

**Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
December 6, 2021
Minutes**

Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Laura Garay
Others Present: Bob Goodskey, Rui Carvahlo, Richard Marcus, Mark Worsman, Dave Boyajian, Tom Duval, Joe Toro, Kathryn Boughton (Republican-American); Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

Appointments to Boards and Commissions:

The First Selectman informed those assembled that the Board of Selectmen appoints individuals to serve as members on various non-elected Boards and Commissions. Annual appointments occur in December of each year for those members whose term of office is expiring. Appointments to fill vacancies occur throughout the year as needed.

MOTION: by Kennerson to reappoint Laura Garay to serve as a member of the Commission on Aging, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Jerram.

Ms. Garay commented that it is a good time to be a member of the Commission due to the fact that there is a Senior Housing development being proposed and the Commission on Aging has been an advocate for such housing for years. She stated that there are several vacancies on the Commission and hopes to get additional members so that this Commission can hold meetings.

Unanimous

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Tony Mitchell to serve as a member of the Conservation Commission, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous

MOTION: by Kennerson to appoint Heather Rems Korwin to serve as a member of the Conservation Commission; term to expire December 31, 2023; seconded by Garay

Unanimous

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Brian Watson to serve as a member of the Economic Development Commission; term to expire December 31, 2026; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to appoint Steven Lam to fill a vacancy and serve as a member of the Economic Development Commission; term to expire December 31, 2023; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Sibyl Pellum to serve as a member of the Historic District Commission, term to expire December 31, 2026; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to reappoint Susie Horn to serve as an alternate member of the Historic District Commission, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint James Hall to serve as a member of the Inland Wetlands Commission, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to reappoint Gerald Tabaka to serve as a member of the Inland Wetlands Commission; term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Wayne Ryznar to serve as an alternate member of the Inland Wetlands Commission, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to reappoint Jean Darlington to serve as a member of the Open Space Preservation Commission, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Seth Warner Jr. to serve as a member of the Open Space Preservation Commission, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to reappoint Karen Griswold Nelson to serve as a member of the Open Space Preservation Commission, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Linda Aquavia to serve as a member of the Recreation Commission, term to expire December 31, 2026, seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to reappoint Greg O'Brien to serve as a member of the Recreation Commission, term to expire December 31, 2026; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Jeremy Schaller to serve as a member of the Recreation Commission, term to expire December 31, 2026; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Brenda Schaufler to serve as a member of the Board for the Regional Refuse Disposal District Number 1, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Kennerson to reappoint Polly Pobuda to serve as a member of the Water Pollution Control Authority, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

MOTION: by Garay to reappoint Wesley Marsh to serve as a member of the Water Pollution Control Authority, term to expire December 31, 2024; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

The Selectmen thanked all of the volunteers who continue to serve as members on these Boards and Commissions. It was noted that there are several vacancies on Commissions and anyone interested in serving on a Board/Commission should contact the Selectmen's Office.

Meeting Schedule – 2022

MOTION: by Kennerson to approve the Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule for the year 2022 as presented- meetings to be held on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM with the exception of November and December when meetings will be held on the third Tuesday due to Holidays; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

Cursory Review of Public Informational Sessions re: ARPA funding:

First Selectman Jerram stated that the public information meetings regarding the use of the American Recovery Act Plan Funding were well attended. He felt that good ideas were presented and people had an opportunity to share their ideas. He asked his Board how they felt -- What did they "take away?" Selectman Garay said that she was pleased that the BOS took the time to hold these meetings. She commented that this is what the process should be..... community involvement. She stated that the next step should to assess what the real needs are and put the money to good use. Garay asked if there has been any formal request from McCall and MCCA for funds. Mr. Jerram replied that only Greenwood's Counseling has made a 'formal' request for consideration of funding. Other counseling agencies have made a generic request to the Northwest Council of Governments seeking support from member towns.

Selectman Kennerson commented that the outreach for financial support continues. Jerram agreed, noting that there have been several opportunities for those interested in being considered for funding to submit a request and they still can by contacting Town Hall by email, phone call or stopping in. He also stated that the Board/Town does not need to be in a rush to spend all of the funding at once; however, there will be discussion soon to get some of the requests moving in order to be in the queue to go to town meeting. Mr. Jerram commented that administrative fees and cost of the mailing to inform the public about this initiative will be requested for reimbursement from the ARPA funds. These are allowable expenses.

It was agreed by the Selectmen that the purchase of a new Ambulance seemed to have support at both public hearings. There was support for emergency services at both of the meetings. It was noted that the second meeting had a large contingent of people who are actively involved and strongly support the Beekley Library and funding for them.

Selectman Kennerson would like to explore using funds to make up for revenue loss due to the pandemic. She asked First Selectman Jerram to calculate the revenue lost to the town from not being able to operate Camp in the usual fashion for the past couple of years.

Discussion of regulation of Cannabis Use on Municipal and private property (restaurants):

The Selectmen discussed the new legislation regarding restricting cannabis in public areas. Different towns have moved in different directions. Regulation occurs by ordinances adopted by towns. The Selectmen would like some guidance from the Land Use Attorney as to the best way to proceed. The Selectmen would like to see the use of Cannabis limited in public places and especially in places where families gather. They were leaning on investigating an ordinance to address this issue.

Operations updates:

Town Clerk:

First Selectman Jerram stated that there has been a good transition in the office of the Town Clerk. Things are going well and the town is blessed to have Lynn Florio, a resident with experience on board. Lynn has the ability to reach out to former Town Clerk Debbie Ventre for guidance as needed.

Wastewater and water asset sale:

Mr. Jerram informed the Board that things are proceeding and nearly complete with Asset Purchase Agreement. Real estate easements are being tracked down. Jerram noted the importance of being diligent and working closing with the town attorney to make sure things are done correctly and completely. Jerram is hopeful to have the document signed soon by both parties and then move on to the PURA application.

Carpenter Road Bridge:

An update on the Carpenter Road Bridge revealed that a mediation agreement has been signed and returned so that the process can move forward. The contractor, engineer, town and one of the subcontractors have all agreed to mediate.

Surdam Farm:

Jerram stated that in 1967, a parcel of land with a house was gifted to the town from the estate of Marie Robinson Surdam. An individual named David Fenwick and his partner have rented the house since then (part of the gift agreement). For years, they have wintered in Florida. The long term agreement has now ended and Fenwicks will no longer return to CT. The deed states that the preference is to keep the land intact and there are other desires, but the town is not legally obligated to abide by those. An electrician and plumber have gone through the house and made recommendations regarding what would be needed to maintain the house. This will be a discussion for another time. Jerram suggested that the Selectmen have a tour of the house at some point in the spring and see what they think. The house has been winterized, so there is no hurry.

New Hartford House Fire:

The survey for the New Hartford House has been completed; Neighbor to Neighbor paid for the survey.

A digital copy of the survey will be sent to the architect. This will allow the owner of the property to move forward with consulting with the architect to see what can be done on the site. Mr. Patel has granted the town the use of his property for Light New Hartford. The Tree could not be put in its usual location due to the fact that it used to be secured to the building and it was protected from the wind by the building. Since the building is no longer there, other arrangements had to be made for this year. Mr. Jerram thanked Dhuval for his cooperation with Light New Hartford.

Fiscal Year End 2021 Audit:

The June 30, 2021 year end audit is progressing; the statistical section is being completed. No “findings” reported.

Retirement of Police Officer:

Mr. Jerram announced that Officer Dan Janco is retiring effective February 17. “Dan has been a great police officer and has served the town well. He will be missed. We thank him for his service.” The Selectmen wished Officer Janco well.

Brodie Bathroom Project:

A Request for proposals for construction of the bathrooms at Brodie will be developed so that construction can begin in the spring. Concern about construction costs and lack of materials has slowed the progress of moving this forward, but it will be placed back on the “front burner.”

CARES act Funding:

First Selectman Jerram informed the board members that there are CARES ACT funds still available for use and they must be obligated prior to the end of the calendar year. He reminded them that funds were initially used to supplement the Farmington Valley Health District and assist with costs incurred for COVID vaccine clinics. This was a perfect use of the funds as it allowed our residents to have access to clinics in the area.

The Ambulance Association has experienced a tremendous increase in expenses related to workforce. Due to lack of volunteers committing to work during the height of COVID, the Association was forced to depend on their third party contracted workers. This resulted in an increase of approximately 160% in labor expenses. Jerram stated that using half of the CARES funds remaining to assist the Ambulance Association would qualify as a use of these funds.

Mr. Jerram also stated that he has been in conversation with Farmington Valley Visiting Nurse Association to further discussion with them regarding providing community nursing services to New Hartford residents. He suggested that the Board consider appropriating funds to the FVVNA to provide additional resources during this time. He would like FVVNA to do some outreach to seniors and see how they are doing during this extended pandemic. Additionally, he would like to see what other services FVVNA can provide to New Hartford. The Selectmen were in support of this.

Mr. Jerram advised that a motion of support for these expenditures will be needed in order to move them to the Board of Finance for approval. These are additional appropriations for less than \$20,000 to two different departments, therefore no town meeting approval is need – but the Board of Finance must agree to this request.

MOTION: by Garay to recommend to the Board of Finance, an additional appropriation of 19,754.50 each to the New Hartford Ambulance Association and also the Visiting Nurse Services line item in order to supplement visiting nurse services; seconded by Kennerson.

Unanimous.

Correspondence:

The First Selectman stated that a letter was received from the New Hartford Village Fire Department requesting access to Farmington River for drawing water from the river for fire suppression purposes. Dan read letter into the record. He asked for clarification from the firefighters in attendance, asking if they were asking for dry hydrants.

Chief Mark Worsman replied that they were seeking actual direct access for hoses to be able to be placed into the river and draft water for fire- fighting purposes. A gravel road access would allow a fire truck to be able to “nose in close to the river and draft from the river.” Mr. Worsman stated that during the downtown New Hartford House fire, a truck from Riverton was used to access the river; but they had an extremely difficult time with the access. The extra water from the river was critical to the firefighting that night. Mr. Jerram replied that there are rules regarding working within the regulated area and this will need to be reviewed by an engineer.

Selectman Kennerson stated that she is in favor of seeing if this can be done, but would request that someone with firefighting (she suggested that a representative from the fire department review whatever plan is drawn up) be involved in the process. Ms. Kennerson asked if the Fire Department currently has trucks that can draw from the river. Mark replied that they do. Dan will reach out to engineer and see if they can prepare a plan. Dan also stated that the Town will need to be the applicant for any permits needed.

First Selectman Jerram extended public congratulations to New Hartford Village Fire Chief Mark Worsman for being elected to serve as President of the CT State Fire Chiefs Association.

2022 Town Hall Holiday Schedule:

The 2022 Holiday schedule was presented to the Board of Selectmen for consideration. There was discussion related to the newly adopted Federal Holiday “Juneteenth.” It is unclear as to whether or not this holiday needs to be added to the list of “official holidays” that Town Employees are due. The Holiday falls on a weekend in 2022 – but is not a union negotiated holiday, therefore the status is undetermined. Selectman Garay would like to have the town labor attorney opine on the matter and adjustments can be made to include the holiday if it is found to be a requirement.

MOTION: by Kennerson to accept the 2022 Holiday Schedule as presented, seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

Requests for Refunds of Taxes:

The following requests for refunds of taxes were presented for approval:

Antonio or Jennifer Persechino	Motor Vehicle	\$73.06
Joseph or Rinette Lavoie	Motor Vehicle	\$5.51
Timothy Doyle	Motor Vehicle	\$11.46
Maidorganic LLC	Motor Vehicle	\$140.07
Home Depot	Motor Vehicle	\$241.47
Katherine White	Motor Vehicle	\$7.46
VW Credit Leasing	Motor Vehicle	\$412.76

MOTION: by Kennerson to approve the refunds of taxes as recommended by the Tax Collector; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

The Selectmen discussed holding a Special Meeting of the Board on January 4 for the purpose reviewing ARPA fund requests and begin to develop a strategy for determining best use of the funds.

MOTION: by Kennerson to adjourn at 7:50 PM; seconded by Garay.

Unanimous.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*

*Attachments: (upon request from the Town Clerk)
Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule 2022
Town Hall Holiday Schedule 2022
Correspondence from New Hartford Fire re river access*