

**Board of Selectmen  
Special Meeting  
Tuesday, July 30, 2013**

**Present:** First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Jack Casey; Conservation Commission Chairman Alison Murdock; Members of the Public: Donna LaPlante, Dan LaPlante, Troy La Mere, Daria Hart, Bob Moore; Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Minutes:**

**MOTION:** by Kennerson, second Casey to accept the minutes dated May 28, 2013 as presented.

*Unanimous.*

**Opportunity for the Public to address agenda items:**

No public comment on agenda items. Dan LaPlante mentioned that he had noticed that beavers have plugged up the flow of water under Route 219 near the Christmas Farm. Jerram stated that the State has been dealing with this matter for a couple of months. Jerram noted that the Town has had their share of beaver problems in several different areas of town.

**Alison Murdock – Farmington River Coordinating Council (FRCC) updates/annual report:**

Ms. Murdock was present as the Town of New Hartford's representative to the Farmington River Coordinating Council. She presented the Annual Report on behalf of the Council, noting some of the highlights of the past year's undertakings. Removal of 'stint grass' (an invasive species) along the Farmington River near the Hurley Property (end of Greenwood's Road) was accomplished in conjunction with the Conservation Commission. FRCC awarded 2 scholarships to local students. The Pat Keener Memorial Scholarship was awarded to one student at Northwestern Regional and to another student from Canton. The FRCC is sponsoring an education and outreach program entitled "No Glass, No Trash" which promotes keeping the river clean and in a healthy state.

Ms. Murdock mentioned that she was aware of the Rails to Trails initiative currently underway as a joint effort between the towns of New Hartford and Barkhamsted. She stated that she is quite familiar with the proposed trail area and indicated that invasive plants should be eradicated in this area as part of the trail preparation. She indicated that the FRCC might be a valuable resource and partner in assisting with identifying and coordinating this kind of work.

**Review of RFP – re: invasive plants:**

Alison Murdock, changing "hats" to speak on behalf of the Conservation Commission, of which she serves as chairman, informed the Board of Selectmen that the Conservation Commission would like to proceed with developing some kind of funding assistance program for local property owners to tap into for assistance in the removal of invasive species of plants. The Conservation Commission would like to issue a Request for Proposals for the services of a grantwriter to assist the Commission in finding funding opportunities. A condition of the

***Minutes – Board of Selectmen July 30, 2013 p. 2.***

RFP would be that the grantwriter would need to find sources of revenue that would at least be equal to the cost of the grantwriting services. General discussion occurred regarding the wording of the RFP. Ms. Murdock asked for support from the Board to fund the grantwriting services.

**MOTION:** by Casey, second Kennerson to approve an amount not to exceed \$1500 for grantwriting services.

Ms. Murdock stated that she would complete revisions to the RFP and submit the RFP to the Selectmen for approval prior to publicly releasing it for consideration.

*Unanimous.*

**Review of Special Town Meeting held on July 11, 2013:**

First Selectman Jerram commented that the recent Town Meeting held on July 11 was one of the largest attended Town Meetings held. Attendance was estimated at over 300 attendees, which shows that people were concerned about the issue ( park rules and regulations). Mr. Jerram stated that the draft ordinance outlining the rules proposed and endorsed by the Recreation Commission is still waiting for final review and editing by the Town Attorney. Jerram noted that he was disappointed that no one posed any questions regarding how many complaints are actually received regarding the parks. He stated that he was aware of a couple of instances where concerns were raised with respect to the use of 'boom boxes' at the Basketball Courts and there were concerns expressed regarding the installation of a Skate Park at Brodie. There was also some concerns voiced regarding blocking driveways/driveway access at the Farmers Market in Chapin Park; but other than that, parks are not a source of concern. Jerram stated that it has been his experience that there are far more compliments regarding town parks than complaints. Selectman Kennerson also expressed her amazement at the number of attendees at the meeting. Selectman Casey stated that he would like to see the issue of park rules expedited by the Attorney, adding "bless it, sign it, seal it and stamp it."

**Operations Updates:**

Jerram updated the Selectmen on the status of various projects throughout town.

***Downtown Center Island:***

The Downtown Center Island replanting has been completed. Five trees were purchased to replace the pin oaks that were removed by the State Department of Transportation. The State had approved the planting of flowering crab apples. Home Depot had donated 5 trees, however, they were of the wrong variety and could not be used in the Island. They were, however, planted in various locations in town in islands located in cul-de-sacs.

***STEAP sewer repair:***

The repair to the Main Street Sewer line is nearing completion and the additional small repair to the Brook Street line will also be done. There may be some funds remaining to tackle a couple of small manhole repairs.

***Antolini Fields:***

M.E. Carroll is in the process of screening top soil that will be used to spread on the playing surface at the

### ***Minutes – Board of Selectmen July 30, 2013 p. 3***

expanded multi purpose field. The project continues to move forward.

#### ***Rails to Trails:***

A grant to the National Park Service has been submitted for consideration of funding for the proposed trail. This is a joint venture between the towns of Barkhamsted and New Hartford. A committee meets regularly to exchange ideas and keep the initiative moving ahead.

#### ***WPCA finances:***

The septage contract has helped to generate revenues for the WPCA and is helping them to take a step in the right direction. Hopefully, this extra revenue source will be a factor in helping to keep the water and sewer rates from seeing a large increase. It does not appear that the request for a deferral on the principal payment will be granted. The annual payment for debt service will increase from \$70,000 to \$120,000 for the WPCA.

#### ***Founder's Day:***

The Founders Day picnic held at Brodie Park was well attended. It was a very hot day, but still people came out to enjoy hamburgers, hotdogs and especially the ice cream that was available. Over 600 servings of ice cream were distributed! Children enjoyed the magician and the Bounce House. There was a constant flow of people at the food line. All in all, it was a good day.

#### ***Public Safety:***

There has been a change in police personnel. Resident Trooper Rich Strolis is no longer assigned to New Hartford. He had requested a transfer to be able to work the day shift (he was on evening shift in New Hartford) so that he can devote more time to his family. For now, a replacement has been assigned to cover Rich's shift – the trooper is Nick Nigro. Postings for a full time evening shift constable and a part time evening shift constable have resulted in some interest. The postings will continue for a while longer.

#### ***Carpenter Road Bridge:***

Investigation into options for the Carpenter Road Bridge continues. Geotechnical services will be required in order to determine what type of bridge should be considered – a box culvert, a con-span arch or a conventional single span bridge. Test borings and investigation into the soils to determine load conditions is needed so that decisions regarding best way to proceed can be made.

#### ***Stedman Road:***

Geodesign Inc. was also asked to provide a proposal for investigation into Stedman Road. According to the Town Engineers Lenard Inc., the roadway continues to remain unstable and has moved since the road closure took effect. Resident Donna LaPlante asked the Selectmen 'what the plans are for this road.' She, and other residents in the area, are concerned that the gated area (not open to the public for travel) needs to be maintained in the event that emergency vehicles need to access the area. She commented that the site lines exiting out onto Route 202 from Stedman are not good and she questions as to whether or not they would be considered to be legal site lines with today's standards. "It's not safe," she stated. Mrs. LaPlante also informed the Board that "Mirandus Brook" has changed its course over several years and that the current path is causing some erosion on the roadway on Old Steele Road. First Selectman Jerram replied that he and the highway foreman, along with the town engineer, have been looking at Old Steele Road and have given consideration to creating a cul de sac at the end of the town owned portion of the road in order to provide a proper turn around for snow removal equipment. Mr. Jerram noted that the condition of Old Steele Road is poor and this road is scheduled to be re-paved. However, the road will need some improvements to the existing drainage system

***Minutes – Board of Selectmen July 30, 2013 p.4.***

prior to paving. The current drainage is inadequate and any new roadway would deteriorate if the water is allowed to run along the road as it currently does. Mrs. LaPlante asked if a hammerhead had been considered as a turn around rather than a cul-de-sac. Jerram replied that the town was working in conjunction with the town engineer in order to determine the best course of action. Jerram noted that easements would need to be gained in order to construct the cul-de-sac.

***Maple Hollow and Dings Roads:***

Paving has been completed on these roads. Aprons will be installed on some driveways along Ramstein Road and then the “apron crew” would move on to Maple Hollow and Dings. Resident Troy LaMere asked why Dings Road was paved prior to the installation of a drainage pipe. The installation of the pipe required the crew to dig up a section of the new roadway, which he believed to be a waste of tax payer dollars. He asked why the paving didn’t wait until after the pipe installation. Jerram replied that the decision to go ahead with the paving prior to the pipe was something that the highway foreman felt strongly about. The paving crews were available and, due to weather interruptions and pipe installation schedules being compromised due to delays, he wanted to take full advantage of the fact that the paving crew was already here and did not want to incur additional mobilization charges to come back another day to pave Dings Road. Mr. LaMere also commented on the paving of the one leg of Shadybrook Road, questioning why this leg was paved to the extent that it was. Mr. Jerram replied that again, this was a decision of the highway foreman. The foreman had come to him and stated that he had been approached by a resident on Shadybrook to have this section of roadway paved. There are road standards that need to be adhered to when making improvements on roads. The road was paved to the same width as the existing leg on the other side of the triangle.

***Death of Former First Selectman Bob LaGoy:***

First Selectman Jerram expressed public condolences regarding the passing of former First Selectman Bob LaGoy. Mr. Jerram commented that Mr. LaGoy had dealt with many challenges as First Selectman and had handled them admirably. He protected the rights of the town with respect to water rights (drinking water) and he was passionate about Open Space. Mr. Jerram stated that he was “sorry to see him go.” The Board echoed his sentiments.

***Part time employees sick leave:***

Mr. Jerram notified the Selectmen that recent legislation requiring paid sick leave for eligible part time employees will affect the Town. There are employees who meet the criterion established for eligibility.

**Review of Capital Plan:**

The First Selectman asked the Board to review the 5 year capital plan. Kennerson suggested that consideration be given to including a wood chipper in Fiscal Year 2014-2015. She noted that earlier this year, there had been initial discussion regarding making such a purchase using “excess funds” but that it had been decided to hold off with this. Ms. Kennerson suggested that funds for a wood chipper replace the Town Garage line item. Selectman Casey asked rhetorically what is the future of the town garage site? This led to a limited discussion regarding the potential for development at that site. Mr. Casey asked if the fact that the town garage has not moved has had any impact on the development of the Hurley property. Mr. Jerram replied that the development of the two properties is not something that has to be done concurrently. Casey disagreed, stating that he felt that there should be a coordinated effort on the part of both property owners (the town and

***Minutes – Board of Selectmen July 30, 2013 p. 5.***

Hurley). Resident ( and Town Clerk) Donna LaPlante commented that she was disappointed to learn that the existing footprint of the Town Garage site might be the only area that could be used for any development. She stated that she felt that it is essential for town garage to relocate if there is going to be any positive changes to the downtown center. This is the direction that we need to go in, she said. First Selectman Jerram replied that paying for it is the reality that has to be faced; noting that there are very large capital expenditures looming “out there” that need to be considered; specifically Maple Hollow Bridge, Carpenter Road Bridge, Stedman Road. He stated that there has to be a distinction between a want and a need. Mrs. LaPlante responded that a large riverfront park would have a lot of value. Resident Daria Hart interjected that there needs to be a vision for the area. Additional discussion and comments ensued. Ms. Kennerson and Mr. Casey bantered back and forth regarding the level of funding to be in place for the town garage removal.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson, second Casey to remove the town garage funding in the 2014-2015 capital plan, replacing it with \$45,000 for a wood chipper and to increase the 2015-2016 capital plan town garage line item from \$50,000 to \$75,000.

*Unanimous.*

**Personnel Policy Review – computer use, Drug & alcohol policy:**

First Selectman Jerram distributed DRAFT policies to the Selectmen to review. He noted that the implementation of policies is highly recommended by the Insurance Company. Policies provide guidance and decrease liability due to confusion and lack of awareness of requirements. Discussion of policies will be on a future Board of Selectmen agenda.

**Appointments to Historic District Commission:**

**MOTION:** by Kennerson, second Casey to appoint Jerry Ecklund to fill a vacancy as a member of the Historic District Commission , term to expire 12/31/2013; to appoint Dan Romaniello to serve as a member of the Historic District Commission, term to expire 12/31/2014, and to appoint Lee Pllum to fill a vacancy as a member of the Historic District Commission, term to expire 12/31/2015.

*Unanimous.*

**MOTION:** by Kennerson, second Casey to adjourn at 9:05 PM.

*Unanimous.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*

