

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DECEMBER 2, 2015**

Present: Timothy Reynolds, Joanne Sullivan, Krystal Holmes and Mel Chafetz. **Absent:** First Selectman Melissa M. Mack. Town Planner Bill Hawkins was also in attendance. Selectman Reynolds called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Selectman Reynolds asked that a moment of silence be observed for the victims of the San Bernardino shooting.

Approval of the Minutes from the November 18, 2015 Regular Meeting

Selectman Holmes made the motion to approve the minutes from the November 18, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Vote 4-0 in favor.

Public Comment:

None

Motion to approve the purchase of Development Rights to the Bielonko Farm, East Street North and recommend to the Board of Finance

Motion to approve the purchase of Development Rights to the Stiles Farm, 876 Mapleton Avenue and recommend to the Board of Finance

These two agenda items were discussed simultaneously. Town Planner Bill Hawkins provided a memo to the Board of Selectmen in advance of the meeting and shared the highlights. In August of 2015 the State Department of Agriculture (DOAG) made an offer to purchase the development rights of 60.51 +/- acres of the 63.51 +/- farm owned by Kevin Stiles at 876 Mapleton Avenue and also of 119.34 acres of the 119.66 acre Bielonko Farm located at 1043 East Street North. These two properties abut each other and the owners wanted to go through the process at the same time. These properties were ranked 5th and 1st respectively on the town list of 20 properties for farmland preservation. A high percentage of the land area of both farms is considered prime or statewide important farmland soils. Mr. Hawkins explained that these parcels are right for development since there are utilities readily available to service the properties and the 180 acres could yield approximately 65 building lots. Three appraisals were done for each property. The third appraisal for the Stiles farm was \$702,000 for the development rights of the 60.53 acres (\$11,601 per acre). The State DOAG offered \$662,240 which was accepted contingent on the town making up the difference of \$39,760 or 5.6% of the total. The Bielonko farm appraised at \$1,074,000 (\$9,001 per acre) for the development rights of 119.32 acres. The State DOAG offered \$1,041,042 which was accepted contingent on the town making up the difference of \$32,958 or 3.1% of the total. The total due from the town is \$72,718 which is subject to adjustment due to final survey if approved at Town meeting. Mr. Hawkins noted that the funds will come from the open space fund which has a current balance of \$844,090. He also mentioned that typically

the town share is 25% of the purchase price so this is an unusual opportunity. If approved by the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Finance would have to approve the expenditure and final approval would be needed at a Town Meeting.

Selectman Chafetz asked about the restrictions when development rights were sold. Mr. Hawkins noted that non-agricultural development is restricted so the property could be sold as farmland but no future development would be allowed. The Stiles Farm will leave about 3 acres containing the house and a 12,500 SF strip of land out of the development right purchase which could be sold separately in the future. The Bielonko farm will have a .34 unrestricted building envelope which included a garage/apartment where the owner can rebuild or build new non-agricultural structures in this space. Selectman Chafetz noted that there is not much open land on the east side of Town and he's in favor of this development right purchase. Selectman Holmes asked if the open space is funded annually and Mr. Hawkins replied that he typically requests funding annually from the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures (ACCE). He plans to ask for \$100,000 this year.

Selectman Sullivan made the motion to approve the expenditure of \$32,958 (subject to any adjustment due to the final survey acreage) from the open space fund for the purchase of development rights to the 119.32 +/- acre Bielonko Farm to the Board of Finance and ultimately to a Town Meeting at a date to be set. Vote 4-0 in favor.

Selectman Chafetz made the motion to approve the expenditure of \$39,760 (subject to any adjustment due to the final survey acreage) from the open space fund for the purchase of development rights to the 60.51 +/- acre Stiles Farm to the Board of Finance and ultimately to a Town Meeting at a date to be set. Vote 4-0 in favor.

Selectman Holmes commended Mr. Hawkins on his thorough memo and presentation.

Motion to approve the Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule for 2016.

Selectman Reynolds stated First Selectman Mack has been in touch with the Police Commission chairman and he plans to change their meeting date to avoid a conflict with the 3rd Wednesday of the month Board of Selectmen meeting. Selectman Reynolds suggested the following schedule:

The Board of Selectmen will meet on the first and third Wednesday's of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall lower level meeting room. During the summer months of June, July and August the Board of Selectmen will meet on the 3rd Wednesday only at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Lower Level meeting room.

The meetings will take place as listed below:

January 6 & 20

February 3 & 17

March 2 & 16
April 6 & 20
May 4 & 18
June 15
July 20
August 17
September 7 & 21
October 5 & 19
November 2 & 16
December 7 & 21

Selectman Chafetz made a motion to accept the proposed meeting schedule for the Board of Selectmen in 2016. Vote 4-0 in favor.

Selectmen's Update

- a. Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is offering training for newly elected local leaders on Friday December 18th or Saturday, January 23rd in Cromwell. Melissa plans to attend on Friday, December 18th.
- b. Melissa and Krystal will be attending CT Council of Small Towns (COST) training for new and returning Town Leaders on Tuesday December 8th. The purpose is to inform municipal leaders about problem-solving and other essential resources that are available from COST, state agencies and other organizations.
- c. An FOI Seminar with Tom Hennick of the Freedom of Information Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, January 5th at 7:00 p.m. at the Suffield Middle School. A list of discussion topics is being developed. There will also be an opportunity for questions from the audience.
- d. The Zoning and Planning Commission will hold a Special Meeting on December 9th regarding the sale of lot 11-2 on the corner of Bennett Road and East Street.

Public Comment

None

Selectman Chafetz moved to adjourn and by unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

The next Board of Selectmen Meeting will be Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Trase
Recording Secretary