

OFFICE OF THE  
FIRST SELECTMAN

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William F. Brennan  
*First Selectman*

Harold E. Clark  
*Second Selectman*

Richard F. Creeth

Susan A. Bruschi

Ted W. Hoffstatter

TOWN HALL  
238 Danbury Road  
Wilton, CT 06897

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING  
August 6, 2007

MINUTES

- Present: William F. Brennan, Harold E. Clark, Richard F. Creeth, Alice L. Ayers (in part), Ted Hoffstatter (in part) (Susan A. Bruschi notified intended absence)
- Others: Joe Dolan, Chief Financial Officer; Sarah Taffel, Director of Human Resources, Labor Relations & Administrative Services; Ed Kulhawik, Police Chief, Steve Schole, Health Director; Bob Nerney, Town Planner; Timothy Bunting, Zoning Enforcement Officer
- Guests: Dan Mahony, David Waters, Jim Saxe, Mike Kaelin, Selectmen representatives to the Library Board of Trustees; Louise Herot, Carol Becker, Kathy Leeds, Nicki Brown, Library; Toni Lee, DTC; Mike Lindberg, Laura Payne, Milton Pohl residents; Jerrod Newman, The Villager; Brian Shea, The Bulletin

First Selectman Brennan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

A. Consent Agenda

A MOTION was made by Mr. Clark, seconded by Ms. Ayers, and carried 3-0-1 (Mr. Creeth abstained) to approve the consent agenda as amended:

Minutes

- Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting – July 16, 2007\*
  - \*Page 2, add the following statement after paragraph 3:  
“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.”

\*Page 4, fourth discussion item, first paragraph – add “appropriately and immediately” to the end of the last sentence.

\*Page 7, first sentence to read “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.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Mr. Clark and carried 4-0 to add one item to the executive session pertaining to salary recommendations for non union employees for FY08.

B. Discussion and/or Action

1. Discussion of a proposed blight ordinance.

Mr. Brennan gave a brief background of the proposed blight ordinance and reminded the Board that the proposal was forwarded onto the land use departments for their review and comments.

Mr. Nerney introduced Steve Schole, Director of Health and Timothy Bunting, Zoning Enforcement Officer. He explained that he has reviewed the ordinance, along with ordinances from other communities. Mr. Nerney noted that blight ordinances are not limited to larger communities or less affluent communities. He reported that the structure of the various towns’ ordinances is very similar and that in many cases, it is enforced through the building departments.

Mr. Nerney distributed a handout outlining the difference between existing regulations and what a possible blight ordinance would include (attached). He also distributed a summary sheet of the advantages and disadvantages of enforcement procedures i.e. fines versus litigation (attached).

Mr. Nerney explained that there are 3 to 4 properties in Wilton that have become blighted and that his department is currently addressing those properties using a more aggressive approach than in the past. He commented that some issues go well beyond zoning enforcement as other problems are present. Mr. Nerney noted that while the Board of Selectmen has the power to pass a draft blight ordinance, such an ordinance does not represent a magic solution.

Mr. Brennan suggested that the land use department continue to try to resolve the issues using existing regulations and to review their progress in 90 days.

Ms. Ayers asked what residents are given when they express a concern regarding a blighted property. Mr. Nerney responded that a written complaint is requested at which point the property is visited by the zoning department. The situation is then assessed and contact is made with the property owner. He noted that the land use departments work together to try to resolve the situation.

Mr. Clark voiced his concern on the length of time it takes to resolve some complaints. Mr. Nerney replied that a blight ordinance would not reduce the time if the situation went into litigation.

Mr. Creeth commented that an advantage of a blight ordinance is that there would be a clear definition of blight.

The Selectmen concurred to have the land use departments further pursue the issues using existing regulations and to review their progress in 90 days.

Ms. Payne stated that the process of proceeding with blighted problems is not clear to residents and that many residents are fearful of retaliation. She reported that there are more than 4 blighted properties in Wilton and that it has taken 14 years to get a cease and desist order on a blighted property in her neighborhood.

Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Nerney to put in writing an instruction sheet for citizens to understand the process.

2. Report from the Board of Selectmen's Library representatives.

Mr. Saxe reviewed the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter highlights and gave examples of how the community is embracing the new library.

Mr. Saxe reported that the library had a \$29,000 year end deficit which was balanced by shifting fundraising revenues that exceeded goals. Mr. Creeth questioned building operating costs budget line.

3. Discussion on establishing a Wilton Energy Commission.

Mr. Brennan explained the rationale for naming the group a commission rather than a task force. He stated that Mike Lindberg has expressed a willingness to serve on the commission and assisted Susan Bruschi in drafting a charge. Mr. Brennan commented that the objective is to vote on the commission members and the charge at the September 5<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

Mr. Lindberg noted that the establishment of an Energy Commission would be an opportunity for Wilton to show leadership on this important issue.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan to nominate Mike Lindberg as Chairman of the Wilton Energy Commission.

Mr. Creeth stated that the mission of the Commission is crucial and goes well beyond energy conservation and should include carbon foot printing and the use of sustainable resources.

Mr. Clark seconded Mr. Brennan's motion and passed 4-0.

Ms. Ayers suggested the first sentence mission statement to read "The mission of the Energy Commission is to promote resource conservation, energy efficiency and explore the used of renewable resources in public buildings, homes and businesses throughout the town of Wilton."

Mr. Clark asked that "sustainability" be included in the charge and Mr. Creeth suggested carbon footprint be added also.

A revised charge will be discussed at the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.

4. Consideration of the establishment of a new bonded capital project process.

Mr. Brennan stated that a sub-committee drafted the capital process and that the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Board of Education have all reviewed the draft.

Mr. Brennan read a statement prepared by Ms. Bruschi (attached). He also read a letter of support from Lee Wilson.

Mr. Brennan voiced his concern that major projects are being held up while the process is being developed. He suggested that the process be accepted with the understanding that the Board can and will make changes in the future if necessary.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Clark, seconded by Ms. Ayers and carried 4-0 to accept the bonded capital project process with the caveat to allow improvements if needed.

5. Consideration of accepting the resignation of Joseph Cugno from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Brennan thanked Mr. Cugno for his service to the town.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Mr. Creeth and carried 4-0 to accept the resignation of Joseph Cugno from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

6. Consideration of accepting the resignation of Alice Ayers from the Board of Selectmen effective immediately.

Mr. Creeth stated that the Town should be very grateful for Ms. Ayer's years of service.

Mr. Brennan acknowledged Ms. Ayer's as a great citizen of Wilton

Mr. Clark expressed his admiration for Ms. Ayer's non-partisan and cooperative activity on the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Ayers stated that she has enjoyed her time on the Board of Selectmen. She commented that she is looking forward to serving on the Planning and Zoning Commission and working on the new Plan of Conservation and Development.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Creeth, seconded by Mr. Clark and carried 3-0-1 (Ms. Ayers abstained) to accept the resignation of Alice Ayers from the Board of Selectmen effective immediately.

Ms. Ayers moved to the audience.

7. Consideration of appointing Alice Ayers to the Planning and Zoning Commission to fill the vacancy created by Joseph Cugno. Said term to expire November 6, 2007.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Mr. Creeth and carried 3-0 to appoint Alice Ayers to the Planning and Zoning Commission to fill the vacancy created by Joseph Cugno. Said term to expire November 6, 2007.

8. Consideration of appointing Edward W. Hoffstatter III to the Board of Selectmen to fill the vacancy created by Alice Ayers. Said term to expire November 6, 2007.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Mr. Creeth and carried 3-0 to appoint Edward W. Hoffstatter III to the Board of Selectmen to fill the vacancy created by Alice Ayers. Said term to expire November 6, 2007.

Mr. Hoffstatter took at seat at the table.

C. Public Comment

Mr. Pohl read a statement that asked the town to take a second look at Wilton Commons.

On behalf of the residents of Wilton, Mr. Kaelin thanked Ms. Ayers for her years of service as a Selectman.

D. Reports

1. First Selectmen's Reports

Ethics Code

The new ethics code will be effective September 15. Booklets are being printed. The RTC and DTC will be submitting nominees for the Council on Ethics.

Stadium Update

An update on the team rooms and concession stands is on the town's website and a press release has been issued to local newspapers. Regular progress meetings with the contractor are being held.

The track will be stripped in the near future. In the meantime, football teams are using the stadium to practice.

Meeting Schedule

The Board of Selectmen's meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup> has been cancelled. The next Selectmen's meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 5.

2. Selectmen's Report

Water Management

Mr. Clark reported that he has contacted Darien regarding their water management plan. He distributed binders to the Selectmen.

Mr. Brennan stated that this subject will be discussed at an upcoming Selectmen's meeting.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Mr. Clark and carried 4-0 to adjourn to executive session at 9:33 p.m.

Mr. Brennan reconvened to open session at 9:42 pm.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Brennan, seconded by Mr. Clark and carried 4-0 to approve the FY08 salary increases for non-union employees.

E. Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Mr. Creeth, seconded by Mr. Clark, and carried 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Lund  
Recording Secretary