

TOWN OF DURHAM

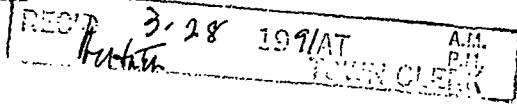


Office of the First Selectman

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Maryann P. Boord
First Selectman

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING March 21, 1991

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Durham Town Hall by First Selectman Maryann P. Boord; Board members present: Francis E. Korn, Gladys B. Lavine.

Karen Avitabile, The Middletown Press reporter, and Linda Loranger, The Hartford Courant reporter were present, as were others as noted within the minutes.

Budgetary Concerns

1. #4521 Landfill Water Co. MOTION M. BOORD, SECOND F. KORN, TO APPROVE \$700 FOR THE WATER CO. (Bd. of Finance had approved \$800, which is \$100 more than previous years; but because Middlefield budgeted \$700 for next FY, and we pay the expenses equally, M. Boord wished to have OUR amount be the same as Middlefield's.) MOTION APPROVED WITH THREE AYES.

2. #2518 Insurance M. Boord reported that the Town will be receiving a \$9,000 credit against next year's premium for CIRMA's liability, auto, and property insurance. MOTION M. BOORD, SECOND F. KORN, TO APPROVE \$372,572; 3 AYES.

Insurance Waiver

J. Muraca has advised Mrs. Boord that Ron Anelli of Anelli Home Improvements, doing work at the ambulance building, has a minimum liability insurance of \$500,000 and auto \$40,000. A waiver is being requested because he will have only his pick up on town property; coverage is low because his wife has a sports car and additional insurance is too expensive; the job term is approximately 1 to 1-1/2 weeks; he is working alone at the job, which consists of building 1/2 a wall. MOTION G. LAVINE, SECOND F. KORN, TO GRANT A WAIVER OF INSURANCE TO \$500,000; 3 AYES.

Roads

It was agreeable to the entire Board of Selectmen that Thomas Fenton, Town Engineer, and Geoffrey Colegrove, Town Planner, prepare and bring forward a list of town roads of quasi stature, noting the length of the road, number of residents, cost of improvements, and amounts of probable cost sharing.

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Resignation/appointment

The Board of Selectmen accepted, with appreciation, the resignation of James McLaughlin from the CT Valley Tourism Commission (term to expire June 30, 1991). He is expecting to do some work for the commission and felt it could be conflict of interest if he continued his membership.

MOTION M. BOORD, SECOND F. KORN, TO APPOINT LEONARD J. BAGINSKI TO FILL THE UNEXPIRED TERM OF JAMES MCLAUGHLIN ON THE CT VALLEY TOURISM COMMISSION; SAID TERM TO EXPIRE JUNE 30, 1991; 3 AYES.

Special Town Meeting

MOTION M. BOORD, SECOND F. KORN, TO CALL A SPECIAL TOWN MEETING FOR MONDAY, APRIL 29, 1991, 8 P.M. IN THE HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEALING WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

1. TRANSFERRING FUNDS FOR THE PURCHASE OF A BACKHOE;
2. APPROVAL OF THE TOWN REPORT;
3. ASSESSOR'S MAPPING RESERVE TRANSFER OF FUNDS.

MOTION APPROVED WITH THREE AYES.

Additional Appointment Considerations

Discussion of appointments to the Durham Housing Partnership.

Department of Transportation Issues

M. Boord reported that she spoke with George Bell of the Department of Transportation about the speed limit on Route 79. He agrees the department may have been a bit hasty in its decision to change the posted speed limit. However, they are willing to reduce the speed limit from South End Ave. north to Route 17 to 40 mph. B/S agreed.

M. Boord also reported talking to Joy O'Connor, Department of Transportation, re the traffic concerns at Pent/Tuttle/Dunn on Route 68; will consider a "flashing light" and will move the stop ahead sign, which is awkwardly placed.

Town's Participation in CCM's Intervention in the CL&P rate increase

MOTION G. LAVINE, SECOND F. KORN, TO PAY \$300 TO SUPPORT CCM'S INTERVENTION IN THE CL&P RATE INCREASE CASE; 3 AYES.

Superfund

MOTION G. LAVINE, SECOND F. KORN, TO DECLINE ANY SUPPORT FOR REVIEW OF THE SUPERFUND PROGRAM BY THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL GROUP; 3 AYES.

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Minutes

MOTION M. BOORD, SECOND F. KORN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 7, 1991; 3 AYES.

Correspondence

1. Letter from Attorney Antin, Town Counsel, reporting that Judge Higgins found for the Field family in Field vs Historic District Commission due to non-compliance with time constraints.

2. Letter from Midstate Regional Planning Agency, offering an opportunity to apply for a 1992 Municipal Aging Grant, which would provide for wheelchair accessible vehicles for the elderly.

G. Lavine shared a complaint she received from an elderly person using the Red Cross bus. M. Boord asked G. Lavine for more details and she will discuss the problem with the Red Cross, as she is a member of its Board of Directors.

3. Thanks received from Earle Bidwell re Student Government Day.

4. January 1991 unemployment 4.2%

Public Comments

RICHARD PARMELEE:

1. He never criticizes DOT because they do their job right; and are very concerned about public safety.

2. Doesn't feel the attention given to the traffic concern on Route 68 was justified.

3. Feels the Board of Selectmen should have had public hearings before approving the application for Route 77-Scenic Road designation. (It was discussed at a Board of Selectmen's meeting.) A DOT Public Hearing is scheduled for April 1, 7 p.m. at the high school.

4. He stated he doesn't want the town to get involved in purchasing of a backhoe; he inferred criticism of the town highway department crew's ability to operate a backhoe.

5. Asked if M. Boord was keeping track of the time that the Town Engineer spent looking at the costs connected with Ridge Road. M. Boord explained these duties are part of his job; he doesn't keep a log for time spent on each project. He wondered why the Ridge Road residents don't pay for plowing their road. M. Boord reported that we have a policy of plowing certain roads during significant storms (or emergency circumstances), such as Harvey Road, Cream Pot

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Road, Ridge Road.

Selectmen's Concerns

G. LAVINE:

1. The treasurer of Hill Hollow Condo Association has spoken to her about communication problems with the town treasurer and the handling of the Hill Hollow money. Discussion. M. Boord said she has spoken to the treasurer of Hill Hollow on several occasions and so has Mr. Korn. G. Lavine said that Dora M. (the Hill Hollow treas.) must have a 1099 on the money to file their taxes. QUESTION FOR TOWN COUNSEL: WHY DO THEY FILE THE 1099 IF IT'S OUR (THE TOWN'S) ACCOUNT?

Joint Meeting with the Board of Finance

Present from the Boards: M. Boord, F. Korn, G. Lavine, M.J. Jewczyn, P. Kofsuske, R. Naples, D. Thomasson, G. Eames, B. Quinlivan.

1. M. Boord advised the Bd/Finance that the Bd/Selectmen wishes to budget \$700 for #4521 Landfill Water Co....using the same amount as Middlefield has budgeted. Costs for the Water Co. are shared equally between the towns.

2. Reduced 1991-1992 Insurance premium payment by \$9,000, due to receiving a credit from CIRMA.

3. Discussed reducing road projects: i.e., paving Allyn Brook Park parking lot can be done out of this year's budget. The firehouse parking lot paving can be budgeted half this year, half next fiscal year.

4. M. Boord asked if they were going to change their present stand on the 3% raises for staff. She feels her 5% request for raises was a thoughtful and considerate one; she can't go to the public hearing united with the Bd/Finance with 3% and stipends for others; this causes great division among employees. She also feels that the Finance's stand ties her hands to effectively negotiate the union contract.

G. Lavine stated there are no guarantees from the state -- employees are asked to stay with their present rate. M. Boord asked G. Lavine why she voted in favor of 5% raises for the Building/Health/Engineering Department and also for the children's librarian and library aides, and zero raises for all others. G. Lavine explained she thought the library increases were for additional time, not salary increases; her vote on the B/H/E budget was a mistake and if she had it to do over again, she should not have voted as she did.

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G. Eames explained that the Bd/Finance had given clerks higher raises (3%) and stipends for the professional staffing, i.e., Sanitarian, etc.

M. Boord reiterated that such inequity is divisive...this is starting to sound like merit increases and the Town of Durham is not set up to get into that type of rating. G. Lavine said we are not talking about the personalities...it's a sign of the times (to freeze salaries.) R. Naples clarified the Bd/Finance's knowledge of the value of the employees. F. Korn stressed that each of us should make our appreciation known to the employees.

F. Korn asked the Bd/Finance what happens to these raises if the union contract comes in over the 3% R. Naples said we have to deal with that when it comes.

M. Boord reported that she and M.J.Jewczyn will be the speakers at the next chamber meeting in Durham re Durham's budget.

G. Lavine asked why the #1522 (B/H/E) salaries are in one account and not lumped with support staff? Also, why is the insurance line item not broken out (#2518)? M. J. Jewczyn explained that the Board tried not to break them out so much to save space...the situation just sort of evolved to what it is now. M.J. Jewczyn further agreed to have the Board of Selectmen issue a "handout" at the Public Hearing, itemizing the DMIAAB budget.

Revaluation

The following townspeople attended this segment of the meeting; Bd/Selectmen, R. Seeton, B. LeVasseur, H. Philip, J. Gracey, J. Stahl, A. Hinman, L. Hinman, M. Mathison, Mr. and Mrs. Gorton, A. Eames, T. Woodson, D. Kellish, M. Tigner, S. Howe.

The position of the residents dissatisfied with their assessments is summarized as follows:

- a. They feel the Board of Tax Review (BOTR) was not fair;
- b. United Appraisal did a poor job of revaluing the homes on Main Street and in the Historic District, those not on Main Street but in the District, and some other antique homes outside the area;
- c. The "grade" system was used inaccurately;
- d. They asked that the depreciations be done fairly and uniformly, taking into serious consideration the traffic impact on all of Main Street.

Explanations by Town Officials are as follows:

Henry Philip, Town Assessor: The BOTR can't change assessments when

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aggrieved parties do not appeal; their recourse is to file suit against the town. The Office of Policy and Management is the state agency to address with questions of policy because they interpret the laws the legislature sets. The BOTR members are elected and empowered by law; the courts are the only avenue by which changes can occur after the BOTR finalizes its work. The Board of Selectmen has jurisdiction only over the hiring of the reval co.

"Grade" is only an estimate of cost. "Fair Market Value" is the criteria of assessment. The owner is responsible for noting what their assessment is...the "grade" judges what it would cost to rebuild new today.

The Assessor can change the 1991 assessment but not the 1990 grand list. He will, he assured the residents, deal with inaccuracies he has observed, when the 1991 list is being considered. He is not in favor of wiping out the entire reval and starting over. He noted that the BOTR can lower an assessment, but there is not enough time remaining to raise it and their authority extends until the last hearing; if they are still in session (the BOTR), they can consider new cases. A timeframe exists with a 10-day notification allowance which, at this point however, limits new cases coming forward.

Jack Stahl, Chairman; Board of Tax Review: The BOTR has two choices now: 1) leave it alone; 2) lower the assessment. They'll consider anything that's legal. The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance need a final grand list figure by April 1st for the Public Hearing on April 8th. He noted that the traffic depreciation affects the house only, not the building lot.

He added that he has said there are alot of inequities. He, too, is dissatisfied with the reval co; every company works differently. No one has complained about the "cost" of the houses except the Mansfield House on Main Street. The BOTR will return to its task of studying how best to handle the concerns raised by the residents and anyone else.

Update From The First Selectman

1. Re upcoming Capital Improvements Meeting: agreed to set a figure of \$50,000 for land acquisition, instead of \$100,000, as in the past.

2. April 1, 1991, 7 p.m. in the high school cafeteria is the Scenic Road hearing, presented by the state.

3. Next DPUC hearing: April 16th, 6 p.m., town hall.

4. Next NU exercise: May 11, 1991; Al Brechlin, CP Director, has requested that all three selectmen appear to show the ability to do shift changes.

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5. A hearing on the Road House Cafe was held today, at which M. Boord testified. Mary Broderick claims to be the only owner of the cafe but there was much evidence to the contrary presented.

6. M. Boord reported on her breakfast meeting with Governor Weicker: he will not take a stand on binding arbitration...we should contact our legislators; will not modify his budget proposal; will consider the mandates and their financial impact on municipalities after the legislative session closes; will look at the police situation in light of the Thomas Commission recommendations.

Adjourn

MOTION M. BOORD TO ADJOURN AT 10:30 P.M.; SECOND G. LAVINE; 3 AYES.