

REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TUESDAY, JULY 17, 2012
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING - 5:30 P.M.

Call to Order: First Selectman Leo Paul, Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:30 with all selectmen present: Paul Parsons, Diane Knox, Jeffrey Zullo, and Jon Torrant.

Approval of Minutes: Motion: J. Zullo moved to approve the regular 7/3/12 meeting minutes, and J. Torrant seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Public Requests/Comments: None

Selectmen's Requests: Mr. Paul said that J. Torrant and he will go to New London tomorrow to meet with one of the parties interested in investing in the old Bantam School building. He is also still talking with people from the Post Office on the rental agreement. He has not yet heard back from his counter offer. Motion: J. Zullo moved to add Item b) under New Business, "Review of Board of Education's Surplus and Expenditure on Wireless Capital Investment." J. Torrant seconded. Mr. Paul said this is an issue between the Boards of Finance and Education, but Mr. Zullo said he wanted to bring up some points in the Board of Education's minutes. Upon voting all voted aye and the motion carried.

Resignations

a) Gerald W. Gault from Board of Ethics, effective 6/11/12: received and noted
b) Francis Gorman from Board of Ethics, alternate board, effective 6/28/12: received and noted

Declining Reappointment: Judd Milani from Litchfield Housing Authority: Mr. Paul noted that this position is filled by a Housing Authority resident, so a replacement will be recommended soon.

Interviews, Appointments & Reappointments

a) Appoint Francis Gorman to Board of Ethics vacancy on regular board: Motion: J. Zullo moved to appoint Francis Gorman to the Board of Ethics to fill 6/2014 vacancy on the regular board. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

b) Reappoint Elisa Bauer to Park and Recreation Commission, term 6/2016: Motion: D. Knox moved to reappoint Elisa Bauer to the Park and Recreation Commission, term expiration of 6/2016. J. Torrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes: 7/11/12 Inland Wetlands minutes; 6/14/12 WPCA Public Hearing & minutes; 7/12/12 WPCA minutes; 5/21/12 P&Z meeting minutes (draft); 6/20/12 BOE minutes (draft); 7/9/12 BOE minutes; 5/21/12 P&Z minutes; 6/4/12 P&Z minutes; 5/23/12 Conservation minutes (draft); 5/30/12 & 5/27/12 (draft) EDC minutes

Vacancies: The list of current appointed vacancies with term expirations is as follows:

Beautification Commission: 2 regular members 2/2012, 2/2014; 1 alternate 2/2013
Economic Development Commission: One regular member 6/2013; 1 alternate 6/2013
Ethics: 2 alternate members 6/2013, 6/2014
Inland Wetlands Commission: 1 regular member 6/2014; 1 alternate member 6/2012
Milton Historic District Commission: 2 alternate members 1/2012
Park & Recreation: 1 regular member 6/2014; 2 alternate members: 6/2013, 6/2014
Recycling Commission: 3 members, 2/2012, 2/2013, 2/2014
Veteran's Advisory Committee: 1 regular member 8/2012; 2 alternate members 8/2012
Water Pollution Control Authority: 1 regular member 1/2013; 1 alternate member 1/2013

Transfers: None

Old Business

a) Town Hall Building Committee Update – J. Zullo: Mr. Zullo reported nothing new since the last report. There was no meeting July 3rd. The next meeting is July 18th. Mr. Paul updated the Board as to meetings the Town Clerk has had with supervisors for the digitization of records for going forward as well as for back filing.

New Business

a) Waive Building Fees for Northfield Firehouse Stairwell Project: Motion: P. Parsons moved to waive the building fees for the Northfield Firehouse stairwell project, and J. Torrant seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

b) Review of Board of Education's Surplus and Expenditure on Wireless Capital Investment: This capital expenditure from the Board of Education's \$350,000 surplus is for installation of new wireless infrastructure. Mr. Zullo agreed with Mr. Paul that the Board of Finance needs to have further discussion with the Board of Education with regard to the way this expenditure was appropriated. He also said that the Board of Selectmen also has interest in the way the Board of Education facilitated the expenditure without going through the proper process and Town meeting approvals. Next, it is clear the Board of Ed considered this as an infrastructure improvement that should have been viewed as a capital expenditure and did not go through the Capital Committee. The Board of Ed said the encumbrance was made in the 2011-12 budget year, and Mr. Zullo called attention to the Board of Ed minutes where there did not appear to be any encumbrance of this money in the 2011/12 budget year, but rather an approval of a recommendation for disposition of 2012 budget surplus (see 6/20/12 minutes, p. 3044); then the 7/2/12 minutes showed a vote to support the Superintendent's recommendation [unclear what the specific recommendation was] to implement the wireless system, thus the encumbrance was made in July. The Superintendent said at the Board of Finance meeting last week that they believe their counsel and auditors would support this being a 2011/12 encumbrance. Mr. Zullo could not see how this was possible, and his question is whether the encumbrance was correct. Finally, he said that the traditional process calls for a large surplus to go back into fund balance. Then it would be appropriate as a capital expenditure to come as a transfer request to the BOS and BOF and then to a Town meeting for approval. An expenditure of this magnitude and investment in Town capital without Town meeting approval is inappropriate.

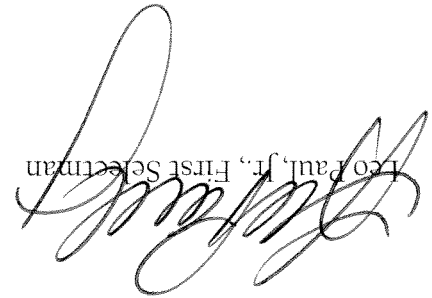
D. Knox thought the Board of Ed would want to be cautious as it appears their budgetary process is far less than transparent. When the Board of Ed presents a budget of .99% increase and intends to cut teachers, then finds the funding for them, and also has enough to fund the wireless technology, one begins to question the authenticity of the budgetary process.

L. Paul said he has spoken with Jack Healy about getting bid process documents from the Superintendent to follow for this infrastructure project and to be sure the new renovation work is not damaged. He's also spoken with Atty. Rybak and Capital Committee Chairman David Wilson about this to be sure that all entities are clear on what a capital expenditure is.

P. Parsons said that the Capital Committee may not look favorably on future Board of Ed requests since this project has bumped others who had been waiting patiently for forecasted capital funding.

Correspondence: None

Motion: P. Parsons moved to adjourn at 6:12 p.m. and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.



Leo Paul, Jr., First Selectman