

OFFICE OF THE
FIRST SELECTMAN

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William F. Brennan
First Selectman

Harold E. Clark
Second Selectman

Alice L. Ayers

Richard F. Creeth

Susan A. Bruschi

TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT 06897

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
July 16, 2007

MINUTES

- Present: William F. Brennan, Harold E. Clark, Alice L. Ayers, Susan A. Bruschi (Richard F. Creeth notified intended absence)
- Others: Joe Dolan, Chief Financial Officer; Sarah Taffel, Director of Human Resources, Labor Relations & Administrative Services; Peggy Reeves, Registrar
- Guests: Sean O'Toole, Ken Post, Karen Birck, Board of Education; Peter Kaskell, Independent Committee on Ethics; Louise Herot, Beverly Hood, League of Women Voters; Bill Brautigam, National Executive Service Corps; Judy Zucker, Social Service Committee; Malcolm Whyte, resident; Jared Newman, The Villager; Brian Shea, The Bulletin

First Selectman Brennan called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

A. Consent Agenda

A MOTION was made by Mr. Clark, seconded by Ms. Bruschi, and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Minutes

- Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting – July 2, 2007

Gifts

- One thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$1,750.00) to the Wilton Senior Center from the United Way of Norwalk and Wilton, Inc.
- Two hundred dollars (\$200.00) to the Fire Department Gift Fund from Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hoyt.

B. Discussion and/or Action

1. Review of the League of Women Voters Town Government report.

Mrs. Herot Louise summarized the main recommendations of the League of Women Voters study as follows: That the Board of Selectmen appoint a charter commission

to consider a change in the election process and terms of the Board of Selectmen; creation of a Town Manager position; improvement of citizen involvement in town government, and consideration of the appointment of a chief administrative officer. She also noted that the current charter went into effect almost 15 years ago in 1992.

Mr. Clark stated that while he agreed that the Board of Selectmen should be thinking about charter revision, he felt it was inappropriate for the current board to empower a charter commission at this time. He stated that it would be more appropriate for the new board to move on it if they so choose in December.

Mr. Brennan stated there seemed to be almost universal consensus for longer terms for the Board of Selectmen and First Selectmen and agreed that it was a good idea that was long overdue. He expressed concern, however, that the LWV survey was very narrow in scope with only 146 people participating. He suggested getting a broader survey of Wilton residents done, perhaps by email, to get a sense for what residents feel the town should be doing.

Ms. Ayers pointed out that although the survey only resulted in 146 respondents, the study group making the recommendations comprised many current and former members of several important town boards and commissions, among them at least seven selectmen. So the recommendations came from a group very knowledgeable about town government.

It was agreed that a more detailed discussion was needed on the subject and would be included on a future agenda when all Board members are present.

2. Review of Facilities Management Study report.

Mr. Bill Brautigam of National Executive Service Corps summarized four main recommendations of the report as follows: Create and fill director of facilities position, standardize a process for initiation and development of capital maintenance and new construction projects, have director of facilities create a comprehensive planning process, and fill the open building maintenance manager position in town.

Mr. Brennan commented that he felt the Town needed professional facilities management organization that could provide the necessary services to manage school and town construction projects.

Ms. Ayers agreed that appointing a director of facilities would help alleviate the problem of having pressing school and town projects that were not included in the 5-year financial plan that then had to be put on bond issue.

The representative from NES further explained the facilities person or function would ideally act as a resource to Town personnel in examining tradeoffs to determine what would be more favorable in the long term for the Town.

3. Review of capital process project.

Mr. Brennan stated that he felt the Town needs a formalized, written and flexible process to serve as a guide to generate, oppose, manage, and ensure the successful completion of a bonded capital project with defined roles and responsibilities. He stressed the need for professional management for major building projects.

The Board solicited Karen Birck, Chair of the Board of Education, for the Board of Education's comments on the plan.

Ms. Birck reported that she had forwarded the document to all board members and the general consensus was that the process needs to be streamlined in order to balance the need for accountability with the need to advance certain important public projects. She said she will take up smaller concerns directly with David Stern, Council on Public Facilities.

Ms. Birck relayed the following comments on the plan:

- Board of Education expressed support for the concept of a town facilities manager with the understanding that Board of Education would have their own building facilities manager that would handle day-to-day operations.
- Concern that the process will be too cumbersome and too slow, which may result in less than accurate budgets, schedule and cost estimates.
- Concern that the process may create a drain on volunteers and discourage talented people from working on projects.
- Concern that the process may be a drain on Board of Selectmen and others who have extensive review obligations under the plan.
- One-size-does-not-fit-all concept when it comes to capital projects. Ms. Birke gave the example of a small Middlebrook canopy project versus a large-scale HVAC renovation at the high school.
- Clarified that while the draft of the plan calls the Board of Education an advocacy group, it is not when it comes to school facilities and noted that the Board of Education is a legal entity that is charged by the State to study district facility needs and to undertake the current maintenance and some of the current may be of a capital nature.
- Need to ensure that whatever process is approved by the Board of Selectmen that it fits with the timelines and requirements of the State Board of Education for reimbursement for school building projects. Particular concerns are the provisions and the process that allow the Council on Public Facilities to require a change in ed specs after they've been approved by the State. Stressed that reimbursement on school building projects is an important piece of this.
- Disappointment that Board of Education members are not on building committees and the skills and talents for putting together projects and organizing and executing projects haven't been recognized in the process. She suggested that this could be resolved by having a non-voting Board of Education member be a liaison to the building committee, attend the building committee meetings and report back to board, and have their personnel that have specific expertise go before

the building committees at the appropriate time. Believe this will enhance communication and cut down on time.

Mr. Brennan thanked the Board of Education for their prompt and helpful responses.

After further discussion, there was consensus and agreement for the need for further discussion on the subject.

4. Discussion of Town-owned houses rental increases.

Ms. Ayers reported that she and Mr. Clark visited the four town-owned rental properties located at Old Ridgefield Road, Old Danbury Road, Danbury Rd and New Street, and after rigorous and extensive review, they agree that a 9 percent (9%) raise in rent is reasonable, based on the conditions of the properties. Ms. Ayers also stated she felt the properties should continually be monitored by the town facilities manager so that maintenance issues are addressed appropriately and immediately.

Mr. Clark noted that the recommendation applied to only three of the four of the buildings listed. Plans already exist for the Sturges Ridge property.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Ayers, seconded by Mr. Clark, and unanimously carried to increase the rent by 9 percent (9%) on the town-owned properties.

5. Review of Code of Ethics and consideration of approving the Code.

Mr. Brennan referred to the revised Code document with various edits discussed at the previous meeting and the public hearing and noted that everyone now had the most edited and finalized document. He noted that the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education had received the Code. Mr. Brennan also stated that Richard Creeth, who was absent from the meeting, conveyed to him that he is comfortable with the Code and with the changes that were made.

Ms. Birck stated that all questions have been resolved and that on behalf of the Board of Education and the Superintendent, she is comfortable with current version of Code of Ethics.

Mr. Brennan thanked Steve Huspeth for the conscientious and diligent assistance he's given throughout the process, and also thanked the committee and everyone involved for doing an outstanding job on a historic effort.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Ms. Ayers, and unanimously carried to approve a revised Code of Ethics for the Town of Wilton as proposed by the Selectman's Independent Committee on Ethics and edited as noted with an effective date of September 15, 2007.

Note: Next steps were discussed after approval of the motion as follows:

Print copies of new code and ascertain Board of Education headcount for distribution.

Distribute new Code to all town employees, members of town boards, commissions, authorities, etc., which will need to be signed and returned to the Town Clerk.

Mr. Brennan stated that the Board of Selectmen has a responsibility to seek and evaluate potential candidates for new five-man Council on Ethics for the Town of Wilton and need to vote on the appointment of members to the Council consistent with Paragraph C-1, which is the appointment provisions, and Paragraph C-3, which sets forth staggered term requirements. He also noted he believed there was an urgency to get the committee constituted and the Board of Selectmen would act as quickly as possible on this matter.

Ms. Taffel brought up the logistics of forwarding sign offs to the Town Clerk and asked whether it would make more sense for the Board of Education to forward all sign offs in one package to the Town Clerk.

6. Consideration of scheduling a public hearing to hear comments on the proposed revisions to the Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief ordinance.

Discussion on tentative dates. Ms. Bruschi noted that the Town can accept written comments from the public if they are not able to attend the public hearing.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Ms. Bruschi, and unanimously carried to schedule a public hearing for 7:00 p.m. September 17, 2007 to hear comments on the proposed revisions to the Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief ordinance.

7. Consideration of approving a resolution that authorizes the defined contribution plan implementation through ICMA-RC.

Sarah Taffel gave a brief review of the plan.

Ms. Ayers asked for clarification of the employee contribution being 5% and Town contribution at 9%; Mr. Clark asked for clarification of no vesting until Year Five. Ms. Taffel also clarified that it was a 401A plan and that the key negotiated items were vesting period and employer/employee contribution rates.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Mr. Clark, and unanimously carried to approve a resolution that authorizes the defined contribution plan implementation through ICMA-RC.

8. Consideration of approving a grant application from the Office of Policy and Management for the Wilton Library and approving resolution authorizing First Selectman William Brennan to execute documents.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Bruschi, seconded by Ms. Ayers, and unanimously carried to approve grant application from the Office of Policy and Management for the Wilton Library and approving resolution authorizing First Selectman William Brennan to execute documents.

9. Consideration of approving a second amendment to a cellular property lease with Crown Atlantic Company, LLC and authorize First Selectman William Brennan to execute documents.

Mr. Brennan noted that a final license agreement was not included in this session but would be covered at the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Clark, seconded by Ms. Ayers, and unanimously carried to approve a second amendment to a cellular property lease with Crown Atlantic Company, LLC and authorize First Selectman William Brennan to execute documents.

10. Consideration of accepting the resignation of Lenore Palmer from the Board of Finance effective July 31, 2007.

Mr. Brennan and all the Selectmen expressed their sincere appreciation for all the contributions and hard work Ms. Palmer has done on the Town's behalf over the years, especially the administration of the trust funds and teacher contract negotiations.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Ms. Ayers, and unanimously carried to accept the resignation of Lenore Palmer from the Board of Finance effective July 31, 2007.

C. Public Comment

Ms. Zucker suggested making available to the public a document showing the proposed revisions to the current elderly tax relief program prior to the public hearing.

Ms. Zucker also suggested a softening of the concept of the term "advocacy groups" in the capital projects process to include the Town's own departments and commissions, such as Parks and Rec and Social Services.

Guest resident thanked the Town for the new doggy collection bags near the trash cans and suggested a separate can for recyclables be located there as well.

D. Reports

1. Selectmen's Reports

Ms. Ayers expressed concern whether the Board is committed to aggressive timelines with respect to setting up a Charter Commission, the capital process project, etc.

Mr. Brennan stated that he was confident the board would be able to move forward on these projects in a reasonable time.

There was consensus that selecting the right people is key to successful commissions/committees.

Water Management Update:

Mr. Clark reported he just today received a packet of information from the Town of Darien on the subject but had not had time to read it yet. He did report that Darien had held a general information session in town for residents, and he hoped to be able to provide a more in-depth update at a future meeting.

Energy Commission Update:

Ms. Bruschi said she had amassed a good amount of material and hoped to have it in a comprehensive format to distribute at a future meeting.

E. Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Ms. Bruschi, seconded by Ms. Ayers, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Corra
Recording Secretary