



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

Office of the Selectmen

MINUTES MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN Monday, July 21, 2014 – 6:30 p.m. Town Hall Conference Room

Present: Edward B. St. John, First Selectman
Elaine M. Strobel, Selectman
Ralph J. Barra, Selectman

Also Present: Attorney Robert Smith
Beverly Dasonville
Polly Wilson
Barbara Whitaker, Recording Clerk
Bill Bittar, Reporter – Republican American
Marjorie Needham, Reporter – Bee Intelligencer

Call to Order with Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by the First Selectman with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes of July 7, 2014 Meeting

Selectman Barra MOTIONED to approve the minutes of the above-mentioned meeting, SECONDED by Selectman Strobel. Unanimous approval.

Selectman Strobel MOTIONED to approve the appointment of Kenneth W. Heidkamp (R), 553 King Street as an alternate member of the Board of Finance – term from July 16, 2014 through July 16, 2016 SECONDED by Selectman Barra. Unanimous approval.

First Selectman St. John MOTIONED to approve the appointment of James G. Crocicchia (R), 546 Breakneck Hill Road as a member of the Land Preservation and Open Space Committee – term from July 17, 2014 through July 17, 2015 SECONDED by Selectman Strobel. Unanimous approval.

First Selectman St. John MOTIONED to approve the appointment of Robert J Jokubaitis (R), 167 Artillery Road as a member of the Land Preservation and Open Space Committee – term from July 17, 2014 through July 17, 2015 SECONDED by Selectman Strobel.

Discussion and Consideration

Dog Park Update – Beverly Dasonville

Beverly Dasonville stated to the Board that she now has nine members on the Dog Park Committee. Mrs. Dasonville said that Ed Bioski's daughter wants to donate land. She said that she knows that there are issues that might prohibit that. A fundraiser had to be cancelled because it was graduation and confirmation week. This is postponed to

October. They will be part of the Quassy 5K charity and will be known as "Strut your Mutt". They are attempting to become a 501(C)3. They have to have a piece of land in order to acquire this status. Mrs. Dassonville said that she is approached daily by residents who want to contribute to making the dog park.

Mrs. Dassonville stated that "A dog park isn't just a dog park, the parks are organized and are not noisy". She compared it to a playground for children where you meet other dog owners and the dogs get to play together. It's a community park. She said that there is so much for the kids (soccer fields).

Mrs. Dassonville stated they are looking for a big area (somewhere between 5 and 10 acres). Newtown's dog park is 2 acres and it is small. The area would need to be fenced in. Beverly said that she was advised to call someone at Timex to have them become corporate sponsors. She can't get a price on the fence because the installer needs to see the property.

Selectman Strobel stated that meets with Tax Collector and Dana every April to assess and review delinquent tax issues. Selectman Strobel said that Mr. Bioski owes taxes and asked Mrs. Dassonville if he going to pay back the taxes and then donate the land. Mrs. Dassonville said that Mr. Bioski is looking for a relief for the taxes. Mrs. Strobel said that the town would take a loss of \$80,000. Mrs. Dassonville said that he (Mr. Bioski) needs a break on his property.

Selectman Barra said that this would take a property off of the tax rolls; and that the Town would lose revenue.

First Selectman St. John said that the Bioski's did come in to see him, and he wasn't sure of which parcel of land they were talking about, because there are two, and one of those is on wetlands. First Selectman St. John said that originally when they spoke there was a discussion of "tax forgiveness", but he doesn't know the specifics of the financial obligation. The Bioski's told the First Selectman that the property value is much more than what is owed. In that case they would have to have it appraised, and then the purchase would have to go to a Town meeting. He never received a proposal on what would be done. The First Selectman suggested that Mrs. Dassonville meet with the Bioski's to see what they have in mind. The First Selectman added that until the Bioski's present what they are proposing he feels that other properties should be looked at. Selectman Barra said that he is concerned with putting a dog park in a residential area. Mrs. Dassonville feels that the area is too close to I-84 and that the dogs would be frightened.

Mrs. Dassonville mentioned the property that the Town owns on Shadduck Road. The First Selectman said that that property is in preservation and he doesn't believe that land could be used for a dog park. Mrs. Dassonville said that she sees people letting their dogs run on a beautiful piece of town property. The First Selectman said that those residents would be subject to the leash ordinance and could be fined if they are caught.

The First Selectman said that he feels that the thought process should be more permanent and that arrangements should be made for facilities.

Selectman Strobel asked if there should be water fountains at the dog park. Mrs. Dassonville said that they would bring in their own money and added that Chris Kelsey, Assessor said that there would be no additional insurance cost to the Town.

The First Selectman encouraged Mrs. Dassonville to speak with the officials at Timex.

Mrs. Dassonville added that they don't need a big parking lot. When she goes to Southbury Dog Park, it's very tranquil. Southbury's Dog Park is located at the Quarry (O&G's property, they still own it). It is 14 acres. The only restriction is that there is no advertisement at all. Mrs. Dassonville said that she would gain 501(C)3 status by the fall. The First Selectman said that he wanted there to be an understanding is that this isn't a permanent use of the town property, but could be used as a dog park for as long as the property can be used for that purpose. The First Selectman added that the Town is struggling to maintain the parks they have now, the maintenance would have to come from another source (fencing, mowing, etc.) The First Selectman said that the Town can help in some areas, but the Town is struggling. The First Selectman said that the Town can carry the insurance.

Approval of Teamsters Contract

The First Selectman MOTIONED to approve the Teamster's contract, SECONDED by Selectman Barra. Unanimous approval. The Board of Selectmen had no questions for the town Attorney.

Attorney Smith stated that the Teamsters agreed to a .75 a year raise over the three year term of the contract. This is between 7.3% and 7.5% total over the life of the contract. It's roughly 2.5% a year. The teamsters gave a savings on the anthem plan. New hires will go into defined contribution plan without a bonus. Elimination of custodial position (the town is able to contract out now) versus paying an employee with benefits.

Approval of Supervisor's Contract

First Selectman MOTIONED to approve the Supervisor's Contract, SECONDED by Selectman Strobel.

Attorney Smith said that the Supervisor's did an extension of contract last year and agreed to a zero percent increase, and a 2.5% increase of over the rest of the term. They are increasing their pension contribution to 4.1%. net pay increase of 6.3% over the years. Attorney Smith said that the Supervisor's agreed to HSA and defined contribution plan. Their co-pays are now going to be 14% by the end of the contract.

Marjorie Needham said that she encourages the Town to use non-sexist remarks in its contracts. The First Selectman said that the Labor Attorney would so note.

Attorney Smith said that the Police and the Clerk's contracts are still outstanding.

Mrs. Needham asked how the Town of Middlebury Public Works employee's salaries are compare to similar towns. Attorney Smith said that the Southbury Public Works increase was .50 for three years, but their pay scale is lower. Our pay scale is higher. We have different positions, and the employees do more. They have one classification of operators rolled into one as the other towns have laborers, truck drivers, etc. First Selectman St. John added that when you have to meet all of those requirements to get the position (up front) because the classifications are rolled into one.

Adjournment

Selectman Strobel MOTIONED to adjourn, SECONDED by Selectman Barra. Unanimous approval.

These minutes are submitted subject to approval this 23rd day of July 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Whitaker

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Recording Clerk