

**Board of Selectmen  
Special Meeting  
Tuesday, December 29, 2015**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Laura Garay,, Chairman of the Water Pollution Control Authority Bud Butler (also Chairman of the School Building Committee), Members of the Public: Joe Toro, John Burdick; Member of the Press Kathryn Boughton (Republican-American), Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

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

Mr. Jerram informed the Selectmen that the primary purpose of this meeting was to reaffirm the actions taken at the December 14, 2015 Board Meeting. There had been a question raised as to compliance with the timeframe for posting of the agenda of that meeting. Jerram noted that the Monday morning meeting was posted on a Friday morning, but due to a clerical error, fell a little short of the 24 notice (the 2 days on the weekend are not considered as part of the advance posting timeframe). Therefore, in order to be totally compliant, the actions taken at that meeting will be readdressed and reaffirmed at this meeting.

The minutes of the December 14 meeting can be referred to for much of the discussion portion of the agenda items. Discussion will be limited on several of the topics.

**Operations Updates:**

First Selectman Jerram informed the Selectmen that he was in the process of conducting the second round of interviews for the mechanic position with candidates who had successfully completed the initial interview. It is his intent to have this position filled by mid-January.

Mr. Jerram stated that he has moved ahead with the disposal/sale of old highway equipment and currently has 5 items for sale on an "on-line auction" site. He is pleased with the activity thus far, noting that the bids will close later this evening (December 29, 2015). 88 bids have been received thus far and Jerram stated that it is likely that this route will be taken again in the future when there is equipment that is no longer used/needed at the garage. There is no cost to the Town for the auction; the buyer pays a premium to the vendor and all transactions occur between the vendor and the buyer. The vendor then forwards the proceeds to the Town.

Jerram noted that the Town Hall currently has a lingering "sewer gas odor" whose source is as of yet unidentified. Investigation into this will continue.

The evaluations of office staffing/personnel/service needs is continuing. Observations will continue for a few more weeks.

The First Selectman stated that the Town Hall Staff had recently had a nice potluck luncheon and the Community Café had a holiday meal that was enjoyed by the Seniors.

**Sale of Town Owned Property – Dorothy Road parcels; 8-24 referral:**

First Selectman Jerram informed the Selectmen that he has been in negotiations with residents regarding 2 town owned parcels of land on Dorothy Road. These parcels have been owned by the town for many years and serve no useful purpose to the Town. Jerram reached out to the abutting property owners to see if they had any interest in acquiring these parcels. There are 2 parcels and the abutters to each of the parcels have expressed an interest in purchasing these from the town. Jerram noted that the lots are mostly wetlands soils and he would recommend that the lots be sold to the abutters with conditions that these could be used for accessory use only; no additional residential dwellings could be placed on the lots. The Selectmen agreed that combining these parcels with existing lots would “put them back on the tax roles” and they agreed with Mr. Jerram’s recommendation that these be put to Town Meeting for consideration to sell.

Jerram also mentioned that there is an additional town owned piece of land that is to the rear of Stedman Road. He noted that an abutter of that parcel has expressed an interest in ownership and he is currently investigating to see if any other abutter is interested prior to negotiating with the interested party.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to refer to the Planning and Zoning Commission the sale of two town owned parcels of land on Dorothy Road, to be reviewed in accordance with CT General Statutes 8-24; seconded by Garay.

Jerram noted that following the P&Z review, this item will come back to the Selectmen to be placed on the call of a Town Meeting.

*Unanimous.*

**Prioritization of Town Meeting items:**

The First Selectman reminded the Board that there are several items that will need to be addressed at a Special Town Meeting. The Maple Hollow Road (septic ) Easement and the Carver Properties Drainage Easement have received favorable reviews under 8-24 and are ready to be voted on.

The consideration of adoption of CT General Statute 9-204(b) is an item that will also be taken to a vote. This is the Statute that “allows for the popular vote” to take precedence when electing members to serve on the Board of Education as long as minority representation on the full Board is not compromised. An additional item is the adoption of an ordinance that would allow the person who is currently serving as the Assistant Animal Control officer to serve as a member on the Planning and Zoning Commission. There is a Statute that outlines on which Boards/Commissions municipal employees may serve as members; and it has been noted that there is presently a conflict with respect to the Assistant ACO and his position on P&Z. Jerram stated that this has never been brought to his or any other First Selectman’s attention before. It was an unknown issue. However, now that awareness

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has been created, it is necessary to take action to allow this exemption. The First Selectman noted that the current individual does a great job as the Assistant ACO and further noted that it is becoming increasingly difficult to be able to get individuals properly trained to take on this responsibility. The State requires specific training and the current ACO has all the credentials and expertise to continue in this role. He is a valued employee. Jerram stated that the best way to proceed is to take this before a Town Meeting vote and let the people decide if they wish the current arrangement to continue. The Ordinance would be specific to this particular set of circumstances (allow the Assistant Animal Control Officer to serve as a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission.)

The Selectmen briefly discussed that there may need to be 2 Special Town Meetings within the next month or so in order to be able to properly address all of the items.

At this point in the meeting, First Selectman Jerram asked the Selectmen to reaffirm the actions taken at the December 14, 2015 meeting .

**Minutes:**

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to accept the minutes of the meeting dated November 24, 2015 as presented; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

**Appointments to Boards and Commissions:**

**MOTION:** by Garay to appoint Regina Wexler to serve as a member of the Inland-Wetlands Commission for the term of 1/1/16 to 12/31/18; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to re-appoint Laura Garay and Karen Gauthier to continue to serve as members on the Commission on Aging; term to be 1/1/16 to 12/31/18; and also to appoint Pam Fitzgerald to serve as an alternate on the Commission on Aging; term to expire 12/31/18; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to re-appoint Roy Litchfield to continue to serve as a member of the WPCA for the term 1/1/16 – 12/31/18; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to appoint Polly Pobuda to serve as a member of the WPCA for a term beginning 1/1/16 and expiring 12/31/18; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to appoint Jim Surber to fill a vacancy as a member of the WPCA for a term that will expire 12/31/16; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

**Carpenter Road Bridge – easement and authorization for Town Engineer to discuss width options with State of CT DOT:**

**MOTION:** by Garay to approve the Temporary Construction Easement between the Coppingers and the Town of New Hartford with the conditions as presented; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to have the Town Engineer contact Franciso Fadul at the State Department of Transportation to discuss modifying the bridge lane width to 25' if possible, but 27' maximum; seconded by Garay.

First Selectman Jerram reiterated his statement made on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December that the bridge would still be 2 lanes, but would be 2 narrower lanes and would still serve the public.

*Unanimous.*

First Selectman Jerram informed the Selectmen that the tree clearing at the site has begun. This was agreed to by the property owners so that there would be no conflict with “nesting bats.”

**WPCA – funding for engineering costs related to investigation of possible sale of assets:**

First Selectman stated that since the discussion held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December regarding the WPCA requesting that the Town engage the services of Consulting Engineers CDM Smith to perform an analysis of the water and sewer assets so that an RFP can be prepared, he has scrutinized the budget looking to see where this funding might come from. He is of the opinion that it may be difficult at this point of the fiscal year to commit any line item for that funding. He noted that there may be funds in the engineering and highway engineering line items, but it is too early to know what the disposition of these lines will be. The Resident State Trooper has excess funding due to cost savings in the cost of the Trooper after the budget was approved, but these funds are being committed to offset costs associated with an unbudgeted 27<sup>th</sup> payroll issue. Jerram noted that the Capital line item may have some savings due to the purchase of an older small truck rather than buying a brand new one( due to not having

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adequate funding for a new truck). However, the Board of Finance would need to approve the transfer of capital funds to a non –capital expense. The First Selectmen stated that it may be necessary to seek an additional appropriation from the Board of Finance. Selectman Kennerson stated that she wasn't confident that the Board of Finance would approve such a request. She said that she felt that they would want the Selectmen "to find it within their budget." Selectman Jerram replied that may be the case, but stated that "I'm not beyond asking for it." Some discussion ensued regarding exactly what the \$20,000 would cover. Kennerson and Garay both expressed concerns that they were uncomfortable seeking funding without knowing exactly what the \$20,000 costs would include. WPCA Chairman Butler replied that he would seek a formal proposal from CDM Smith to present to the Selectmen.

**Bakerville School Closing –**

*correspondence from Superintendent Murphy:*

First Selectman Jerram noted that he had received formal correspondence from Superintendent Murphy regarding the vote taken by the Board of Education to close Bakerville School. He read the correspondence into the record.

*review of 2 informational meetings held December 14, 2015:*

First Selectmen Jerram stated that he had attended both public informational meetings that were held on December 14, 2015 regarding the closing. One was at Bakerville School, at which there were approximately 25 attendees and the other at a PTO meeting at Antolini School, at which there were approximately 30 attendees. There were many duplicate attendees at both meetings. Selectman Kennerson and Selectman Garay were also at the meetings as interested citizens. The Selectmen briefly discussed their concerns with the future of the building. There was concern that if the student population increases and the building is needed as a school once again, there may be building code issues that will need to be addressed. The Selectmen would like to meet with the Fire Marshal and have a walk through of the building to seek his opinion as to what the future might bring. Selectman Garay commented that she had recently attended a seminar for newly elected officials and learned that "we are not alone –there are other towns that are going through the same thing that we are and we all have to make choices."

**Request for Refunds of Taxes:**

First Selectman Jerram noted that there were several new requests for Refunds of Taxes to be acted upon, but asked that the Board reaffirm the approvals made at the December 14, 2015 meeting:

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to approve the Requests for Refunds of Taxes as presented by the Tax Collector (\$841.70 to Nationwide Advantage Mortgage (Krasow) due to payment in error; \$203.73 to VW Credit Leasing, LTD due to prorated after payment; \$401.97 to Chase Auto Finance due to sale of vehicle; \$24.89 to Joseph McNally Jr. due to prorated after payment.); seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

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**MOTION:** by Garay to approve the Requests for Refunds of Taxes as presented by the Tax Collector (\$228.00 to USB leasing due to sale of vehicle; \$24.46 to Nissan Infiniti LT due to sale of vehicle; \$130.70 to Ally for Vault Trust due to Veterans Exemption after payment of taxes; \$90.76 to Peterson DL Trust due to sale of vehicle, prorated after payment.) seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous.*

**2016 – 2017 Budget priorities :**

First Selectman Jerram asked the Selectmen to be prepared to begin discussion of the 2016 – 2017 budget. He asked that they give some thought and consideration to the Capital Budget as well as the General Government Budget. He reiterated his strong belief that there cannot be another 5% tax increase this year. He noted that it will be difficult to find savings in the general budget and that once again, it will be necessary to work with Regional to insure that their budget takes into consideration the ability for residents to pay for the expense.

Jerram stated that he would like to have some kind of funding for a wash bay near the Waste Water Treatment Plant. He sees a need for there to be some place where the town owned vehicles, trucks and equipment can be washed. This is sorely lacking at the current facility and Jerram stated that there needs to be proactive measures to keep vehicles clean to increase longevity. Kennerson presented a lengthy list of priorities; which included sidewalks near the library on Route 219 (to extend the village center), additional parking in the downtown area, stone gateway signage, Riverview Park paths – extension to the current paths, Callahan Park improvements, parking behind the post office, Rails to Trails, Stedman Road, removal of The town owned house at Brodie; continued renovation of the Field house, and possible renovation of Berkshire Hall kitchen.

Selectman Garay stated that she has not prepared a list, but will do so. However, planning for events at the new Pavilion and plans for the seniors to have additional space were among her priorities.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to adjourn at 8:40 PM; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*

