

Board of Selectmen
SPECIAL MEETING
May 17, 2011 – 5:00 PM
Town Hall

MINUTES

1.0 First Selectman Joyce Okonuk called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Selectmen John Bendoraitis and Linda Finelli, and Administrative Assistant Patti Handy were also present. Audience: 4.

2.0 Resident Wayne Budney addressed the Board with a request to form a town-appointed Agriculture Commission or Committee. The Committee that would serve as a liaison between local farmers and the State Department of Ag. Finelli asked what an Ag Commission could do that our Conservation Commission and the State could not. Budney said that although our Planner/PZC Agent, Phil Chester represents the farmers' concerns through the Conservation Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission, Budney feels that the farmers could be better represented by other farmers. Bendoraitis didn't disagree with what Budney, however, he stressed that an appointed commission must have a specific objective, and at present the request seemed a bit "nebulous". Bendoraitis suggested farmers form an Ag Advisory Group on their own, thereby not restricting themselves to the rules and statutes that apply to all town-appointed commissions. Okonuk agreed, emphasizing that establishing a town-appointed commission would hamper the members' ability to act on issues/complaints in a prompt manner. Discussion followed. Budney used Woodstock as an example of a town where the Commission organizes farm-oriented activities to promote agriculture and assisted in the passing of a Right to Farm Ordinance. They also investigate complaints and mitigate on behalf of the farmers. The Selectmen agreed that while the concept that Budney proposed is "right on," making it a town-appointed entity would not benefit anyone. Budney relented and said that he would investigate it further and consider all that the Selectmen had said.

3.0 Due to budget constraints and the need for all salary funds in the Assessor's budget to be used to hire a full-time Assessor, the full-time Assistant Assessor position has been eliminated and the employee has been laid off. To codify this process, the Selectmen wished to move the action. **Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to approve the elimination of the full-time position of Assistant Assessor as of May 6, 2011. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

4.0 The Selectmen reviewed the job description and the employment ad for the position of full-time Assessor. Minor revisions were made. **Motion made by Bendoraitis, seconded by Finelli to advertise the position of full-time Assessor for the Town of Lebanon referencing the revised job description. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

5.0 Phil Chester, Town Planner requested the Selectmen recommend bringing to Town Meeting the use of Open Space funds from the Capital Reserve account to assist with the State Department of Agriculture's preservation of the McCaw property on Trumbull Highway. Chester said that with the funds approved in the budget for FY 2011-12, there would be just enough to cover the Town's share of \$1,000 per acre in matching funds to the State's share of \$3,000 per acre to purchase the McCaw property. The Selectmen discussed the process required to bring this to Town Meeting, and decided that it first needs to go before the Board of Finance. **Motion made by Bendoraitis, seconded by Finelli to earmark the available Open Space Funds in FY 2011-12 for the purpose of the preservation of the McCaw property on Trumbull Highway. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

6.0 **Motion made by Okonuk, seconded by Finelli to recommend to Town Meeting the acceptance of a \$50,000.00 Village Center Visioning and Revitalization Grant from the CT Trust for Historic Preservation, for the purpose of conducting an economic development study/plan for the town center. Vote: Yes, unanimous.**

7.0 **Motion made by Finelli, seconded by Bendoraitis to move into executive session at 6:00 pm to discuss potential cemetery land negotiations with Cemetery Commission. Vote: Yes, unanimous.** Cemetery Commission Chairman Howard Wayland and Planner Phil Chester were invited into Executive Session.

Selectmen returned to regular session at 6:20 pm. No action taken.

8.0 **Moved by Finelli, seconded by Bendoraitis to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 pm. Vote: Yes, unanimous**

Respectfully Submitted,



Joyce R. Okonuk
First Selectman