

Board of Selectmen  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
January 29, 2015 – 10:00 AM  
Town Hall  
**MINUTES**

**1.0** First Selectman Joyce Okonuk called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Selectmen Linda Finelli and John Bendoraitis and Administrative Assistant Patti Handy were also present. Guests included Phil Chester, Town Planner; Dr. Meredith Metcalf of Eastern Connecticut State University (presenting); Bill Warzecha, DEEP Remediation Division; Michael Kirby, Uncas Health District and Professor Gary Robbins, UCONN. Audience: 1.

**2.0** Dr. Meredith Metcalf contacted the Selectmen in the spring of 2014 after learning from a television report in October 2013 that traces of arsenic were found in school well water. Professor Metcalf asked if she could review street files in the Building Department to locate any water tests in file. After gathering all documents from the files she solicited volunteers from the community to allow her to pull samples from their wells. Metcalf asked the Selectmen if she could present her findings and as a result this meeting was called. 100 wells tested resulted in 15% of the samples testing positive for arsenic. 7% of those samples had arsenic concentrations exceeding the EPA Drinking Water Standard (10µg/L). All residents whose wells contained unsafe levels of arsenic were notified and given information on treatment. It was noted that the Lebanon Elementary School is located in the area expected to have arsenic present based on the results of the study. The study looked at both dug (shallow) and drilled wells. Dr. Metcalf explained that arsenic can occur naturally or from man-made sources such as pesticides. The possibility of man-made arsenic coming from agriculture or the closed landfill was also studied and it was determined that the direction of outflow from these potential sources was not going towards the affected homes. Professor Gary Robbins of UCONN added that uranium and arsenic could potentially be found in every well because it occurs naturally, and that it's possible that the arsenic is linking up with other elements that could "mobilize" it via underground fissures in the bedrock. Dr. Metcalf has requested permission to have three test wells drilled on Town-owned property, along with clusters of shallow wells to facilitate a more in-depth study of the water tables. She is seeking a grant to fund the study and the Selectmen agreed to support the study and thanked Dr. Metcalf for all of the work that she has done thus far. Dr. Metcalf will also provide the Town with an informational packet that can be placed on the Town website. The First Selectman will provide a letter of support for Metcalf's grant application.

**3.0** Maggie McCaw and Cathe McCall, members of the Library Building Committee (LBC), and Berkley Nowosad, member of the Library Board of Trustees joined the meeting at 11:06 a.m. to discuss with Selectmen a draft timeline for several projects coming before the community in the spring including the Library Project, Town Charter, Budget Public Hearing and Annual Town Meeting, possible sale of town land and any associated referendums/questions associated with the budget or project process.

McCaw said that the LBC will be giving 15 informational presentations to various groups and will have two general presentations at the Library as well before they hold a Public Hearing on the project followed by a vote by the residents to accept or reject the project. Discussion followed as to the timing of the Public Hearing. Okonuk suggested holding it the week between the Budget Hearing and the Annual Town Meeting and all agreed; a tentative date of April 20<sup>th</sup> was set.

The Selectmen discussed the process required for passing the proposed Town Charter. The CT General Statutes requires a the Charter Commission to hold a Public Hearing before the Commission turns the draft Charter over to the Board of Selectmen. The BOS will then either ask for revisions to the Charter or may simply bring the Charter forward for town-wide vote. Bendoraitis and Okonuk said they are both in favor of passing a Town Charter; Finelli stated that she is still “on the fence.”

Bendoraitis said that the CGS require at least a 15% voter turnout with an affirmative vote to pass a charter. Discussion followed as to the best way to ensure an adequate voter turnout and the pros and cons of having the Charter as part of the Budget Referendum. Okonuk felt the Charter was important enough to warrant a “stand alone” election. The Library Project, however, has a fiscal impact and must be tied to the budget vote. A tentative date of June 8<sup>th</sup> was set for the referendum on the Charter. Okonuk will work on a timeline for possibly another Public Hearing, Town Meeting and eventual referendum.

The sale of Town-owned property was discussed and all agreed that the sale of the small parcels of vacant land could be approved at the Annual Town Meeting.

**4.0** Okonuk requested additional clerical support in the Selectmen’s Office for the current fiscal year and FY 2016 to assist with the retention and destruction of files. The Selectmen agreed on the purpose and discussed the most appropriate way to fund the request. It was decided to request an over expenditure from the Board of Finance. **Motion made by Bendoraitis/Finelli to authorize the First Selectman to ask the Board of Finance for an over expenditure for additional clerical support in the Selectmen’s Office for the current fiscal year and FY 2016 to assist with the retention and destruction of files as per CT General Statutes. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**5.0** **Motion made by Bendoraitis/Finelli to authorize up to \$1,941.00 for the purchase of three replacement computers for town employees as part of the planned upgrade, funds to come from TIP Account #208-00-620-6200. Vote: Yes, unanimous.** Okonuk also noted that her printer no longer functions as its software is too outdated and will no longer sync. **Motion made by Finelli/Bendoraitis to approve, as an additional upgrade, the purchase of a network-ready laser printer for the First Selectman’s Office for a cost not to exceed \$350.00, funds to come from TIP Account #208-00-620-6200. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

**6.0** Okonuk needed more information before approving the amended Fair Housing Action Plan; tabled until the next Regular Meeting.

**7.0** **Motion made by Okonuk/Bendoraitis to adjourn the meeting at 12:12 p.m. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Joyce R. Okonuk, First Selectman