

Board of Selectmen  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
May 1, 2012 – 5:00 PM  
Town Hall  
**MINUTES**

1.0 First Selectman Joyce Okonuk called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. Selectmen Linda Finelli and John Bendoraitis, and Administrative Assistant Patti Handy were also present. Audience: 4.

2.0 **Public Forum**

Sandra Tremblay, Recreation Coordinator and member of the Board of Education asked to speak to the Board regarding her concerns over the use of electronic communication devices (texting) during meetings. She consulted with FOIC and was told that it was illegal for board members to text each other during meetings. Tremblay requested that the Selectmen look into the matter and they agreed to take this issue up under New Business.

3.0 **Minutes**

3.1 **Motion made by Finelli, seconded by Bendoraitis to approve the minutes from the April 3, 2012 Regular Meeting, amended as follows: Item 5.1 under old business, the last sentence should read: “Finelli suggested that the LVFD put up a sign to inform residents of the ongoing use of the building, and Elliot said that he would do so.” Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

3.2 **Motion made by Finelli, seconded by Bendoraitis to approve the minutes from the April 12, 2012 Special Meeting. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

3.3 **Motion made by Finelli, seconded by Bendoraitis to approve the minutes from the April 23, 2012 Special Meeting. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

3.4 **Motion made by Finelli, seconded by Okonuk to approve the minutes from the April 26, 2012 Special Meeting, amended as follows: Under Item 6.0 regarding the wording for the non-binding advisory questions to be on the ballot for the FY 2012-13 budget as recommended by the Board of Finance, the ballot will be worded *exactly* as follows (changes in bold):**

*(2) If you feel the Board of Education budget is at an appropriate level, please skip this question; otherwise, do you feel the Board of Education budget is:*

*Too High*

*Too Low*

*(3) If you feel the General Town Government **and Capital Budget** is at an appropriate level, please skip this question; otherwise, do you feel the General Town Government **and Capital Budget** is:*

*Too High*

*Too Low*

**Vote: Yes (2), Okonuk and Finelli, Abstain (1) Bendoraitis. Motion carries.**

4.0 **Correspondence**

None

5.0 **Police Report**

5.1 The Selectmen reviewed report for the month of April and noted the increase in activity.

6.0 **New Business**

6.1 The following two bids were received for Resetting the Stone Walkway at the Jonathan Trumbull Jr. House Museum:

- Greenscapes Landscape and Construction Design, Inc. of Hebron, CT: \$1,850.00.
- Romi Masonry Construction, LLC of Norwalk, CT: \$8,730.00.

**Motion made by Bendoraitis, seconded by Okonuk to award the bid for Resetting the Stone Walkway at the Jonathan Trumbull Jr. House Museum to the apparent low bidder, Greenscapes Landscape and Construction Design, Inc. of Hebron, CT, in the amount of \$1,850.00 pending review of bid specification compliance and verification of references. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to add Item 6.1.1 to the agenda: Discuss and act upon opening bids and awarding the contract for Corn and Hay Harvesting on Town property. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.1.1** Four bids were received. Bids were solicited in two parts:

**BID A:** Planting and harvesting approximately 13 acres of corn land located at the Town owned property adjacent to the Lebanon Solid Waste Facility for a two (2) year contract. Bid shall be a lump sum price.

**BID B:** Harvesting approximately 22 acres of standing hay located at the Town owned property adjacent to the Lebanon Solid Waste Facility, harvesting standing hay located at the Lebanon Fire Safety Complex, 23 Goshen Hill Road, and harvesting approximately 6 acres of standing hay at the Lebanon Senior Center, 37R West Town Street, for a two (2) year contract. Bid shall be a lump sum price.

- Shawn McGillicuddy      **Bid A:** \$715.00/year (\$1,430.00 total)  
   **Bid B:** \$1,050.00/year (\$2,100.00 total)
- Jim McCaw                **Bid A:** No bid  
   **Bid B:** \$1,810.00 (two years)
- Jeff Cone of              **Bid A:** \$1,200.00 (two years)  
  River Plain Dairy        **Bid B:** \$1,800.00 (two years)
- James Smith of         **Bid A:** \$1,300.00/year (\$2,600.00 total)  
  Cushman Farms         **Bid B:** \$1,430.00/year (\$2,860.00 total)

Discussion followed the opening of the bids. Okonuk explained that it had come to her attention that Shawn McGillicuddy, the last successful bidder for the harvesting, had already fertilized the land for this year as he was mistakenly under the impression that his contract extended into the 2012 growing season. McGillicuddy, who was present, stated that in the past the request to bid has gone out earlier in the year; Okonuk agreed. The suggestion was raised that in light of the confusion, perhaps McGillicuddy's current contract could be extended for this year and the bid would go out again next year, at a much earlier date. Okonuk agreed to look into the legal implications of this suggestion. No action taken until further information can be obtained and will be brought to the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.

**6.2** Okonuk detailed the recent failure of the electronic septic monitoring system at the Senior Center resulting in a service call by Water and Waste Equipment with a \$310.00 service call charge, and a \$1,210.00 estimate to replace the controller. Okonuk then consulted Bob Cady who said that he could repair the controller for approximately \$100.00; the Selectmen agreed to the repair. Cady also suggested some alternatives for changing the location of the alarm monitor and the costs that would be involved. The Selectmen asked him to get an estimate for relocating the monitor and to bring it back to a future meeting. **Motion made by Bendoraitis, seconded by Finelli to authorize up to \$310.00 to Water and Waste Equipment, Inc. for the service call at the Lebanon Senior Center, funds to come from TIP – Sr. Center Septic Project. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.3** Jim Macauley provided an update on several programs currently being undertaken by the Lebanon Energy Task Force (LETf) Advisory Committee including their accomplishments and goals. In terms of percentage of sign-ups for the Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) Energy Challenge program, Lebanon is doing very well and may end up being in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> place among small towns in Connecticut. The LETf recommends that the Town consider breaking its current contract with Trans Canada as even with fees, the savings in energy costs could be substantial over the next two years by utilizing other options. Okonuk said that she will look into procedures and termination fees. The LETf's request for funding this year was turned down by the Board of Finance as the Committee was not "official." Okonuk will check into the status of Energy Committees in other towns to see what authority and funding they receive. It was suggested that Macauley provide the same presentation to the Board of Finance as they may gain an increased appreciation for what the LETf has accomplished. Macauley agreed to do so.

**6.4** The Selectmen discussed the recommendation by the Board of Finance to hire Stephen T. Hopkins as the auditor for the Annual Audit for a two-year contract for Fiscal Years ending June 30, 2012 and June 30, 2013. Okonuk stated that although she feels it is time for the Town to seek a new auditor to provide a new set of eyes on our accounting, given the fact that we are once again working with a relatively new Finance Director, this may not be the right time to make the change. The current auditor has the historical knowledge to assist the interim Finance Director as she continues to become familiar with the town accounting. With that said, Okonuk proposed the contract with Hopkins be offered for only one year which will provide a smooth transition for the current consultant, and then consider a two-year contract with a new accountant next year. All Selectmen were in agreement that as Hopkins has been the auditor for 13 years, it is time to have a “new set of eyes” doing the auditing, even though the Town has been generally satisfied with his work. Finelli agreed with the idea of a one year contract, but Bendoraitis questioned that since the bid was for two years, and the prices given were for two years, that we may have to go out to bid again for a one-year contract. He added that he feels that it is time to change the auditor, and delaying the decision will not help. He cited the state of New York who stipulates that auditors must be changed every five years. Finelli countered that as the Town has finally gotten the Finance Office in order, thanks to the two consultants, now may not be the best time for additional changes and Hopkins has 13 years of experience to back up the new consultants. Finelli added she does not want to “rock the boat.” Okonuk added that the Finance Office is in the process of adding the Capital Budget to the accounting system and that Hopkins has been very helpful in assisting with his knowledge of the Pro-Fund software. Bendoraitis feels strongly that this is a conflict of interest as Hopkins is helping to develop processes and then he will then audit later on. Okonuk stressed that there are not a lot of other resources available to assist the town and although she recognizes the need for “a new set of eyes,” she also knows the day-to-day needs of the Finance Office. Okonuk noted that all firms are very experienced with municipal accounting practices.

Three proposals were received:

- Stephen T. Hopkins, CPA, PC of Scarborough, ME: \$13,000.00 for FY 2012 and \$13,000.00 for FY 2013.
- Meyers & Company LLC of Danbury, CT: \$18,500.00 for FY 2012 and \$19,000.00 for FY 2013, including other consulting services.
- Michaud and Accavallo, CPA, LLC of New Haven, CT: \$15,000.00 for FY 2012 and \$15,450 for FY 2013, with an additional charge of \$35.00/hour to \$135.00/hour for other services.

**Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to award the contract for the Town Audit Services to the low bidder, Stephen T. Hopkins CPA, PC of Scarborough, ME, in the amount of \$13,000.00 for FY 2012, as recommended by the Board of Finance, with the condition that the contract be reduced to *one* year. If Hopkins does not accept, then the Town will go out to bid again for a one-year contract. Vote: Yes, (2) Okonuk and Finelli, No (1) Bendoraitis. Motion carries.**

**6.5** The Selectmen discussed the vacancy in the Public Works Department due to the recent resignation of Martin Clark. Okonuk noted that the budget increase for FY 2012-13 barely covers wages, and she proposed not filling the vacancy immediately to provide additional funds to help cover increases in the Highway budget. Bendoraitis questioned the amount of work to be done and how it could be managed with less staff, adding that one of the charges of the Board of Selectmen is maintaining roads and infrastructure. Okonuk added her concerns about the age of much of the equipment that may need repair or replacement during the next fiscal year. Additionally, most of the Public Works employees take vacation time during the summer which impacts the department. Finelli suggested waiting until after the Union negotiations are finalized to take action on the position; all agreed. No action.

**6.6 Motion made by Bendoraitis, seconded by Finelli to sign a Resolution for the Small Cities Program Reuse Income Plan for Lebanon. Vote: Yes, unanimous. (See attached).**

**6.7** The Selectmen discussed renewing the cleaning contract with Richard’s Floor Finish which expires on June 30, 2012. In the past the contract has been for a two year period, however, Okonuk suggested renewing at the same rate for one year, and then review again next year; all agreed. **Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to renew the contract with Richard’s Floor Finish for July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013, in the amount of \$969.23 bi-weekly for 26 weeks (\$25,200.00 for the year). Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.8** The Selectmen reviewed the bid specifications as provided by the Recreation Coordinator for lawn mowing and field maintenance for the Lebanon Recreation Department. **Motion made by Finelli, seconded by Bendoraitis to solicit bids for Lawn Mowing and Field Maintenance for the Aspinall Recreation Area and**

**Tyler Field. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.9 Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to renew the contract with Willimantic Waste for the optional two-year extension period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014 as recommended by the Solid Waste Commission. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.10** Okonuk presented a proposed increase in user fees for the Transfer Station as recommended by the Solid Waste Commission. This will require revising the present Ordinance and taking it to a Town Meeting for approval. Okonuk will revise the Ordinance with the recommended changes in user fees and bring it back to a future Selectmen's meeting for approval. No action.

**Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to add Item 6.11 to the agenda: Discuss and act upon the hiring of staff for the Community Center Pool as recommended by the Recreation Commission. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.11 Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to hire two Lifeguards, two Water Safety Instructors and one Aquatic Director at the same rates as the 2011 season: Aquatic Director - \$14.76/hour; Lifeguards - \$10.11/hour; WSI - \$11.08/hour. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to add Item 6.12 to the agenda: Discuss and act upon hiring Pyro/FX Entertainment for the Summer Dance Fest, as recommended by the Summer Dance Fest Committee. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.12 Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to authorize the hiring of PYRO/FX Entertainment Group to provide fireworks at the 2012 Summer Dance Fest and to approve the \$3,000.00 payment for the deposit as requested by the Summer Dance Fest Committee. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to add Item 6.13 to the agenda: Discuss and act upon hiring an Assessor. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.13 Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Bendoraitis to hire Thomas Tanganelli as the full-time Assessor, at a six-month probationary wage of \$33.41/hour (\$60,800.00/year); upon the successful completion of the probationary period the wage will increase to \$35.17/hour (\$64,000.00/year). Tanganelli has agreed to waive any wage increase that may be negotiated as part of the union contract for July 1, 2012 only. Vote: Yes (2), Okonuk and Bendoraitis, Abstain (1), Finelli. Motion carries.**

**Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to add Item 6.14 to the agenda: Discuss and act upon a policy on the use of electronic communication devices such as cell phones for texting by board members during meetings. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.14** The Selectmen discussed the situation that was posed by Recreation Coordinator Sandy Tremblay during Public Forum. Many voiced the opinion that they had also witnessed the use of electronic devices during meetings and all agreed that this issue should be looked into. Okonuk will conduct research with the FOIC for current practices and regulations concerning the matter and report back to the Board. No action.

## **7.0 Old Business**

**7.1** Tax Collector Joyce Hofmann was present to request approval for proposed renovations to the Tax Collector's Office. The project will consist of additional counter space and second cash drawer as Hofmann is instituting a policy of two cash drawers for improved security, a smaller safe that may be located more securely and conveniently within the office and an upgrade to the electrical circuit to reduce the frequency of "brown outs" during peak electrical draw times. The office may also need an additional data cable installed for the computers. **Motion made by Okonuk, Seconded by Finelli to approve up to \$7,500.00 for the Tax Office Renovation Project, funds to come from TIP FF&E Account # 208-520-5201. Vote: Yes (2), Okonuk and Finelli, Abstain (1), Bendoraitis. Motion carries. Note: The action must also receive approval by the Board of Finance at their next Regular Meeting.**

**8.0 Appointments/Reappointments to, and Resignations from, Boards, Commissions and Committees**

**8.1** No action.

**Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to add Item 8.1.1 to the agenda: Discuss and act upon an appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Vote: yes, unanimous.**

**8.1.1 Motion made by Bendoraitis, seconded by Finelli to appoint Alternate Zoning Board of Appeals member Keith Kersey to a full member of the ZBA to fill the vacancy that was created by the resignation of Alicia Wayland, term to expire on 11/19/2013; and to appoint Kathy Dunnett to fill Mr. Kersey's Alternate position on the Board, term to expire on 11/21/22017, as recommended by the Republican Town Committee. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**8.2 Motion made by Finelli, seconded by Okonuk to reappoint Nusie Halpine, Michael Lambert and Bruce Sievers to the Rails to Trails Committee for two years, terms to expire on 5/5/2014. Vote: Yes, unanimous.** It was also noted for the record that due to time constraints, member Laura Cascio does not wish to be reappointed when her term expires on 5/5/2012. The Selectmen expressed their appreciation for her time spent serving the Committee.

**9.0 Motion made by Bendoraitis, seconded by Finelli to approve the Tax Refunds for April 2012 as follows:**

Marceau, Gary R. & Dawn	\$2,327.20
Ellis, Richard G.	\$4.02
Szafarek, Bernice & Stefan	\$54.27

**Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**10.0 Financial Reports**

The Selectmen reviewed the monthly financial reports as provided by the Finance Office. Discussion included an update on legal expenses that Okonuk will provide to the Board of Finance.

**11.0 Motion made by Bendoraitis, seconded by Finelli to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Joyce R. Okonuk, First Selectman