florio has begun working in the Town Clerk's office. She will be working side by side with outgoing Town Clerk Mrs. Ventre in an effort to get some valuable training in the position before Mrs. Ventre relocates to Florida.

*Town Hall Closures:*

Mr. Jerram stated that Town Hall will be closed for in-person business on Election Day – November 2. Staff will be available by phone and email. This will limit the amount of foot traffic not related to the voting that is occurring at Town Hall and will assist in keeping parking open for voters.

Town Hall will also be closed on November 12 due to the Union voting to use this as half of their discretionary day following the Veteran's Day Holiday on Thursday.

Town Hall will also be closed on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving (November 23). This is typically a half day, however, the union voted to use the remainder of their discretionary day to make a longer holiday this one year.

*RRDD/MIRA:*

First Selectman Jerram stated that he has received notification from Regional Refuse Disposal District 1 that they will be closing early on Saturday, November 6 to attend services for a former employee.

MIRA issues continue –the trash to energy plant in Hartford is nearing the end of its life and there are no plans to renovate. Disposal of municipal solid waste (MSW) will soon become a problem as costs are anticipated to increase, having already doubled since 2016. Regional Refuse Disposal District 1 generates 11,000 tons of waste. Options such as pay per throw have been discussed in an effort to curb costs. Sticker prices will need to increase in order to keep up with the increase passed on by MIRA.

*Highway Maintainer:*

The interviews for filling the vacant highway maintainer have been completed. An offer will be extended to one of the candidates soon and it is hoped that the vacancy will be filled before too long.

**Discussion of public outreach for suggestions of use of American Recovery Funds:**

The Selectmen agreed that a mailer needs to be sent to all households to inform them of the public informational meetings that will be held on November 18 and November 30 at Town Hall. These meetings will allow for discussion of the American Recovery Funds the Town has received. Public comment and sharing of ideas for the best use of the funds will be encouraged. Information will be given as to what the guidelines for use of the funds may be. The Selectmen agreed to hold special meetings of the Board of Selectmen to specifically address the ARPA funds. Meeting dates will be scheduled as needed.

**Requests for Tax Refunds:**

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to approve the Tax Refunds as recommended by the Tax Collector; seconded by Garay:

Lewis or Marci Chappel	Motor Vehicle	\$10.41
Estate of Wesley Beam	Motor Vehicle	\$18.75

David Ganci	Motor Vehicle	\$26.66
David Maloy	Motor Vehicle	\$1.27
David Maloy	Motor Vehicle	\$8.88
David Maloy	Motor Vehicle	\$4.60
Toyota Lease Trust	Motor Vehicle	\$324.77
Toyota Lease Trust	Motor Vehicle	\$179.92
Toyota Lease Trust	Motor Vehicle	\$111.75
Toyota Lease Trust	Motor Vehicle	\$501.75
Honda Lease Trust	Motor Vehicle	\$90.97

*Unanimous.*

**Opportunity For Public Comment:**

Bart Baxter requested that the Board of Selectmen give due consideration to forming a committee to elicit responses and gather ideas regarding the use of the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds that New Hartford has already received and the additional funds pending. Mr. Baxter claimed that it would be best to have a committee make recommendations for the use of the funds rather than have it be the Board of Selectmen who determines unilaterally the use of the funds.

Regina Wexler addressed the Board and echoed Mr. Baxter's sentiments. She stated that although she appreciates the public informational meetings, she felt that there should be public participation in the process. She informed the Board of Selectmen that she had discussed the ARPA funding with the auditors and was told by them that they have not yet seen the final regulations as to "how to spend the funds." Ms. Wexler commented that this is a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity for the town and it needs to be a collaborative effort. She stated her belief that the debate of closing the Bakerville School and the sale of the assets of the water and wastewater systems was not collaborative nor inclusive and she would like this to be collaborative in nature. She also said that she felt it was dangerous to elicit applications for assistance and dangerous to promise confidentiality to those who might seek assistance. Ms. Wexler felt that a non-profit should be contacted that might be able to assist determining need for individual assistance in order to protect confidentiality. Mr. Jerram replied that he is not aware of any town that is using the service of a non-profit to assist in determining eligibility or provide assistance with the disbursement of the funds. He responded that the Board of Selectmen are elected to superintend the needs of the town and this falls under their purvey.

Selectman Garay interjected that she would be in favor of having a committee that assists in the process. She stated that the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities has written guidance regarding the ARPA funding and they do suggest that committees be used to assist in the process of creating a plan and increasing public awareness. Ms. Garay gave examples of recent committees that had served the community well; specifically the committee that was formed by the Superintendent when there was discussion of closing the Bakerville School and the Asset Sale committee formed by the Board of Selectmen that investigated the potential sale of the assets of water and wastewater systems.

**Correspondence:**

Letters were received from Regina Wexler, Neil Tolhurst and Laura Bedford regarding their desire to see a committee formed to solicit suggestions for use of the ARPA funds and also to make recommendations for the distribution of the funds.

**Any Other Business:**

None discussed

**Minutes:**

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on September 7, 2021; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Garay to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on September 28, 2021; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*

*Attachments:*

*Correspondence from*

*Regina Wexler*

*Neil Tolhurst*

*Laura Bedford*