

Woodstock Board of Selectmen Minutes

Thursday, February 16, 2023

7:00 pm

Regular Meeting

Town Hall, Room A

1. **Call to order:** First Selectman Jay Swan called meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
 - a. **Present:** First Selectman Jay Swan, Selectman Chandler Paquette, Selectwoman Kate MacDonald
 - b. **Others Present:** Finance Director Karen Fitzpatrick, Board of Finance Chair Michael Dougherty, WVFA Chief Eric Young, Dawn Adiletta, Bill Chaput, Sandra Ahola, Ray Morgan, Toby Bishop, Jessica Weaver Boose, Megan Bard Morse, Recording Secretary Amy Monahan
2. **Approval of Minutes from February 2, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting**
 - a. Chandler Paquette made a ***Motion** to approve the Minutes from of February 2, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting as presented. ***Motion Passed Unanimously.**
3. **Board of Selectman Appointment**
 - a. Jay Swan welcomed Kate MacDonald to the Board of Selectmen. A biography introduction to Kate MacDonald will be posted on the webpage next week. Kate MacDonald was duly sworn in to service at noon today.
4. **Warn of Special Town Meeting**
 - a. Jay Swan read the following notice-

**TOWN OF WOODSTOCK
NOTICE OF ADJOURNED
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
& REFERENDUM
February 28, 2023**

A Special Town Meeting of the electors and citizens qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of Woodstock, Connecticut, will be held at Woodstock Middle School, 147B Route 169, in the Town of Woodstock, Connecticut, on February 28, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. for the following purpose:

1. **To choose a moderator.**
2. **To consider and vote upon the following Resolution:**

"Resolved that the Ordinance adopted at Adjourned Special Town Meeting on December 8, 1979 known as Proposition 46 be, and hereby is repealed".

3. **To consider and vote upon the following Resolution:**

**AMENDMENT TO THE ORDINANCE ADOPTED AT
ADJOURNED SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
"PROPOSITION 46"
Adopted: December 8, 1979
Effective: December 27, 1979
(By waiving the Ordinance for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024)**

SECTION 1 Resolved, the Town shall limit the increase in the town's combined annual budget to revenue generated by growth in the Grand List, in State and Federal assistance, and in other income, except for increases, voted upon by town meeting, necessary to cover debt service on legal obligations, court judgements against the town, State mandated programs and emergency expenditures.

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In the event of property revaluation, the actual dollar increase in the combined town budget shall be limited to the dollar amount of increase in the preceding year's budget or the average amount of increase over the preceding three years, whichever is lower.

Ordinance shall not be applicable to the combined annual budget of the Town for the fiscal year commencing on July 1, 2023. The limitations set forth in Section 1 above shall be applicable to determine the permissible increase in the combined annual budget for the Town for the fiscal year commencing on July 1, 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter.

4. To consider the following Resolution:

“RESOLVED, that the Town of Woodstock approve the expenditure in the amount of \$215,441.00 as has been recommended by the Board of Finance from the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund for the Woodstock Academy Capital Project Assessment.”

5. To consider the following resolution to repeal an Ordinance:

ORDINANCE CONCERNING FORECLOSED LAND, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 1956

“RESOLVED that the Selectmen be authorized to dispose of, in their discretion, land acquired by the Town by foreclosure of tax liens, by deed in lieu of foreclosure of tax liens, or by abandonment of highways.”

6. To consider the following resolution to Amend an Ordinance:

**AMENDMENT IV TO THE ORDINANCE CREATING
THE WOODSTOCK AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION AND LAND
ACQUISITION FUND
Adopted May 3, 1999
Effective June 4, 1999
(By amending Section 5)**

Section 5 PROCESS FOR THE DISPOSITION OF OPEN SPACE LAND

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) below, the following process shall be followed if in the event that the Board of Selectmen desires to sell, transfer, assign or otherwise dispose of a parcel of Town-owned real estate, or any interest therein:

1. The Conservation Commission shall review and report on any proposed disposition of an interest in real estate.
2. The proposed disposition shall be subject to a public hearing before the Board of Selectmen and to review by the Planning and Zoning Commission pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. 8-24.
3. The Board of Selectmen shall consider the following criteria in evaluating any proposed disposition:
 - a. Each property should be assessed individually for suitability and/or desirability of sale.
 - b. Any property conveyed shall, where appropriate, be conveyed subject to a conservation easement prohibiting development. The Conservation Easement should be transferred to an independent third party such as a land trust or similar organization.
 - c. The land shall not be conveyed to any individual solely to allow the grantee to have enough acreage to sub-divide or develop the property.
 - d. Prior to submitting any proposed disposition of land, the town shall investigate and negotiate to retain any rights to quarry, harvest, timber or any other such rights the Board of Selectmen deems to be in the best interest of the Town.
4. Disposition of any property is subject to the approval by the Annual or Special Town Meeting after due warning.

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5. Any funds received from such conveyances should be applied to the town's Open-Space Fund.

6. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the Board of Selectmen be authorized to dispose of, in their discretion, land acquired by the Town by foreclosure of tax liens, by deed in lieu of foreclosure of tax liens, or by abandonment of highways if such land consists of less than .5 acres and is not contiguous to any other town-owned land, open space land, or otherwise permanently protected land.

(b) In the event the Board of Selectmen determines that the property proposed to be sold, transferred, assigned or otherwise disposed of possesses unique characteristics or is otherwise sufficiently significant to the character of the Town or to the present and future functions of Town government, it may elect to issue a request for proposals as an alternative to a traditional bidding process. In such event, the following provisions would apply unless waived by the Board of Selectmen if they determine that such waiver is in the best interests of the Town:

1. The solicitation of requests for proposals shall identify the property being offered for sale or disposition and shall require respondents to provide a detailed description of the monetary or other consideration that they intend to pay for the property, as well as the proposed use of such property and such other information as the Board of Selectmen may request. Such solicitation shall be posted at the Town Hall, on the town website, and shall be published in a newspaper of substantial circulation within the Town.

2. The Board of Selectmen, in its sole and absolute discretion, may evaluate the responses based upon the purchase price to be paid, the proposed use of the property, the compatibility of the proposed use with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development, the experience of the proposed purchaser in similar projects and such other criteria as they may deem appropriate under the circumstances.

3. The Board of Selectmen shall be under no obligation to accept any proposals and may negotiate with one or more of the respondents as they deem necessary to further the best interests of the Town.

4. The requirements set forth in subsection (a) above requiring review by the Conservation Commission, a public hearing before the Board of Selectmen and the review by the Planning and Zoning Commission pursuant to Conn. Stat. §8-24 shall remain applicable.

5. Notwithstanding the ability of the Board of Selectmen to select a proposal for consideration and negotiation with any such respondent, the disposition of the property remains absolutely subject to the approval of the Annual or Special Town Meeting after due warning.

7. To Adjourn.

Please take note that pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Woodstock Board of Selectmen has on their own initiative, removed the foregoing items 2, 3 and 4 for submission to the voters of the Town of Woodstock by referendum to be held on March 9, 2023, from 12noon to 8:00pm at the Woodstock Town Hall. The votes will be "Yes" or "No" votes on tabulator machines. Absentee ballots are available at the Office of the Town Clerk.

Dated at Woodstock, Connecticut, this 15th day of February 2023.

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John Swan, First Selectman, Chandler Paquette, Selectman,
Kate McDonald, Selectman, Attest: Judy E. Walberg, Town Clerk

- b. All members of the Board of Selectmen signed and dated the document warning of special meeting read above.
- c. Kate MacDonald made a ***Motion** to warn of the Special Town Meeting read and documented above.
***Seconded** by Chandler Paquette. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

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5. Tax Rebates

- a. Tax rebate to Lereta LLC, in the amount of \$3580.99 for duplicate payment- paid by owner and Lereta LLC
 - i. Kate MacDonald made a ***Motion** to accept the tax rebate as presented above. *** Seconded** by Chandler Paquette. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

6. Open and Accept Sealed Bids for Audit Services

- a. Only one bid was submitted for audit services. That bid came in from our current Auditor and the Board of Selectmen is happy to continue working with the current firm as they have served our Town well.

7. Boards/Commissions Appointments and Resignations

- a. Consider the appointment of Jeremy Hughes as a Member of the Historic District Commission for the term of February 16, 2023 through December 31, 2023
- b. Consider the appointment of Toby Bishop as a Member of the Historic District Commission for the term of February 16, 2023 through December 31, 2027
- c. Consider the appointment of Bill Chaput as an Alterate Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals for the term of March 20, 2023 through December 31, 2025
 - i. Kate MacDonald made a ***Motion** to accept all Board/Commissions Appointments as presented. ***Seconded** by Chandler Paquette. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
 - ii. Mr. Bishop and Mr. Chaput were both present and the Board welcomed and thanked them for their commitment.

8. Consider a Resolution for the Creation of a Town Poet Laureate

- a. Jay Swan noted the 63 towns in Connecticut currently have a Poet Laureate. The most common term for such position is 3 years. Jay Swan would like to create this position and appoint person to the position at the next meeting.
- b. Chandler Paquette made a ***Motion** to establish the position in the Town of Woodstock. ***Seconded** by Kate MacDonald. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

9. Correspondence and Announcements

- a. There will be a workshop for learning the new GIS system currently in use for the Town of Woodstock on Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 9:30 am. This workshop is aimed at all Boards & Commissions and is open to anyone who is interested in learning about the new GIS system.
- b. Covid-19 Tests and Masks are available in the Town Hall Lobby.
- c. The State Police report the following in Woodstock for the month of January 2022. Jay Swan noted he had been contacted by Lt. Haglund, CO of Troop D, to meet and discuss our needs.
 - i. 6 Accidents
 - ii. 12 Investigations
 - iii. 0 Larceny
 - iv. 1 Burglary
 - v. 44 non-reported matters
 - vi. 1 DUI
 - vii. 1 Traffic Citation
 - viii. 2 Written Warnings

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- d. Recreation department has many upcoming programs and events. Information about recreation programs and events can be found on the Town Website at <https://www.woodstockct.gov/recreation-department/pages/recreation-programs> or you can sign up for the monthly recreation newsletter at <https://www.woodstockct.gov/recreation-department>
- e. There are new Senior Social Hour Activities scheduled in the Town Hall and will be hosted by Woodstock Academy STRIVE students. The following programs are scheduled:
 - i. Painting- March 7, 2023 at 10:30 am
 - ii. Board Games – April 21, 2023 at 10:30 am
 - iii. Bingo – May 16, 2023 at 10:30 am

10. Public Comments

- a. Jessica Weaver Boose noted that her property is marked incorrectly and asked for guidance about this issue. Jay Swan suggested that Jessica take her concern and documentation to the Assessor.
- b. Sandra Ahola is here on behalf of the Windham Tolland 4H Camp and inquiring about allocation of ARPA funds available. Jay Swan shared that the Board of Selectmen in Woodstock elected to use ARPA funds for public health and safety. He noted that there are still funds available for allocation and he is aware that the dam on camp property is a concern and aware of the proposal submitted by the Windham Tolland 4H Camp. Sandra noted that many campers are from Woodstock and that repair of this dam does impact the health and welfare of Woodstock children that attend Windham Tolland 4H Camp.
- c. Toby Bishop noted that there are new drainage concerns on Senexet Road after the building of new homes. Chandler Paquette noted that John Navarro is aware of the situation and work started on one of the homeowner's property to try to address this concern.
- d. Dawn Adiletta asked about minimum budget requirement statutes if Prop 46 is overridden. Michael Dougherty noted that minimum budget requirements are currently suspended due to COVID.

11. Adjournment

- a. Chandler Paquette made a ***Motion** to adjourn. ***Seconded** by Kate MacDonald. ***The motion passed unanimously**. The meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Amy Monahan, Recording Secretary. DISCLAIMER: These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Selectmen. Please refer to next month's meeting for approval/amendments.