

September 15, 2011

Board of Selectmen's Meeting

September 15, 2011

Present: First Selectman Gayle Weinstein; Selectman David Muller; Selectman Dan Gilbert; Town Administrator Tom Landry; Administrative Assistant Judy DeVito

This meeting was recorded and videotaped. The tapes are available in the Selectmen's office.

Ms. Weinstein called the meeting to order at 7:30pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Discussion/decision regarding the Lachat agreement- Dennis Tracey

Dennis Tracey chair on the Nature Center Building Committee has been working with Ms. Weinstein on an agreement with the Nature Conservancy that will hopefully in the future allow the Town to utilize the Lachat property.

Mr. Tracey said the obstacle from using the property to the best advantage of the Town has been that the Nature Conservancy and the Town have different missions and different views about how to use the property. As a result of that, the committee has been working closely with the Nature Conservancy to restructure the relationship. They have also been working very closely with the Attorney General's office on a potential restructuring because the Attorney General would have to approve any change.

They are proposing tonight a restructuring of the relationship which is very consistent with the original purposes of the agreement with Leon Lachat and also allows the Town to use the property in an appropriate way. The basic outline of the agreement is that the Nature Conservancy and the Town will agree to allow use of the property by the Town that it wants and use of the property by the Nature Conservancy that it wants through mutual leases.

There would be a lease by the Nature Conservancy to the Town of approximately ½ of the property which represents the meadow areas along Godfrey Road and there will be a lease of the forested lands, approximately ½ of the land from the Town to the Nature Conservancy. The Nature Conservancy will use its land as part of the Devil's Den preserve and will treat it the same. The Town will use its land as appropriate consistent with the conservation easements that are in place with one exception.

The second element of the agreement relates to the use of the Town's portion of the land. There has been no decision as to how to use the land but one of the options that has been considered is to use it as a Town Farm. The conservation easements that apply to the property would be modified to make it clear that a Town or Community farm would be an acceptable use of the property.

September 15, 2011

The agreement deals with the endowment which relates to this land. The original contribution to the endowment of \$250,000 from the Nature Conservancy and \$250,000 from the Town is managed by the Nature Conservancy. The endowment has now increased in value and the agreement is that it will be used solely for the maintenance of the property and buildings on the Lachat property.

There is a 5% draw down of the principal in any given year. This agreement preserves that endowment in its entirety and provides that it will be maintained as a single endowment under the continuing management of the Nature Conservancy. The income will be distributed as appropriate for the maintenance of the entire land. This treatment of the endowment has been discussed in detail with the Attorney General and the committee believes that it will be approved. The entire agreement, because it involves a change to the conservation easement and a change to the potential use of the land would need Attorney General approval. This agreement is contingent on that approval.

Mark Harper said he would like to thank the committee and the Board of Selectmen for coming to an agreement like this. He feels that Leon Lachat's wishes have been served and are still going to be served in the future and he is very happy to hear the results of all of their hard work. Ms. Weinstein said that it was very important for them to respect Mr. Lachat's wishes.

Liz Ward asked how long the leases were for. Mr. Tracey said they were ten years and we can renew them if both parties agree.

Ms. Weinstein said we are going to set an informational meeting and a Town Meeting because it's the Town that needs to vote on this agreement because it involves leasing of Town property.

Mr. Muller made a motion to schedule a public information session on the 20th of October at 7:00pm followed immediately thereafter at 7:20pm or when appropriate for a Town Meeting for the purposes of approving an agreement between the Town of Weston and the Nature Conservancy based on the draft dated September 15, 2011. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Muller amended the motion to locate the meetings in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding the appointment of Bernadette McGovern Park to fill the vacancy (Eric Tyson) on the Weston Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee for a term to expire October 13, 2012. Bernadette said she has been a Weston resident for eight years and she loves it here. She is an avid runner, biker and does triathlons and would love to see her kids biking to school one day. That is the motivation behind her getting involved.

Mr. Muller said there have been a little bit of turnover on some of these committees and did she foresee being able to serve the 13 month term. She said she felt she would be here for a long time. Mr. Gilbert made a motion to appoint Bernadette Park to fill the vacancy

September 15, 2011

(Eric Tyson) on the Weston Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee for a term to expire October 13, 2012. Mr. Muller seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Accept the resignation of Don Gary from the Building Committee effective immediately. Mr. Muller made a motion to accept the resignation of Don Gary from the Building Committee effective immediately. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding deer hunting on Town property –Mark Harper
Mr. Harper said we have hunted the landfill area before which is 50 acres. He also wants to hunt the 80 acres of the Fromson/Strassler property which we have also hunted before. He already has hunters lined up who will meet with the First Selectman so she can sign the required permits.

He has limited four bow hunters to the 80 acre Fromson/Strassler property and three hunters to the landfill at any given time. The reason for limiting the hunters is when you are bow hunting you are in an elevated stand and the effective range of 35 yards in perimeter around that one stand is the area that will be used by each hunter. There would be plenty of room at the landfill for three hunters and plenty of room for four hunters on the Fromson/Strassler property.

If residents in the Town of Weston want to bow hunt they should contact Mr. Harper and he will go over all their paper work and make sure they have all the necessary paperwork and their safety courses. If we get more people than we currently have he would set up a system where different people would alternate days.

Ms. Weinstein said that last year she did not sign any permits and she received calls from neighbors saying they thought they saw or heard hunters. Mr. Harper said he would be happy to talk to the Selectmen in private about that but he said he could assure the selectmen it had nothing to do with the controlled hunt. He has in place the necessary tools to make sure that the people that are there are supposed to be there.

Mr. Muller asked other in the change in location was there any other changes. Mr. Harper said that last year we were going to limit the amount of does that were taken off the property but this year he does not want to put a limit on the number. He sees the number of deer in Town rising again and we need to effectively remove as many deer as we possibly can in particular the female deer because they are the ones producing. The State of Connecticut has a system set-up now where you can shoot has many does as you possible can because they are the problem.

The only way that we are effectively going to be able to help the rest of the Town is to appeal to some of the private property owners which Mr. Harper already has and has obtained permission from private property owners to bring hunters onto their land.

Ms. Weinstein asked Mr. Harper to maintain lists of the seven hunters who are going to be there each day so that we know in Town Hall who is hunting on any particular day.

September 15, 2011

Mr. Harper said that the permit that Ms. Weinstein signs is their identification and is a State mandate. He will send a letter to the Town of Wilton informing them of the hunt since the Fromson/Strassler property borders a space in Wilton. Ms. Weinstein said she also wanted the residents of Upper Parish to be notified of the hunt.

Mr. Muller made a motion to authorize the Animal Control Officer to conduct a controlled deer hunt at the Weston Transfer Station and at the Fromson/Strassler property. Such hunt shall only be bow and arrow. No more than three hunters at a time will be allowed at the Weston Transfer Station and no more than four at a time on the Fromson/Strassler property. Adjacent property owners will be notified in writing at least 5 days in advance. The First Selectman will meet all hunters in person prior to signing any permits. The Animal Control Officer will report to the Board of Selectmen on the status and results of the hunt halfway through the hunting season. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Request for property tax refunds:

Sandra Buckle	\$500.00
Media Group of Conn. Inc.	\$12.80
David Burns	\$92.65
Randi Cannon	\$387.11
Bryan Liggett	\$177.16
Ally Financial	\$467.03
Chase Auto Finance Corp.	\$301.19
Chase Auto Finance Corp.	\$78.69
Fifth Third Bank	\$433.79
Honda Lease Trust	\$1,298.01
Mercedes- Benz Financial	\$1,223.29
Toyota Financial Services	\$842.81
Toyota Financial Services	\$64.16
Tom Espeland	\$18.82
W. Glenn Major Executor	\$116.90
Paul A. Levin	\$115.17
Dominick Vento	<u>\$42.90</u>
Total	\$6,172.48

Mr. Gilbert made a motion to approve property tax refunds in \$6,172.48 as listed on the September 15th 2011 Board of Selectmen's meeting agenda. Mr. Muller seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Open Items

Ongoing updates

Grants- Gayle Weinstein- Mr. Landry attended the FEMA meeting today which is the first step in getting FEMA reimbursement. We will be applying for reimbursement for all the impacts of tropical storm Irene. We have filed some papers to begin the process which was done today. In a couple of weeks FEMA will send

September 15, 2011

someone out to meet with the Town and we will talk to them about specific expenses we had. From the day we meet we have 60 days from that day to submit all of our expenses for reimbursement. As of today we have not received any reimbursements from the storm in February.

Ticker File, Discuss as updated

Reimbursement from State for school projects- Tom Landry- No new news

Any business to come properly before the meeting- Mr. Muller made a motion to add a discussion/decision regarding soliciting input from Town residence regarding emergency communications to the agenda. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The week following tropical storm Irene both Mr. Muller and Ms. Weinstein heard several suggestions on what could be done differently in reacting to future emergencies. Mr. Muller said that we should begin by gathering suggestions from Weston residents to incorporate into our existing plans for emergency management and communication.

Mr. Muller is proposing that we draft a short questionnaire that would be available on either the Town website or hard copy at the First Selectmen's office. The questionnaire would solicit input from residents on steps that could be taken at the Town level to deal with regional or statewide emergencies. He proposed that the collected responses be summarized for discussion at a future meeting with the Board of Selectmen and then the Board would agree which suggestions could be incorporated into the existing emergency management communication plans.

Ms. Weinstein said her only concern was the question of "what are you doing to push CL&P?" There was nothing more that we could do to push CL&P and people need to understand that. Ms. Weinstein said she did get some good suggestions from residents. Mr. Muller said he wants to focus on "what can we do in the Town to communicate better?"

Mr. Muller said he would draft a questionnaire and circulate it to see if we could think of anything else that should be on it. He would like a free form so if there is a question someone wanted an answer to that was not asked they would be able to do that. He will have the questionnaire for the next Board of Selectman's meeting. Ms. Weinstein said that they were going to send a letter town wide to the residents to let them know that they should be updating not only their home phone but there cell phones and emails with the Code Red alert system. She asked if they should wait for the results of the survey so that we can decide what else should be in that letter. Mr. Muller said he did not see any reason to wait.

September 15, 2011

Mr. Muller made a motion that the Board of Selectmen approve the dissemination of a questionnaire to solicit input from Town residence regarding emergency communications and management. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/approval of the Board of Selectmen's minutes of August 18, 2011.

Mr. Gilbert made a motion to approve the minutes of August 18, 2011 Board of Selectmen's meeting as presented. Mr. Muller seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

At 8:15pm Mr. Gilbert made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Muller seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

Judy M. DeVito
Administrative Assistant
10/20/11