

MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Michael Alberts, Frank Olah, and Chandler Paquette

OTHERS PRESENT: Joni Cullan, Dave Fortin, Michael Dougherty, Linda Auger, Diane Miller, Kurt Kaufman, Emily Carlone, WINY reporter, Heather Paquette.

1. **Call to Order:** First Selectman Michael Alberts called the meeting to order at 4:00pm
2. **Approve Minutes of the October 18, 2018 Regular Board of Selectmen's Meeting:**

Selectman Chandler Paquette **MOTIONED** to **APPROVE** the regular meeting minutes of October 18, 2018 as presented. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. **Consider the Appointment of Kurt Kaufman as a Charter Communications Representative for the Term of November 1, 2018 through November 19, 2019:**

First Selectman Michael Alberts acknowledged receipt of Mr. Kaufman's application and confirmed his awareness of this position as being a volunteer position. First Selectman M. Alberts thanked Mr. Kaufman for stepping up and asked him to explain why he would like to be on this committee.

Mr. Kaufman said he saw a list of committee openings on the town's website and remembered that Mr. Alberts had assisted him in obtaining Internet access when he first moved to Woodstock by putting him in contact with the Charter Communications liaison committee. Mr. Kaufman explained that he felt it would be nice to be able to provide that type of help to someone else who needed it, who doesn't have service yet. He felt that although Frontier still provides Internet connectivity they do not maintain it as well as they did previously. Mr. Kaufman added that it would be important to have a representative at the meetings to keep up with any plans Charter/Spectrum may have that would affect the town.

Selectman Frank Olah wanted to make sure that Charter's service was as coherent as it should be, commenting about the video buffering and lag time, and said that Charter needed to be kept on its toes. He added that someone with some managerial background would be able to help address some of these issues and appreciated someone stepping up to voice some of the concerns that residents have.

Selectman Chandler Paquette noted that Woodstock previously had a dedicated channel run by Nancy Gale, doing lifestyles of Woodstock and asked Mr. Kaufman if he was aware of this channel. Mr. Kaufman said they still have a local access TV station there and added there were still plenty of spots available for anyone interested in presenting something.

Selectman Frank Olah **MOTIONED** to **APPOINT** Kurt Kaufman as the Charter Communications Representative from the term November 1, 2018 to November 19, 2019. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. **Discussion Regarding Assessor Position with Emily Carlone:**

First Selectman Michael Alberts provided background on the situation explaining the current assessor had resigned to accept another position, and noted the extensive job postings online with the State Assessor's Association, Shopper's Guide, Turnpike Buyer, as well as reaching out to Rande Chmura and a former assistant assessor. He added that the postings for the position closed on October 26, 2018. In reviewing their options, it was determined

that Emily Carlone, who is a resident of Woodstock, appears to be extremely well qualified based on her past experience. First Selectman Alberts said that no formal offer has yet been made and wanted to provide opportunity for questions and discussion, and also noted that until recently the Woodstock assessor's hours were 37.5 hours per week and briefly talked about the various assessor hours of the surrounding towns. He added that Emily Carlone proposed a minimum of 14 hours weekly in the office with accessibly to a laptop to work from outside of the Town Hall office as necessary, and to meet all statutory responsibilities of the office including serving as a department head.

First Selectman Alberts said this was a different paradyne than what Woodstock has had in the past and thought the strengths should be explored, but the Board needs to be comfortable that this is good for the town as well. His hope is that if the Board members are satisfied with what they see and hear, that there will be a motion made to pursue dialog, up to and including offering a position subject to reference and background checks, and subject to a more thorough analysis of what the other towns are doing. This also presents the possibility of readjusting the assistant assessors' hours and perhaps providing the assistant with some additional training. He added that before hiring staff a discussion with the town treasurer regarding the budget is needed, and that although Ms. Carlone was seeking a salary, she is not seeking a benefits package or pension eligibility from the town.

Input from Treasurer Karen Fitzpatrick and the Finance Committee is needed as increased assistants position hours has a dollar effect, but other areas are also being addressed, such as the 100 day assessment of the building official, who in a discussion from October was complimentary of the service being done by Tina Lajoie and her office, however he felt she was being pulled in too many different directions by serving as his assistant, the Inland Wetlands Agent, and the Zoning Enforcement Officer. His suggestion was to create two positions, one as the building assistant, and the other as the Inland Wetlands agent and ZEO combined. First Selectman Alberts commented that the building official assistant position was 31.5 hours weekly and an equivalent position for the other functions doesn't exist.

First Selectman Alberts said they may want to ask the Board of Finance to have some flexibility with the contingency fund that the board controls so adjustments within the Town Hall can be made if they are the right thing to do. He also said the AFSCME Union asked if the Board of Selectmen would consider increasing the hours of Christine French by 3 hours per week on Fridays so that she may handle filing and preparation and packets for the PZC in addition to her regular work as the assistant town clerk; this would be helpful to Tina Lajoie in getting her job done. These would be interim steps to the end of the fiscal year.

First Selectman Alberts then welcomed Emily Carlone. Ms. Carlone talked about her experience in the assessor's field in various towns such as South Windsor and Marlborough, and noted her State of Connecticut certification and other certifications that she holds. She added that she has performed 2 revaluations and has written her own RBF's.

Ms. Carlone and First Selectman Alberts discussed the differences and similarities between Marlborough and Woodstock. Selectman Paquette asked if the hours proposed by Ms. Carlone were going to be sufficient to perform the job of assessor; Ms. Carlone replied that she would be taking extra work home and would put in any hours necessary to get her job done, adding that she is a perfectionist, driven, and devoted.

First Selectman Alberts and Selectman Olah discussed the salaried position, hours, and equipment needed to perform the job such as laptop and software. Selectman Olah was also concerned with hours during the busier times of the year and assessing performance and burdensomeness of the job, adding that there are residual items that need addressing from the past year which are also of concern from a fairness point of view for salaried personnel. First Selectman Alberts said that she would be reporting to the First Selectman and the Board of Selectman, and public input would also be a factor.

Joni Cullan said Rande Chmura volunteered to meet with Richard Kryzak to determine the status of tasks remaining to be done in preparation for the next assessor. Selectman Olah and First Selectman Alberts discussed legalities and possible liabilities of the handling of data by a volunteered party, but agreed they were both confident and comfortable with Rande Chmura's professionalism and integrity.

The Board members and Ms. Carlone discussed training for the current assistant accessor, Cheryl Stadig, that would

be beneficial to aiding the new assessor in his or her work, especially if the assessor is not in the office on a daily basis. Ms. Carlone noted that she would have scheduled hours, her excess time would be from home. First Selectman Alberts noted that per a conversation with Cheryl Stadig, she was receptive to several additional weekly hours and training.

Selectman Olah said he was pleased with the number of people First Selectman Alberts reached out to and spoke with regarding the assessor position. First Selectman Alberts noted that he did reach out to John Filchak of NECCOG for input however he did not hear back from him, though previously his hope was to find a way to have a regional assessor's position. There had been no concerted move to address this since the tendency for towns is to want to fill their own assessors positions.

For the record, First Selectman Alberts noted that Emily Carlone is related by marriage to the owner of one of Woodstock's larger companies; he asked Ms. Carlone to explain how any conflict of interest issues are handled. Ms. Carlone said they went through revaluation 2 years ago, and at that time the property was valued. If a change were to be (for example an addition, or removal of an item) the property would need to be revalued by an outside company or assessor and she would have to recuse herself from the process.

Selectman Olah **MOTIONED** for the Board of Selectman to give authority to the First Selectman to create and offer a package to Emily Carlone for the assessor's position, subject to reference checks and background checks, and salary agreement between the Treasurer, First Selectman, and Ms. Carlone.

Selectman Paquette commented that in some towns the assessor goes on the final C/O inspection; this was done by Woodstock previously. He asked Ms. Carlone if this was something she would be doing as well and she confirmed that she would be inspecting all of the final C/O's.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Tax Rebates;

- # 1 tax rebate is an adjustment for vehicle sold in March 2017
- # 2 tax rebate is an adjustment for vehicle sold in May 2018
- # 3 tax rebate is an adjustment for overpayment of real estate taxes for double payment made by new owner and Corelogic
- # 4 tax rebate is an adjustment for motor vehicle Veterans exemption

Selectman Paquette **MOTIONED** to **APPROVE** the following tax rebates:

- #1 tax rebate to Cab East LLC in the amount of \$228.42
- #2 tax rebate to Cab East LLC in the amount of \$80.54
- #3 tax rebate to Corelogic Real Estate Tax Service in the amount of \$464.28
- #4 tax rebate to Paul R. Stanton in the amount of \$101.19

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Correspondence and Announcements:

First Selectman Alberts said he attended the CCM Annual Convention. He also met with Attorney Rich Roberts of Halloran Sage who confirmed he was compiling a package of bids.

A letter of resignation has been received from Bill Brower, Chairman of the Palmer Arboretum Committee. The Board of Selectman will be drafting a letter to Mr. Brower to thank him for his many years of dedicated service, and for going above and beyond expectations in his work and creativity within the Palmer Arboretum and connections made across the state.

Superintendent Viktor Toth sent a letter to Mr. DeRosier of J&J Construction thanking him for the contribution of stone dust to be used in the baseball field.

First Selectman Alberts reviewed the highlights of the October 2018 NECCOG Meeting:

Transit Fleet – funds have been allocated for new buses but not yet released.

Crumbling Foundations – property owners as well as schools, and bridge abutments experiencing this issue though the standards differ.

A letter from former NECCOG employee Melissa Frank was received outlining a number of concerns regarding past and more recent events during her employment with NECCOG. The NECCOG Chairman has turned this letter over to NECCOG's council for review.

Transfer Station fees – Woodstock transit fees are high, yet small in comparison to the cost of roadside pickup.

First Selectman Alberts noted the services in Spencer, MA. for Karen Fitzpatrick's father. Anyone wishing to attend can obtain details and information from Joni Cullan. The Board of Selectmen express their condolences.

7. **Citizen's Comments:**

Michael Dougherty said the middle school cafeteria has been secured to hold the Tri-Board meeting on November 27th, 2018 at 7pm.

Linda Auger explained her concern regarding the building inspectors' hours and her need for timely inspections for the completion of her brewery foundation. The Board of Selectman assured her that other scheduling arrangements can be made, and issues can be resolved by contacting Tina Lajoie in the Building Department and by requesting a scheduled inspection.

Diane Miller expressed her appreciation for the care taken by the town clerk with her personal information when the assessor and assistant assessor was not available.

Selectman Olah asked about the ability to add an item to future agendas that would address items for future discussion; Michael Dougherty suggested the term "Other from Committee". Selectman Paquette and the Board Members discussed and agreed on using this term.

8. **Adjournment:**

First Selectman Alberts **MOTIONED to ADJOURN at 5:02pm; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted by Terri Lasota, Recording Secretary

DISCLAIMER: These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Please refer to next month's minutes for approval/amendments. Please note that the audio record is the legal record of the meeting.