

Board of Selectmen

**REGULAR MEETING**

Town Hall

February 6, 2007 - 6:00 PM

**MINUTES**

**1.0** The Regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:00 PM by First Selectman Joyce Okonuk. In attendance were Selectman John Bendoraitis, Selectman Russ Blakeslee and Administrative Assistant Mary Ellen Wieczorek. Audience: 14.

**2.0 Minutes**

**2.1** Moved by Blakeslee, seconded by Bendoraitis to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2006 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**2.2** Blakeslee requested the following changes to the minutes of the January 2, 2007 Regular meeting:

Item 2.2, page 2, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence corrected to: The Officer told Eskedal he (and the friends) **were** (not was) in violation of the sign.

Item 5.7, 4<sup>th</sup> sentence: change wording from *buildable lot* to *buildable square*.

Moved by Blakeslee, seconded by Okonuk to approve the minutes of January 2, 2007 Board of Selectmen Regular meeting as amended. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**2.3** Moved by Blakeslee, seconded by Bendoraitis to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2007 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**2.4** Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Blakeslee to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2007 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**2.5** Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Blakeslee to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2007 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**2.6** Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2007 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**2.7** Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Blakeslee to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2007 Special meeting. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**2.8** Moved by Blakeslee, seconded by Okonuk to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2007 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**2.9** Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Blakeslee to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2007 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Blakeslee to adjourn the order of the meeting agenda and take up Item 5.1, Opening Bids for the Hoxie Road Bridge replacement project. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**5.1** First Selectman Okonuk told the audience there are 12 bidders. In the audience this evening is Jim Otis of Anchor Engineering. She further told the audience that the bids will be opened and recorded this evening and the documents will be presented to Anchor Engineering for review and tabulations. There will be no bid award this evening. The bids were opened and recorded as follows:

Old Colony Construction, Westbrook CT	\$248,700
D&V Morin Construction, Meriden, CT	\$416,700
CFL, Manchester, CT	\$358,686.25
PJF Construction, West Hartford, CT	\$448,170
Milton Beebee, Storrs, CT	\$216,661
Catco Construction, LLC – Bristol, CT	\$175,000
American Industries, Jewett City	\$393,752
Pondview Construction, Willington, CT	\$273,746
Nutmeg Gravel, Colchester, CT	\$484,600
New England Infrastructure, Inc., Southboro, MA	\$368,000
Schumack Construction, Clinton	\$308,880
NJR Construction, Harwinton, CT	\$315,000

Okonuk thanked all the bidders who were present and advised they would be notified once a determination had been made.

Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Blakeslee to return to the regular order of the agenda. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

### **3.0 Correspondence**

- 3.1** A letter from Josephine Kessler pertaining to the opening of Meetinghouse Road was read aloud.
- 3.2** A letter from the State DEP regarding the placement of signs on state property was read aloud.
- 3.3** A letter from Ron Cowles regarding the vote count at the last general election was read aloud.
- 3.4** A letter from the Town Clerk to the Town Committees regarding the resignation of Bert Bosse from the Board of Finance.
- 3.5** A letter from the Town Clerk regarding filling vacancies on the Board of Finance due to the resignation of Ron Bender.
- 3.6** A letter from the Recreation Commission Chair to the Board of Selectmen to consider a wage increase for the Rec Coordinator.
- 3.7** A letter from the Lebanon Conservation Commission re Open Space Funding was added to the agenda. The Commission recommends to the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance that an annual allocation of \$100,000 be made to fund land preservation.

### **4.0 Old Business**

**4.1** Okonuk reported that the motion made by Selectmen at a prior meeting to approve the wage matrix for part-time, non-union staff was not worded correctly. Okonuk recommended to the Board an amendment to Item 3.0 of the January 23, 2007 meeting to read:

(1) Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Okonuk to adopt a new experienced-based wage matrix for budgeting purposes only for non-union, part-time Town employees for FY 07-08 as shown on the attached schedule, noting that placement within the matrix is based on service time as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of each new fiscal year, with the exception of probationary employees who shall be adjusted after six months of employment. Vote: yes (Bendoraitis/Okonuk); nay: (Blakeslee). Motion carried.

(2) Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Okonuk to propose a 3% non-experienced based wage adjustment for budgeting purposes only for part-time, non-union Town employees for FY 07-08 as shown on the attached scheduled. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**4.2** DEP forwarded a letter to the Town, which was read under Item 3.1 above. Signage at state property on Brewster Pond has been put up. The order for the two town road signs was placed and signs will be installed once received. In addition, No Parking signs will be added along the section of the road between the end of the town-maintained portion down to the brook. John Okonuk told the Board that the state signs posted on state land are not in the correct location and he will meet on 2/7/07 with the state to review these locations. There was discussion about the process for opening a town closed road. Blakeslee asked Okonuk to check with the town attorney or the town planner to see if there are any categories of closed roads, such as can a road be closed seasonally, etc. John Okonuk asked the Selectmen to review the counsel's recommendations and seriously consider taking the attorney's advice. First Selectman Okonuk stated that the Board was taking the counsel's recommendations into considerations and are responding putting up the appropriate signage as recommended by counsel.

## **5.0 New Business**

**5.1** Acted upon above.

**5.2** Okonuk told the Board that in order for the town to continue to pursue the State's suggestion to join a health district, a second phase of the process must be completed for the town to be eligible for the next award of \$10,000. Proceeding with this phase does not obligate the town to join a district, but rather serves as a notification that we are still continuing to investigate options. The Board needs to authorize a Resolution this evening for the First Selectman to execute on behalf of the Town. Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to authorize the First Selectman to execute all necessary documents on behalf of the Town of Lebanon with the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health for continuing to pursue the of joining or forming a health district. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**5.3** The First Selectman has always served as Emergency Management Director (EMD) for the town. The First Selectman now recommends that a resident trained in emergency services and someone outside the Board of Selectmen be the point of contact for emergency preparedness. Okonuk recommended the appointment of Byron Lennox as the Emergency Management Director due to his extensive training and experience in emergency services and management. Byron explained his level of training and experience and has been working closely with the First Selectman to develop a properly trained emergency response team as required by the state and federal governments. Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Blakeslee to appoint Byron Lennox as the Emergency Management Director for the Town of Lebanon effective immediately. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**5.4** Byron Lennox recommends Josiah (Joe) Burnham as the Assistant Emergency Management Director. Byron told the Board that Joe has worked with him as a member of the fire department, and they have known each other for several years. Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Blakeslee to appoint Josiah Burnham as the Assistant Emergency Management Director. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**5.5** The Board received a request from the Recreation Commission to increase the Recreation Director's hourly wage from \$12.34 to \$14.34. Enes Martineau (Commission Chair) and Sandy Tremblay (Recreation Director) were present at the meeting. Enes told the Board that this was discussed at the last Recreation Commission meeting. Okonuk explained the new salary step matrix. Enes told the Board the Commission feels that Sandy has accomplished incredible success over the years and makes the same as a newly hired, experienced part-time clerk. Okonuk reviewed the new matrix and stated that the Rec Coordinator position, in the proposed matrix for budgeting purposes only, is scheduled to receive a .99 cent per hour wage adjustment, if approved by the Finance Board. Selectmen reviewed responsibility, skills, and years of service,

as they are trying to give the matrix some relativity. Russ stated that he feels at least one position was bumped too high. Sandy stated the Rec Commission is taking exception to the Director's pay increase (as proposed by the Selectmen) based on her tenure and local pay scales for rec coordinators. Enes told the Board the Rec Commission cannot "take exception", as Sandy said, because the Commission has not looked at the new matrix as a full board. Their comments are from individuals only. The request of the Commission is to recommend and put in the \$2.00 increase requested. No action.

**5.6** Members of the Recreation Commission were present to speak to the Selectmen and recommend the purchase of a 1.5 acre parcel of land located on Exeter Road (Rte. 207) behind/near the Jaspers/Subway retail area. The Economic Development Commission (EDC) will discuss this parcel tonight at their meeting as well. Bendoraitis said he understands that the parcel is zoned for business, and would like to hear what EDC has to say following their meeting. Resident Tim Thompson stated the Town should desire to keep this area adjacent to the school not zoned for business. Sandy Tremblay said that she believes the Conservation Commission is looking at the property as well and the Commissions should work together. Okonuk will contact Ed Keefe to discuss and investigate and bring back to another meeting.

**5.7** No action on the agreement between the Lebanon Volunteer Fire Department and the Town of Lebanon for Basic Life Support (BSL) and Advanced Life Support (ALS) services and billing.

**5.8** No action on the Review of Town Ordinances.

**5.9** Okonuk told the Board that final numbers are needed to complete the FY 07-08 town budgets and this process cannot be completed until Barbara Griffin returns from sick leave. No action.

**5.10** Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Okonuk to go out to bid on the lawn maintenance for all town grounds and cemeteries with the following options: (a) all town grounds only, (b) cemeteries only, and (c) town grounds and cemeteries. Vote: 2 Yes (Okonuk and Bendoraitis); 1 Abstain (Blakeslee). Motion carried.

**5.11** At the January 12<sup>th</sup> Selectmen's meeting, the Board reviewed the performance review process agreed to critique the performance review form prior to reinstituting the program. Okonuk suggested that there should be a section for goals/recommendations. Board made suggestions to the form, including Employee Feedback and Recommendations. There was discussion when to begin the reviews and a format (anniversary date of hire, January 1<sup>st</sup>, department by department). The Board agreed it would be best to begin this year by doing department by department. Blakeslee asked if reviews will be done alone. Okonuk stated employees who report to a supervisor (such as the Assessor), the supervisor would be given the form to prepare it first for discussion with the First Selectman. The review will be done with the First Selectman, the supervisor and the employee. The Board of Selectmen will meet with employees who report directly to the First Selectman (department heads). Reviews will be scheduled once this year's budget is finalized. No further action.

**5.12** Appointments/Re-Appointments to Commissions/Committees

(a) Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to reappoint Dave Scata to the Conservation Commission for a three (3) year term to expire April 1, 2010, as recommended by the Conservation Commission. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

(b) No action on the reappointment of Ray Yarmac to the Solid Waste Commission. The Selectman's office will contact the Commission and request action of the SWC on this appointment.

(c) The Selectmen's office will contact Christine Witkowski who is interested on serving on the Rails-to-Trails Committee. The R-to-T Committee has met Christine, and they recommend her appointment. The Board concurs they would like to meet Christine before her appointment. No action.

(d) Moved by Bendoraitis, seconded by Blakeslee to reappoint Mike Lambert, Stefan Szafarek and Nusie Halpine to the Rails-to-Trails Committee for three (3) year terms to expire May 5, 2010. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

**5.0 Resignations from Commissions/Committees. - NONE**

**6.0 Executive Session - NONE**

**7.0 Tax Refunds** - Moved by Okonuk, seconded by Blakeslee to approve the following tax refunds, without interest. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

Jennifer Wishart	\$156.86	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$451.61	Overpayment
Raymond Roy & Jacqueline Roy	\$40.00	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$187.73	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$195.29	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$124.72	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$159.45	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$229.90	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$229.90	Overpayment
Gerardine Bakaj	\$493.34	Assessor Adjusted Bill
Frederick or Lee Altwater	\$257.30	Assessor Adjusted Bill
Ford Motor Credit	\$197.49	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$124.72	Overpayment
Ford Motor Credit	\$111.00	Overpayment
Patricia & Richard Wielock	\$3521.13	Overpayment
Susan Roberge	\$1562.15	Overpayment

**8.0 Public Forum**

Resident Ron Cowles was told that his letter to the Selectmen was read under Item 2.0, Correspondence, although he was not in the meeting at the time it was read. Cowles asked what action would be taken on the letter. Okonuk told Mr. Cowles there was no action asked for in the letter and it was read as general correspondence. The concerns outlined in the letter involved a lengthy discussion between Mr. Cowles, the Registrar of Voters, and the Assistant Town Clerk re the election process. Discussion continued on the issue of how the election process worked and how it could be improved in the next election. In response to Mr. Cowle's question, Okonuk told him that the Registrar of Voters selects the Moderator for elections. Bendoraitis acknowledged that as the Moderator in the fall election he was responsible for the vote count and again apologized to Mr. Cowles for the error. Cowles told the Board that it the way in which he was spoken to and the "matter of fact" attitude of the Registrars during that discussion in December that continues to upset him. Mr. Cowles told the Board that the matter is in State hands, and expects that the Registrars be spoken to. Okonuk told Mr. Cowles that she can speak to the Registrars about the conversation, but she cannot discipline them, nor any other elected officials. She further explained that elected officials (Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Registrars) are independently elected and work directly for the tax payers. Okonuk assured Mr. Cowles that she would speak to them and about the conversation had with Mr. Cowles as well as reviewing safeguards to prevent this type of error from happening again. Mr. Cowles was thanked for attending and for his concerns.

**9.0** Moved by Blakeslee, seconded by Okonuk at 8:03 pm. Vote: yes. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce R. Okonuk, First Selectman

