

TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
SENIOR CENTER/TOWN HALL
JUNE 24, 2015

A special town meeting of the electors and citizens qualified to vote in town meeting of the Town of New Hartford, Connecticut, was held in the New Hartford Town Hall, 530 Main Street, in the Town of New Hartford, Connecticut on Wednesday, June 24, 2015 at 7:00PM.

First Selectman Dan Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. First Selectman Jerram opened the floor to nominations for Moderator. Motion Jim Fitzgerald, second Mary Lou Rayno to nominate Reggie Smith as Moderator. First Selectman Jerram asked if there are any further nominations. Motion Jim Fitzgerald, second Judy Ruhm to close nominations. Motion to close nominations unanimously approved by voice vote. First Selectman Jerram then called for a voice vote on the motion to nominate Reggie Smith for Moderator. Motion unanimously approved.

Moderator Smith read the call of the meeting:

TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD
NOTICE OF A SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

The Board of Selectmen of the Town of New Hartford, CT hereby notifies all electors and citizens entitled to vote in Town Meetings in said Town of New Hartford, that a Special Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 24, 2015 at 7:00 PM in the Senior Center/Meeting Room of the New Hartford Town Hall, 530 Main Street, in New Hartford, CT for the following purpose:

1. To take such action as the voters deem best with respect to the acceptance of a certain piece or parcel of land known as 1550 Litchfield Turnpike, New Hartford, Connecticut and more fully described in a Special Warranty Deed from FB New Hartford, LLC to the Town of New Hartford, a copy of which deed is available for inspection in the New Hartford First Selectman's Office, 530 Main Street, New Hartford, Connecticut.

2. Upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, to take such action as the voters deem best with respect to a request by the New Hartford Board of Education for an appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$72,000 for unanticipated costs related to Special Education for the fiscal year June 30, 2015.

Dated at New Hartford, Connecticut this 18th day of June, 2015

Board of Selectmen

Daniel V. Jerram
Alesia R. Kennerson
John (Jack) H. Casey

Moderator Smith read the Return of Posting and Publication:

**RETURN OF POSTING AND PUBLICATION
OF NOTICE OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

I, Daniel V. Jerram, First Selectman of the Town of New Hartford, Connecticut, hereby certify that I caused a copy of the foregoing Notice of the Special Town Meeting to be posted on the Town signpost on Friday, June 19, 2015 and also published in the Register Citizen, a newspaper published in Torrington, Connecticut and having a general circulation in the Town of New Hartford, on Friday, June 19, 2015.

Dated this 24th day of June, 2015

Daniel V. Jerram, First Selectman

ITEM 1

To take such action as the voters deem best with respect to the acceptance of a certain piece or parcel of land known as 1550 Litchfield Turnpike, New Hartford, Connecticut and more fully described in a Special Warranty Deed from FB New Hartford, LLC to the Town of New Hartford, a copy of which deed is available for inspection in the New Hartford First Selectman's Office, 530 Main Street, New Hartford, Connecticut.

Motion Alesia Kennerson, second Mary Lou Rayno to accept the parcel of land known as 1550 Litchfield Turnpike.

Moderator Smith announced that the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed this potential acquisition in accordance with Ct General Statutes 8-24 and issued a favorable report at a regular meeting held on May 27, 2015. (Attachment 1)

First Selectman Dan Jerram explained that the acquisition of this property is essentially a friendly foreclosure. This property did not meet the threshold for the recent Tax Sale as they currently owe the town \$16,466.62. They have not paid taxes since 2003 because this 5 acre parcel was supposed to be a part of Home Depot and has deed restrictions against it that prevent development of the parcel. (Attachment 2) Tax Collector Linda Sheffield recommended to the Selectmen that the town acquire this parcel since each year the taxes due to the town are placed on the suspense list. The Town required the owner to complete an environmental site assessment to ensure there was no pollution and provide a title insurance policy.

Judy Ruhm inquired if the Town has any liability in acquiring this parcel. Does the town need to carry any special insurance? First Selectman Jerram replied that it would be included in the existing Town liability policy.

John Burdick inquired if the Town had approached the abutting neighbors to acquire the parcel. First Selectman Jerram replied that the town had approached the neighbors, but Home Depot did not need additional property and the other abutting neighbor enjoys the fact that it is not being developed without paying taxes on it.

Jim Fitzgerald inquired what the town would do with this property. First Selectman Jerram indicated that whether we acquire it now or 2 years from now we would then have to determine what to do with it. As of July 1, the taxes due on this property would be \$16,892.67. Mr. Fitzgerald saw no point in removing this property from the tax rolls and indicated that he would not support acquiring the property.

Mrs. LaPlante commented that there would be an additional expense to the town if the property was taken at Tax Sale. First Selectman Jerram agreed.

Moderator Smith called for a voice vote:

8 Yes 3 No. Motion Passes.

ITEM 2

Upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, to take such action as the voters deem best with respect to a request by the New Hartford Board of Education for an appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$72,000 for unanticipated costs related to Special Education for the fiscal year June 30, 2015.

Motion Alesia Kennerson, second Jim Fitzgerald to approve an additional appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$72,000 for unanticipated costs related to Special Education for the fiscal year June 30, 2015, said appropriation to be funded from the General Fund.

Moderator Smith announced that the Board of Finance approved this request for an additional appropriation at a regular meeting of the Board on June 9, 2015. (Attachment 3)

Moderator Smith introduced Board of Education Chairman Josh Adams. Mr. Adams explained that Connecticut Statutes require funding for Special Education costs. For students whose needs cannot be met with town services, the town must pay transportation costs to bring the student elsewhere to receive those services. He explained that the Board of Education budgets for known Special Education costs, but does not have a slush fund to cover students who may move into town after a budget is approved or other unanticipated costs. He elaborated that grant funds from the State for Excess Costs have been obtained and some funds have been allocated from the current budget so the remaining amount needed would not exceed \$72,000.

Judy Ruhm questioned if this is a continuing budget item and whether there is a limit on the amount that towns need to pay. Superintendent Brian Murphy explained that the known Special Education costs have been included in the 2015-2016 budget but that there is no limit under statute.

Mary Lou Rayno inquired if the students are being transported out of New Hartford for education. Superintendent Murphy indicated yes they are. She asked if providing the services in town wouldn't be less costly than transportation costs. Mr. Murphy indicated that the services needed are too specialized and would in fact be more costly.

Alesia Kennerson questioned whether all the Special Education expenses have been paid out. Superintendent Murphy asked Director of Student Services, Paula Gladu-Morabito and she indicated that the bills had not yet been paid, but if all the bills are paid without this allocation that line item would end the fiscal year in a deficit.

Gina Maroney commented that as a parent of a special education student it takes a great deal of courage to admit their child needs special education and when she was pregnant she never expected that her child would need special education services.

Jim Fitzgerald explained that when the Board of Education came to the Board of Finance, their original request was for \$110,000. They have \$40,000 or \$50,000 in surplus in their current budget which will be applied to the Special Education costs. Jim Fitzgerald also commented that the Board of Finance was unanimous in their support of the allocation of additional funds.

Moderator Smith called for a voice vote: Unanimous. Motion Passes.

Moderator Smith announces that having no other business to conduct, he would entertain a motion to adjourn.

Motion John Burdick, second Jack Casey to adjourn at 7:19 pm. Unanimously approved.

A True Copy

Attest: Donna N. LaPlante, Town Clerk