



BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING RICHARD H. SMITH TOWN HALL

XX Regular Meeting

Special Meeting

Date: February 27, 2024

Time: 6:30 PM

Attendance:

Selectmen: Carol Jones, Duane Gates, Kathryn Russell;

Audience of Citizens: There were a total of 10 residents in attendance; The meeting was held with a hybrid component. Three residents joined via Zoom, 7 in person.

1. Call to Order:

Jones called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

2. **Approve minutes** from the regular meeting held on January 23, 2024. Gates made a motion; second by Russell. Motion passed.

Approved 3-0

3. Audience of Citizens:

- One resident suggested that Region 4 revisit the bond issue approved last year by the three towns for the 10-million-dollar field improvement project, given the financial burden facing the towns now with the mold remediation at John Winthrop Middle school. The field project should be put on hold.
- Offered support for two residents up for appointments
- Compliments on transparency of First Selectman's Office
- Comments offering appreciation for the Boards' consideration of ARPA projects for downtown revitalization and business mobility access issues.

4. Discussion on the bonding payments made by the town for sewer projects- Jones asked Russell to make presentation of bond information. To summarize, town paid cost with a partial contribution from the WPCA for many years. In 2016, the town began to pick up 100% of bond payments. After discussion, it was agreed that the BOS would respectfully ask the WPCA Board to be a 'good neighbor' and again begin to help contribute to the yearly bond payments. Jones will write a letter to request a 50% contribution for this year. Jones asked for amotion to move this forward. Russell made a motion; seconded by Gates.

Approved 3-0

5. Appointments/Reappointments: Gates made a motion to appoint the following residents to the boards/commission as listed.

- Janet Klink-Parks and Recreation term to expire 2026
- Frank Santoro-EDC, term to expire 2026
- Stacie DiNello, EDC, term to expire 2024

Jones second; discussion. Russell made a condition of her approval for the appointments of Santoro and DiNello be that the terms that each were to be appointed, be changed so that DiNello was appointed for the longer term. Gates and Jones agreed. Motion to appoint all three candidates was approved.

Approved 3-0

The BOS was not able to act on candidate for Library Board, Christina Fleury's appointment as the Town Clerk had determined that her voter registration affiliation made her ineligible due to the current makeup of the board.

The position to serve as the Deep River representative to the Estuary Transit board was discussed as two candidates were interested: Angus McDonald as a reappointment and Kathryn Russell. Gates made a motion to reappoint Angus McDonald to this position as he volunteered to continue to serve on this board and members of this board have reached out to Jones to request his reappointment. Jones seconded. Discussion led to Russell stating that she would not support this reappointment as she would like to serve on this board and she read an email sent to Gates and Jones outlining her interest and experience. After further discussion, Gates offered his support for Russell. Jones did not, citing, the Transit board members who had spoken to her against the appointment of Russell and in favor of McDonald's reappointment. Jones conceded to the appointment but stated that if the First Selectman's Office receives any negative feedback about Russell from the transit board, as she represents Deep River, she would be removed. Russell agreed. Motion passed.

Approved 2-0, 1 abstention

6. ARPA expenditures- Jones, Gates and Russell offered their priority projects from those presented at a special BOS meeting on 2/6/24. After much discussion, the following 6 projects, totaling 206K, were agreed on to be presented to the Board of Finance for approval.

- Heritage and Tourism Corridor (various pieces to this project) -\$35K
- The Nest -accessibility ramp- \$17.5K
- Police Department/Capitol-\$11K
- Downtown Deep River Master Plan (many components to this project)- \$100K
- Public Art for Economic Development - \$25K
- Pandemonium- Animal Center, educational pathways and signage- 17.5K

Jones made a motion to present this list to the BOF. Gates seconded. Motion passed

Approved 3-0

7. Special town meeting will be scheduled following the meeting with the BOF, in order to bring some items forward to the residents for vote and hopefully add the ARPA funding requests. Date to be set in late March.

No action taken

8. Audience of Citizens-

- Resident spoke again about the issues at John Winthrop school

9. Adjournment:

Jones asked for a motion to adjourn @7:25 pm. Russell made a motion; Gates second.

Approved 3-0