

Special Board of Selectmen's Meeting

December 9, 2009

Present: First Selectman Gayle Weinstein; Selectman David Muller; Selectman Dan Gilbert; Town Administrator Tom Landry; Administrative Assistant Judy DeVito, Press and members of the public.

This meeting was recorded and video taped and the tapes are available in the Selectmen's office.

Ms. Weinstein called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

Pledge of Allegiance- Ms. Weinstein leads the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Discussion/decision regarding acceptance of a gift of \$5,100 from the Weston Gun Club to be put toward the purchase of new bullet proof vest for the Weston Police Department. Chief Troxell said the manufacturer suggest that you trade your bullet proof vest out every four to five years. Sgt. Ferullo found a grant through Homeland Security and was able to get funds to cover 50% of the cost of the vest. The Weston Gun Club wants to donate the extra \$5,100 dollars needed to buy the fourteen vests.

Ms. Weinstein asked if it was standard procedure for officers to wear bullet proof vest at all times. Chief Troxell said there was no absolute requirement for the officers to wear the vests at all times but with the exception of himself, they all wear the vests all the time.

Mr. Muller made a motion to approve the acceptance of the gift \$5,100 from the Weston Gun Club for the purchase of new bullet proof vest for the Weston Police Department. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding the Lachat architectural review. Bob Uzenoff (Lachat Committee Chair) said their committee has met a few times during the year and came up with a rough estimate of \$300,000 to \$400,000 to put the house in a shape fit to be occupied and a minimum of \$85,000 to stabilize the house. They contacted an architect, Robert Hatch and they have a recommendation from him. David Coprio said Mr. Hatch chaired the Southport Historical Society for many years and is a known expert on restoration work. Mr. Hatch also worked on the Heady House.

Ms. Weinstein said she had seen the house and is concerned from a safety and liability perspective. Mr. Coprio said Mr. Hatch would do it in three phases. Mr. Gilbert asked if there was a maintenance fund for Lachat. Ms. Weinstein said yes and the money for this would come out of that. Ms. Weinstein said there was approximately \$64,000 in the fund.

Mr. Gilbert said that we should consider having the architect come in and talk to us and get a sense of his thoughts in terms of what it might cost in order to stabilize the cost. Ms.

Weinstein said Mr. Hatch could not give us a cost until he analysis it which is what this proposal is for.

Mr. Coprio said that the house is about 3000 square feet and if you were to preserve the house and restore it as it was originally, you would spent about \$300 a square foot.

Mr. Muller made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$7,200 from the Lachat maintenance account including \$1,000 for a structural engineer required for Phase 1 as described in the letter from Robert Hatch, Architect dated November 9, 2009. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding authorizing the First Selectmen to sign a letter authorizing the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund to apply on the Town's behalf for the Connecticut Clean Energy Communities Program-Community Energy Savings Project. Martin Strasmore said that this requires no money from the Town. The federal government has put in place various opportunities for grants to save energy and do green things for green jobs. Because we are a small town we cannot get all the possible money available.

A consortium including the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund has gotten together and said if we go to all the small towns together, we can propose a project which will get funding to help communities and their residents reduce their energy consumption at no cost to the Town because we are getting the money through the Federal Government. There will be additional money coming in because of the energy credits that are accomplished. The whole proposal goes to the Federal Government on December 14th.

The only thing the Town has to do is get baseline electric energy consumption for the Towns activities and also for the whole Town. CL&P will provide it. The committee on sustainability will work with them to educate people, to offer incentives, to help people set goals and then help them accomplish those goals at no cost to them.

Mr. Muller made a motion to authorize the First Selectman Gayle Weinstein to sign the letter as proposed to Dr. Steven Chu to apply on the Towns behalf in the Connecticut Clean Energy Communities Program- Community Energy Savings Project. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Interview for reappointment/appointments on the Building Committee for Allen Swerdlowe; Raisa Kendall

Allen Swerdlowe- Allen said that he has been on the Building Committee about 10 years. He got involved primarily because of his distress of the work that was done at Hurlbutt Elementary School. When the new building project came up he decided that he had to get involved. He was appointed to the School Building Committee and was later appointed to the Building Committee.

About 1 ½ years ago he took the initiative to start an Alternative Energy Sub-Committee of the Building Committee and they studied the energy needs of the municipality for

about one year. They determined that they would study the use of a single fuel cell at Middle School and High School. The study was complete and they got about one million in grant money from the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund and they are on there way to installing a fuel cell.

He would like to look at having an architectural review board as part of the Building Committee and he would like to go further with that discussion. Mr. Gilbert asked what would be the goal. The goal would be to take a look at the entire fabric of municipal Weston and to understand its historic or contemporary nature and by that understanding be able to move forward with new building projects.

Raisa Kendall was not available.

Discussion/Interview for reappointment/appointments on the Conservation Commission for David Rosenberg; Joseph Pachman; Cathy Minter

David Rosenberg- Mr. Rosenberg said he has been on the commission for 10 years and has lived in Weston for 15 years. He was involved in preserving Trout Brook and this was a way to get involved on the Town level. Conservation is a non partisan board, and is a completely objective board in terms of doing the best thing for the Town wetlands. It does sometimes become a forum for neighbor disputes.

Ms. Weinstein asked what the he thought the biggest issue was facing conservation right now. Mr. Rosenberg said people not applying for proper permits and then saying they did not know. Also invasive species is a huge problem for the Town that has not been dealt with.

Ms. Weinstein asked Mr. Rosenberg about his attendance because he had missed quite a few meetings in the last six months. Mr. Rosenberg said there were personal reasons and he did not feel that should be an ongoing problem.

Joseph Pachman was not available.

Cathy Minter-Ms. Minter said that she is a landscape designer working in Weston. She has lived in Weston for 23 years and now wants to do something to give back to the Town. She has been in front of the Conservation Commission many times representing clients. She agrees with Mr. Rosenberg that it is a very non-partisan board. She has taken a lot of courses at the Institute for Ecological Studies and at Conway School for Management, anytime she could get more information about inlands and wetlands she did.

Ms. Weinstein asked if she had a strong understanding of the regulations and she said yes and also her background as a landscaper does play into conservation.

Discussion/Interview for reappointment/appointments on the Historic District Commission for Carol Baldwin-

Carol Baldwin- She said this was her first involvement in Town politics. She had been approached about being on the Historic District Commission and looked into it. It sounded like something that she would be interested in. She has lived in Weston for about 16 years and has a historic home built in 1859 which she has been renovating. She joined the Weston Historical Society this year. She is a Freelance Documentary Producer and has been doing that for the last 25 years.

Ms. Weinstein asked if she was familiar with any of the rules and regulation that the Historic District Commission is governed by. Ms. Baldwin said not really. She knows the Coley Homestead is part of historic district and even working on the gardens there they have to look into the rules of the historic district.

Discussion/ Interview for reappointment/appointments on the Parks and Recreation Commission for Robert Uzenoff.

Robert Uzenoff- Mr. Uzenoff said he has served on the Commission for approximately 12 years, the first six as chair and continued to serve the last six years. The commission only does what the selectmen allow or empower them to do. Working with the finance committee about 10 years ago, they saved significant amounts of money going from in house maintenance of the fields to a competitive out sourcing. He enjoys serving the Town and he would like the opportunity to continue serving.

Ms. Weinstein asked what he saw as the biggest challenge that Parks and Recreation is facing right now given the budget constrains. Mr. Uzenoff said balancing the users' desires to be on the fields all the time and how do we preserve that investment that we have in the fields. Part of the challenge is to educate the Selectmen to listen to the Parks & Recreation Commission and in the end you have to make a balanced decision on what to do. We have to protect and maintain the fields whatever the budget constraints are.

Discussion/Interview for reappointment/appointments on the Commission on Aging for Tom Sherman- Mr. Sherman said he has lived in Town for about 15years. He has kids that went through the Weston school system and coached them in different sports. He has a particular interest in this commission that is both personal and professional. He has a mother who has Alzheimer's who is home and has 24-7 care. Professionally he is a financial advisor so he works with people to protect a long life expectancy.

Mr. Muller asked him about his interest in Parks and Recreation and how he came up with one versus the other. Mr. Sherman said that he has an equal interest in the Parks and Recreation side. He is an athlete, into nutrition and exercise. He has coached kids since they were little but in business he coaches people too. He felt that either the Commission on Aging or Parks and Recreation would be a great place for him to become an asset to the Town.

Ms. Weinstein asked if the commission meetings being during the day would be an issue for him. She said the meetings run from about 9:30am to about 11:30am sometimes later and they have their senior lunches on Wednesday. Mr. Sherman said it could be. If the meetings run more than an hour or so it could be problematic for him.

Discussion/decision regarding the reappointment on the Building Board of Appeals for David Coprio for a term to expire December 31, 2014. Mr. Gilbert made a motion to reappoint David Coprio for a position on the Building Board of Appeals for a term to expire December 31, 2014. Mr. Muller seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/ decision regarding reappointment/appointments on the Building Committee for Jack Davidoff; Allen Swerdlowe; Raisa Kendall for a term to expire June 30, 2011. Ms. Weinstein said she felt that they could not vote on Raisa Kendall since they had not spoken to her as yet. Mr. Gilbert made a motion to appoint Jack Davidoff and reappoint Allen Swerdlowe to the Building Committee for a term to expire June 30, 2011. Mr. Muller seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/ decision regarding reappointment/appointments on the Conservation Commission for Howard Aibel; David Rosenberg; Robert Turner; Joseph Pachman; Cathy Minter for a term to expire December 31, 2013. Mr. Gilbert said that he saw that we have five candidates to fill four positions. We had not heard from Mr. Pachman which is unfortunate. He brings a special level of expertise to that commission. If the sense is that we have to move forward tonight then we have to move forward with people who were good enough to come. If we do not have to then we should defer this.

Mr. Muller said Mr. Rosenberg missing 50% of meetings is troublesome and he does have an issue with that nomination. Ms. Weinstein said that she hopes that one of the outcomes that come out of this process is create more efficient boards with people who want to attend meetings.

Mr. Gilbert made a motion to appoint Howard Aibel, David Rosenberg, Robert Turner and Cathy Minter to the Conservation Commission for a term to expire December 31, 2013. Mr. Muller seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding reappointment/appointments on the Historic District Commission for Paul Deysenroth; Carol Baldwin for a term to expire December 31, 2014 and Stuart Mather Gibson III as an alternate for a term to expire December 31, 2011. Mr. Muller said we have three very qualified candidates and two spots. Ms. Weinstein said two of the candidates seem to have more experience. Mr. Gilbert said that Mr. Deysenroth brings so much to the table and he could not imagine a better person to serve. Mr. Muller said Mr. Gibson offers a lot of potential for the Town and given his background, which appears to be much more in the arts, he would encourage Mr. Gibson to be a candidate for a position on the Commission for the Arts when a vacancy becomes available.

Mr. Muller made a motion to appoint Paul Deysenroth to the Historic District Commission for a term to expire December 31, 2014 and Carol Baldwin as an alternate for a term to expire December 31, 2011. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding reappointment/appointments on the Library Board for Victor Escandon; Marilyn Parker; Amy Sanborn; Denis Toner for a term to expire December 31, 2013. Mr. Gilbert said that his position is always with the person who's serving unless we have a specific issue. Where we have people that are serving effectively especially beyond the individual boards and commissions that they serve on his predisposition is to reappoint them.

Ms. Weinstein said just because they were active in another area of Town that is not a reason to appoint or reappoint them. They may feel the other way, if someone is so active maybe they should give that seat to someone who is not involved so that we can get more people involved in diverse areas in the Town.

Ms. Weinstein said of all the Boards and Commissions this was the most difficult to decide. She had a problem with the way the elections for chairmanship were held. It was her understanding that discussions did take place that there might be some switches in who the board members were. The way it was conveyed to them, it seemed like the discussion about a change in leadership on the Board of Selectmen and therefore a potential change in a majority of Boards and Commissions never took place, when in fact it did.

Mr. Muller said the tone that was set by what happened was sort of a challenge to the Selectmen. We have members to appoint and it is harder to not reappoint someone who has been elected chairman. However the election did take place and result was nine to zero, all the members of the commission voted in that direction and he felt that it shows that there is support on the Library Board which is comprised of many new people.

Mr. Gilbert made a motion to reappoint Marilyn Parker, Amy Sanborn and Denis Toner to the Library Board for a term to expire December 31, 2013. Mr. Muller seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/ decision regarding reappointment/appointments on the Parks and Recreation Commission for Eric Albert; PJ Dodge; Nancy Babyak; David Juneau; Robert Uzenoff for a term to expire December 31, 2013.

Mr. Muller said that we have several members who have been on the commission for at least a decade or more. It is his desire to introduce a new member who brings a tremendous amount of experience working the sports organizations.

Mr. Muller made a motion that they appoint and reappoint Eric Albert; PJ Dodge, David Juneau and Robert Uzenoff for a term to expire December 31, 2013. Ms. Weinstein seconded.

Mr. Gilbert said to operate on a premise that change in and of itself is good is not a good premise. He feels that we should be appointing people who we truly believe are best qualified. Ms. Weinstein said that what PJ Dodge has to bring to the table is her

experience both with the Boosters and with the schools. She felt change was good on Boards and Commissions to bring new ideas.

The motion passed Ms. Weinstein and Mr. Muller yes, Mr. Gilbert no.

Discussion/decision regarding reappointment/appointments on the Commission on Aging for Margaret Anderson; Terry Hully; Susan Moore; Tom Sherman for a term to expire December 31, 2011. Mr. Muller said that he was very disappointed that one of the nominees had expressed concern about availability to attend meetings. He would very much have liked to see Mr. Sherman filling a role on this commission but there was no way he could say that was in the best interest of the Town.

Mr. Muller made a motion Margaret Anderson; Terry Hully; Susan Moore be reappointed, reappointed, and appointed respectively for a term to expire December 31, 2011. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding reward of a Recycling Contract for the Town Transfer Station- Joe Lametta. Mr. Lametta explained that the original contract was for solid waste. Through discussions with City Carting they offered us the same price that they offered Norwalk which is \$15.00 a ton. The recycling has increased a lot and we are probably at 20 percent and the State's target is 50 percent. Mr. Muller asked if anyone was in the 20 to 50 percent range.

Mr. Landry said the States that have the highest collection rate seem to do two things. They charge a lot more to dispose of your garbage to give you an incentive to recycle and they have curb side pick up. Ms. Weinstein said she wants more people educated on all that are recyclables. Mr. Lametta said the trend is good the garbage is going down and the recyclable is going up.

Mr. Muller made a motion to authorize the First Selectman to sign the amendment to Hauling and Disposal amended contract dated as of December 8, 2008 between the Town of Weston and City Carting, Inc. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Open Items

Ongoing update

Grants- Gayle Weinstein- No new news.

Fuel Cell- Gayle Weinstein- Ms. Weinstein said she spoke to Don Gary and CL&P has agreed to write a letter in support of our project to the DPUC.

Booster Barn- Gayle Weinstein- No new news

Tickler file, discuss as updated

Reimbursement from State for school projects- Tom Landry-

January Tax Collection- Report- Tom Landry-

Discussion/approval of the Board of Selectmen's meeting minutes for December 3, 2009. This item will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

At 8:05pm Mr. Muller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gilbert seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

Judy M. DeVito
Administrative Assistant
Approved 01/07/10