

OFFICE OF THE
FIRST SELECTMAN

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William F. Brennan
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Second Selectman

Richard F. Creeth

Harold E. Clark

Ted W. Hoffstatter

TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT 06897

BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING

March 17, 2008

MINUTES

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

Others: Steve Pierce, Parks & Recreation; Robert Nerney, Planning & Zoning; Mark Amatrudo, Deputy Fire Chief; Pat Sesto, Environmental Affairs; Joe Dolan, CFO

Guests: Paula Byrdy, Alice Levin, Kate Throckmorton, Paul Burnham, John Kalamarides, Louise Herot, Toni Lee, Brian Shea (Bulletin), Frank MacEachan (Villager)

First Selectman Brennan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Brennan stated that he would like to add two items to tonight's agenda: 2a) A firefighters grant from Homeland Security to replace the self-contained breathing apparatus and 7) Consideration of the appointment of Linda Bufano to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

A. Consent Agenda

A MOTION was made by Mr. Clark, seconded by Mr. Hoffstatter and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Minutes

- Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting – March 3, 2008

Gifts

- Three hundred seventy five (\$375) from Wilton Meadows to Wilton Senior Center, Comstock Community Center
- Five hundred forty-four and 29/100 (\$544.29) to Wilton Youth Services from Regina Borden and Michael Solecki, received via United Way
- Fifty (\$50) from Lori and Kenneth Kaine to the Fire Department Gift Fund
- One hundred (\$100) from Lisa and Bruce Dominic to the Fire Department Gift fund

Refunds

- Real Estate Refunds as outlined in Tax Collector memorandum dated 3/12/08
- Motor Vehicle Refunds as outlined in Tax Collector memorandum dated 3/12/08

B. Discussion and/or Action

1. Authorization to apply for and accept grant monies in the amount of \$391,000 from ConnDOT for the design and construction of a pedestrian bridge/walkway between the Wilton Train Station and Wilton Center

Mr. Brennan passed out a hand-out prepared by Town Planner Robert Nerney, who was present to speak to the grant application. The requested project represents an opportunity to connect the Wilton Train Station and Wilton Center via a pedestrian bridge and paved walkway. Doing this will serve to integrate the train station and Wilton Center, allowing train commuters the opportunity to quickly and easily access the downtown area by walking.

Mr. Nerney pointed out that this project is unique insofar as land ownership is limited exclusively to the Town of Wilton and The State of Connecticut D.O.T., making the project more manageable and cost efficient.

First Selectman Brennan would write a supporting letter for this grant application, and the subject will be on the Board of Finance agenda for tomorrow night.

Mr. Clark moved to authorize an application for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Funding for the Wilton Train Station Walkway Project in the amount of \$391,000. Motion seconded by Mr. Hoffstatter and unanimously carried.

2. Authorization for submission of grant application for a DOT

Recreation Director Steve Pierce was present to request authorization to apply for a grant through SWRPA for a ConnDOT grant for the Town's Dial-A-Ride program. The grant amount would be \$25,256 and would be used for additional personnel three days a week to help alleviate the current busy schedule of the two current drivers

Ms. Bruschi moved to authorize submission of a grant application in the amount of \$25,256 for a SWRPA grant through ConnDOT for the Town's Dial-A-Ride program. Motion seconded by Mr. Clark and unanimously carried.

- 2a. Addition to Agenda – Authorization to apply for Assistance to Firefighters Grant from the Department of Homeland Security.

Deputy Chief Mark Amatrudo was present to speak to this request. This is the same grant that was received in the amount of \$110,000 for the wellness and fitness program and associated equipment this current fiscal year. They would like to apply for the grant again to help defray the cost of replacing the old self contained breathing apparatus. The replacement cost is in the fire year capital plan for FY10 and is \$185,000. There is a 5% local match so the town would only have to pay \$9,250. The applications must be in by April 4.

Ms. Bruschi moved to authorize the application for an Assistance to Firefighters Grant from the Department of Homeland Security for the wellness and fitness program and associated equipment. Motion seconded by Mr. Clark and unanimously carried.

3. Town of Wilton Tree Plan

Ms. Pat Sesto, Director of Environmental Affairs, presented a very complete plan which had been given to Board of Selectmen members earlier. The ad hoc Tree Committee has prepared a plan that specifically shows locations where trees are needed and gives guidance as to what class of trees should be considered based on limitation/opportunities such as space, desired shading, utility lines, or sidewalks. They have been working closely with the Garden Club regarding flowers as well. The plan will be implemented through charitable actions such as commemorative or general donations, landscaping in association with new development, merchant donations, grants and landscaper contributions. Shade trees will cost \$500 and “understory” trees will be \$300 each. This will be an ongoing process implemented over time. The town has already spent \$47,000 on tree management.

The Chamber of Commerce supports the Plan. The committee will also need the approval of each private property owner where a tree would be placed. Mr. Brennan pointed out that this all connects to a plan to make the Village area better, more attractive and safer.

Ms. Brushi moved to approve the Wilton Center Tree Plan, dated March 2008, as prepared by the Ad hoc Tree Committee, seconded by Mr. Creeth and unanimously carried.

4. Review of Charter VII – Richard Creeth

There was a lengthy discussion, section by section of Chapter VII of the suggested changes or revisions to the Charter. Mr. Creeth will put together all comments and add to the comments that have been prepared by members of the Board of Selectmen regarding the earlier chapters.

5. Consideration of appointment of members to Charter Commission

Mr. Brennan advised that at the last meeting, the Board of Selectmen voted to appoint a Charter Commission. We now have 30 days to make appointments.

Resumes of nominated and self-nominated candidates were sent a week in advance for review by the Board of Selectmen members. A handout indicating, in alphabetical order, the twelve candidates for the Charter Commission was distributed. Mr. Brennan also distributed a hand out outlining suggested selection criteria to be considered. There was a general discussion of how many members should be on the Commission to assure effectiveness.

Mr. Brennan moved to appoint a 9 member Charter Review Commission. Motion seconded by Mr. Clark and unanimously carried.

Next, the Board discussed the best way to select the nine members from the list of twelve candidates, all of whom were very well qualified. It was decided that each selectman would simply circle the names of the nine candidates he/she felt were the most qualified to serve on the commission. Each selectman circled their choices on the candidate list hand out and gave the list to CFO Joe Dolan to tally the votes in another room. The candidates receiving the most votes would be on the commission. Mr. Dolan eventually returned and gave each selectman a summary of the votes received by each candidate. A copy of the Charter commissions vote tally is attached for the record.

The next step was to decide on a Chairperson or let the commission elect its own Chair. Mr. Brennan indicated the Board of Selectmen had successfully appointed many chairman to various boards and commissions and passed out a handout detailing those appointments. He felt the commission was too important to leave the Chairman to chance and suggested Bob Russell for this responsibility, because of this Town knowledge, competency and high community respect.

Mr. Creeth and Mr. Hoffstatter disagreed and felt the Commission should elect their own chair citing precedent of other Towns, etc. Mr. Brennan suggested the Board appoint the chairman, but let the commission appoint a Vice Chairman and Secretary.

Mr. Clark moved to appoint Mr. Robert Russell as the Charter Commission Chairman. Motion seconded by Mr. Brennan. Motion carried 3 YES (Brennan, Bruschi, Clark) – 1 NO (Hoffstatter) and 1 absention (Creeth)

6. Consideration of appointment of Gerald Holdridge and Cindy Watkins as additional alternate members to the Board of Assessment Appeals.

Mr. Brennan advised that both of these candidates have served on the Board of Assessment Appeals in the past. During revaluation, when the Board of Assessment Appeals is extremely busy, the Charter allows the Board of Selectmen to appoint additional members.

Mr. Clark moved to appoint Gerald Holdridge and Cindy Watkins as additional alternate members to the Board of Assessment Appeals for a one year term, to end on March 17, 2009. Motion seconded by Ms. Bruschi and unanimously carried.

7. Consideration of appointment of Lori Bufano to Zoning Board of Appeals

This consideration of appointment will be on the next agenda for April 7. In the meantime, Ms. Bufano will be contacted to set up an interview with Board of Selectmen members.

D. Reports

1. First Selectman's Report

Mr. Brennan handed out amended copies of the Board of Ethics to members of the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Brennan advised that there will be a DOT public information meeting to discuss the Route 7 widening project and progress to date and plans for 2008. This meeting will be held on April 3, 2008 at 7:30 pm in the cafeteria at Cider Mill School. This will be the road construction will be finished by the end of the year.

2. Selectmen Reports

Ms. Bruschi - Ms. Bruschi advised that she has an assembly line of high school students who will be putting the amended pages into the Code of Ethics books and asked for help loading these into her car after the meeting.

Mr. Hoffstatter – Mr. Hoffstatter met with A. J. Lucas and is working on the dog park, possibly at an Allens Meadows East site. Right now, they are seeking donations.

Mr. Clark – No report

Mr. Creeth – No report

C. Public Comment

A member of the public asked that the names of the new Charter Review Commission be read out loud. Mr. Brennan read the names, alphabetically:

- Alice Ayers
- Paul H. Burnham
- Marilyn Gould
- Louise W. Herot
- Michael P. Kaelin
- Toni Lee

- Douglas B. Levene
- Robert H. Russell
- Christopher Weldon

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Jan Andras
Recording Secretary