

Board of Selectmen  
REGULAR MEETING  
Town Hall  
December 2, 2008 – 6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

- 1.0 First Selectman Joyce Okonuk called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:07 PM. Selectman John Bendoraitis was present; Selectman Russ Blakeslee arrived at 6:20 PM. Also in attendance: Highway Foreman Tom Conley and Administrative Assistant Patti Handy and audience of 3.

2.0 Public Forum

3.0 Minutes

- 3.1 *Motion by Bendoraitis, seconded by Okonuk to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2008 Special Meeting.*

*Vote: Yes (Bendoraitis/Okonuk)*

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2008 Special Meeting:*

*Vote: Yes (Okonuk/Bendoraitis)*

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2008 Special Meeting:*

*Vote: Yes (Okonuk/Bendoraitis)*

Okonuk requested the following correction to the minutes of the November 21, 2008 Special Meeting to reflect the change in rate of pay for newly appointed Assistant Town Clerk Mary Ellen Wieczorek, from \$15.71 per hour to \$16.00 per hour.

*Motion by Bendoraitis, seconded by Okonuk to approve the minutes of the November 21, 2008 Special Meeting as amended:*

*Vote: Yes (Bendoraitis/Okonuk)*

4.0 Correspondence

- 4.1 A letter of appreciation was received from Girl Scout Troop 65451 for allowing them to hold a cookie booth sale on Election Day.

5.0 Old Business

- 5.1 Mowing contracts for Town and cemetery maintenance.

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to amend the order of the agenda and take Added Items 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 on the agenda:*

*Vote: yes (Okonuk/Bendoraitis)*

- 5.2 Application for Federal Funds to construct a salt shed for Public Works.  
Tom Conley spoke of the possibility of applying for funds under the proposed plan of the Obama Administration. He has spoken to a representative of the town of Coventry who has obtained a grant for a salt storage shed, and suggests that Lebanon also apply. The shed would be proposed to be constructed on vacant town land across from the Fire Safety Complex. Conley said that he has spoken to the Town's Planning and Zoning Officer Phil Chester, who would like to have a plan to bring to the Zoning Board. Discussion of the design followed. Okonuk reported that Brandon Handfield of Anchor Engineering could prepare preliminary plan – the cost would be approximately \$1,500 to \$1,800.

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to authorize Tom Conley to work with Anchor Engineering to design a salt shed, with a design cost of up to \$2,000:*

*Vote: Yes (Okonuk/Bendoraitis).*

- 5.3 Purchase of a leaf vacuum for Public Works.  
Okonuk explained that the cost of a new vacuum is too expensive to consider. Conley reported that he knows of a used vacuum for sale for \$2,300, and it would meet the Town's needs. He also said that it is a Giant Vac brand, and that there is a local service for repair if needed. Funding was discussed, and Conley suggested that the proceeds from the sale of other vehicles be put in the General Fund and applied towards the cost of the vacuum. Blakeslee asked if hiring a service once or twice yearly would be more cost effective; both Conley and Bendoraitis felt that the cost of purchasing the machine would be justified. Conley pointed out that if leaves clogs drains and the subsequent water backs up, then driveways and property must be repaired at the Town's cost. Just one such repair would pay for the cost of the vacuum. More discussion of where the funds could come from followed, and it was decided to place the item on hold until the Board of Finance could make suggestions. *NO ACTION*

- 5.4 Shredder or shredder services for Town Hall  
Okonuk explained that the current shredder is no longer working or under warranty. Repairs costs were staggering and not warranted vs the cost of the equipment. The cost of a new, more powerful shredder is cost-prohibitive and she suggested hiring a shredding service once or twice a year, and buying a small shredder for day-to-day use. Discussion followed on associated cost. Bendoraitis suggested that we look into renting a shredding service that provides a locked bin for items needing shredding – Okonuk given referral to make call. *NO ACTION*

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to return to item 5.1 under Old Business:*

- 5.1 Mowing contracts for Town and cemetery maintenance.  
(As the contractor who spoke is related to Russ Blakeslee, he wished to abstain from conversation and/or vote on this matter. The First Selectman suggested he participate in discussion, but agreed that he abstain from the vote).

Sandy Blakeslee of S&J Lawncare (current contractor) was present to propose splitting her mowing contract for the Town and the cemeteries into two separate contracts. Okonuk had obtained proposals from other contractors for the mowing of the cemeteries only two years ago, and they far exceeded the budgeted amount. Discussion followed as to the cost for Ms. Blakeslee to continue to do both, which she said would have to be \$36,000/year. Bendoraitis added that the new Lebanon Senior Center will also have to be included eventually. The board and Ms. Blakeslee agreed to add a re-opener clause to the contract to be able to adjust the cost of adding the new property to contract.

*Motion was made by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to re-new the mowing contract with S&J Lawncare for a two-year contract at the rate of \$36,000/year, for both cemetery and town properties with a re-opener clause to allow both parties to negotiate the added cost of mowing the new Lebanon Senior Center.*

*Vote: Yes, (Okonuk/Bendoraitis; Blakeslee abstained)*

- 5.5 Replacement of carpet at the Community Center  
Okonuk received three bids to replace the carpet and padding in the upstairs of the Community Center.  
Williams Flooring of Lebanon: \$5,460.99  
Michaud Flooring of Willimantic: \$5,400  
The Leader Store of Taftville: \$6,969  
It was recommended by the First Selectman that the contract be awarded to Williams Flooring inasmuch as the bid is only \$59.00 higher than the low bid and this contractor is a Lebanon Business that has provided excellent service to the Town in the past.  
*Motion by Bendoraitis, seconded by Blakeslee to award the contract to Williams Flooring in the amount of \$5,460.99.*  
*Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

## 6.0 New Business

- 6.1 Resignations from Committees/Commissions.

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to accept the resignation of Chuck Harrelson from the Solid Waste Commission:*

*Vote: Yes, (Okonuk/Bendoraitis).*

6.2 Appointments/Re-Appointments to Committees/Commissions.

Solid Waste Commission:

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to appoint Kara Fishman as a Regular Member of the Solid Waste Commission to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Cheryl Wheaton, for a term to expire on 2/01/2012, as recommended by the Commission.*

*Vote: Yes, (Unanimous).*

Economic Development Commission (Alternate)

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to appoint Chris Warner as a Alternate Member of the Solid Waste Commission, for a term to expire on 2/01/1012, as recommended by the Commission.*

*Vote: Yes, (Unanimous)*

6.3 Repairs to the Jonathan Trumbull Jr. House Museum

*NO ACTION until source of funding is approved.*

*Motion by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to skip to 6.5: Town Meeting.*

*Vote: Yes, (Unanimous)*

6.5 Calling a Special Town Meeting for December 15, 2008.

*Moved by Blakeslee, seconded by Okonuk, to call a Special Town Meeting for December 15, 2008 at 7:30PM. (See attached agenda.)*

*Vote: Yes, (Unanimous).*

6.4 Electrical quotes are not yet available for the generator project at the Town Garage; will bring back to future meeting.

6.6 The Selectmen set Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 9AM to review Capital – Non-Recurring requests.

6.7 The Selectmen set Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 9AM to begin budget preparations for FY 2010.

6.8 Board of Finance members joined the Selectmen. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss FY 2010 budget preparations including budget hearing schedules, letters of notification to departments/commissions and the concern of both Selectmen and Finance members re the economy and the impact of same on the town budget for next year. It was the consensus of those present that town and school budgets must be prepared and submitted with the intention of keeping budgets flat. Given the present re-valuation as well as the strained economy, all agreed it was essential that operating budgets be kept as low as possible, thus the strong recommendation that budgets be presented the same as in '09. Finance members also suggested meeting with school administration to discuss the flat recommendation. Tom Valone will prepare notices with a cover letter and send out this week.

*Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to add item 6.9 to the agenda, "D&A upon the extension request from the Board of Tax Review.*

*Vote: ( Yes, unanimous)*

6.9 Chairman T. Alan Palmer on behalf of the Board of Assessment Appeals has requested a one-month extension to conduct the appeals hearings and complete their paperwork. The new deadline would be May 30, 2009. This extension is necessitated by the current Re-valuation that will increase the number of hearings beyond that of a normal year. The Selectmen questioned the lateness of the new deadline given the fact that the town budget goes to Town Meeting the first Monday in May. Will discuss with Finance.

*NO ACTION*

7.0 Financial Report Update

7.1 Monthly expenditures were reviewed – Legal and Selectmen are the only budgets that need watching. Finance has been made aware that Legal funds will not be adequate. The slight overage YTD in the salary line-item for wages in Selectmen is due to the payout of the Floating Clerk that came out of the July payroll.

7.2 TIP Funds FY '09 were discussed.  
*NO ACTION*

7.3 Capital Non-Recurring Expenses will be discussed at a meeting next week.  
*NO ACTION*

8.0 Tax Refunds

*Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Blakeslee to approve the following tax refunds, without interest:*

Robert Damoski           \$94.52

Betty Wengloski         \$ 8.87

*Vote: (Yes, unanimous)*

9.0 Executive Session

Selectmen went into Executive Session at 8:23 PM for the purpose of discussing a Public Works Grievance.

Selectmen returned to Regular Session at 8:33 PM.

*Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Blakeslee to direct the First Selectman to decline the proposed resolution to the grievance filed by James Smith.*

*Vote: (Yes, unanimous)*

10.0 Adjournment

*Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Blakeslee to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 PM.*

*Vote: (Yes, unanimous)*

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce R. Okonuk  
First Selectman