

**Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
Tuesday, January 5, 2016**

Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectman Laura Garay; Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 2:10 PM. He stated that this meeting was being held at the request of Selectman Laura Garay. Mr. Jerram noted that due to regulations/laws defining meetings, discussions between he and Ms. Garay are considered to be legal meetings and therefore this discussion is posted as a meeting.

Ms. Garay stated that she had approached Mr. Jerram and asked for this meeting as an opportunity to gain a better understanding of current issues and have a chance to ask questions regarding day to day operations. Ms. Garay stated that she viewed this meeting as an orientation. She noted that it is her intent to be proactive with respect to issues and therefore welcomed this opportunity to meet.

Ms. Garay began the discussion by commenting that, while she was campaigning for office, a resident expressed a concern regarding inadequate drainage run-off in an area of Brook Street. Mr. Jerram replied that he would have the highway department look into this matter.

Ms. Garay also relayed that a new resident who lived in close proximity to the school bus depot had raised a concern regarding diesel fumes from idling school busses. Ms. Garay questioned if anything could be done to address this issue. Mr. Jerram replied that the issue is between the resident and the bus company, not the town. He noted that the bus yard has been there for a very long time and this would be considered a civil matter between property owners. It was noted that there may be Department of Environmental and Energy Protection regulations that apply to diesel fumes and length of idling time; but this would be something that the affected party would have to pursue.

Ms. Garay questioned the proposed Senior Tax Abatement Ordinance that Mr. Jerram had referred to at the last Selectmen's meeting. She was curious to know how many senior households might be able to take advantage of this and wondered what effect its implementation would have on tax revenues. Mr. Jerram replied that he did not have exact figures at the moment, but could get the numbers from the assessor.

Ms. Garay asked for background on the Town Hill Cemetery. She stated that she was aware that the ownership/operations of the Cemetery was being researched by the Town Attorney. Mr. Jerram replied this is a complicated situation and that is why the Town Attorney has been asked to make a determination of ownership. Jerram noted that the Memorial Bell site is not in question, only the Cemetery. He noted that the Town has appointed members to serve on the Cemetery Association in the past, which seems to indicate that the Town, through its Legislative Body, has some ownership regarding the oversight of the operations and possible fiduciary responsibility of the Cemetery. Jerram stated that this issue is not yet resolved and he vowed to check with the Town Attorney for a status update.

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Selectman Garay stated that she had been to a seminar recently that was held for newly elected officials and they had offered some advice as to what information Board members should gather in order to be informed participants. She stated that she would like to have access to the audit, the management letter, a marketing report and reserved the right to other documents as necessary. First Selectman Jerram replied that he had no issue with sharing of any of that information and encouraged Ms. Garay to ask for whatever she wanted whenever she needed it. He noted that the town does not have a marketing report, but that the official statement that was completed recently for the bond note sale might be of interest to her. He also stated that the audit report and management letter are always shared with the Board of Selectmen as routine protocol and when available, she would receive those documents.

Ms. Garay stated that she had noticed a large check being written to the New Hartford Beekley Library when she was signing checks and asked how the allocation for the libraries was determined. She expressed concern at the funding currently being given to the library and asked if there was any documentation to support their use of the funds. Mr. Jerram replied that the libraries submit budget requests each year and the Selectmen address them at budget time. Jerram further stated that there are several non-profits that receive an allocation from the Town and noted that these are all subject to review each year.

A general discussion of Grants occurred, with Mr. Jerram stating that the town takes advantage of as many grant opportunities as it can. He noted that each grant needs to be reviewed to determine whether or not they are worthy of application. Some grants require matching funds or percentages that are not affordable to the town. Not every Grant has value to New Hartford.

Ms. Garay asked about CCM (Connecticut Conference of Municipalities) and wanted to know if New Hartford takes advantage of the services this agency provides. Mr. Jerram replied that New Hartford is a member of CCM and does use several of its services; noting especially the seminars and training this group provides.

Selectman Garay expressed her desire to shadow town hall staff and asked if this would be permissible. She noted that she would give employees a heads up prior to that undertaking. Mr. Jerram stated he saw no issue with doing this – their jobs are public. Ms. Garay also indicated that she would like to “ride along” in a snow plow during a snow event in order to gain first hand knowledge of that operation. She also is interested in a tour of the wastewater treatment facility and a tour of the Antolini School with a focus on the proposed upgrades.

Ms. Garay thanked Mr. Jerram for his willingness to help her as she becomes familiar with the responsibilities of being a member of the Board of Selectmen.

MOTION: by Jerram to adjourn at 3:30 PM, seconded by Garay *Unanimous.*

Respectfully Submitted by Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant