

**Town of Woodstock  
Board of Selectmen  
Regular Meeting  
Thursday, January 18, 2018  
7:00 PM – Room A**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Michael Alberts, Frank Olah, Chandler Paquette

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Joseph Adelitta, Megan Bard-Morse, Josh Bottone, Joni Cullan, Dorothy Durst, Wayne Durst, David Elliott, Delia Fey, Karen Fitzpatrick, David Fortin, Diane Miller, Jean Pillo, WINY, Kevin Withers, Scouts and Parents from Pack 27

**1. Call to Order**

First Selectman Alberts called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance – Boy Scouts**

The Board of Selectmen welcomed a group of Scouts from Pack 27. Alberts stated they were attending the meeting to learn about how the general government operates in town. They led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Paquette moved** to add as item 7a – Timing of Budget Discussions for the New Fiscal Year. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**3. Approve the Minutes of the December 21, 2017 Regular Board of Selectmen's Meeting**

**Paquette moved** to accept the minutes of the December 21, 2017 Regular Board of Selectmen's meeting. Olah requested that the minutes be amended to reflect that under Item 10, paragraph 2, the reference to "a paraprofessional" should have been "three paraprofessionals". **The minutes as amended carried unanimously.**

**4. Connecticut State Library Historic Documents Preservation Grant FY2018**

The Town Clerk was informed that the Town of Woodstock was approved for a \$4,000 Historic Documents Preservation grant from the State of Connecticut Library. The plan submitted with the grant application was to increase security in the town hall by installing a security camera in the Town Clerk's vault among other security measures as listed in the Venture Communications' document. The scope of work exceeds the grant by \$2,121.50 which can be covered with funds from the Information Technology budget. **Olah moved** to authorize the First Selectman to sign the Connecticut State Library Historic Documents Preservation Grant #169-SF-18, Cycle 2, FY 2018 award. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**5. Appointment of Josh Bottone as Deputy Emergency Management Director for the Term of January 18, 2018 through January 17, 2019**

David Elliott, Woodstock's Emergency Management Director, recommended that the Selectmen appoint Josh Bottone as the Deputy Emergency Management Director. Appointing Bottone will provide the town with an additional qualified individual on the emergency planning team. Bottone has extensive experience in emergency situations and has related certifications as well as being a trained spotter during severe weather. He has been a member of the Bungay Fire Department for 28 years, currently the Deputy Fire Chief and previously the Chief. They were asked to report back in 6-8 months on their progress in the development of the town's emergency plans. Elliott met with the Treasurer to begin building a budget. All agreed that having up-to-date health and safety standards is extremely important for the town. **Paquette moved** to appoint Josh Bottone as Deputy Emergency Management Director for the term of January 18, 2018 through January 17, 2019. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**6. Discussion About the Status of Bull Hill Road**

Alberts had a meeting with three residents of Bull Hill Road. The road is a discontinued road. There have been different interpretations by previous First Selectmen over the years as to how the road should be maintained. The recorded documents refer to a specific length of the road. Alberts went with the Public Works Director to measure the road and found that two of the three people who brought their concerns to him had driveways beyond the end of the road. The town has continually maintained the road for many years, even the area which extends past the official end of the road. Alberts requested the Town Attorney to provide legal opinion and options to address this issue. Alberts will keep the Board apprised.

**7. Comparison of Town Hall Hours**

Alberts spoke about the difficulties that the town will face while putting a budget together for FY18-19. While it is unclear what the State will do, we know that certain grants have been reduced and/or eliminated. The Superintendent reported that there will be an increase of 32.5 Woodstock students attending Woodstock Academy at a cost of \$537,000. Alberts asked the Selectmen to consider closing the Town Hall on Fridays and regionalizing some positions through NECCOG as a way to reduce the general government budget. He provided a document comparing the number of hours that surrounding town halls are open to the public. Woodstock is open more hours than any other area town with the exception of Putnam, where some of their departments are open 40 hours. Brooklyn, Pomfret and Eastford town halls are closed on Fridays. Discussion resulted in a request for the Treasurer to provide a savings estimate if the town hall was closed on Fridays.

Alberts reviewed a document received from NECCOG which listed services currently provided by them (animal control, paramedic, reevaluation, engineering and GIS program) and options with preliminary costs for towns that have expressed interest in regionalized services of a town planner, various land use inspectors, and assessor. He stated he may need to renegotiate the costs of the engineering services because John Navarro reported NECCOG's engineer cannot provide all of the services Woodstock needs. Discussion took place among the Selectmen. Regionalization of services could end up being vital for success in communities, as long as the towns' needs are met. Taking part in any of the regionalized positions could reduce the cost of salaries and benefits for Woodstock.

Karen Fitzpatrick voiced some concerns. She recommended first cutting from areas with known surpluses last year and then looking at the town hall hours and regionalization of positions as an additional means to save. She worried that shortening hours could potentially cause major issues in certain busy departments.

The Selectmen commented that they felt good about being transparent in their discussions and believed the public would get used to a new schedule at the town hall.

## **7a. Timing of Budget Discussions for the New Fiscal Year**

The Treasurer reviewed the budget schedule. Budgets are currently being submitted. By the first week of February, the Selectmen will begin reviewing the proposals and the budget history. At that time, the Selectmen will request to meet with certain departments to discuss their submissions before finalizing and presenting the general government budget to the Board of Finance.

## **8. Tax Rebates**

Alberts reported that there is one tax rebate being requested for a vehicle that was sold. **Paquette moved** to approve a tax rebate to Ally Financial in the amount of \$236.92. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## **9. Correspondence and Announcements**

A letter from Superintendent Toth was received informing the Selectmen of an increase of 32.5 students attending Woodstock Academy next year. This will result in an impact of \$537,000 in the FY18-19 Board of Education budget. He requested we consult with the Town Attorney as to whether this increase could be classified as an emergency expenditure under the language of Proposition 46. Alberts indicated he responded to the Superintendent saying he thinks it is unlikely this would qualify as an emergency expenditure but offered Mr. Toth the opportunity to ask the Town Attorney.

Bob Brex from NECASA sent a letter reporting that NECASA has lost funding and it will no longer exist.

A copy of Governor Malloy's press release was received reporting that the CT DOT has postponed hundreds of transportation projects. The town has four bridge projects. Of concern is Butts Bridge. Repair of this bridge is critical because of the heavy trucks that drive over it.

The State of Connecticut has changed its rules on bazaar and raffle permits. The Department of Consumer Protection will no longer be involved; it will be done at the local level. The State provided guidance with a range of fee schedules for the town to use. He provided a list of the current bazaar and raffle permits in town to the Selectmen. At a future meeting, the Selectmen will need to set the fees.

Alberts reported that an advertisement was placed in the Shoppers Guide for a 25 hour per week part time assistant tax collector, a 20 hour per week recreation director, and recording secretary for various boards and commissions.

Alberts informed the Selectmen that he met with Bill Brower and the Registrar of Voters because they were unavailable to attend the next Board meeting.

## **10. Citizen's Comments**

Megan Bard Morse, Chairperson of the Woodstock Board of Education, spoke about the increases in enrollment. The eighth grade class is much larger than expected. At this time there are 48 more students enrolled in K-8 since last year. She stated that the fourth grade teachers requested help as their class sizes are at 25 students with some students having challenging issues. The Board approved hiring three regular education paraprofessionals. She stated it is their hope to add a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher next year so the paraprofessionals do not need to move with the students. The \$537,000 increase in Woodstock Academy tuition is calculated by the enrollment increase of 32.5 and the projected 1.59% tuition increase for the FY18-19.

David Fortin, Board of Finance member, thanked the Selectmen for advertising for the recording secretary. He commented that he is encouraged by the transparency of the Selectmen. Alberts said that there is nothing to hide and they are looking for the same thing from the Board of Finance. They talked about the possibility of the three boards meeting to discuss the budget, as in the past.

Jean Pillo, member of the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District, reported that she will be presenting the Roseland Lake Management Plan and requested that someone from the Town attend. Olah suggested that she invite the Economic Development Commission as well.

Woody Durst asked the Selectmen to improve the acoustics in Room 1. He reported that he cannot hear all of the discussions that take place in the room. He said that he knew Chandler was researching the possibilities of how to address this issue and offered his help. The Selectmen said they would do everything they can to address the issue. It was suggested, in the meantime, that the Board of Finance hold their meetings in Room A, as it is a smaller room and easier for people to hear.

## **11. Adjournment**

**Paquette moved** to adjourn at 8:07 p.m. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Joni Cullan, Recording Clerk