

OFFICE OF THE
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TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT 06897

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2010
WILTON TOWN HALL, ROOM B**

PRESENT: First Selectman William Brennan, Selectman Richard Creeth, Selectman Harold Clark, Selectman Ted Hoffstatter

ABSENT: Second Selectman Susan Bruschi

GUESTS: Sandra Dennies, members of Wilton High School Building Committee, members of ETR Committee, Steve Pierce, members of Parks & Recreation Commission, Pat Sesto, members of Tree Committee, Gail Lavielle, Captain John Lynch, Jan Andras, approximately 20 members of public

OTHERS: Joan Lounds (Bulletin), Christian Camarota (Patch.com)

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

A. Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Creeth, seconded and unanimously carried, to approve the Consent Agenda with slight amendment to the minutes:

Minutes

- Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting, December 7, 2009

B. Discussion and/or Action

1. Wilton High School Building Committee Report

Those present included Karen Birck, Bruce Hampson (committee members), Gil Bray, Barbara Meyers, James Saxe (BOE members), Schools Superintendent Dr. Gary Richards, WHS Principal Tim Canty, Ty Tregallas

and Michael Duillard (Turner Construction). The committee reported on the project to begin the process for permanent financing of the bond anticipation notes. Ms. Birck reported that the high school was able to open on time this fall and she distributed copies of a Budget Update (attached), indicating a 12/15/09 cost estimate of \$3 million less than was approved by the voters in September 2008. Mr. Clark pointed out that this amount is still \$700,000 more than the target level. Ms. Birck advised that \$250,000 of the change orders represents work that was required by Town municipal offices and was not anticipated. These costs are being covered with contingency funds. It was pointed out that the savings versus to the project budget means that \$3 million less will not have to be borrowed. In general the BOS felt it was a very successful capital project.

Turner Construction was lauded for the excellent job they have done in keeping this project on schedule and under budget.

2. Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief – Committee Recommendations

Committee members Judy Zucker, Jerry Holdridge, Joe Equale and Chuck Cunningham were present. First Selectman Brennan read his comments on this subject (attached).

After a lengthy discussion, with input from members of the public who were present, the following motion was made: Mr. Hoffstatter moved to recommend that the Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief Ordinance be revised by the Committee. Recommendation #1 to include business losses and depreciation and medical expenses in Definition of Qualifying Income, but not to include a special deduction from AGI for those residents 75+ years of age; to revise by including the Committee Recommendation #2 for Tax Credit Program in its entirety; to revise the Tax Deferral Program to include that deferral up to 100% be available to homeowners with income up to \$75,000; and to place a total cap of \$850,000, to include with a \$675,000 cap for the Tax Credit Program, \$175,000 cap for the Tax Deferral Program, and with language to allow for a type of a “float” of these caps between the two programs. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

Ms. Zucker and Mr. Holdridge will meet tomorrow with CFO Sandy Dennies and First Selectman Brennan to draft language for an ordinance amendment. The Board of Selectmen will be meeting on 1/6/10 with the Board of Finance to discuss these recommendations.

3. Parks & Recreation Commission Proposal to Ban Dogs from Playing Fields

Parks & Recreation Director Steve Pierce was present along with P&R Commission members Jamie Van Acker and Ann Richards. The Commission had submitted a list of the specific fields they are recommending, as was requested by the Board of Selectmen at their last meeting. There was some

discussion as to whether regarding the recommendation of the necessity for dogs to be at least 50' from playing fields was necessary. Captain John Lynch advised that a 50' requirement could be pushing people out into the road at some fields. The Commission was asked to do more research by looking at ordinances in other towns.

4. Proposed Tree Ordinance

Pat Sesto, Director of Environmental Affairs was present, along with Tree Committee Chairman Jessica Kaplan and other Tree Committee members. A public hearing was held earlier this evening to receive public comment on this proposed ordinance. Mr. Clark moved to adopt the Tree Ordinance with a minor change as discussed. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

It was noted that having an ordinance will enable the Town to receive "Tree City" status and be eligible to apply for grant funds.

5. Report on town property at 415 Danbury Road

Mr. Brennan reported that this building has been stabilized by replacing floor joists and a sagging broken beam. A large threatening tree was removed by the DPW and the building was made weather tight. Grants for renovation of historical houses will be researched, as and the building could become a rentable property.

6. Appointment to Commission on Social Services

Mr. Brennan moved to appoint Roseann DeSimone as a member of the Commission on Social Services to fill the remainder of the term of Leslie Rogers to expire on 11/30/10. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

7. Resignation from Zoning Board of Appeals

Due to increased family and work demands, Mr. Darst has tendered his resignation from the Zoning Board of Appeals. His resignation was accepted and the process will begin to appoint a replacement.

C. Public Comment – Ms. Barbara Holdridge, 14 Forge Road, suggested that the words "Tax Relief" be changed, possibly to "Tax Assistance".

D. Reports

1. First Selectman

Route 7 – The Police Dept. has stepped up patrolling now that the new lanes are open and speeds have increased. It was suggested that all drivers obey the posted speed limits, as summons are being issued for speeding offences

2. Selectmen Reports

Mr. Creeth – No report

Mr. Clark – No report

Mr. Hoffstatter – He reminded that Mr. Jonathan Kunitz will be present at the 2/1 Selectmen meeting to discuss the successes of the Plastic Bag Ban in Westport.

E. Adjournment

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Jan Andras, Recording Secretary

Attachment: Wilton High School Budget Update

Attachment: Bill Brennan Comments