

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING FINAL MINUTES
MARCH 19, 2014

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 19, 2014, in the first floor conference room of Independence Hall.

Members Present: First Selectman Michael C. Tetreau, Selectman Cristin McCarthy Vahey
Members Absent: Selectman Kevin P. Kiley

Others Present: Gerry Lombardo, Gerry Speno, Stanton Lesser, Genny Reilly, Robert Mayer, Ken Placko, Jim Kennelly, Tom Flynn, Mary Hogue, UI Representatives: James Cole-Director Operations and Maintenance, Ken Bullard-Line Coordinator, David Godsen-Vegetation Management/Arborist, Soundview, Attorney Bob Lotty

1) CALL TO ORDER - First Selectman Tetreau called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. He announced that Fairfield's 375th Anniversary's Historic Town-Wide Food Drive is to be held on April 26 and 27. The Shop & Stroll into Spring event will take place on April 3 in shops around town.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Selectman McCarthy Vahey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) RECOGNITION – Recognition of Fairfield Warde High School student Annie Blumenfeld, founder of the nonprofit Wags 4 Hope. Ms. Blumenfeld could not attend the meeting since she was ill. Therefore, the recognition was postponed to a future meeting.

4) MINUTES - To consider and act upon the minutes of: Regular Meeting of March 5, 2014
Selectman McCarthy Vahey made a motion to approve the minutes. First Selectman Tetreau seconded the motion which carried 2-0.

5) UNITED ILLUMINATING – Report on United Illuminating's Vegetation Management Plan (Tree Clearing Program).

UI representatives said storms Irene and Sandy took out power lines with downed trees which disabled the State for several days. The State passed new legislation to help protect the lines. A vegetation management project begins June 1, 2014. There will be a technical session on March 27 at PURA's Offices at Liberty Square, New Britain and residents may attend or visit www.ctpura.gov.

First Selectman Tetreau asked UI to give him a list of priority circuits in town. Selectman McCarthy Vahey will keep a list in a follow-up folder. UI has a map with each year on it that would also be helpful.

Tree Warden Ken Placko briefly discussed a matter regarding a resident in the Redding Road/North Street area who complained about more trees cut down than the person was notified about. UI has resolved the matter with the resident. UI stated ground to brush

removal is 6" or less of unplanted or undesirable plantings. Ken Placko doesn't agree with the 6" removal. UI said they will not remove native mountain laurels or dogwoods.

First Selectman Tetreau asked UI to report back to him on the progress of the project and UI agreed to do so. He repeatedly expressed concern about the mechanics of the process. The project is permission based; the Town or homeowner has to agree to removal of vegetation. State roads get annual permits from the DOT for pruning and removal of brush. UI will make a list of any trees 18" in diameter or greater that they feel should be removed and seek the First Selectman's approval of that list. UI said the State has an agreement with the Town and DOT for trees on certain streets that the town is to maintain. Anyone whose property abuts the tree will get notified when UI will be in the neighborhood. Work planners will visit each resident to discuss this. If residents are not home, UI will leave a letter that they stopped by and with a contact phone number. UI would confirm all removals and consents before work is performed and meet and review with the state, local tree warden and First Selectman.

Trees stumps are left after removal. UI will take away the tree within a week and clean up wood chips. Stump grinding and replanting is contracted out and is performed on a case by case basis as is replanting. UI will assess each tree as they don't want to trim too much and destroy the tree. UI is working on additional funding with a regulator for stump grinding and replanting. First Selectman Tetreau said it is a town policy to grind stumps and wants a permit used when grinding stumps. UI will give First Selectman Tetreau a list of what trees have been given permission for stump grinding.

First Selectman Tetreau is concerned about town resources since he noted the town has one tree warden and he believes this may be another unfunded mandate. He will contact Fairfield's State Delegation on this matter especially since there has been no request for additional staff in the budget for this.

Selectman McCarthy Vahey said she is concerned about the safety and well-being of residents and the benefit of trees for health and fresh air. She has heard from many residents concerned about their property values based on tree canopy streets. She asked UI to add Fairfield to the list of concerned towns. She is concerned that mature and taller trees will be removed and also noted the Merritt Parkway's look has changed because of tree removal. This program is primarily removal not trimming. It entails about 50% public and 50% private property.

UI said underground wires are too expensive. The overhead system was installed in 1899. If wires are put underground, the resident has to absorb the cost to put the wires from house to street costing \$1,500-7,000 and then pay an increased rate as well.

UI said amendments moving through the state legislature are disempowering the tree warden. The law implies giving the homeowner consent on town property and the decision to what trimming is to be done. UI said one to one tree replacement is expensive. Stump grinding and replanting each tree and can get costly. First Selectman Tetreau and Selectman McCarthy Vahey thanked UI for their report.

6) PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR – To hear an update on the Golf Cart Lease Program
Parks and Recreation Director Gerry Lombardo said the Town decided to lease carts rather than buy or outsource them in 1996. This capital lease is approved by the BOS, BOF and RTM annually. A capital Item does not have a bargain purchase price and there is no right to buy. It is written as a series of five one-year leases with a non-appropriation clause. Carts cost about \$4,500-\$4,900 and their life span is about 6-8 years. The net profit for the Town is \$200,000 each year. The Town bids every 4-5 years on the lease for new carts and then raises rates. Parks and Recreation was informed to no longer ask for waivers, so they bid each year. Town Attorney Stanton Lesser said he reviewed his program with two prior town attorneys and they view the lease program as he does.

7) FAIRTV OPERATIONAL COMMITTEE – To hear an update from the FairTV Operational Committee
Chairman James Kennelly read the package he distributed which will be posted on the website. He introduced committee members Tom Flynn and Mary Hogue. FairTv supports the town's education and government through public access. There are three videographers. Gerry Speno is the System Manager. The others cover events and the BOE.

8) MILL HILL ROOF BUILDING COMMITTEE CHARGE – To hear, consider and approve a charge for the Mill Hill Roof Building
Selectman McCarthy Vahey motioned to postpone the item to a date certain of the next regular meeting of April 2, 2014. First Selectman Tetreau seconded the motion which carried 2-0.

9) TAX COLLECTOR – To consider and act upon tax refunds as recommended by the Tax Collector in the amount recommended
Selectman McCarthy Vahey made a motion to approve the item. First Selectman Tetreau seconded the motion.

Selectman McCarthy Vahey made an amendment to remove the period at the end of the resolution, add a comma followed by \$13,569.68. First Selectman Tetreau seconded the amendment which carried 2-0.

The main motion, as amended, carried 2-0.

10) To hear, consider and act upon any communications.
There were no communications.

11) To hear, consider and act upon any other business which shall properly come before this meeting. There was no other business.

12) TOWN ATTORNEY – Private Executive Session – Pending Litigation
Selectman McCarthy Vahey made a motion to enter into private executive session pending litigation at 7:04 p.m. First Selectman seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Selectman McCarthy Vahey made a motion to adjourn private executive session at 7:11 p.m.
First Selectman Tetreau seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Selectman McCarthy Vahey made a motion to accept the Attorney's recommendation. First
Selectman Tetreau seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

13) ADJOURN - Selectman McCarthy Vahey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m.
First Selectman Michael Tetreau seconded the motion which carried 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Tesei
Recording Secretary
