

**Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
Tuesday, August 1, 2017**

Minutes

Present: First Selectman Daniel Jerram, Selectman Laura Garay, Selectman Alesia Kennerson; Water Pollution Control Authority Chairman/School Building Committee Chairman Denton (Bud) Butler; Members of the Public David Krimmel, Polly Pobuda, Paul Pobuda, Penny Miller, Robert (Bob) Diorio, Marcia Jones; Member of the Press Kathryn Boughton (Republican-American); Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

Minutes:

First Selectman Jerram noted that there were several members of the public present at the meeting and stated that there was a fairly lengthy agenda and therefore, it might be best to move approval of minutes to the end of the meeting; The Selectmen had no objection to this suggestion and it was agreed to change the order of the agenda and place minutes at the end of the meeting.

WPCA update:

Mr. Jerram introduced Chairman of the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) Denton Butler and stated that Mr. Butler was present to address the Board and deliver an update regarding the WPCA. Mr. Butler began his discussion by presenting information related to the revenues of the WPCA. He compared fiscal years 2015/2016 and 2016/2017. Revenues for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016 were \$718,642 while revenues for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017 were \$646,650. Mr. Butler indicated that he had reviewed several reports and data collected by Torrington Water Company in order to perform an analysis to determine what may have caused the decrease. Vacant properties, seasonal usage and the loss of a commercial account are all contributing factors; as well as conservation measures being implemented by commercial and residential customers. The loss of the laundromat is a loss of approximately \$26,000 per year in revenue. This is a big hit to the WPCA.

Chairman Butler continued his discussion focusing on the maintenance needs of the water and sewer collection systems. He discussed the difference between "demand, planned and dictated" maintenance needs. Mr. Butler gave examples of maintenance items that were considered during the WPCA budget planning process. Mandatory well inspections, rehabilitation of wells, replacement of water meters, hydrant flow testing, repairs to water storage tanks and water main repairs were a few mentioned. An additional list of items was specific to the sewer operations, including cleaning of the equalization tanks, repairing of the odor control operations, replacement of pumping stations and other mechanical needs. Mr. Butler estimated the cost of the "must do" items for the water system at \$45,000 with an additional \$25,000 for the sewer system "must do" items.

It was noted that the WPCA has attended to many of the concerns that were expressed by the Selectmen and members of the Board of Finance with respect to their collections. There has been a drastic reduction in the amount of past due balances on accounts. Liens have been placed on properties in order to secure unpaid balances. Properties that were connected to the system without paying for services have been identified and have been billed for past services. The WPCA has taken all of the measures that were found to be deficient in the past and rectified them. They have done all they can do with respect to securing revenues due to them. Mr. Butler noted that the next step will be to review the

list of abutters currently not connected to the system to see what options exist for them regarding connections.

Some questions were posed to Mr. Butler regarding the list of maintenance items; Mr. Jerram asked if there was any priority given to the list. Mr. Butler replied that the WPCA understands that they need to put off some of the things due to lack of funding, but they also do not want to get to the point that things get into such bad condition that repairs are more costly than preventive maintenance costs. He stated that the WPCA would like to be “in front of things” instead of “always having to react.”

Mary Beth Greenwood, a member of the WPCA, (present at the meeting as an observer) commented that there is still a shortage of revenues needed to meet all of the expenditures.

Mr. Butler asked rhetorically, “where does this discussion lead?” and remarked that it has been suggested that the WPCA seek assistance from the Town. He noted that the debt service payment due to the town was not made in the last quarter and it may not be made this quarter, either. He added that when it comes to reviewing the payables each month, it is necessary to prioritize payment using existing funds at the time. The Town happens to be one of the payments that gets put at the bottom of the list due to the fact that “things won’t get shut off or services discontinued.” Payment to the operators of the system take priority so that the system can continue to function. Mr. Butler noted that it may be time to reconvene a meeting of the Asset Evaluation Team to complete the process of the Request for Proposals and see if a sale of assets is a possibility.

First Selectman Jerram asked the Selectmen to consider temporarily suspending the debt service payment owed by the WPCA to the town as an effort to offer some financial relief. He said that this would be a discussion item for the next Board meeting.

Antolini School Update:

Mr. Butler changed roles and began a presentation on the Antolini School Building project. He informed the Selectmen that this has been a busy summer with respect to projects. Ceiling tiles have been replaced, air conditioning has been installed in the gym, multi-purpose room, library and some of the adjoining rooms. The portico has been constructed and drainage has been attended to in the courtyard. LED lights have also been installed, although it was noted that this was not part of the School Building project, but was a project that was financed by the Board of Education capital expenditures account. Mr. Butler commented that there is a chance that the School Building project will pick up the cost of changing lenses on the existing lights. (lenses were not changed as part of the lighting project and it may be beneficial to change them in order to get the best result of changing the fixtures.) Butler commented that there was an additional \$8,500 of costs not projected due to some needed repairs to the heating system. There have been issues with the heating system freezing up during the winter. A glycol system has been installed in order to alleviate that condition. It was found that during one of the freeze ups, there was damage done to the circulating pumps which necessitated replacement so that they will function properly this winter.

Mr. Butler stated that all in all, the project is “on time, near budget and progressing nicely.” He complimented Scope Construction and stated that the crews have been “a good group to work with.”

First Selectman Jerram thanked Mr. Butler for all of his efforts supervising the project. Penny Miller, a member of the Board of Education present at the meeting as an observer, added, “it will be nice to have air conditioning in the library and multi-purpose room.”

West Hill Lake (pond) dam repair:

First Selectman Jerram informed the Selectmen that there has been a problem noted at the dam located in West Hill Lake. It is leaking. Water is seeping underneath the dam and this needs to be addressed. Mr. Jerram stated that Mr. Martin Seifert has assumed the role of President of the property owners association, replacing Mr. Skip Sly – who had held that position for many years. Mr. Seifert has experience with dams in his professional career and he was the one who actually noticed that the dam was leaking. Engineers have been consulted and an estimate for a 2 phase repair has been obtained. The initial phase includes permitting, repairs around the gatehouse, and engineering. This phase is estimated to cost \$47,500. The second phase includes removal of and replacement of the existing gate house at a cost of \$50,000.

The Association has asked both the Towns of Barkhamsted and New Hartford for financial contributions to the cause. Mr. Jerram noted that the interim budget currently has \$5,000 in the line item for West Hill Lake. He asked the Selectmen to consider releasing those funds to be used toward the repair expenses. He commented that 75%- 80% of the houses on the lake are physically within New Hartford. If there are problems with the dam, there will be a direct effect on those homes.

Selectman Garay noted that the line item was in place due to a request for assistance in paying for measures that help to preserve the water quality of the lake. Kennerson agreed, and added that she would want the Association to understand that there will not be any additional allocation given for water quality measures. Jerram replied that the Association has stated that this takes precedence and that they, too, have to put water quality on the back burner until this is resolved.

MOTION: by Garay to release the \$5,000 allocation from the interim operating budget to be used for the purpose of assistance in funding the West Hill dam repair and associated engineering costs; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

Resignations/Appointments:

First Selectman Jerram announced that two members of the Economic Development Commission have resigned. Dave Krimmel and Rob Boyan submitted letters of resignation.

MOTION: by Kennerson to accept with regret and thanks for their service, the resignations of Rob Boyan and David Krimmel; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

Mr. Jerram commented that he did not have a chance to speak with the alternates to see if they wished to be appointed as full members of the Board, but noted that he would be reaching out to them soon.

MOTION: by Garay to appoint Conservation Commission member Tony Mitchell to serve as an alternate member of the Farmington River Coordinating Council, term as established by the FRCC; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to appoint Robert (Bob) Diorio as Deputy Fire Marshal; seconded by Kennerson.

First Selectman Jerram commented that Mr. Diorio has been recommended by Fire Marshal Baldwin to assume the Deputy Fire Marshal duties. Mr. Diorio has taken all of the necessary classes required to be appointed to this position.

Unanimous.

Selectman Garay congratulated Mr. Diorio on his appointment and stated that she was aware of how hard he had worked to complete the requirements of the classes.

Resignation of Building Official:

First Selectman Jerram announced that Michael (Mike) Carbone has submitted his letter of resignation as Town of New Hartford Building Official. He will be leaving New Hartford for full time employment with benefits in another town. Mr. Jerram thanked Mike publicly for his service to the Town, adding that during Mike's tenure here, there were "never any complaints – he is extremely competent and gets the job done. He will be successful wherever he winds up." The resignation is effective at the end of August.

Operations Updates:

The First Selectman presented the following updates:

Highway:

The Highway Department is currently preparing the northern end of the southern section of Steele Road(at Hoppen Road heading towards Browns Corner) for paving.

A large wash out occurred on Richards Road and it has been repaired.

The highway department has had use of the cooperatively owned catch basin cleaner and has been cleaning out several catch basins.

Line striping of area roads has been completed. This is an annual undertaking.

Town Hall:

A Heat pump has failed in the Superintendent's Office; the one that services the Special Education Office area. A quote of \$5000 has been received to replace this almost 20 year old unit. There are 35 individual heat pumps within Town Hall.

All locks within Town Hall have been re-keyed; including the front and rear entries. Mr. Jerram noted that this is the first time since Town Hall was renovated in 1999 that locks have been changed. There was beginning to be a problem where the locks were getting "sticky" and there were some instances of keys breaking in the locks. There were no extra keys remaining to be used for replacement, requiring the services of a locksmith to be able to manufacture new keys due to the type of security key needed. After consulting a locksmith as to the best way to proceed, it was decided that the best course of action and most economical would be to re-key all of the locks at the same time.

Mr. Jerram also explained that over the years, there have been many keys distributed and some have been lost or misplaced. In an effort to be proactive with respect to internal controls (an area that the

auditors pose verbal questions regarding practices and procedures each year), each employee will receive new keys to the entry doors and to their individual offices. Office keys will be given to staff in that office only. If access is required to an office due to occasional coverage requirements, keys can be obtained from the Office of the First Selectman for temporary use. This allows for better accountability of who has access to individual spaces. Jerram noted that many town halls have electronic systems in place; so this is a step in the right direction with respect to internal control measures. Additionally, each key is numbered and there will be a record of key assignments. Jerram noted that this is not a matter of a lack of trust, it is just good business practice. The Selectmen agreed.

Miscellaneous:

First Selectman Jerram informed the Selectmen that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection recently made a visit to the Town Garage site to review Stormwater Management. It was noted that the Town has not yet begun the new MS4 Stormwater Management practices. Mr. Jerram explained that there are costs associated with the new requirements that are unfunded mandates, but promised them that efforts to move forward would begin. A task order for engineering services for assistance in this area was completed in June.

Mr. Jerram also informed the Selectmen that the new oil separator tank design plan has been approved by the Inland Wetlands Commission and that project will get underway soon.

Mr. Jerram showed the Selectmen the most recent edition of the New England Real Estate Journal (NEREJ) that has the Hurley Property featured as a Property of the Month. Jerram explained that the Economic Development Commission had discussed having an ad in this journal as a way to promote the Hurley/town garage properties as an area for potential development. The EDC contacted the NEREJ seeking information as to how to secure publication in this magazine. Contact information was forwarded to the First Selectman so that action could be taken regarding a submittal. The EDC did not provide a draft article for submission and the deadline for publication was looming, therefore, Mr. Jerram gathered photos and drafted an article that was submitted for publication.

The First Selectman stated that he thought this was a good idea that EDC had to gain exposure for this parcel of developable land and he thinks it would be good to do more of this type of advertising.

Carpenter Road Bridge:

The First Selectman informed the Board that he has heard that there are questions in the community regarding the status of the Carpenter Road Bridge. He reminded the Board that at the June meeting, he had informed them that he had been monitoring the water levels and that the water was receding to levels that might be appropriate for a re-start of the project. At the June meeting, Mr. Jerram told the Board that he had requested a meeting with the contractors to discuss the project. The town wants them to move forward with the project. A meeting was held recently and the contractor has expressed concerns with the subterranean and above ground water flow in the area where excavation needs to be done in order to place the culvert. The water level has been inconsistent and the contractor is concerned that they may not see “dry” conditions. They have asked to modify the plan to work in what is known as “wet conditions.” This would require some changes in technique, but would not have an impact on the “approved area” for work under the required permits that are currently in place. Lenard Engineering will contact their geotechnical engineer to discuss. The contractor stated that they have done many bridges and this is the “most complicated bridge they have done” due to the soils and

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conditions at the site. Mr. Jerram told the Selectmen that he has told the contractor that “they need to figure this out and they need to mobilize.”

Opportunity for Public Comment:

Mr. Denton (Bud) Butler applauded Mr. Krimmel for his service to the town in his role as a member of the Economic Development Commission.

Mr. David Krimmel commented on the WPCA discussion and stated that “as a homeowner with my own septic and water system, I feel it’s time to look at the water and sewer operations of the town as infrastructure. This is a vital part of our town. Economic viability resides in the implementation of a town center and the idea that there are people who object to paying off the WPCA debt with town money is unbelievable.” He commended the First Selectman for writing an ad for the New England Real Estate Journal; adding that the town needs to increase the user base of the water and sewer system and the article is a start. Mr. Krimmel commented that the WPCA has done everything possible to move forward and all of the things that were criticized in the past have been attended to. He urged the Selectmen to consider assuming the debt service “until the ship gets righted.” Mr. Krimmel suggested that there be a joint meeting of the Boards of Finance, Selectmen, Planning and Zoning Commission, Economic Development Commission and the Water Pollution Control Authority to discuss how to drive revenue.

First Selectman Jerram thanked Mr. Krimmel for his comments and encouraged residents to attend Board of Selectmen meetings to voice their opinions on matters. He added that the Selectmen welcome public comment and that generally input is sought throughout the meeting, not only during the agenda item that calls for public comment.

Selectman Garay also thanked Mr. Krimmel and stated that she appreciated his comments. She agreed with Mr. Krimmel’s views expressed regarding the WPCA, adding “it’s a community issue.” She thanked Mr. Butler for his dedication and hard work on the WPCA and said, “we need to come together on this issue.”

Town Meeting update:

Mr. Jerram noted that the Special Town Meeting that has been on the “back burner” still has not occurred and he reviewed once again the items that need to be addressed. The Elderly Tax Abatement, The CT Green Bank Resolution, The Town Hill Memorial Cemetery, The acquisition of the Hoag property (the old ‘canal’ on Wickett Street) The Open Space Tax abatement, and an appointment to Stanclift Cove are all agenda items.

The Selectmen discussed having a Call for a meeting ready to be approved at the August 22, 2017 Board of Selectmen regular meeting. An early September meeting date was discussed.

Minutes:

MOTION: by Garay to approve the minutes dated June 27,2017 as presented; seconded by Kennerson. *Unanimous.*

MOTION: by Garay to adjourn at 9:32 PM; seconded by Kennerson. *Unanimous*

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant