

**Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
Tuesday, January 12, 2016
MINUTES**

Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Laura Garay, School Building Committee Chairman (also serves as Water Pollution Control Authority Chairman) Denton (Bud) Butler; Members of the Public Donna LaPlante (Town Clerk), Dan LaPlante (Assistant Animal Control Officer); John Burdick, Joe Toro, Mary Lou Rayno, Regina Wexler; Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 6:20 PM.

He noted that there were several items on the agenda and the goal was to complete business by 7:00 PM so that he could attend the Board of Finance meeting being held at 7:00.

Set Time, Date, Manner of Special Town Meeting

MOTION: by Kennerson to adopt the call of the Special Meeting as presented (call attached), seconded by Garay.

First Selectman Jerram reviewed each item on the call.

The first two items on the agenda refer to the granting of easements from the Town to New Hartford property owners. The easements have received a favorable report from the Planning and Zoning Commission and will now be presented to the Legislative Body (Town Meeting) for consideration. Item Number 3 – an additional appropriation of \$18,900 is a matter of “housekeeping.” The Water Pollution Control Authority, through the Town acting as the agent, has received a Planning Grant from the State of CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Clean Water Fund for expenses totaling \$48,900 to be used to engage the services of the engineering firm of CDM Smith to evaluate the existing sewer system and assist in planning for future connections. An approval was granted at the April 21, 2015 Town meeting appropriating \$30,000 for this endeavor; however the authorization needs to allow for the full expenditure of \$48,900. The Grant reimburses expenses at a 55% rate; the Town will receive a reimbursement from the State while the WPCA will pick up the non-reimbursed portion of the expenses as part of their operations.

Number 4 on the Call of the meeting is consideration of the acceptance of an ordinance that will allow the Town to adopt the provisions of CT General State Statute’s section 7-421(e). This has to do with Municipal employees serving on certain Boards and Commissions. Mr. Jerram noted that a situation was brought to his attention regarding non-compliance with one of the Town Boards. Adopting this ordinance would allow individuals to serve as members of the Boards and Commissions as outlined in the Statutes. Further discussion revealed that the Assistant Animal Control Officer currently sits as a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission; a conflict according to the Statutes. Adoption of this

ordinance would allow for that individual to continue in both capacities. Mr. Jerram noted that the current guidelines for becoming an Animal Control Officer are onerous and it would be very difficult to find an individual who would be able to undergo the stringent training required; especially since the position is not a full time job -- it is part time, with very limited hours. He noted that the Town is very fortunate to have this person as the Assistant Animal Control Officer and he would like that relationship to continue.

An additional Ordinance to be considered for adoption is an ordinance that has to do with adoption of Section 9-240(b) of the CT General Statutes which has to do with election of members to the Board of Education. During the recently held election in November, a situation arose where there were several seats vacant for the Board of Education. The 2nd highest vote getter was not able to be seated due to the town not having such an ordinance in place. It was noted that minority representation would still take precedence and that adoption of this section of the Statutes would not interfere with that.

The final item on the Call of the Meeting is one that has been placed on the call as a “placeholder” due to legal timeframes for publication of the Call. However, there has not been a formal recommendation or approval by the Board of Finance to take this matter to a Town Meeting. This issue will be brought before the Board of Finance later this evening. There is the chance that this item will be removed from the agenda at the time of the actual Town Meeting. Jerram noted that the Selectmen had briefly discussed this request for funding at their previous Board meeting. They had requested that a formal proposal be presented to them for consideration of funding for engineering services. This will be discussed as a separate agenda item later in the meeting.

At this point, Mr. Jerram asked for a vote on the motion that was on the floor; restating that the motion was to adopt the call of the Special Town Meeting which was called to be held on Thursday, January 21, 2016 at 7:00 PM at Town Hall.

Unanimous.

Bud Butler – Antolini School Update /Project Scope

Mr. Denton (Bud) Butler was present to update the Selectmen on the status of the Antolini School renovation project. He distributed a hand out that outlined the status of where things stand as of today, with respect to the total amount appropriated at Town Meeting and the expenditures to date, along with the costs of the original scope of work outlined for the next phase. The roof project came in under budget; but there has been a recent development that will add costs to the final figure. Mr. Butler explained that double rows of snowguards and diverters will be placed over the entrances to the school. This will prevent snow and ice from falling off the roof and potentially landing on individuals as they try to enter the school. There was a situation recently where snow/ice had accumulated on the roof and it slid off onto the entranceways. Fortunately, no one was in the area at the time and no injuries occurred; however, it served as an example of “what could happen.”

Discussion then turned to the scope of the project, with Mr. Butler stating that the Board of Education had recently approved an increase to the scope. They approved using the town meeting approved allocation to be used toward adding additional work to the renovation plan. The Selectmen were

uncomfortable authorizing use of the ‘savings’ to do additional work. Selectman Kennerson commented that she felt that the scope was “too muddled” and she would like to see clarification of what each additional item would cost. Selectman Garay agreed.

At this point, Selectman Jerram noted that the time was close to 7:00 PM and stated that he needed to get to the Board of Finance meeting. He asked the Selectmen if they would be willing to recess in order to attend that meeting and then reconvene to continue the School discussion later this evening. Mr. Butler indicated that he would not be able to stay for that continuation and therefore would not be present to answer any questions that might arise. The Selectmen understood this, but felt that they were not ready to make any decision regarding the scope of the project at this time. They reserved the right to discuss it further.

Mr. Jerram then asked that the Selectmen digress quickly to the next item on the agenda which referenced the additional funds being sought by the WPCA to fund in engineering services related to the valuation of the water and sewer system assets.

Bud Butler – WPCA engineering proposal

MOTION: by Kennerson, to move a request for funding in the amount of \$20,000 for engineering services related to valuation of the water and sewer assets to the Board of Finance for consideration; seconded by Garay.

The First Selectman noted that a formal proposal for services has been received by the town for consideration. It outlines the scope of services that will be undertaken by the Engineer. First Selectman Jerram reiterated his earlier statements that this funding proposal was an agenda item on the Special Town Meeting call and that he would be addressing this with the Board of Finance this evening.

Unanimous.

NOTE: At this point in the meeting, the Board of Selectmen agreed to recess (no formal motion –just agreement among the members) and headed up to the Board of Finance meeting. Time: 7:05 PM.

Following the conclusion of the Board of Finance meeting, the Selectmen ended their recess and returned to the Sessions Conference Room to complete the agenda of their meeting. Time: 9:35 PM.

Antolini School Update/Project Scope (continued):

The Board of Selectmen continued their discussion of the school renovation project. They noted their concerns with increasing the scope of the project; noting that when the project was taken to referendum, voters were voting on a project that consisted of \$250,000 in ADA (American with Disabilities Act) improvements and a roof repair. Both Selectmen Kennerson and Garay expressed their

concern with using savings from one portion of the project to cover additional expenses of another. Kennerson stated that, at the time of referendum, the scope was developed because it was known that the taxpayers could not afford all of the improvements. Selectman Garay commented that she understands and supports that the school needs upgrades; but is very uncomfortable adding to the scope without hearing from the voters. She noted that the taxpayers might want the savings rather than a revised scope.

First Selectmen Jerram commented that the oversight performed by the School Building Committee was second to none and noted that the Town is extremely fortunate to have such dedicated volunteers serving in this position. He stated that Mr. Butler and Mr. Litchfield have given countless hours of their item keeping an eye on construction and attending many meetings on behalf of the Town. He noted that their continued watch and commitment along with constant review and questioning of contractors practices and procedures has produced positive results. Both Ms. Garay and Ms. Kennerson agreed to his statement and publicly stated their appreciation of Mr. Butler and Mr. Litchfield. The Selectmen noted that they were more than grateful for the way things have turned out, but at the same time, they did not want to feel obligated to approve additional spending at this time. They discussed the issue at length but could not come to a consensus as to what action to take. They decided to end their discussion without a vote and stated that they intend to discuss this issue again and tentatively set a date for an additional special Board of Selectmen meeting on Thursday, January prior to the Special Town Meeting to complete their discussion.

Resolution re: Pilot Program for Municipal Campaign Finance Filings

MOTION: by Kennerson to approve the “Resolution to approve Town of New Hartford Town Clerk’s application to the State Elections Enforcement Commission’s Municipal Filing Pilot Program” as presented; seconded by Garay. (attached)

First Selectman Jerram informed the Selectmen that Town Clerk Donna LaPlante has asked the Selectmen to support her in her quest to be chosen by the Secretary Of State’s office as part of a pilot program that has to do with the way campaign finances are filed for non- major political parties. Currently, local Town Clerks Offices are the repository for filing information related to campaign finances if a non-major political party has candidates seeking elected offices. This pilot program consists of passing along that duty to the State Elections Enforcement Commission.

Unanimous.

Discussion of future Town Meeting items:

First Selectman noted that the sale of two town owned parcels of land did not make it to the Call of the Special Town Meeting called for later this month. He stated that he had originally planned to have these parcels included, but realized that there was no need to rush these items. Review of previous sales of property showed that additional paperwork should be completed prior to bringing the item before the

people to approve. Conditions of sale and a sales agreement should be developed so that there is no misunderstanding as to what can and cannot be done on the parcels of land to be sold (i.e. no residential use). The Selectmen agreed that this would be appropriate to do.

Selectman Garay asked that the Selectmen also consider making changes to the current status quo of electing alternates for the Board of Finance. She noted that an ordinance currently exists (78-3) that does not provide for alternate minority representation. Currently, both alternates can be of the same political party which does not allow for filling a vacancy when someone of the other party on the full board is absent. She suggested that the current ordinance be rescinded and that a new ordinance be considered for adoption that allows for the election of 3 alternates; with each party nominating 2 candidates and the voters being asked to vote for any 2 candidates, with a total of 3 alternates being elected every 2 years. Mr. Jerram and Ms. Kennerson did not object to this suggestion, noting that the Town Attorney would need to develop such an ordinance for consideration.

Selectman Kennerson commented that the Elderly Tax Abatement should also be an item for consideration at the next town meeting.

Jerram noted that another item would be the Town Hill Cemetery question; deciding whether this is a town owned entity or an entity of its own.

The Selectmen also discussed the fact that it is highly possible that the question of Consolidation of the local schools could be an item that adjourns to a Referendum vote. They noted again that the Board of Education has final jurisdiction over this matter, but it might serve well to take this issue to a town vote to see where the majority opinion lies.

The Selectmen agreed that an informational meeting regarding the Bakerville School issue needs to be held. They discussed potential dates and decided that January 28, 2016 would be suitable. The Selectmen decided that the Multi purpose room at Antolini would be best so that there is ample room for all. Once it is confirmed that the location is available, notification to residents will begin.

MOTION: by Kennerson to adjourn at 11:15 PM; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant