

OFFICE OF THE
FIRST SELECTMAN

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TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT 06897

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S SPECIAL MEETING
February 25, 2008

MINUTES

Present: William F. Brennan, Susan A. Bruschi, Harold E. Clark, Ted Hoffstatter, Richard F. Creeth

Others: Joseph Dolan (Chief Financial Officer), Richard McArdle (Comptroller), John Savarese (IT Director)

Guests: Brian Shea, Wilton Bulletin

First Selectman Brennan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Discussion of Wilton Charter – Review of Article IV – Ted Hoffstetter

Selectman Susan Bruschi asked to make some clarifications first to Charter Article III which she had reviewed at the last meeting. She did not hear from anyone with recommendations. She does not believe she missed anything but wanted to make sure she got some of the different points of view correctly.

Regarding §C-9 (6) – if the terms of the Board of Selectmen should change from two years to something longer, then maybe the last sentence should be revised, which reads “No ordinance or legislative action which shall have been adopted or repealed by Special Town Meeting and Adjourned Town Meeting in accordance with the provisions of this section may be repealed, amended or reenacted by the Board of Selectmen during its then-current term of office”. Selectman Clark feels that the remedy for this would be to call another Town Meeting to make any changes to ordinances.

Article IV – Board of Selectmen

Selectman Hofstetter advised that he pulled this section apart and tried to summarize and make it more understandable. The Board of Selectmen consists of a First Selectman and four elected Selectmen, “as provided in Article IX”. He feels that §C-13 is a disclaimer on everything regarding the Board’s powers, administration, appointment and legislation. Mr. Clark feels that the Charter Review Commission should go through the State Statutes to see how they apply to all of this. First Selectman Brennan thinks that the objective of the Charter Review Committee should be to simplify the language in this article to make it more comprehensible.

Mr. Hofstetter stated that the Board of Selectmen has the power to adopt the administrative code and to create, modify or dissolve ad hoc or advisory offices, councils, committees and boards. The question of who appoints the chairperson of committees, the Board of Selectmen or the committee members was raised. Selectman Brennan pointed out that is not for the Board of Selectmen to decide. We are just

identifying areas for the CRC to review. The charter is silent on this matter, but in the past the Board of Selectmen has also appointed the Chairperson. Recent examples are the Ethics Committee and Energy Commission.

Under Conduct of Meetings, it says that in the event a meeting needs to be changed, there is a 15 day window? Ms. Bruschi pointed out that a special meeting can be called by the First Selectman or any two Selectmen, however, you need a quorum of three to hold a meeting. Mr. Clark feels that the term “reasonable amount of time” needs to be spelled out and he suggests 48 hours. Mr. Clark also feels that since the Board of Education claims 2/3 of the total budget, the Board of Selectmen should vote on that as well. Mr. Dolan pointed out that you cannot do that under State law. It was also pointed out that FOI rules determine the amount of time you have to post before a meeting takes place.

Under §C-15 (C), the word “councils” should be included.

Regarding §C-16, Mr. Clark pointed out that a Second Selectman is appointed at the first meeting of each new term. What happens if the First Selectman is incapacitated for a lengthy period of time. If the second selectman is employed, how do we proceed? If the second selectman was not employed and took over on a temporary basis, is there compensation? He feels the CRC should look at what happens if the First Selectman becomes incapacitated and clarify this matter.

Mr. Hoffstetter will write up the comments from tonight and send them to the other members, adding them to the comments already done by Ms. Bruschi for Section 3.

Budget Work Session

IT Budget Requests - Selectman Brennan advised that he invited Mr. John Savarese to discuss the IT budget requests and that Mr. Joe Dolan and Mr. Rich McArdle were here on behalf of Finance. Mr. Brennan also has additional information on the DPW requests.

Mr. Savarese passed out information about the four capital requests including the Disaster Recovery System, at a cost of \$169,000. It is always a good idea to have a back up plan where when you “lose your information” in a catastrophe. The idea is to use some resources we already have in the complex. The town has a room at the Police Department used as a data center which could be upgraded to use as a coordinated second data center. The proposal is to expand operations between both the #1 and the #2 Data Centers.

Mr. Creeth and Mr. Clark would like to discuss the overall IT strategy with Mr. Savarese once the budget process is completed. They would like to understand the process better but don’t want to take the time during the budget process. Selectman Brennan stated that he is very supportive of the detailed work and analyses that John Savarese and Joe Dolan have done during the budget planning process.

Regarding the GIS, the big expense is the fly-over. Mr. Savarese reported that we can no longer get information from AT&T, their program has come to an end and they will not be doing any flights this year. We currently have 200 scale with 15' contours from 2006. We need 2' contours for an environmental study. We have worked out a budget that will let us do 2' contours and ¼' pixel pictures. He is very enthusiastic about doing this. It will be valuable to the citizens, contractors and developers. It would require \$42,000 in new money – we have \$19,305 in the Building permitting software that would also go to GIS. However, the fly-over is a new element and would have to be done in the spring before the leaves are on the trees.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- **Social Security** – Mr. Dolan reported he estimated 7.65 x taxable wages. The retirement comes from the actuary and reflects a 20% increase, which the Board of Finance takes on if we are less than 85% funded, which we are, including the Library, Fire Department and Police Department.
- **Defined Contribution** – is estimated at 9% x the estimated salary amount based on vacancies that currently exist – no new vacancies.
- **Group Insurance** (disability, life, health and dental) includes a 12% increase in medical and 8% increase in dental. There is no increase in the others but the costs look higher because salaries have increased.
- **Unemployment** – A 2% increase. This is a reimbursement to the state for unemployment paid out to Town employees.
- **Insurance** – Almost no change. There is a soft market right now. From actual expenditures we will be increasing property coverage. We will be bidding for fee brokerage services.
- **Negotiating Reserve** – For the Police and Fire Departments, we have used 12% for all benefits. We can reduce their benefit request by taking the money out of the amount put into the negotiation reserve.

Department of Public Works

First Selectman Brennan reported that while Director Tom Thurkettle was on vacation, he spoke with Ken Jayne, the mechanic at DPW, about the excavator. He asked him what if we take \$10,000 and do a total maintenance job on the machine. Would it be better to acquire a new unit or refurb this unit for another 3-4 years? Ken replied that the machines have a lot of electronic technology now. Once you get into a 9-10 year old machine, there are a lot of breakdowns. After 10 years, there can be problems with the hydraulic system, which is very expensive to replace. We only have one big machine like this. In addition, if we replace this machine now, we could get a \$25,000 to \$30,000 trade-in.

The First Selectman suggested doing necessary maintenance on the machine and retaining it one more year. Mr. Brennan also asked Mr. Thurkettle about this when he returned. Tom and Ken both agreed that retaining the machine for one more year was a reasonable decision.

Regarding the screener, Mr. Thurkettle estimated that they rent a machine on average 52 days per year. The costs are \$835 per day; \$2,500 per week; or \$7,500 per month. Purchasing could mean a three year payback on this machine that will last at least 10 years and they could use it more often, which would also be more cost effective. The First Selectman recommends purchasing the screener this year. The board unanimously concurred.

Selectman Brennan advised that the Transfer Station will be discussed at the workshop on Thursday night, 2/28 at 7:30 pm.

Selectman Brennan moved to adjourn, motion seconded by Mr. Hostetter and unanimously carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Jan Andras, Clerk