

Woodstock Board of Selectmen Minutes

Thursday, January 4, 2024

4:00 pm

Regular Meeting

Town Hall, Room A

1. **Call to order:** First Selectman Jay Swan called meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
 - a. **Present:** First Selectman Jay Swan, Selectman Chandler Paquette, Selectwoman Kate McDonald
 - b. **Others Present:** Finance Director Karen Fitzpatrick, Ray Morgan, Charlene Perkins Cutler, Jessica Weaver Boose, Roger Gale, Reverend Kevin Downer, Richard Baron, Matt McCabe, Suzanne Woodward, Wayne Durst, Glen Lessig, and several other members of the public and Recording Secretary Amy Monahan.
 - c. **Jay Swan requested the following agenda changes:** Agenda item number 8 (Senior Tax Freeze does not need further discussion. The previously proposed changes in fees for building office and fire marshal need to be brought to town meeting as well as the change in appropriation amount to require town meeting for approval.
 - i. Kate McDonald made a ***Motion** to adjust the agenda item 8 by removing further discussion of the Senior Tax Freeze and replacing it with the previously proposed changes in fees for building office and fire marshal being brought to town meeting as well as the change in appropriation amount to require town meeting for approval. ***Seconded** by Chandler Paquette. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
2. **Approval of Minutes from December 7, 2023 Board of Selectmen's Meeting**
 - a. Chandler Paquette made a ***Motion** to approve the Minutes from December 7, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting as amended. ***Seconded** by Kate McDonald. ***Motion passed unanimously.**
 - i. Public comment item 3.e – needs the following correction: cross out word not to read “She feels that budget votes should be done at referendum as every taxpayer has the right to vote upon funds.”
3. **Public Comment**
 - a. Jessica Weaver Boose asked if a date was set for upcoming town meeting. She requested as a registrar to hold the meeting as early as possible due to the full schedule for her office this spring.
 - b. Charlene Perkins Cutler reiterated that there is a window of time for seniors to apply for the proposed tax freeze program supporting setting a date for town meeting as soon as possible.
 - c. Kevin Downer noted that as a member of the Committee on Aging, he is very happy and supportive of senior tax freeze as proposed.
 - d. Suzanne Woodward asked for clarification on the impact of proposed senior tax freeze. Kate McDonald explained that using the current eligible number of seniors, the impact would be \$5 increase per taxpayer for every mil increase.
 - e. Wayne Durst opposes the tax freeze as he understands it. He noted that the seniors it impacts have more than a tax problem- they have a money problem and shared that there are several programs in place for the people in need for financial aid. He noted that using the programs available would be more beneficial to the qualifying seniors and the town.
 - i. Chandler Paquette noted that the senior program helps those who do not have the ability to increase their income levels.
 - ii. Suzanne Woodward noted the low income requirement for the program and that those who qualify are in real need.

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4. Tax Rebates

- a. None

5. Boards and Commissions Appointments & Resignations

- a. Consider the Reappointment of Martin Nieski as a Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals for the term of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2027.
- b. Consider the Appointment of Bill Chaput as a Member of the Housing Authority for the term of January 1, 2024 through April 30, 2028.
 - i. Kate McDonald made a ***Motion** to accept and approve the 2 appointments as presented above. ***Seconded** by Chandler Paquette. ***The motion passed unanimously**

6. Consideration of STEAP Grant for Muddy Brook Fire Department

- a. The Selectmen have a copy of the STEAP grant proposal for review.
- b. Richard Baron reviewed the grant information. The roof of Muddy Brook Fire Department needs replacement in several sections. This STEAP grant would pay 80% of the roof replacement cost.
- c. Karen Fitzpatrick stated the Board of Selectmen would have to approve the grant application. The grant requires funding up front that would have to come from CNR funds which need to go before the Board of Finance and to Town Meeting.
 - i. Chandler Paquette noted that there are many requirements for STEAP grants in the bid process and work of the project that will need to be met.
 - ii. Karen Fitzpatrick stated that this grant does allow for refusal to the State from the Town of Woodstock if awarded at a later date. This allows the process to move forward without any commitment if issues arise in the future.
- d. Chandler Paquette made a ***Motion** to move forward with the process to obtain the proposed STEAP Grant for Muddy Brook Fire Department. ***Seconded** by Kate McDonald. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

7. Discuss Installation of Crosswalk on Child Hill Road

- a. Chandler Paquette noted the need for crosswalk due to the Academy Students crossing Child Hill Road. There currently is no crosswalk which could be a potential liability for the Town of Woodstock.
 - i. Kate McDonald agrees that action is needed in that area for safety.
 - ii. Jay Swan will further investigate options with The Academy.

8. Discuss Senior Tax Freeze- ADJUSTED AGENDA ITEM

- a. Kate McDonald made a ***Motion** to move the proposed changes in building department fees, the proposed changes in fire marshal fees and proposed referendum cap increase to the list of items to be addressed at town meeting. ***Seconded** by Chandler Paquette. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
- b. Kate McDonald made a ***Motion** to award the Peake Brooke Road Bridge bid to Loureiro Contractors in the amount of \$974,191. ***Seconded** by Chandler Paquette. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

9. Discuss Poet Laureate Position

- a. The selectmen have a draft for the establishment of Poet Laureate created from other resolutions in surrounding towns. Kate McDonald is looking to create a committee to choose who the Poet Laureate would be and assist them in their role.
- b. Kate McDonald will continue with the process as presented.

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10. Discuss Fire Department Access to Transfer Station

- a. Muddy Brooke would like a floating sticker for trash removal for the department. Jay would like to offer the same option to the other departments as well and will work on further details.

11. Correspondence and Announcements

- a. Jonathan Higgins has submitted a monthly status update for review as requested by the Board of Selectmen.
- b. A thank you letter was received from TEEG for Election Day donations made by the Town of Woodstock.
- c. The TEEG Mobile Market will be at the Woodstock Town Hall on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 1:30 pm going forward.
- d. Masks available in lobby of the Town Hall for any resident to help reduce the spread of COVID 19 in our community.
- e. Please visit the Recreation Department page for information about upcoming events and programs.
<https://www.woodstockct.gov/recreation-department>

12. Public Comments

- a. Jessica Weaver Boose presented a newly created welcome document prepared by the Economic Development Commission to the Board of Selectmen for review.

13. Adjournment

- a. Chandler Paquette made a ***Motion** to adjourn. *** Seconded** by Kate McDonald. ***The motion passed unanimously**. The meeting adjourned at 5:16 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.