

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, August 27, 2019**

Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Eric Claman; Members of the Public Donna LaPlante, Dan LaPlante, Madeline McClave, Bill Michaud; Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Discussion of Conservation Easement – Butler property:

The final draft version of the proposed Conservation Easement was presented to the Board of Selectmen for review. Ms. McClave and Bill Michaud, representatives from the Open Space Commission, were present to answer any questions that remained from the Board of Selectmen. There were questions posed by Selectman Kennerson regarding responsibility for a management plan. She noted that the easement references that a plan will exist. Ms. McClave replied that the Land Trust has a template for a management plan and it could be used to create a plan that would be a collaborative effort between the Conservation Commission and Open Space Commission. The plan would be presented to the Board of Selectmen for approval. Ms. McClave noted that a management plan can be evolving – it can change as it needs to.

The Selectmen had no concerns with the proposed conservation easement. They indicated that it “looked good.”

Operations Updates:

First Selectman Jerram informed the Board members that the fiscal year 2019 ended with a \$420,000 surplus. The 2018-2019 budget was underspent by \$175,000. Revenues exceeded expectations. Short term interest saw a significant increase than what was projected. This was due to the investment in the CT STIF account, at the recommendation of the Town Treasurer.

Mr. Jerram stated that all departments are whole; line item transfers remained within departments. The Bakerville Library did receive funding toward a new furnace; this was a one time special appropriation above their requested operations funding.

Repair of the sidewalk at 8 Bridge Street has been completed. The town agreed to contribute \$15,000 toward the cost of the project. Payment will be issued to the property owner as outlined in the agreement. West Road is being prepared for paving. Tree work is being completed and there are plans to remove a hump in the middle of the roadway to allow better sight lines. There may be some differences in the total width of the road in some areas due to stone walls that cannot be pushed back. There are a couple of telephone poles that need to be moved. This may not happen until after the road is paved.

The Speed signs that alert drivers to their speed have been moved to new locations. The signs have now been placed on Cedar Lane and Southeast Road.

One of the Board of Assessment Appeals lawsuits has been settled. The Barberry Drive claim has reached an agreement. The solar panels case (LSE Cannis Minor) remains unsettled. The taxation laws regarding commercial arrays are unclear.

The new Dunkin Donuts location is still under construction. Connecticut Department of Transportation has not given final approval regarding the driveway cuts. They had been approved but the engineer who

granted the approval has retired and the replacement has some concerns with the proposed exit onto Route 44.

Senior Director Diane has been warmly received by the New Hartford seniors and has been doing a fabulous job with programming. When Diane was originally hired, she was given extra hours to work in excess of the 20-22 hours that were budgeted due to funds remaining from unused hours from the prior Director. At the start of the current fiscal year, she was told that she had to revert back to the budgeted hours as there are no extra funds available for additional hours. The “senior club” has approached the First Selectman and has offered to provide additional funding for 4 extra hours so that Diane can work on Fridays. They feel strongly that her presence is needed 5 days a week so that those who need transportation from the Van will be able to call and schedule appointments. This has been referred to the Town’s labor counsel to be sure that funding from an outside source can be used to supplement wages.

First Selectman Jerram informed the Board that the deed for the “old canal on Wickett Street” has been signed and recorded. This completes the transaction of accepting that parcel of land.

Camp Brodie was a huge success this year. Enrollment numbers were much higher than last year. There were a lot of campers who registered for additional weeks after attending a successful first week. It is anticipated that there will be 30K in the program account after expenses are paid. Selectman Claman commented that he felt that having a summer brochure helped with enrollment numbers.

The Asset Evaluation Team has not met recently due to the fact that all materials have been submitted to the USDA and the town is now waiting for a response regarding the status of the request to forgive the grant repayment.

A Request for Proposals for engineering services for a trail routing study has been released. Proposals are due on September 16, 2019.

A letter was sent to New Hartford Day participants alerting them to some of the changes that will be occurring this year. A later start time and a reconfigured vendor and entertainment area are two examples of implemented changes. Electrical upgrades have been completed.

Appointment to Cemetery Committee:

Mr. Jerram stated that a resignation from the Town Hill Cemetery Committee has been received. Sue Hall will be a full time Florida resident and will no longer be able to serve on this committee. A recommendation to appoint Nancy Linton as her replacement has been made by Chairman Mary Lou Rayno.

MOTION: by Kennerson to appoint Nancy Linton to fill a vacancy on the Town Hill Cemetery Committee, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Claman.

Unanimous.

Correspondence:

Dan Jerram stated that he had received a letter of concern from a Harwinton resident who bikes frequently in New Hartford regarding the lack of shoulders on Route 202. This resident was hoping that the town could persuade the State to increase the width so that bikers would have ample safe passage along route 202. Mr. Jerram stated that he will bring this concern to the State DOT.

Any other Business:

First Selectman Jerram expressed his thanks publicly to Assistant Town Clerk Debbie Ventre and Town Clerk Donna Laplante for all of the hard work and effort they have been putting in to work out the details of the Open Farm Day that is occurring on September 14, 2019. This is an Economic Development Commission undertaking and Donna and Debbie have performed many tasks to help this come to fruition. He commended them for a job well done. He hopes that Farm Day is a success.

Selectman Alesia Kennerson stated that she had recently attended a meeting of the Stanclift Cove Commission on behalf of her son who was unable to attend due to having to work. He is an employee of the Cove and had some questions regarding policies and procedures with respect to wages. Ms. Kennerson expressed her concern regarding how this Authority functions without a budget. She also expressed concern that they do not appear to have a maintenance plan. She was unclear as to what personnel policies they may or may not have. She stated that she felt that since this Authority is an extension of both Barkhamsted and New Hartford, perhaps some guidance could be given to them so that they can implement clear policies.

Request for Tax Refunds:

Stephen and Martha Busemeyer	\$226.38	overpayment
Timothy and Susan Traub	\$217.47	overpayment
Kurt and Lisa Carpenter	\$14.31	overpayment
Elizabeth Goergen	\$99.13	overpayment
ILIRS construction & Remodeling	\$650.46	overpayment
Frank Aurin	\$194.14	overpayment
Acar Leasing Ltd	\$545.78	overpayment
Adam Janeczek	\$49.91	overpayment

MOTION: by Kennerson to approve the request for refunds as submitted by the Tax Collector; seconded by Claman.

Unanimous.

Donna LaPlante expressed her displeasure at the condition of the walkway between the Town Hall and the neighboring building. She Stated that it was overgrown and unkempt. She asked if the Board might consider hiring someone to maintain the area so that it could return to the condition it once was. She noted that there were shrubs and plantings donated many years ago and they are now overgrown and intertwined with bittersweet.

Selectman Jerram replied that it is difficult for the current crew to keep up with all of the demands of green space. He noted that this is one reason why grass was planted in front of town hall. It is hoped that it will be easier to maintain. There just isn't enough manpower available to weed and maintain flowerbeds and gardens. Selectman Claman stated that he would be in favor of hiring someone to work on getting the walkway and the downtown center island back to where they once were. Jerram replied that there are budgetary limitations. He stated that there may need to be a change in the downtown center island so that it, too, can be low maintenance.

Dan Laplante questioned the status of the Carpenter Road Bridge. Selectman Jerram replied that he will be having an executive session to discuss some matters with the Board later in the evening, but can provide some brief information. There has been a timeline submitted that indicates that the work will be completed by September 19. The strapping plan to stabilize the culvert as proposed by Lenard Engineering was not deemed to be necessary by the contractor. They did do some grouting and applied a weatherproof membrane. Sheetpiling is supposed to be cut off to a level that is one foot below ground level. This remains to be done.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: by Kennerson to approve the minutes dated July 23, 2019; seconded by Claman.

Unanimous.

MOTION; by Kennerson to enter into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation related to the Carpenter Road Bridge project, seconded by Claman.

Unanimous.

Jerram, Claman, Kennerson entered into Executive Session at 8:35 PM.

Jerram, Claman, Kennerson exited from Executive Session at 8:55 PM.

MOTION: by Kennerson to schedule a Special Meeting for September 19, 2019 to re-evaluate the construction schedule, seconded by Claman.

The Selectmen expressed their displeasure that the project schedule that was presented on July 18 is not being adhered to. They indicated a lack of confidence in the ability to get the project done by September 19 as projected. They will schedule a meeting to discuss further action on the 19th.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to adjourn at 9:06 PM; seconded by Claman.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant