

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING FINAL MINUTES
June 3, 2015

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 3, 2015, in the first floor conference room of Independence Hall.

Members Present: First Selectman Michael C. Tetreau, Selectman, Selectman Kevin P. Kiley, Selectman Sheila H. Marmion

Others Present: FairTV, Soundview, Lexi Rodriguez Kennedy and two Alzheimer's Association interns, Stuart Strelzer, Leslie Pearson, Sally Connolly, and McKinley parents, Sherri Steeneck and Rowdy, Bill McDonagh, Betsy Browne, Cinda Buchter, Mark Barnhart, Genny Reilly

1) CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Tetreau called the meeting to order at 4:38 pm.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3) WEDNESDAY'S PET – presented by Sherri Steeneck

As part of the adopt a pet program, Sherri Steeneck introduced Rowdy, a male dog who is not neutered and costs \$50. He can be picked up as soon as June 11th at the Town's Animal Shelter, 211 Richard White Way. Anyone seeking to adopt a pet can call 254-4857.

4) MINUTES-To consider and act upon the minutes of Regular Meeting of May 6, 2015
Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve the minutes. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

5) RECOGNITION of McKinley Elementary School's Odyssey of the Mind Winners
Principal Leslie Pearson introduced Sally Connolly, a parent who coached the OM team. Mrs. Connolly said two other coaches, Angi Pechman and Suzanne Graceffa along with Jen Kennelly were instrumental in bringing OM to McKinley. While they are not at today's meeting, she wanted to thank them. Mrs. Connolly described the OM Challenge which is a long-term problem for kids to solve as a team without parents' help. The team won the silver medal, placing 3rd out of 17 teams and this was the first time they ever participated.

First Selectman Tetreau thanked Mrs. Connolly, the Principal and the team. Selectman Marmion congratulated the team. She said her son is in OM at TMS and she saw McKinley perform at the finals. She said OM is a tremendous program and team work is important. Selectman Kiley also said he was very proud of the Team, the teachers, the school. He said the team demonstrating visionary thoughts and finishing so well in their first year is remarkable. First Selectman Tetreau said it's important to learn to work with others and problem solving will be invaluable throughout the students' lives. The Selectmen issued the Coach and Team certificates of congratulations.

6) APPOINTMENTS-To hear, consider and act upon the following appointments:

- a) FairTV Commission (requires unanimous vote of BOS and RTM approval)
Stuart Strelzer (U), 56 Lamplighter Lane, term 7/15 – 7/18

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve the item. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion.

Selectman Kiley congratulated Mr. Strelzer for volunteering on this important Commission. He said Mr. Strelzer has a great media background. Selectman Marmion said Mr. Strelzer has tremendous broadcast experience and the Commission will greatly benefit with him on it. First Selectman Tetreau said this is a great example of people in the community getting involved by responding to the press inquiry.

The motion carried 3-0.

b) Land Acquisition Commission

Linda J. Batchelder (U), 175 Shoreham Village Drive, term 11/13 – 11/17

(to replace Jay Adams who resigned)

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve the item. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

7) ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

To hear a report from the Alzheimer's Association, CT Chapter Lexi Rodriguez Kennedy, Special Events Director for the Fairfield County region, gave an overview on the Association, discussing numbers of people it helps and services like a helpline and research advocacy. She said the Chapter does a lot in Fairfield such as partnering with the Senior Center, Fairfield University, Fairfield Theatre Company, police and fire, convalescent homes and provides EMT training. She thanked the First Selectman for tying the first purple ribbon on a tree downtown. Different businesses have gotten involved. There will be a walk on October 4th.

First Selectman Tetreau said he is thrilled Fairfield has this resource. He asked how Fairfield residents can learn more about the Chapter or sign up for the walk. Mrs. Rodriguez Kennedy said they can go to www.alz.org/ct. Selectman Kiley thanked Mrs. Rodriguez Kennedy for bringing this information to the Board and said awareness is the first step. Selectman Marmion said that she works in geriatrics. The biggest stressor for families is where to go for help. She thanked the Chapter for all they do. She said there is a shortage of units in our community for people to go to. Selectman Kiley noted that a memory care center will be put in near the Angus near Black Rock Turnpike and may be the first one in town. First Selectman Tetreau read a proclamation declaring the month of June as Alzheimer's and Brain Health Awareness month and issued it to Mrs. Rodriguez Kennedy.

8) FAIRFIELD STORM SANDY RECOVERY COMMITTEE

To hear a final report from the Fairfield Storm Sandy Recovery Committee Mark Barnhart, Director of Economic Development and Chair of the Sandy Relief Committee, gave the Board a report on the Committee's work. He stated the names of the committee members and said Operation Hope served as a fiduciary to collect funds that went to Fairfield residents affected by Storm Sandy. The funds paid for item insurance did not cover. First Selectman Tetreau said immediately following this Storm, there was a major outpouring of volunteers and donations. Mr. Barnhart said Operation Hope had also helped people on a case by case basis, determining needs and presenting them to the Committee for approval. Mr. Barnhart said that in addition to donations, four organizations gave substantial grants for a total of \$387,790.67 to help Fairfield residents.

People living in 79 homes received about \$4900 each. Mr. Barnhart said this experience was extremely rewarding and it helped victims in a small way, but showed the Town cares and is behind them. Selectman Kiley said he is sure families are grateful. Selectman Marmion said the amount of donations, time and Fairfield residents helping their own is impressive and so was getting this committee and fund together so quickly.

9) **TOWN CLERK (requires RTM approval)**

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Town Clerk:

RESOLVED, that Michael C. Tetreau, First Selectman of the Town of Fairfield, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of the Town of Fairfield a contract with the Connecticut State Library for an Historic Documents Preservation Grant.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve the item. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion.

Town Clerk Betsy Browne brought a book of birth certificates to show the Selectmen its age and how funding is needed to restore these old documents. She said the grant is \$4000 which is less than the previous \$6000 her office had received. She will use the funding to restore the worst documents. She scans the documents and stores information on microfilm off site.

The motion carried 3-0.

10) **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (requires RTM approval)**

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Director of Community and Economic Development:

RESOLVED, that the applications received under the Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Program are hereby approved, and that the Director of Community and Economic Development is hereby designated as the municipal liaison of the Town of Fairfield for this program.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve the item. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion.

Director of Community and Economic Development Mark Barnhart discussed the Neighborhood Assistance Act which allows businesses to claim a State tax credit for cash contributions made to qualifying community programs conducted by tax exempt or municipal agencies. Agencies apply to Mr. Barnhart's department which acts as the vetting authority and is the agent to solicit applications. Mr. Barnhart's department conducts a public hearing and submits the information to the State by July 1, 2015. This past year organizations received over \$40,000 and this year can apply up to \$150,000. Mr. Barnhart said no town funds are involved. First Selectman Tetreau said he is surprised there is not more agencies on the list. Mr. Barnhart agreed. Selectman Kiley asked how this program is promoted to organizations. Mr. Barnhart said he has a mailing list, a press release is sent out and the information is put on the Economic Development's webpage.

The motion carried in 3-0.

11) **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
(requires RTM approval)**

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Director of Community and Economic Development:

RESOLVED, that the Program Year 41 (October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is hereby approved in an amount to be finalized by HUD, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Michael C. Tetreau, First Selectman of the Town of Fairfield, be, and hereby is, authorized to execute any and all necessary documents that facilitate the Town's participation in said CDBG Program.

Selectman Marmion made a motion to approve the item. Selectman Kiley seconded the motion.

Mr. Barnhart said this is a federal grant program. The Town is considered an entitlement community so it receives funds directly without applying. Mr. Barnhart has to prepare a five-year plan and an annual plan showing how the projects help address the issues in the five-year plan. He said the Town received \$460,148 this year. Projects have to relate to a national objective.

Selectman Marmion asked what the program administration funding is used for. Mr. Barnhart said a staff member in his office who administers this program and other programs like the rehab programs that his office handles. Selectman Kiley asked what the Microenterprise program is. Mr. Barnhart said there is a committee that screens applications to give small federal matching grants to help small businesses with five or less employees. The business has to serve a low to moderate population which is the national goal. This program encourages job promotion for business owners with low to moderate incomes and creates a business development initiative out of this. The matching funds are 50% or \$5000. Selectman Kiley asked if the \$60,000 for funding for walking areas were identified. Mr. Barnhart said yes and the funding is being used at Kings Highway. He wants to use funding to improve side streets off Kings Highway also.

The motion carried 3-0.

12) **TAX COLLECTOR**

To consider and approve an abatement of taxes for the 2013 Grand List taxes due July 2014 – June 2015 for 21 and 63 Durrell Drive in the total amount of \$8,398.24.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve the item. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion.

Tax Collector Cinda Buchter requested the Board abate the 2013 taxes due for low income housing at 21 and 63 Durrell Drive. Selectman Kiley asked about the history of these properties being eligible for abatement. Ms. Buchter said this is a unique situation and provided a copy of an agreement signed by the developer and the Town in 1995. Mr. Barnhart said the property

was conveyed to the builder which is unusual because usually these properties are exempt. The property owner files an annual report with Mr. Barnhart's office. Mr. Barnhart said this is in full compliance with this agreement and also recommended the Board approve the abatements.

The motion carried 3-0.

13) TAX COLLECTOR

To consider and act upon tax refunds as recommended by the Tax Collector in the amount recommended.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve the item. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion.

Selectman Marmion made an amendment to strike the period at the end of the sentence and a comma followed by \$56,808.44. Selectman Kiley seconded the amendment which carried 3-0.

The main motion, as amended, carried 3-0.

14) To hear, consider and act upon any communications.

There were no communications.

15) To hear, consider and act upon any other business which shall properly come before this meeting.

Selectman Kiley wanted to discuss GE's statement at the Board level. He wrote a letter to the Governor and discussed how Hartford's budget on increasing taxes on corporations affects the Town since GE is Fairfield's largest taxpayer. He noted that typically corporations like GE do not make statements. If the state increases taxes to corporations like GE, this measure will affect Fairfield, the State, families, and jobs. Selectman Kiley said he knows the First Selectman spoke to someone at GE and he spoke to the same person. Selectman Marmion asked both Selectmen to share their conversation with GE. First Selectman said GE's statement is not good for the Connecticut business community overall. First Selectman Tetreau said the state legislature came up with this increase at the 11th hour giving little time for GE to react which created tension and a lack of communication and resulted in a poor process. First Selectman Tetreau said he asked the person he spoke to at GE how the Town could help GE. He encouraged GE to talk to the Fairfield State Delegation and anyone else who could be of help including the Governor and for them to discuss better communications with Hartford going forward. Selectman Kiley said he had the same conversation and noted the unity tax is a hot point when he had talked to GE. GE's understanding was that there were not going to be state tax increases on corporations like GE this year. When GE learned about the State wanting to tax corporations, it was troubled by these discussions taking place. If the state budget passes, the taxes would be retroactive taking effect this year.

Selectman Kiley said he drafted a letter to the Governor and had emailed it to the Board this afternoon. Selectman Kiley read parts of the letter that stated how Connecticut should help businesses succeed and losing GE would result in real consequences. He also stated in the letter that Fairfield can't afford to lose such a large company or lose jobs. Selectman Kiley will send the Fairfield State Delegation a copy of his letter. Selectman Marmion said the other side of this issue is the State attracting new businesses.

First Selectman said the Town represents residents and the business community too. He is concerned businesses will stop expanding if the business community is not happy or is not informed.

16) ADJOURN

Selectman Kiley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 pm. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer S. Carpenter
Recording Secretary
