

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DECEMBER 4, 2013**

Present: First Selectman Edward G. McAnaney, Joanne Sullivan, Brian Fitzgerald, Mel Chafetz and Timothy Reynolds. Patrick McMahon, Director of Economic Development was also in attendance. First Selectman McAnaney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes: Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to accept the November 20, 2013 minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen as presented. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Public Comment:

First Selectman McAnaney recognized the accomplishments of Sean Sullivan and the Suffield High Boys soccer team. Sullivan received an "All American" award, the first given to a Suffield player. He was also named to the All New England Team and the number 1 player in Connecticut. The team was ranked first in New England and 8th in the nation.

Tax Rebates:

Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the tax rebates as recommended by the Tax Department and printed on the agenda: Adams, Richard, \$80.25; Adams, Richard, \$191.52; DiLorenzo, John, \$27.32; Murray, John, \$29.94; Rossi, Gina, \$129.37; Rossi, Gina or James, \$29.31; **TOTAL: \$487.71.** Vote 5-0 in favor.

Item #6 was moved up in the agenda.

Authorize First Selectman to approve tax rebates up to \$1,000 per individual rebate.

Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to authorize the First Selectman to approve tax rebates up to \$1,000 per individual rebate. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Approval to submit an application to CEFIA for the Energy Efficiency Thermal Imaging program.

Patrick McMahon, Director of Economic Development was in attendance to discuss this item. He noted that the Town authorized the Clean Energy Finance & Investment Authority (CEFIA) to manage the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program earlier this year and it is working well. That program allowed commercial, industrial and certain multi-family dwellings to qualify for 100% low cost upfront financing for energy efficiency projects. CEFIA is seeking to drive increased market penetration of residential energy efficiency upgrades throughout the state. CEFIA is requesting expression of interest from CT communities to demonstrate local interest and engagement in participating in an Energy Efficiency Thermal Imaging Program. CEFIA will select 3 to 5 communities to participate in this program. A contractor (Sagewell) will take thermal images from the front and side of dwellings

during cold evenings. The dwellings must be on public streets and within 70 feet of the public road. Homeowners will be able to request Thermal Image Reports of their home, which will display where their residence may be losing heat. Reports are password-protected so that only the homeowner can view the report. Sagewell will then connect homeowners with utility-sponsored in-home energy assessments. The homeowner may then choose to make any recommended energy efficiency improvements utilizing a financing arrangement provided by CEFIA. Mr. McMahon noted that there is no financial commitment on the part of the Town. The Town's responsibility will be to aid in marketing the program via press releases, website notice, email, etc.

Selectman Reynolds made a motion to approve the submission of an application for the Energy Efficiency Thermal Imaging Program.

Discussion followed where Selectmen Chafetz and Sullivan expressed possible concerns by residents regarding photography of private residences. The First Selectman noted that there is no way to prevent photos on public streets. Selectman Fitzgerald noted that CEFIA is sanctioned by the State so there is a layer of security to ensure that no citizens are being taken advantage of. Selectman Sullivan added that a few calls should be expected but if residents are warned and the program is explained, they will see its merit. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Mr. McMahon also requested the Board discuss the Solarize CT program that CEFIA recently announced.

Selectman Chafetz made a motion to amend the agenda to add an item to discuss and possible vote to approve the application for the Solarize Connecticut program. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Solarize Connecticut is a State-sponsored pilot program through CEFIA and SmartPower that makes solar more affordable for Connecticut homeowners. The ideal solar home has a solid roof, is south facing and does not have a lot of shading from trees or buildings. CEFIA's approved contractor would look at homes of interested residents and determine if they could benefit from the solar program. The Town would aid in marketing the program and there is no cost to the Town. Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the submission of an application to the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority for the Solarize CT program. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Approval of Lease Extension for 230C Mountain Road

First Selectman McAnaney has negotiated the extension of the lease of office space at 230C Mountain Road. The lease will be extended for one year with the rental charge remaining the same as the current year (\$5,600) per month. Additionally the Town agrees to pay an annual \$500 fee for basement storage.

It was noted that the Town is assessed quarterly charges for common areas and maintenance obligations. The portion we rent is exempt from taxes and utilities are not included in the lease. Selectman Chafetz asked if the lease price was fair and the other

Selectmen noted that there is not much other space in Town to be used in comparison and rental fees are not typically public information.

Selectman Sullivan asked about the total cost for leasing the office space. She stated that if Bridge Street School was operational we could be saving this money. Mrs. Sullivan noted that it would not take the entire projected \$2.7 million to get Bridge Street School operational and that grants also exist to help defray the cost. Selectman Reynolds noted that there should be a referendum to let the citizens decide on the future of Bridge Street School.

Selectman Reynolds made a motion to approve the lease extension for 230C Mountain Road as contained in their information packet. Vote 4-0 in favor. Selectman Chafetz abstained.

Reappoint Library Commission members Christine Rago, Lynne Cigal, Claire Kawalec, Joe Grimard and Robert Brooks through November, 2017.

Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to Reappoint Library Commission members Christine Rago, Lynne Cigal, Claire Kawalec, Joe Grimard and Robert Brooks through November, 2017. Vote 5-0 in favor.

It was noted that there are two openings on the Library Commission. The Library Commission has recommended two candidates and the Town Committees have been approached for their recommendations.

Discussion regarding Memorandum of Understanding – Kent Memorial Library

There is a potential donor for the new entranceway at Kent Memorial Library. A Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted with the Town, the Library Foundation, the Library Commission and the unnamed donor. The donor has requested to keep his name confidential until an agreement is reached. The document has been reviewed and modified by the First Selectman, the Town Attorney, and Bob Brooks, a member of the Library Commission and attorney. The First Selectman recently made changes and the document is with the donor's attorney to finalize. It was noted that this is not a pledge to make a gift as a pledge has tax implications.

Selectman Sullivan made a motion to authorize the First Selectman to further negotiate the Memorandum of Understanding and to approve it as finalized. Vote 5-0 in favor.

Selectman's Update

FOFAH Tax Rebates

Janet Banks attended the last Selectmen meeting to discuss the status of the possible rebate of taxes paid by Friend of the Farm at Hilltop (FOFAH) for Hilltop Farm. She stated that FOFAH has become a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and will be exempt from taxes next year forward but the group is looking for forgiveness for taxes due through 6/30/14. A meeting was held among the Town Attorney, Assessor and First Selectman to discuss the matter. The Town Attorney is researching the State

Statutes and soliciting input from other towns to determine the impact of approving the rebate for a single organization. A Town Meeting may be needed to approve the ordinance.

Update on IT Storage and Virtualization Project

First Selectman McAnaney reported that contracts have been signed and deposits have been paid to Daymark for Virtualization of the Town's computer system. Mr. McAnaney stated that the project should be implemented by mid-January 2014.

Fundraising for Kent Memorial Library.

Selectman Chafetz updated the Board on fundraising efforts. Along with the possible MOU mentioned earlier, the Library Commission Endowment will add \$300,000 ; there is an application to Hartford Foundation for Giving for \$400,00; the Library Foundation expects to donate \$100,000 and the Capital Expenditure account in the Town has reserved \$100,000. The group expects to hear from the Hartford Foundation for Giving in January. Mr. Chafetz reported that the groundbreaking could take place in July with 8-9 months expected for construction.

Grand List Revaluation Update

Helen Totz, Town Assessor, prepared a preliminary report on the current revaluation and its impact on the upcoming Grand List. The project was conducted using analysis of sales and inspections of all new construction. The general impact she saw was an overall decrease in the gross Real Estate Grand list of approximately 8%. Preliminary figures for the Personal Property Grand List shows an increase that will help offset some of the Real Estate decrease. Ms. Totz reported that notices of new values will be mailed soon. A process has been created for taxpayers who disagree with their assessments.

North Central District Health Department Annual Report

The 2012-13 Annual Report of the North Central District Health Department was distributed to the Selectmen for their review. The North Central District Health Department provides Suffield with full-time health department services. The Town paid \$70,389 in the current fiscal year for their services. This is a \$4.47 per capita charge for a Suffield population of 15,747.

Tri-Board Meeting Date

The Tri-Board meeting date has been confirmed on January 15, 2014 at the Volunteer Ambulance Association.

Update on Open Positions.

Human Resource (HR) Director position:

Katherine Christopher has accepted the position of HR Director. Shannon Walker, the HR Director from Windsor Locks who is consulting part-time for Suffield will aid Katherine as she transitions.

Accounting Assistant

One member of the Town Hall Union applied for the Accounting Assistant position and was offered the position.

Youth Service Director

The First Selectman held a strategy meeting with members of the Social Services Commission. The plan is to have the HR Director post the position, accept resumes and screen them. Selectman Chafetz offered to assist. The Social Service Commission and HR Director will perform the first round of interviews. Final interviews will be made by the First Selectman, the HR Director, and a Board of Education member.

Selectman Fitzgerald asked if the position could be contracted out. Selectman Chafetz responded that the position doesn't work typical hours as many nights and weekends are required to provide family support. He added that we need to look at the service provided not only the economics.

Library Director

Library Director, Jim McShane's last day is Friday, December 13th. The new HR Director Katherine Christopher will take over for Shannon Walker assisting in the interview process with Library Commission Chair, Lynne Cigal.

2014-2015 Budget Preparation

The First Selectman has sent an email to the Department Heads looking for their budget proposals by the end of December. Capital Projects should be included. Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures (ACCE) meetings are starting this month. We should expect a budget surplus for the last fiscal year and need to decide what to do with the surplus. Options include a tax rebate or reduction or adding to the newly created Capital Account.

Bridge Street School

The bids have been opened and Beacon Mechanicals was awarded the project to add heaters to Bridge Street School. Four Modine units will be installed to provide temporary heat. The gas line has been installed.

There being no further business, Selectman Reynolds moved that the meeting adjourn. Vote 5-0 in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Next Board of Selectmen Meeting will be Wednesday, December 18, 2013.

Lisa Trase
Recording Secretary