

**Board of Selectmen  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, December 20, 2022**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Laura Garay, Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

Others present (virtually): Kathryn Boughton (Republican-American reporter), Denton Butler; WPCA Chairman

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

**ARPA**

First Selectman Jerram distributed requests received for American Recovery Plan Act funding from some Scout troops, which are non profits. Jerram noted that the Selectmen had set aside funding in the ARPA plan that was approved at Referendum. Even though the funding was listed in the document and was approved, the Selectmen had asked for applications to have on file prior to releasing funds. Boy Scouts Troop 19, Scouts BSA , Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts Pack 19 submitted applications to secure the funding. The commonality in the applications was that COVID had a great impact on the ability to retain membership and it was difficult to stay afloat during COVID. Holding Scout meetings via ZOOM was not something that was well received and membership declined substantially.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to release funds as requested for the 4 Scout units, seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

At this point in the meeting First Selectman Jerram sought the approval of the Selectmen to modify the agenda and add discussion of the Beekley Library to the agenda.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to amend agenda item number one to include discussion of the Beekley Library, noting that the library is categorized as a large non-profit, seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

Mr. Jerram announced that the planned addition to the Beekley Library has been shelved. Jerram has received an email from the library requesting to use the ARPA funding for maintenance items on the existing building, rather than using it for new construction.

Garay asked how much funding had been raised towards the initial construction. Jerram replied that he thought it was in the area of \$400,000. Garay asked how those funds were used – what happened to them? Jerram replied that it can be assumed that there were costs associated with design and planning. He explained that there was also the issue of prevailing wage that raised the cost of construction to an unachievable goal. Garay and Kennerson questioned the cost of the maintenance projects – Garay would prefer that there are actual estimates. Kennerson added that she would prefer to pay for a specific invoice. Paying for an invoice, she believed, insures that the town has the proper documentation to back up the spending. Jerram noted that there may be other changes from other organizations regarding changes in requests for funding. Kennerson would like to move on and discuss phase II funding before making any decisions on the change to Beekley Library.

**Discussion of American Rescue Plan Funding –next phase:**

Jerram stated that there have been additional requests for funding from various agencies since the approval of the first round of funding. The ambulance has asked for an additional \$56,250.00 to assist in paying for the ambulance. They have had to use their funds to pay for additional staffing due to the lack of volunteers and therefore need additional help.

South End Fire has asked for \$50,000 to pay for repairs to fire apparatus. Ms. Kennerson asked if these repairs have already occurred. Jerram replied that the thought they had, but will seek clarification.

New Hartford Fire had initially asked for funds for upgrades to radios; however, they were recently awarded a grant that will pay for the communication upgrade. Therefore, they have asked for reconsideration of funds to pay for the cost of paving of their parking lot. A portion of the parking lot has already been completed, but the Fire Department would appreciate having the ARPA funds cover the remainder of the lot.

Selectman Kennerson commented on the request from the South End Fire Department, saying she has an issue with granting \$50,000 for a project that has already occurred. She does not want to see the money “sit in their bank account.” Selectman Garay agreed that she supports the fire department seeking assistance through ARPA; but she would like it communicated to them that they should come back with a specific request for something that they would have difficulty paying for, not something that has already been paid for.

Mrs. Kennerson would like to be certain that the taxing district is the beneficiary of the ARPA funding, not the individual volunteer fire departments. She noted that there is a difference. She wants to see the funds used for something that would ordinarily require funding from the tax revenues.

The Farmington Valley Health District has asked for funding in the amount of \$440,544.00 from the 10 towns with the New Hartford allotment coming in at \$27,149.00. The Selectmen reviewed the request; noting that the majority of the funds are allocated toward a community outreach coordinator for a period of 3 years. There was discussion as to what happens once the funding runs out; with the Selectmen being of the opinion that they are not in favor of funding something that could be short term. Jerram commented that the sewer line for New Hartford is still looming out there and noted that funding cannot be approved for all of the various requests if there is intent to put more funding towards the sewerline extension. The Selectmen will return to this item; no decision at this time.

The Governmental “bucket” was addressed by Mr. Jerram. Originally, \$187,400 was approved to fund a new roof for New Hartford Elementary School. (\$175,000 was the figure given to the Selectmen by the Superintendent) and some HVAC improvements for Antolini School. Mr. Jerram stated that there has been consultation with contractors regarding the roof replacement and the estimate is closer to \$500,000 for that job.

Town Hall IT was originally at \$25,000 for various projects – including new software for the building department. The Assessor needed additional funding for the GIS mapping and a special project related to uploading a historic proprietor’s map onto the town website. Mr. Jerram would like to increase the funding for various IT needs.

Public Utilities: Jerram thinks that there should be consideration of additional funds to this item.

Selectman Garay stated that she has heard good things about the Food pantry at St Johns and would like to increase the funding to them, if possible. The Selectmen had discussed purchasing Gift Cards to be

distributed to help people get additional food products that may not be available at the pantry. Mr. Jerram replied that, due to accountability, he was reluctant to give the gift cards and would prefer to receive an invoice from St Johns for the purchase of the cards or issue payment to purchase food items. The Selectmen discussed Senior needs. Administrative Assistant Hayward updated the Selectmen on a recent discussion Senior Director DeSantis had with Farmington Valley Health District regarding what might be needed in order to be able to prepare some on site meals for the Seniors. Mrs. DeSantis had asked what upgrades would need to be done in order to make the kitchen area an approved kitchen for food prep. There are several areas that need to be addressed – i.e. new flooring, additional counter space, new appliances, to name a few.

Selectman Kennerson stated that she would love to have the funds available to find a place for a new senior center but the reality is that there aren't a lot of options available at this time. There are timeframes for spending the ARPA funds that need to be adhered to and Ms. Kennerson is concerned that there won't be an option for a new center and the funds would sit idle. Therefore, she is in favor of reducing the amount set aside for the Seniors.

Selectman Garay would like to know the cost of moving forward with making the kitchen more usable. She'd like to have the Seniors benefit from the ARPA funds. She is reluctant to reduce the allocation for seniors until there is an idea of the cost of possible renovations to the kitchen. She'd rather wait before reducing this area.

Jerram encouraged the Selectmen to consider adding funding to the sewerline extensions. He would propose making adjustments to other line items in order to increase funding for the extension plan. Garay and Kennerson are in support of this, but want to look at all of the options first.

The Selectmen will continue their review of ARPA at another meeting. They want clarifications in a couple of areas – such as the cost of the ambulance, cost estimates for the paving at the fire station parking lot and an alternate spending plan from District 2 if the truck repairs have already been done.

**Annual Appointments:**

First Selectman Jerram announced that it is time for annual appointments to Boards and Commissions.

**MOTION:** by Garay to reappoint Ann Gadwah to the Conservation Commission; term to expire December 31, 2025; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Garay to reappoint Harlan Gustafson to the Conservation Commission; term to expire December 31, 2025; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

Mr. Jerram noted that there was an error made with regards to the expiration date of the term for Paul Mahoney and the Selectmen were asked to correct the error.

**MOTION:** by Garay to correct the term for Conservation Commission member Paul Mahoney and modify the expiration date of the term to 12/31/2024; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Anita Barden to the Economic Development Commission; term to expire 12/31/2027; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Garay to reappoint Frances Stoffer to the Historic District Commission; term to expire 12/31/2027; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Anne Hall to the Inland Wetlands Commission; term to expire 12/31/2025; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Garay to reappoint Eva Barham to the Open Space Preservation Commission; term to expire 12/31/2025; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Garay to reappoint William (Bill) Michaud to the Open Space Preservation Commission; term to expire 12/31/2025; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Garay to reappoint Mary Hoag to serve as an alternate on the Open Space Preservation Commission; term to expire 12/31/2025; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Hans Anderson to serve as a member on the Board at Regional Refuse Disposal District #1; term to expire 12/31/2025; seconded by Garay.

First Selectman Jerram offered public thanks to Hans for continuing to serve on this Board.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Garay to reappoint Donna Burdick as a member on the Town Hill Cemetery Committee; term to expire 12/31/2028; seconded by Kennerson.

First Selectman Jerram stated that Donna Burdick “is closing in on 50 years of service to the Town of New Hartford” and offered thanks for her continued service. He stated that this is an ‘amazing accomplishment.’

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Garay to reappoint Mary Lou Rayno to serve as a member on the Town Hill Cemetery Committee; term to expire 12/31/2028; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint David Douyard to the Water Pollution Control Authority; term to expire December 31, 2025; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Denton (Bud) Butler to the Water Pollution Control Authority; term to expire 12/31/2025; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous*

First Selectman Jerram gave public thanks to all those who serve as volunteers on all of the Boards and Commissions in Town. He also noted that there are several vacancies on various Boards and reminded all that anyone interested in serving on a Board or Commission should contact him at Town Hall to see if there is an area that might be of interest.

**Approval of 2023 Meeting Schedule:**

The meeting schedule for 2023 was presented to the Selectmen. Meetings will continue to be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM, with the exception being in December 2023 due to the Christmas holiday. That meeting will be on the third Tuesday of December. The meetings will be hybrid format to allow public participation from home. The Selectmen will continue to meet in person.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to approve the 2023 Meeting Schedule as presented; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous*

**Approval of 2023 Town Hall Holiday Schedule:**

The First Selectman asked that the Selectmen hold off on approving the entirety of the proposed Holiday Schedule due to the fact that contract negotiations are in process. Holidays are part of the negotiations. He would like to recommend that the Selectmen review only the first quarter at this time.

**MOTION:** by Garay to approve the first quarter of the 2023 holiday schedule (January through end of March); seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous.*

**Requests for Tax Refunds:**

First Selectman Jerram presented tax refunds to the Board of Selectmen.

Canton Well Drilling	MV	\$1173.28
Toyota Lease Trust	MV	\$ 196.58
Toyota Lease Trust	MV	\$ 283.96
Toyota Lease Trust	MV	\$ 245.55
Toyota Lease Trust	MV	\$ 315.66
Toyota Lease Trust	MV	\$ 725.92
VCFS Auto Leasing Co	MV	\$ 342.19

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to approve the tax refunds as recommended by the Tax Collector;  
seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous*

**Any Other Business to Come Before this Board:**

No other Business

First Selectman Jerram wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

**MOTION:** by Garay to adjourn at 9.40 PM, seconded by Jerram.

*Unanimous*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*

**ATTACHMENTS**

*2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule*

*2023 Holiday Schedule – 1<sup>st</sup> quarter approved*