

REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING - 5:30 P.M.

Call to Order: First Selectman Leo Paul, Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. All Selectmen were present: J. Zullo, D. Knox, P. Parsons and J. Tarrant.

Approval of Minutes: Motion: J. Tarrant moved to adopt the regular meeting minutes of February 3, 2015, and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Public Requests/Comments: None

Selectmen's Requests: Motion: P. Parsons moved to add to Resignations f) Heather Boesch-Wages from Economic Development Commission, alternate member, effective 2/26/15, and to g) Alexander Vandenberg from Economic Development Commission, regular member, effective 2/27/15. J. Tarrant seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Motion: J. Tarrant moved to add to Interviews, Appointments and Reappointments: i) Appoint Heather Boesch-Wages to Economic Development Commission, regular member, term 6/2017, and j) Appoint Alexander Vandenberg to Economic Development Commission, alternate member, term 6/2017. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried. Mr. Paul explained that the two members wanted to switch positions on their respective boards.

Mr. Paul explained that he has been going to testify in Hartford on proposed legislative action to increase to 100% the towns' share of the Resident Trooper cost. He will testify next week against the discontinuance of roads bill that will add more unfunded mandates to the towns. Further, the EPA is requiring compliance with DEEP's stormwater runoff general permit, for Litchfield called MS4, which goes well beyond what the EPA has suggested towns conform to, such as monitoring goose and dog feces, insure there are no leaves on roads or parking lots, more frequent street sweeping and inspection of catch basins.

Resignations

- a) Carol Dake, declining reappointment from Recycling Committee
- b) Debra Cahill, declining reappointment from Recycling Committee
- c) William Deacon, Jr., declining reappointment from Town Hall Building Committee
- d) Kathleen Orr, declining reappointment from Beautification Commission
- e) Joann M. Brogis, resigning from Litchfield Prevention Council, effective 2/10/15
- f) Heather Boesch-Wages from Economic Development Commission, alternate member, effective 2/26/15
- g) Alexander Vandenberg from Economic Development Commission, regular member, effective 2/27/15

All resignations and reappointments declined were received and noted.

Interviews, Appointments & Reappointments

- a) Reappoint Leon Losee, Jr. to Recycling Committee, term expiration 2/2018
- b) Reappoint David R. Wilson to Recycling Committee, term expiration 2/2018

Motion: J. Tarrant moved to reappoint Leon Losee, Jr. and David R. Wilson to the Recycling Committee with terms expiring 2/2018, and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

c) Reappoint Virginia Dean to Zoning Board of Appeals, term expiration 3/2020: Motion: J. Tarrant moved to reappoint Virginia Dean to Zoning Board of Appeals, with term expiring 3/2020, and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

d) Reappoint William J. Buckley, Jr. to Town Hall Building Committee, term 3/2018

e) Reappoint David T. Wilson to Town Hall Building Committee, term 3/2018

Motion: J. Torrant moved to reappoint William J. Buckley, Jr. and David T. Wilson to Town Hall Building Committee with terms to expire 3/2018. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

f) Reappoint Jeffrey Zullo to Town Hall Building Committee, term 3/2018: **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to reappoint Jeffrey Zullo to the Town Hall Building Committee with term expiring 3/2018. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye except Mr. Zullo, who abstained, and the motion carried.

g) Reappoint Jack Healy to Town Hall Building Committee, term 3/2018

h) Reappoint Ann Combs to Town Hall Building Committee, term 3/2018

Motion: J. Torrant moved to reappoint Jack Healy and Ann Combs to the Town Hall Building Committee with terms expiring 3/2018. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

i) Appoint Heather Boesch-Wages to Economic Development Commission, regular member, term 6/2017: J. Torrant moved to appoint Heather Boesch-Wages to the Economic Development Commission as a regular member with term expiration of 6/2017. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

j) Appoint Alexander Vandenberg to Economic Development Commission, alternate member, term 6/2017: **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to appoint Alexander Vandenberg to the Economic Development Commission as an alternate member with term expiration of 6/2017. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes: 1/28/15 Economic Development Commission minutes; 1/22/15 Spec. Board of Education minutes; 2/4/15 Board of Education minutes; 11/25/14 & 2/24/15 Conservation Commission minutes (draft)

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

Beautification Commission: 6 regular members: three 2/2016, one 2/2017, two 2/2018; 2 alternates 2/2016
Conservation Commission: 1 regular member 12/2016; 2 alternate members 12/2015
Economic Development Commission: 2 alternate members 6/2016
Litchfield Prevention Council: 1 regular member 6/2015; 2 alternate members, two 6/2016
Milton Historic District Commission: 1 regular member 1/2020; 3 alternate members 1/2015, 1/2015, 1/2019
Park & Recreation: 2 alternate members: 6/2017, 6/2018
Recycling Committee: 6 members: two 2/2016, one 2/2017, three 2/2018
Town Hall Building Committee: 1 member, 3/2018; one alternate 3/2018
Veteran's Advisory Committee: 2 regular members 8/2016, 8/2015; 2 alternate members 8/2015
Water Pollution Control Authority: 1 alternate member 1/2015
Zoning Board of Appeals: 2 alternate member 3/2015

Tax Refunds: Mr. Paul explained the one high refund. **Motion:** P. Parsons moved to approve the 6 tax refunds, for a total of \$4,928.75 and J. Torrant seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Old Business: None

New Business

a) Adopt Proclamation for Girl Scout Day 3/12/15: **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to dispense with the reading of the entire proclamation and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried. **Motion:** J. Torrant moved to adopt the proclamation for Girl Scout Day 3/12/15, and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

b) **Request to Close North Shore Road 5/3/15 for “Girls Just Wanna Run”:** Motion: J. Torrant moved to approve the North Shore Road closure for the “Girls Just Wanna Run” foot race on 5/3/15. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

c) **Waive Building Permit Fees for Small Cities Grant Project at Bantam Falls:** Mr. Paul introduced Jim Simoncelli, the Executive Director for the Litchfield Housing Authority. He explained they are applying for a Small Cities Grant for work at Bantam Falls. He is requesting the waiving of the building and electrical permit fees, as it is considered a Town contribution in applying for the grant. There are many items in this upgrade project including heating system, shingled roof, flat roof and outside lighting. Motion: J. Zullo moved to approve the waiving of the building permit fees for this Small Cities Grant project at Bantam Falls. J. Torrant seconded. Mr. Paul said this is a very competitive grant and Larry Wagner and Jim have worked very hard on it. Upon voting, all voted aye and the motion carried.

d) **Request to Close Roads for 2015 Litchfield Hills Road Race 6/14/15:** Motion: J. Torrant moved to approve the road closures as requested in the 2/12/15 letter for the 2015 running of the Litchfield Hills Road Race on June 14, 2015. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

e) **Approve Capital Improvement Committee’s 2015/16 Recommended Budget:** David T. Wilson, Chairman of the Capital Improvements Committee presented an overall review of the work of the Committee and the proposed 2015/2016 Capital budget of \$3,380,054. Upon question by J. Zullo, last year’s budget was \$2.6 million for comparison. J. Zullo said this represents a huge increase of 30%. He said he had no details to review and was not comfortable voting without time to analyze it first. Mr. Paul suggested tabling it for review and scheduling a special meeting next week. He said next year he would have the complete report sent to them as soon as the Capital Committee completed its work. P. Parsons said he likes to see the departments’ summary detail, but does not need all the detail. J. Torrant suggested attending a Capital meeting to understand it ahead of time.

J. Healy elaborated on the bridges and road projects that must be done this year. J. Zullo again expressed his dissatisfaction with the budget being too high. Mr. Wilson asked where the efficiency is if the Capital Committee’s work is not good enough without questioning all the detail they already scrutinized to arrive at their final recommendation and suggested the Selectmen go back to doing Capital themselves. J. Zullo said the Selectmen have to make the harder cuts. He then asked how much of this would be bonded, and Mr. Wilson said he did not know yet. Mr. Paul said any unused capital money would be used for bond authorizations on other projects, as long as they are qualified projects. Upon question of this procedure by Mr. Zullo, Mr. Wilson explained that the regulators are looking at the municipalities to see if they are spending their money in the allocated time frame for the authorized projects in order to comply with the regulations. Bond counsel has advised we review the projects, and if there are projects where the money cannot be spent in the allocated time, then the funds may be directed toward another authorized project where the funds can be spent in the allocated time. We were not non-compliant in the past, but are being advised to follow this to remain compliant. P. Parsons said it is a question of how much new money needs to be bonded and how much unused money can be used, not a question of spending more or less, but a question of timing so that we are not bonding more than we need to. Mr. Zullo said there must be more oversight of the process by the Selectmen.

Motion: J. Zullo moved to approve the 2015/16 Capital budget as presented in the amount \$3,380,054 as presented, and P. Parsons seconded. There was no discussion.

Amendment to Motion: J. Zullo moved to amend the motion to reduce the Capital spending plan from \$3.38 to \$3 million. D. Knox said she would like to review the plan detail before seconding this. Hearing no second, the amended motion failed.

Vote on Motion: Upon hearing no removal of the original motion or further amendments, Mr. Paul called for a vote on the original motion. P. Parsons and L. Paul voted aye, and J. Zullo, D. Knox and J. Torrant voted nay, so Mr. Paul announced the motion failed.

Motion: J. Torrant moved to table this discussion. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

f) Approve Selectmen's 2015/16 Budget: Mr. Paul said the proposed Selectmen's budget is at \$9,134,384, an increase of 5.71%. Amaechi Obi, Interim Finance Director, said the grand list has dropped, and is \$1 million less than last year's, with increase in budget of \$1.4 million. J. Zullo said this budget is excessive and 5.5% increase is too much to expect of the taxpayers with a grand list that is dropping. He would like the budget to be cut by 3% but asked Mr. Paul to designate the cuts. Mr. Paul says there is nowhere to cut. He questioned the need for a Resident Trooper, and Mr. Paul said without a trooper we can have no police. Mr. Parsons questioned some of the larger increases in highway line items and it was explained by Jack Healy. D. Knox said she has also questioned some larger increases but finds them justified. She does find the budget a bit high, but cannot find a place to cut. She said the Board of Education budget is totally unreasonable and she will not support it. Mr. Paul said that every year the Selectmen's budget has been kept between 0% and 2% increases, but we cannot continue to operate that way without compromising the Town's infrastructure or eliminating our Police force. Mr. Torrant said he is not happy with this budget but cannot continue to postpone necessary work, saying we don't have much choice.

Motion: J. Zullo moved to approve a spending plan for the Board of Selectmen of \$8,900,000, a reduction of \$234,384, which will bring it to about a 3% increase. D. Knox seconded for discussion. J. Zullo wanted the Town to look at driving efficiency into this town, saying we are a community that is not growing but is increasing expenditures. He said that is a recipe for disaster in 5- 10 years and asked who is getting increases in income of 5.5 percent to pay for this budget? D. Knox agreed we must take a look at sustainable budgets over time, but we have been lean on the Selectmen's budgets in the past. Now we must build up Public Works and then can level off. Mr. Paul reminded the group how they took about \$1 million out of Capital Public Works items over a few years to fund the Public Works operating budget as it should be. Mr. Parsons said he was looking for more of a 5% increase, or \$65,000, that he could support. J. Torrant was not happy with the increase, but would be willing to make some cuts that would not be too hurtful. He agreed with Mr. Parsons about trying for \$65,000 and asked about taking \$30,000 from Contingency.

Vote: Voting on the motion, J. Zullo voted aye, and D. Knox, P. Parsons, J. Torrant and L. Paul voted nay; motion failed.

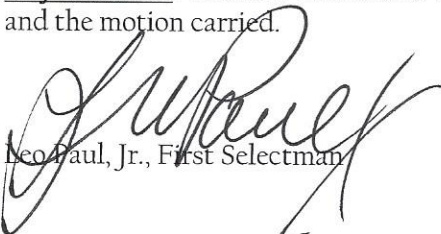
Motion: J. Zullo moved to approve a spending plan for the Board of Selectmen of \$8,950,000 and increase of 3.5%, with a cut of \$184,384. D. Knox seconded for discussion. P. Parsons said he would like to try and maintain services as best we can and would not be willing to drastically reduce the current level of services. Mr. Zullo said the budget is beyond the means of the residents and the needs must be balanced with the means.

Vote: Upon voting, J. Zullo voted aye, and D. Knox, P. Parsons, J. Torrant and L. Paul voted nay; motion failed.

Motion: D. Knox moved to approve the budget as submitted. J. Zullo seconded for discussion. Ms Knox said she understands all arguments but feels the roads need attention and the public needs to know they are getting something for their tax dollars.

Vote: Upon voting all voted aye except J. Zullo, who voted nay, and the motion carried.

Adjournment: **Motion:** P. Parsons moved to adjourn at 7:27 p.m. and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.


Leo Paul, Jr., First Selectman