

Special Town Meeting March 5, 2012

MINUTES

A special town meeting of the electors and those qualified to vote at the town meetings of the Town of Lebanon was held on Monday, March 5, 2012 in the Lyman Memorial High School Auditorium, 917 Exeter Road, (Route 207) Lebanon, Connecticut. Audience: 43

First Selectman Joyce Okonuk called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

First Selectman Okonuk then called for nominations for moderator.

Moved by Linda Finelli, seconded by Alicia Wayland, to appoint Al Vertefeulle as moderator. Vote called – Motion passed

Moved by Alicia Wayland, seconded by Oliver Manning to waive the reading of the call of the meeting. Vote called-motion passed

Moved by John Bendoraitis, seconded by Jason Huling to bring item 1 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon a Resolution authorizing the Registrar of Voters to designate the Lebanon Fire Safety Complex at 23 Goshen Hill Road, Lebanon as the single polling station for all general and special elections for the 47th and 48th Legislative Districts.”*

Discussion: Mary Beth Yarmac, Registrar of Voters, spoke to item 1 as follows. The Town has had one voting district, the 139th. Redistricting by Legislative Committee, based on the 2010 Census, has split the Town into two Legislative Districts, the 47th and 48th. Town Meeting approval is required to have a single polling station for the 47th and 48th Legislative Districts.

Moderator Vertefeulle called the question:
Vote called – item 1 passed

(A copy of this Resolution follows these minutes)

Moved by Joyce Okonuk, seconded by Linda Finelli to bring item 2 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon releasing fifteen thousand dollars and no cents (\$15,000.00) from Capital Reserve Acct. #220-900-5469 (Open Space Fund) for the purpose of preserving Beltane Farm, a 22-acre property at 59 Taylor Bridge Road as part of the match for the Connecticut Department of Agriculture Community Farms Preservation Program.”*

Discussion: Phil Chester, Town Planner, spoke to the question as follows. Beltane Farm produces and sells raw and pasteurized goat milk, and goat cheese products. The preservation cost of \$120,000 is being met by the State Department of Agriculture’s Farmland Preservation Program and the Connecticut Farmland Trust. A 25% match of the funds is required by the easement, and the Department of Agriculture has agreed to split the \$30,000 match with the Town. The Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen have approved this request.

Moderator Vertefeulle called the question:
Vote called – item 2 passed

Moved by Jan Van Woerkom, seconded by Jaclyn Sinkewicz to bring item 3 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon abolishing the Conservation Commission and adopting An Ordinance Creating the Conservation and Agriculture Commission.”*

Discussion: Phil Chester, Town Planner, spoke to the question as follows. The Conservation Commission was established 40 years ago by Town Meeting to inventory natural resources and open space land, and manage conservation easements, as prescribed by General Statutes. The commission has also been a leading force in spearheading the Town's commitment to agriculture, and spends the majority of their time working on improving agricultural viability in town. In 2010, legislation was established to allow towns to form Agricultural Councils or Commission and about 12 of these have been formed. The towns of Columbia and Franklin have chosen to combine their Conservation Commission with an Agricultural Commission. At their December 5, 2011 meeting Lebanon's Conservation Commission voted unanimously to recommend the adoption of a combined Conservation and Agriculture Commission. The charge of this Commission would be as described by the proposed Ordinance. Because the existing Conservation Commission will be abolished, members of the current commission will be required to apply for membership on the Conservation and Agriculture Commission, if they so desire.

A copy of this Ordinance follows these minutes

Moderator Vertefeuille called the question:
Vote called – item 3 passed

Moved by Alicia Wayland, seconded by Linda Finelli to bring item 4 to the floor. *“consider and act upon revising the Library Building Committee to include nine (9) members, three (3) of whom must include two (2) members of the Jonathan Trumbull Board of Trustees and the Library Director.”*

Discussion: First Selectman Joyce Okonuk stated that the Library Building Committee was formed by Town Meeting January 11, 2011. At the May 2, 2011 Annual Town Meeting, the Board of Selectmen received authorization to appoint seven members to the Library Building Committee. Alicia Wayland stated that it is a requirement of State Grants for this project that the committee membership is to include two Library Board of Trustee members, and the Library Director. Therefore, the request is for two additional committee members. Jan VanWoerkem stated that the question as written was confusing.

Moved by Jan Van Woerkom, seconded by Jason Huling to amend item 1 to read *“consider and act upon revising the Library Building Committee to include nine (9) members, three (3) of which must include the Library Director and (2) members of the Jonathan Trumbull Board of Trustees.”*

Moderator Vertefeuille called the question:
Vote called – motion passed

Moderator Vertefeuille called question 4 as amended.
Vote called – item 4 passed

Moved by Jan Woerkom, seconded by Oliver Manning to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. Vote called motion passed

Respectfully submitted,

Susan C. Coutu
Town Clerk