

OFFICE OF THE
FIRST SELECTMAN

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TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2009
WILTON TOWN HALL, ROOM B**

PRESENT: First Selectman William Brennan, Second Selectman Susan Bruschi, Selectman Hal Clark, Selectman Ted Hoffstatter **ABSENT:** Selectman Richard Creeth

GUESTS: George Ciaccio, Larry Kluetsch, Buck Griswold, Ken Dartley, Jan Andras (clerk)

OTHERS: Brian Shea (Bulletin), Lauren Mylo (Villager)

First Selectman Brennan read his comments in regards to President Barack Obama's call to encourage expanded community service by citizens in all municipalities. Wilton will set up a procedure for citizens to volunteer their services.

A. Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Ms. Bruschi, seconded and unanimously carried, to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

Minutes

- Board of Selectmen Meeting – January 5, 2009

Tax Refunds

- Motor Vehicle Tax Refunds and personal Property Tax Refunds as outlined in Tax Collector's memorandum dated January 9, 2009.

Gifts

- Gift of \$50 to the Fire Department Gift Fund from Darrel and Judy Herbst
- Gift of \$50 to the Fire Department Gift Fund from John and Patricia Doumas
- Gift of batting cage (\$8,500 including electrician fees) to Wilton High School from the Wilton Baseball and Softball Association

These gifts are much appreciated and those who made donations to the town are thanked for their generosity.

B. Discussion and/or Action

1. Proposal for Establishment of a New Historic District – Cannondale Neighborhood

Historic Commission members were present to discuss this proposal and the report that was previously received by Selectmen. Ms. Janet Foster advised that the idea came from residents of the area a year ago. Meetings have been held with residents and business owners, and the required formal public hearing was held in November. They have tried to accommodate those who did not want to be involved, but the properties in an historic district have to be contiguous. The ballot vote results were not unanimous but the consensus was to approve the continuation of the process. Mr. Kevin Quinlan added that the owner of Cannondale Village voted against this proposal because he believes it would limit his property rights, although the Commission does not see any downside. It was noted that the Historic District Commission did approve this unanimously and the Planning & Zoning Commission voted unanimously to endorse the proposal.

The members of the Commission were thanked for attending the meeting this evening. A public hearing will be held on February 2, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Upon motion by Ms. Bruschi, it was unanimously decided to scramble the next items on the agenda.

2. Update on Progress of Wilton Commons

Mr. George Ciaccio, Chairman of Wilton Commons, Mr. Larry Kleutsch, Ex. Director of the Mutual Housing Association, and Mr. Buck Griswold, a member of the W.C. Board were present. The funding effort is on-going, with support from Senator Toni Boucher, Representative Peggy Reeves and Selectman Richard Creeth. An application has been submitted to DECD for a \$6 million grant. Small adjustments have been made to the plans to try to reduce costs. The units have been reduced by 3, eliminating the third floor and cutting down on common areas. There is also a \$2.2 million commitment of private funds.

The Board of Selectmen members thanked the three representatives for attending this meeting and giving an update.

3. Elderly Tax Relief Program - Discussion

Selectman Brennan advised that it has been a year and a half since this was last studied and this Board should decide the timeliness of looking at the program again.

Ms. Bruschi had attended a forum with Ms. Judy Zucker and found that of 169 towns in the state, each one has a very different Elderly Tax Relief Program. Some of the recommendations heard were 1) property tax relief

should be provided to low and moderate income residents; 2) the State should examine the possibility of efficiencies and how they could benefit residents; and 3) this should be considered as comprehensive tax reform.

Mr. Ken Dartley, who served on the last ETR commission, feels that the commission should be part of the budgeting process each year and that the last adjustments made were miniscule. He is willing to serve on a study commission to look at this now and come back with a report. Mr. Brennan would like to get a broader opinion from others who served on the commission. The February 2 Selectmen's meeting agenda will include discussion of whether this is the right time for another study.

4. Proposed Amendment to the Wilton Alcoholic Beverages Ordinance

A public hearing was held earlier this evening and was attended by several representatives of the local restaurants who believe that extending the weekend hours when alcoholic beverages can be sold will make them more competitive with restaurants in other towns.

Mr. Brennan moved to amend the Wilton Alcoholic Beverages Ordinance to read as follows: Sec. 8-8 Permitted hours of sale of alcoholic liquor. The Town of Wilton shall allow the sale of alcoholic liquor in all establishments operating under restaurant permits only between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday; between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight on Fridays and Saturdays; from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 am. on New Year's Eve; and between the hours of 12:00 noon and 11:00 p.m. on Sunday.

5. Proposed Amendment to the Wilton Dog Leash Ordinance

A public hearing was held earlier this evening. Those attending stressed that the language needs to be more specific about the walking trails, so as not to include the walking trails on open space overseen by the Conservation Commission. A change in language will be drafted by town counsel, along with an improved map, and this will be discussed again at the February 2, 2009 Selectmen meeting.

6. Consideration of Appointment of Ms. Marian Kilbride as Hearing Officer for Motor Vehicles Taken Into Custody

The Statutes require a hearing officer for vehicles that have been towed. Town counsel advises that it can be the same person who serves as hearing officer for parking violations, but the two positions must be kept separate.

Ms. Bruschi moved to appoint Ms. Marian Kilbride as Hearing Officer for Motor Vehicles Taken Into Custody, for a period of one year or until such time as a successor is qualified and appointed. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

7. Discussion of request to consider the establishment of a “Train Horn Quiet Zone”

Mr. Matt Nesco of Seeley Road sent a memo to the First Selectman regarding a quiet zone and was present tonight to offer more information. Under the Federal Railroad Association, applications can be made for a quiet zone so that train horns will not be blown when approaching each intersection. A study has shown that horn blowing does not necessarily prevent accidents. Hundreds of cities across the country have a quiet zone, including Groton and Stonington in Connecticut. Mr. Nesco was asked to take digital pictures of the intersections in Wilton. Mr. Brennan will follow up with the D.O.T. First Selectman Jeb Walker of New Canaan is now applying for a quiet zone. Mr. Brennan will stay in touch with him to monitor their progress.

- C. Public Comment – Mr. Milton Pohl, 417 Hurlbutt Street, gave examples of costs for libraries and high school renovations in other towns. He feels that the estimated costs for the Wilton High School project are high in comparison. He also questions whether the air conditioning is necessary for the 35-50 hours per year it is used. Mr. Brennan pointed out that the focus in this project is not air conditioning, but air quality.

D. Reports

1. First Selectman

Unfunded Mandates – Mr. Clark followed up by meeting with Senator Toni Boucher, Rep. John Hetherington and Rep. Peggy Reeves. In addition, CCM has compiled a report on the burden of unfunded mandates and the opportunity for fiscal relief. Mr. Brennan asked the Selectmen to read through this information before the next meeting.

High School Renovations – Ms. Birck, Mr. Hampson and Mr. Whyte will be invited to discuss the renovations at the next Selectmen’s meeting.

Library Trustees – will be giving their report at the next Selectmen’s meeting.

2. Selectmen’s Reports

Ms. Bruschi – No report

Mr. Hoffstatter – The Town of Westport has a plastic shopping ban ordinance that becomes effective in March. He suggests waiting for their results before going any further here.

Mr. Clark – No report

E. Adjournment

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Jan Andras, Recording Secretary