

**Board of Selectmen  
Special Virtual Meeting  
January 4, 2022**

**Present: (virtually)** First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Alesia Kennerson, Selectman Laura Garay, Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.  
Members of the Public: Charlie Neale, Heidi Gallagher, Member of the Press Kathryn Boughton (Republican American).

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. He thanked those present for their attendance. Mr. Jerram noted that this meeting was being held virtually, but that it was not setting a precedent for all future meetings to continue as virtual. First Selectman Dan Jerram stated that Board of Finance member Ryan Bingham is the liaison for the Board of Finance for matters regarding ARPA funding. Jerram noted that Mr. Bingham was currently on vacation in California and most likely would not be joining the virtual meeting. However, Jerram informed the Selectmen that he had personally reached out to Mr. Bingham and had met with him prior to his vacation in order to review the requests that have been received for ARPA funding. Therefore, Mr. Bingham is aware of the requests that have been received to date.

**Appointment of Town Clerk:**

First Selectman Jerram reminded all that the position of Town Clerk was changed by Ordinance and is now an appointed position. The elected term has now expired and in accordance with the adopted Ordinance the Board of Selectmen now appoints the Town Clerk to the appointed, unionized position.

**MOTION:** by Garay to appoint Lynn Florio as Town Clerk for a 4- year term that expires in 2025, at which time the newly elected Board of Selectmen will appoint/reappoint the Town Clerk at their first regular meeting following that municipal election; seconded by Kennerson.

The Selectmen welcomed Lynn to the team as an appointed position.

*Unanimous.*

**Appointment of Sub Registrars:**

First Selectman Jerram informed the Selectmen that he had received a request from Town Clerk Lynn Florio to reappoint Sub registrars. Mr. Jerram noted that Jason and Susan Montano currently serve in this role and their terms have expired and they wish to continue in this capacity. This allows them to issue death certificates.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to reappoint Jason and Susan Montano as Subregistrars for a term that begins in 2022 and goes through 2025; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

**Appointment to Inland Wetlands Commission:**

Mr. Jerram noted that Wayne Ryznar has resigned his position as an alternate on the Inland Wetlands Commission as he is interested in filling a vacancy as a full member.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to appoint Wayne Ryznar to fill a vacancy on the Inland Wetlands Commission; term to expire in 2024; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous*

**Appointment to Historic District Commission:**

First Selectman Jerram stated that the Historic District Commission has the same scenario; Susie Horn is currently serving as an alternate, but is willing to fill a vacancy as a regular member. She has submitted her resignation as an alternate in order to be appointed to a full seat on the Commission.

**MOTION:** by Garay to appoint Susie Horn to fill vacancy on the Historic District Commission; term to end in December 2024; seconded by Kennerson.

*Unanimous*

**Approval of Resolution for DEHMS Region 5 homeland Security Grant:**

First Selectman Jerram informed the Board that the Region 5 Homeland Security Grant is once again available to fund equipment for Region 5 and each town needs to submit an application and approve a resolution in order to get the requested funding.

He read the resolution for consideration by the Board of Selectmen into the record:

*RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and FURTHER RESOLVED, that Daniel Jerram, as First Selectman of the Board of Selectman, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Board of Selectmen and to do and perform all acts and things which he deems necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.*

**MOTION:** by Garay to approve the resolution as read; seconded by Kennerson.

Selectman Garay asked Mr. Jerram how often the Region 5 committee holds meetings. Jerram replied that the Regional Emergency Planning team meetings are held quarterly. He stated that the Regional Coordinator reports regularly to the Northwest Council of Governments and keeps the Selectmen informed of operations pertaining to emergency planning.

*Unanimous.*

**Discussion of ARPA funding:**

First Selectman Jerram stated that this meeting is a “follow up” to the public meetings that were held regarding the American Recovery Plan Act Funding that New Hartford has received. This meeting is an opportunity to discuss the suggestions received at the meetings and to review additional requests that have been sent via email. Mr. Jerram noted that the emailed requests were posted on the town website along with the agenda. Therefore, they are available for public review.

It was agreed that there was strong support at the first public meeting for requests made by Emergency Services. The request from the Ambulance Association for consideration of a new ambulance seemed to be well accepted. The Selectmen reiterated that there must be a connection with COVID in order to be an approved expenditure and the ambulance request certainly fills that requirement.

Mr. Jerram reviewed some of the requests that have been received. He mentioned that the local school Superintendent has requested consideration for funding to improve air quality in the schools and has also asked for funding for replacement of a roof at New Hartford Elementary School. Regional 7 Superintendent has asked for funding to improve air quality.

Selectman Kennerson would like to “rank” the requests and figure out the value associated with them – what can we afford to do? She would like to look at the ideas that have merit and see what can be done. Selectman Garay suggested grouping requests – for example, the Ambulance request should be put together with other emergency services requests. The First Selectman mentioned that it is important to keep in mind that not all of the funding has to be spent at the same time. He stated that some requests can be fulfilled now and some later. He mentioned that procuring an ambulance can have a lead time of several months. If that is something that the Selectmen would like to support, they need to keep in mind how long it is going to take to make it a reality. Earlier approval would seem to be warranted in this instance. Ms. Garay stated that she would like to see the Selectmen make decisions as to what they would like to consider for funding and then figure out what the timeline for approval should be. She also would like to see if there are things where a one-time use of funds would make a difference, not just fund things that are “usual expenses.” Rails to trails, for example-- could there be an allocation of funds that could make a difference to getting this trail up and running?

Garay mentioned that the town has talked about a wash bay to protect our town owned equipment – could these funds be used for that?

Selectman Garay noted that correspondence from Dianne Litchfield has mentioned the “elephant in the room” – a senior center. Ms. Garay would support a larger sum of funds to support that. She also feels that assistance with addiction is important.

Selectman Kennerson stated that she is in support of looking at another space for our seniors – but does not have any specific ideas at this point. Mental health is important; but how do we get the money to the right place? What is the right organization to support? Kennerson feels it is important to put money toward mental health due to the negative impact COVID has had on many people.

Garay agrees that depression (rampant through COVID) has been an issue; “perhaps we need to invite Greenwoods to the table and see what they can offer our residents.”

First Selectman Jerram agrees with what has been suggested; but added that he would like to see some money go toward the parks. Parks were used widely during the pandemic. He supports the use of funds to create some kind of band shell for concerts. He also would suggest that some funds be used to pay

for professional engineering to look at some of the buildings/cabins. Jerram stated that the buildings at Brodie are cute and Adirondack style- but most are in need of facelifts.

Selectman Kennerson would like to see a second building like Berkshire Hall. Some of the cabins may not be worth saving. Dan would like to see improvements made to Berkshire Hall to allow for a foundation to be built and protect the water lines. He also would like to see an upgraded kitchen.

Dan mentioned that he would like to discuss some possible options for consideration for senior center space at the next meeting but does not want to mention possible real estate in public session due to the fact that “once someone knows the town is interested in a property, the price goes up.”

Mr. Jerram stated that the West Hill Pond Association/Lakeshore Property Owners Association request for funding towards maintaining Water Quality at West Hill Pond was also well received.

Selectman Kennerson asked if Mr. Jerram had done any investigation into recouping loss of revenue as an approved use of COVID funding. She asked if he would be able to determine lost revenue and report back to the Selectmen at their next meeting. Jerram will make an effort to determine what that number is.

It was suggested that the Selectmen review the emailed requests for funding and see if they could place them into defined “buckets.”

Emergency Services would include the request for the Ambulance and an undefined request from the New Hartford Village Fire District for HVAC improvements at the firehouse.

Governmental would include the requests from the schools for HVAC improvements (New Hartford Public Schools as well as Northwestern Regional) A request for a sprinkler system at Bakerville School (it was noted that this was a suggestion made by a member of the public, but it is not certain that this could be tied to COVID related).

Selectman Garay asked if tax relief is allowable; Is there a way to “put more money in people’s pockets” – give them some relief on their tax bill. Jerram replied that it does not appear to be allowable. ARPA Funds cannot be used to lower taxes or fund a routinely budgeted item

The First Selectman stated that Public Utilities bucket could include the funds for the Installation of sewers will that allow for preservation of aquifer for those who rely on the drinking water supply. The WPCA has suggested \$475,000 for sewers. A public waterline along Route 44 was also a suggestion that was made.

Additional buckets would be the non-profit relief -- requests have been received from the Pleasant Valley Children’s Center, The Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Scouts BSA, Boy Scouts, Historical Society, West Hill Trustees, Northwest Transit District and others. The Non Profits could be broken into the “smaller” non- profits – i. e. Scouts, Women’s Club, St Johns Food pantry, counseling Services. The larger non-profits such as the Libraries would be a different bucket.

Resident Relief and small business relief should be two additional buckets.

GIS improvements could be added to the Governmental bucket. There is a need for improved GIS Mapping.

A request for consideration of a dog park was received by email. Selectman Kennerson stated that Animal Control has not been in support of this in the past. However, Selectman Garay countered that she would be in favor of looking into this. She stated that a dog park would be a social gathering spot. This request would be placed in the Recreation bucket.

First Selectman Jerram will create a spreadsheet outlining the various buckets and the requests that are grouped within that bucket.

**Opportunity for Public Comment:**

Board of Finance Chairman Kerry Guilfoyle stated that she liked the process that the Selectmen were using. She liked the fact that they were reviewing the requests together

Charlie Neale commented that he felt it was a good discussion, a good start. Mr. Neale stated that he thought it was important to be sure we get buy in from the town before coming to the Board of Finance. It is his opinion that there's a lot of other folks in town that may have not spoken. He is concerned that if things are presented at town meeting without a lot of public input, it may get shut down. He would like to see proposals up on the town website and get comment on them. He feels that there are some pressing needs from some businesses that should be addressed now. Charlie favors grants rather than loans.

Shelley Lloyd, identifying herself to be a member of Economic Development Commission, but noting that she wanted to speak for herself first (and not as a representative of the EDC) stated that she felt the meetings and discussions have been very informative. The suggestions have been very good, but asked that if the Selectmen were seriously going to consider funding for a helipad for Lifestar that they please check with Lifestar to see if there is need for this. Her concern was that Lifestar seems to have places where they land and she would not want to see funds used for something that was not necessary. Ms. Lloyd also supported funding for the West Hill Pond Association stating that clean water is essential for recreation at Brodie Park.

Shelley then commented as a member of the EDC. She stated that EDC supports using funding to hire a planner to help guide the EDC and the Planning and Zoning Commission to make decisions about the future development of New Hartford. She stated that "a planner for downtown is like having an engineer look at Brodie Park." Funding for a planner would be an investment in our community. A Planner would recognize that office buildings in the downtown area may not be needed anymore but might be able to tell the town what they could be repurposed for. First Selectman Jerram countered that this is what Planning and Zoning does.

Ms. Gallagher liked the bucketing ideas and enjoyed the discussion of seeing how things were grouped together. She likes to see that things are being evaluated with respect to return of investments. Her personal passion is funding for mental health and is pleased to see that funding in that area is being considered.

The Selectmen noted that small local non-profits have requested funding. The Selectmen would like to see some additional information regarding proposed use of funds by some of the non-profits.

First Selectman Jerram stated that he will group the Information and put it into a spread sheet form. Ms. Kennerson would like to see the dollar amounts included in the request on the spreadsheet. They will discuss this further at the January 25, 2022 regular meeting.

**MOTION:** by Kennerson to adjourn at 8:22 PM; seconded by Garay.

*Unanimous.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*

*ATTACHMENTS - available from the Town Clerk upon request*

*ARPA funding requests*