

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – July 21, 2020, SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES:

(Note: This is a virtual meeting and the recording of the meeting is on the Town website at

<https://www.barkhamsted.us/board-selectmen/minutes/board-selectmen-virtual-meeting-recording-3>

Meeting called to order at 7:43 PM. Present were First Selectman Don Stein and Selectmen Ray Pech and Nick Lukiwsky. Holly Krouse, Town Clerk was also present.

DELEGATIONS: No delegations were present.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments were made.

MOTION: A motion was made by Ray Pech, seconded by Nick Lukiwsky, and passed unanimously, to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2020, meeting, with the following correction: in the last full paragraph of the minutes, delete “An amendment to the above motion” and insert “A motion”.

MOTION: A motion was made by Nick Lukiwsky, seconded by Ray Pech, and passed unanimously to approve the following Tax Refunds:

\$ 268.12	Lena Hassinger	refund
\$ 17.77	MaryKate Terzini	refund
\$ 29.08	Duane C. Blische 2 nd	refund

DISCUSSION: The Selectmen reviewed the General Government budget expenditures through June 30, 2020, which includes all expenditures other than any additional, late invoices received for expenditures that were incurred during the current fiscal year. Because of the acceleration of some highway department projects and some late legal bills, the final total before appropriate application of Town Aid Road to Highway Department expenses is about \$6,500 over budget. With the use of the TAR funds, the General Government budget will show a small surplus.

DISCUSSION: The Selectmen briefly discussed steps that may be taken relative to re-opening Town Hall and the Town Garage to the public, but the First Selectmen stated that there was still not a firm plan since the next few weeks are critical as to what may be feasible. If the positive trend in infection rate continues, re-opening phases could take place in August, but if there is a spike in cases, the re-opening will be done quite slowly. The Town will await guidance from the State, although Town Halls in our region are starting to re-open. However, we have not received any complaints about the process in place now with the doorbell and outside service.

DISCUSSION: Don Stein informed the Selectmen that he had received a letter from Scott Hoskins regarding the sightline at the intersection of Knob Hill Road and Route 44. The Town is responsible for creating appropriate sight lines where Town roads intersect with State roads, and apparently this was

not done properly when the road was built 20+ years ago. Don Stein and Rich Novak will look at the intersection to determine appropriate actions to make it safer.

MOTION: A motion was made by Nick Lukiwsky, seconded by Ray Pech, and passed unanimously to appoint Steve Blackburn as a full member of the Board of Assessment Appeals and to appoint Michael Stewart as an alternate to the BAA. This request was made by Rob Brainard, the chair of the BAA as a result of Tom Palmer moving out of town.

DISCUSSION: The Selectmen discussed the revised State program for STEAP grants (Small Town Economic Assistance Program), the application for which is due at noon on August 14. The recently-announced funding is limited to \$128,500 per town with the requirement that the Town provide matching funds, although the percentage of match is not defined. In addition, in-kind effort does not count as a match, so town funds would have to be spent on contractors or materials. The Barkhamsted Historical Society and the Stanclift Cove Authority had expressed interest in grant possibilities, but since both organizations are independent of the town, it was decided that it was not appropriate at this time to invest Town funds in those groups. In addition, the Selectmen discussed whether there were capital projects eligible for this grant that would benefit the school in light of the COVID-19 situation. Don Stein took the action to talk to Jim Agostine, Superintendent, about that possibility. (Note: Don and Jim talked after the meeting and there were no projects identified for the school that would qualify). The two Town projects that were discussed for the STEAP funding were the riverbank restoration that is needed on the Farmington River north of the Little League fields or the reconstruction of Wallens Hill Road between Old North Road and Route 20. The Selectmen preferred the riverbank project as being necessary to prevent future potential problems with W. River Road caving in if the bank gives way. Don Stein will proceed with applying for that project to offset the cost of \$150-175,000 by the amount of the grant, and will review it with the other Selectmen at the BOS meeting on August 11, which is prior to the due date. Wallens Hill Road is the next priority for major reconstruction and will be worked into the road budget for FY '21-22.

DISCUSSION: Don Stein informed the Selectmen that he had received numerous complaints about the new streetlights that Eversource installed in Riverton, which are extremely bright and intrusive to the residents' homes. He is working with the Eversource reps to determine if there are alternate solutions and has asked Eversource to turn off the lights through Labor Day while the possibilities are analyzed. At this time, the lights that are there are the only decorative ones available and whether they can be modified is unknown. One possibility is that the Town purchase the light poles and modify the lights, but Eversource has not provided a price for that purchase. More information will hopefully be available before the next Selectmen's meeting.

DISCUSSION: Don Stein informed the Selectmen that MIRA, the quasi-public agency that disposes of municipal trash in a waste-to-energy facility in Hartford is evaluating options for how to handle the trash (including that from RRDD #1 and its 3 member towns). The facility is quite close to its end-of-life and there was an announcement that the organization may have to start shipping waste out-of-state, which is in opposition to the State's Solid Waste Management plan. Nick Lukiwsky had asked the question as to whether there were alternate options after he had seen that Roxbury was considering leaving MIRA and going to the Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority, which uses the Wheelabrator plant in Bridgeport. That probably would not be an economic solution for RRDD due to the distances involved, the age of that facility also, plus there is no insight as to whether the 11,000 tons per year of waste

generated by the RRDD towns would be accepted at that facility. Don reported that MIRA is still evaluating options and will be working with the CT DEEP solid waste group to come up with the most economical and environmentally sound approach to resolving this problem.

MOTION: A motion was made by Ray Pech, seconded by Nick Lukiwsky, and passed unanimously, to authorize the First Selectman to sign the contract with the State for the Affordable Housing Plan grant awarded to the Town. The Town is required to adopt an Affordable Housing Plan every 5 years and the plan is to use this funding and the funding awarded to other towns in the region in an effort to collaborate on plans for each of the participating towns. The Northwest Hills Council of Governments will hire a consultant to do the overall work and then to prepare the individual town's plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM on a motion by Ray Pech, seconded by Nick Lukiwsky.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald S. Stein
First Selectman

*The meeting scheduled for July 28 is canceled.
The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be on August 11 at 7:00PM.*