

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 19, 2014**

Present: First Selectman Edward G. McAnaney, Joanne Sullivan, Mel Chafetz, Brian Fitzgerald and Timothy Reynolds. First Selectman McAnaney called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes: Selectman Reynolds made a motion to approve the March 5, 2014 minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen as corrected. Vote 5-0 in favor. Selectman Sullivan made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 14, 2014 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen as presented. Vote 4-0 in favor. Selectman Reynolds abstained.

Public Comment:

Warren Packard of 2 Oxford Drive noted the presentation made by Beth Chafetz at Rotary on the previous night regarding the renovation of Bridge Street School. He asked what the Board of Selectmen's position was. The Selectmen noted that it was to be discussed later in the agenda.

Krystal Holmes of 42 Michael Lane asked the Board to move the Bridge Street School project forward to the Board of Finance and to a Town Meeting. She requested a better idea of how the financing could be accomplished. She also questioned why the Agenda included referring the project to a Town referendum and suggested that we stop at the Town Meeting step and determine whether or not a referendum is needed.

Ann Borg of 1310 Mountain Road stated that she was disappointed that there are no extra parking spaces as part of the new Library addition. She felt the parking spaces were very important to the community and would like to see parking on the west side of Bank Lane.

Ruth Zimmerman of 36 Gooseberry Drive echoed Ms. Borg's request.

Bruce Rietberg of 12 Devine Road echoed Ms. Borg's comments as well. He also asked about the crosswalks across from the Middle School. It was noted that those are managed by the State.

Presentation of Citation to Joseph Blake, Assistant Principal of the Year.

The First Selectman read the Citation and Mr. Blake noted that the recognition from the Town was more important than the actual award since he lives here. He believes that it is important that the administrators be part of the culture and not just observing the culture. He enjoys being part of the community and taking part in local sporting and Town events and local organizations.

Approval of Tax Rebates

Selectman Fitzgerald upon the recommendation of the Tax Department moved to authorize the tax rebates to Griffin Land, LLC, \$1,168.56 and to Corelogic, \$1,758.56 for a total of \$2,927.12. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Appointment of Town Clerk.

First Selectman McAnaney stated that George Beiter was recommended by the Democratic Town Committee. The charter requires that the appointee must be a member of the Democratic party and a resident of Suffield with no other requirements. Maria Capella indicated her interest in the position. They both were in attendance and had provided the Board with their resumes. At this time, Selectman McAnaney asked if anyone else was interested. Kathy Dunai Thibedeau expressed an interest as well. Mr. Beiter and Ms. Capella discussed their qualifications and the Selectmen asked questions. Ms. Dunai withdrew her request as she didn't bring a resume and felt unprepared to give a presentation.

Selectman Reynolds made motion to add an Executive Session to the Agenda to discuss the Town Clerk position. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Approve increase in hours for Parks and Rec Special Program Coordinator from 25 to 30 hours per week.

The First Selectman stated that the Parks & Recreation Secretary position was eliminated and replaced with a 10 hour per week Registration Clerk. The Parks & Rec Commission requested an additional 5 hours per week for the Special Program Coordinator. The elimination of the Secretary position has caused a budget surplus that will cover the extra hours. This position is budgeted for 30 hours per week in the 2014-15 budget year. Selectman Sullivan made the motion to approve increase in hours for Parks and Rec Special Program Coordinator from 25 to 30 hours per week. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Approve Salary increase for 1 Library Assistant and 3 Library Substitutes to \$12.50 per hour.

First Selectman McAnaney noted that these positions were omitted from the recent 2% Salary increase. The increase is not retroactive. Selectman Fitzgerald requested steps be taken to ensure that no employees are excluded in the future. Selectman Chafetz moved to approve Salary increase for 1 Library Assistant and 3 Library Substitutes to \$12.50 per hour. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Resolution authorizing the Town of Suffield to enter into contracts with the CT Department of Agriculture for the Farm Viability Grant.

Town Planner Bill Hawkins prepared a memo stating that the farm viability grant will allow the Town to stretch our dollars for promoting agriculture. The grant is a 50% cash match program and the Town can use in-kind hours as a part of our match. This year's budget is heavy on advertising and fixing the Farmers Market and Suffield Agriculture Council's websites. A large part of the project will also be for obtaining appraisal reports for our farmland preservation program projects.

The CT Department of Agriculture is responsible for \$11,450 and the Town is

responsible for \$9,650 as our cash match. The budget also includes \$3,650 as in-kind hours which are mostly related to Town staff time working on the grant.

Selectman Fitzgerald read the resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that it is in the best interests of the Town of Suffield to enter into contracts with the CT Department of Agriculture.

IN FURTHERANCE OF THIS RESOLUTION, the Honorable Edward G. McAnaney is duly authorized to enter into and sign said contracts on behalf of the Town of Suffield. The Honorable Edward G. McAnaney is further authorized to provide such additional information and execute such other documents as may be required by the state or federal government in connection with said contracts and to execute any amendments, rescissions, and revisions thereto.

THE TOWN CLERK IS AUTHORIZED is authorized to impress the seal of the Town of Suffield on any such document, amendment, rescission, or revision.

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN, THIS 19TH DAY OF MARCH 2014.

Vote 5-0 in favor.

Authorize the First Selectman to sign the Joint Community Application Cooperation Agreement with Ellington through the Small Cities Community Development Grant Program.

Director of Economic Development, Patrick McMahon provided a memo which stated that the Town of Suffield is interested in joining with the Towns of Ellington and Somers for a 400,000 grant application to the Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program for a housing rehabilitation program. The Town of Ellington is the lead applicant responsible for all of the obligations under the terms of the grant and Suffield residents meeting income guidelines who are in need of housing rehabilitation would be eligible beneficiaries of the program. In order to move forward with a joint application for funding, a cooperation agreement must be executed between the towns.

This program provides financial assistance for low- and moderate-income households for repairs to their homes. Repairs could include roofing, heating systems, plumbing and electrical upgrades, new window, siding, accessibility modifications, and/or de-leading. The assistance is provided in the form of a deferred loan which is paid when the property is sold. The advantage of joining with Ellington is that our residents benefit from the financial assistance but the administrative burden of the program falls on Ellington. 10 Suffield homes are on the waiting list to be completed. The program helps insure the quality of Suffield's housing stock.

Selectman Reynolds moved to approve the resolution from Patrick McMahon's memo dated March 18, 2014. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Refer Bridge Street School expenditure of \$2.7Million to Board of Finance and to

Town Meeting and Town Referendum.

First Selectman McAnaney stated that two Public Forums have been held. If the Board wants to move forward the request should be referred to the Board of Finance. There was discussion about when the Board of Finance would determine the financing method. If the Board of Finance approves the appropriation then the Board of Selectmen would call the Town Meeting. Selectman Sullivan asked what the recourse is if the Board of Finance does not approve the expenditure. Selectman Fitzgerald stated that the citizens can petition to approve the project but need 10% of the electorate. The Town Attorney would need to be consulted to confirm.

Selectman Chafetz made a motion to refer the Bridge Street School expenditure of \$2.7 Million to the Board of Finance and to Town Meeting.

After some discussion, Selectman Reynolds made a motion to amend the motion that the Town Meeting be followed by a Town Referendum. Vote 4-1 in favor of the amendment. Selectman Chafetz voted against.

Discussion followed about the plan to send to a referendum regardless of the outcome of the Town Meeting.

Selectman Fitzgerald moved to amend the motion to substitute the word recommend for the word refer. Mr. Fitzgerald said that the Board should show their support. The vote was 3-2 in favor. Selectmen McAnaney and Reynolds voted against the amendment.

Discussion on the main motion followed.

Next the vote took place on the motion to recommend the Bridge Street School expenditure of \$2.7 Million to the Board of Finance and to Town Meeting followed by a Town Referendum. The vote was 3-2 in favor. Selectmen McAnaney and Reynolds voted against the motion.

Selectmen's Update

Large Animal Facility/Fire Pump

First Selectman McAnaney stated that the Large Animal Facility progress is slow. The Fire Pump project is moving forward even though we have received a claim from the original contractor for \$587,000. There is an outside chance that the facility will be open this current school year.

Town Meeting, Thursday March 20th at 7:00 p.m. at Suffield Middle School.

The agenda items are

1. That subject to the receipt of \$1,300,000 in a combination of gifts and grants and to the receipt of \$100,000 in Town funds, the Town Meeting of the Town of Suffield approves the Accessibility Addition to the Library.

2. That the Town Meeting authorize the Town of Suffield to withdraw from membership in the Central Connecticut Solid Waste Authority and to repeal the ordinance entitled "Ordinance to Create and Become a Member of the Central Connecticut Solid Waste Authority" that was approved at a Town Meeting dated August 17, 2010.

Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to convene Executive Session to discuss the Town Clerk position. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Executive session convened at 8:17 p.m. and ended at 8:45.

Selectman Fitzgerald moved to appoint George Beiter to fill the unexpired position of Town Clerk for the balance of the term of Elaine O'Brien through January 4, 2016. Vote 4-1 in favor. Selectman Reynolds voted against.

Selectman Fitzgerald moved to adjourn at 8:47 p.m. Vote 5-0 in favor.

The next Selectmen's Meeting will be Wednesday, April 2, 2014.

Lisa Trase
Recording Secretary