

## MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN JUNE 19, 2013

**Present:** First Selectman Edward G. McAnaney, Joanne Sullivan, Eileen Moncrief, Timothy Reynolds and Brian Fitzgerald. Patrick McMahon, Director of Economic Development and Town Planner Bill Hawkins were also present. First Selectman McAnaney called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Minutes:** Selectman Moncrief made a motion to accept the May 15, 2013 minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Vote 5-0 in favor.

**Public Comment:** Approximately 40 residents were in attendance. Mel Chafetz (Mapleton Ave) asked the Board to redouble the efforts of sending out emails with Agendas and Minutes of Board and Commission meetings. Kerry White (Newgate Road) is a book sorter at Bridge Street School and said that the building is deteriorating since the heat has been off. Cindy Nicholson (Lakeview Drive) speaking as the Vice Chair of the Parks and Rec Commission read a letter thanking the Town for the Suffield Speaks study and is in favor of keeping the Bridge Street School Building. She stated that it is historic and needs protection. The Park & Rec Commission is intent on using the building as it is in a strategic location and is perfect for community use. Parks & Rec could use the building during the day for pre-school programs since there is no other space available for that purpose. She also noted that Parks & Rec would be willing to share space with the Friends of the Library and youth services. Bob White (Newgate Road) commended Town government for Suffield Speaks and said that by the end of the meeting 90% chose the same option to retain ownership. Frank Forti (Brandywine Lane) said he was in favor of the keeping and utilizing the building. He said the total price is irrelevant since over 20 years it is estimated to cost \$34 per year. Janet Banks (Randall Drive) said the building is a significant asset of over 12,000 sq feet of useable space in a prime location. She requested the Selectmen to add an item to the agenda for the next meeting to stabilize the heat, fix drainage, gutters, etc. She said over 200 people signed the petition online. Ray Pioggia (River Blvd) wanted to publicly announce the existence of website BridgeStreetSchool.com. They have an online petition with 200 signatures and a goal of 500. He encouraged the Selectmen to visit the website. Anne Borg (Mountain Road) agreed with all previous speakers that we should renovate the building. She also said it would be a perfect fit for Parks & Rec. Laurie Tavino (River Blvd) spoke in favor of the renovation and requesting the building be maintained including repair of the furnace. Brian Casinghino (Day Ave) said that it is important to make Suffield attractive to perspective residents. The building is an important and impressive part of the Town Center. He said we should protect and maintain what we have and Bridge Street School is an inexpensive investment. He sees this as a project where volunteers can help to complete in a cost effective way. Beth Chafetz (Mapleton Ave) said that the Friends of the Library would be supportive and would be happy to help. The Friends provides \$16,000-\$25,000 to the library annually. John Smith (Halladay Drive) stated that since it is June the Town needs to move forward and prepare for another winter by doing basic maintenance, including temporary heat. Vin Barnes (Countryside Lane) said he's seen inaction in another town that caused a building to be torn down and be replaced by a major retail property. He doesn't want that to happen here. Jean Barnes (Countryside Lane) requested the Selectmen to not let it get worse and raze the building. Lester Smith (Marbern Drive) spoke in favor of Town use of the building and asked about the possibility of STEAP grants for the project.

**Tax Rebates:** Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the tax rebates as recommended by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$1,343.16. Vote 5-0 in favor.

**Tax Abatements for Dairy Farms:** Selectman Moncrief made a motion to accept tax abatements as presented and grant tax relief for Dairy farms as provided for in Connecticut General Statutes. The motion was amended to include orchards. Vote 5-0 in favor.

**Suffield Speaks Presentation:** Mr. Glen Chalder was in attendance to discuss Suffield Speaks. He explained that research was done on the history and issues surrounding the Bridge Street School. He explained that Open Houses were held and interviews were conducted. Reasonable options (with costs) were created from doing nothing to selling the school. Signs and a website were created to promote the event. About 80 people attended. They were handed discussion booklets and divided into small groups of 6-8 people. They were tasked with defining their most preferred, 2<sup>nd</sup> choice and least preferred option. The choice was nearly unanimous (90%) wanted to renovate the school for Town use, stabilizing the building was the 2<sup>nd</sup> preferred choice. The least preferred option was to relinquish control of the building. The Selectmen thanked Mr. Chalder for his work. Selectman Sullivan said we need to make a choice. Selectman Moncrief said with the recent rain we should act now to stabilize the building and control moisture. Selectman Fitzgerald suggested adding temporary heat and work on drainage problems while a decision is made. He also said that the Board of Finance may be resistant to the project. First Selectman McAnaney said there is an insurance claim on the heating system and he will have the Public Works Director take a comprehensive look at the building.

**Application for Grant for C-PACE marketing:** Patrick McMahon, Director of Economic Development, explained that the Town entered into the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program at the May 23<sup>rd</sup> Town meeting. The Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority (CEFIA), which manages the program is offering small marketing grants to help inform prospects of the availability of financing for energy efficient improvements. The Town has made a request for \$1,000 to get the word out to eligible property owners (deadline was June 7<sup>th</sup>). The Board of Finance approved this at their June meeting. Selectman Reynolds made a motion to approve the submission of the C-PACE marketing grant and expenditure of the grant should one be offered. Vote 5-0 in favor.

**Application to Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for Library ADA:** Patrick McMahon, Director of Economic Development, stated that he is seeking assistance to make handicapped accessibility improvements to the Kent Memorial Library. The Town has the opportunity to apply for grant funds through the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to assist with these improvements. The preliminary estimate for the chosen solution is \$1,094,027. A \$700,000 grant application is pending with the State of CT for federal CDBG funds. To move forward with this preferred solution would require identifying other funding sources. Possible sources of funds are the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the State's Historic Restoration Fund and the fundraising by the Library Foundation. Selectman Reynolds made a motion to approve the submission of a grant application in the amount of \$400,000 to the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for the Library ADA project and that the First Selectman is authorized to execute any grant-related documents. Vote 5-0 in favor.

**Reprogramming of \$75,000 Grant for Babbs:** Patrick McMahon explained that the Town of Suffield was awarded a \$75,000 Open Space Grant in 2000 to rebuild the Babbs Beach Bathhouse. The grant is still on the books and we would like to utilize these funds towards the restoration of the 11,872 square foot rink building. Last February the Board of Selectmen authorized the First Selectman to explore the reprogramming of the open space grant to the rink building. The \$75,000 State grant was originally approved to rebuild a bathhouse. The bathhouse was condemned and razed before the funds could be used to repair it. The plan shifted to building a new bathhouse but due to budgetary constraints a new bathhouse has never materialized. The grant was never officially approved at Town Meeting. Rep. Elaine O'Brien has been in communication with the Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) about the process to reprogram the grant and the feedback has been positive. Selectman Sullivan made a motion to authorize the First Selectman to execute any grant related documents to effectuate the use of the Open Space Grant on the rink building at Babbs. Vote 5-0 in favor.

**STEAP Grant Application:** Patrick McMahon stated that the deadline on the next round of Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant applications is August 1, 2013. STEAP funds are issued by the State Bond Commission and can only be used for capital projects. Mr. McMahon described the types of projects eligible for STEAP funds. Suffield has used STEAP Grants for Babbs Beach, Senior Center, Canal Road, Harvey Lane and Landfill expansion projects in recent years. Towns can apply for up to \$500,000 and suggests that the Town apply for projects for Friends of the Farm at Hilltop and Babbs Beach Roller Rink in the amount of \$250,000 each. The Friends of the Farm at Hilltop (FOFAH) are looking to acquire the 8 acres upon which the large white dairy barn sits. Currently, FOFAH is in the midst of a 99 year lease with the property owner for the barn and several outbuildings. However, three houses and a garage are not included and are experiencing deferred maintenance. FOFAH is looking to get control of the property in order to further their mission of establishing an agricultural educational facility at this historic property. Funding would be to acquire the property and to begin restoration work on one of the homes. The Babbs Roller Rink has been improved by Citizens Restoring Congamond (CRC) with a new roof, windows and siding thanks to a previous STEAP grant, private fundraising and volunteer effort. The project needs an additional infusion of funds in order to get the building operational. The goal at this point is to utilize the building for athletic training. Work that needs to be completed includes: extension of a water line, plumbing, septic system, electrical upgrades, lighting, and some interior finishing. Selectman Reynolds made a motion to authorize the submission of a Small Town Economic Assistance Program grant application for the following projects: 1) \$250,000 for Hilltop Farms; and 2) \$250,000 for the Babbs Roller Rink property. Vote 4-0 in favor. Selectman Moncrief abstained due to her relationship with FOFAH.

**Appointment of Kate Daly Rietberg to Retirement Commission:** Selectman Moncrief made the motion to appoint Kate Daly Rietberg to the Retirement Commission through August 2016. Vote 5-0 in favor.

**Resolution to authorize First Selectman to sign Master Municipal Agreement for Construction**

**Projects:** The Department of Transportation wants municipalities to sign a Master Municipal Agreement for Construction Projects (MMAC) to expedite the paperwork for any future projects. This is a ten year agreement which contains the "boilerplate" contract language from the State. Having agreed upon this boilerplate language upfront, contracting for construction projects will be accomplished

through a Project Authorization Letter (PAL). The PAL will contain funding details as well as expectations and obligations of the municipality depending on the project type. By not including the contract language already agreed to in the MMAC the PAL will be shorter and easier to negotiate. Selectman Fitzgerald resolved that the Honorable Edward G. McAnaney, First Selectman, is hereby authorized to sign the Agreement entitled "Master Municipal Agreement for Construction Projects". Vote 5-0 in favor.

**Selectman's update:** The Town has received checks from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving as recommended by the Amiel P Zak Public Service Fund for \$7,935 for installation of dugouts at Bruce Park; \$20,425 for an irrigation system for the high school softball and baseball fields as well as a speaker system for the high school field. Maryann Zak was in attendance and her family was thanked by the Board of Selectmen.

**Boston Neck Road Bridge update:** The bridge portion is complete but drainage problems were discovered and are being addressed. The pedestrian bridge will also be replaced at a cost of \$75,000. The Bridge is expected to be opened in mid-July.

**Landfill Fees:** Currently the Landfill charges \$100 per ton for residents delivering bulky waste in vehicles over ¾ ton as well as for all business and commercial bulky waste. This rate is being reviewed along with all other landfill fees. A report will be created for proposed fees once the analysis is completed.

**WPCA Debt Payment:** The WPCA had committed to paying \$260,000 this year for debt service. We received a check from WPCA in the amount of \$493,000. This larger payment was due to actual payments in developer agreements and advanced payments being larger than the budgeted amount. The WPCA is in-line with their remaining payments with a final payment due in 2015/2016.

The First Selectman reported that the Rotha Case has been settled and withdrawn.

Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Personnel matters and litigation. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Executive Session convened at 8:20 p.m. and ended at 9:26 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Selectman Sullivan moved that the meeting adjourn. Vote 5-0 in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

The next Selectmen's Meeting will be Wednesday, July 17, 2013.

Lisa Trase Recording Secretary