

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** M. Alberts called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm
Members Present: First Selectman Michael Alberts, Selectman Chandler Paquette, Selectman Frank Olah
Others Present: Rich Roberts, Stewart Morse, Diane Miller, Crystal Adams, John Navarro, Karen Fitzpatrick, Mr. & Mrs. Durst, Mike Dougherty, Dave Fortin, Linda Bernardi, Terri Lasota, Chief Constable Jay Swan, Bill Brower, Paul Miller, and 3 others.
2. **Approve the Minutes of the April 18, 2019 Regular Board of Selectmen's Meeting:**
C. Paquette **MOTIONED** to **APPROVE** the meeting minutes of 04/18/2019;
F. Olah **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. **Discuss Ordinance Regarding Tax Abatements for Dairy Farms and Fruit Orchards:**
The Board of Selectmen met with the Agricultural Commission in October and one of the items discussed was expanding tax abatements for many more different types of agriculture.

S. Morse recommended to be consistent with the State's definition of agriculture and noted there are statutes specific for abatements and tax allowances making it important to get the definition correct as having inconsistencies could result in other issues.

M. Alberts said farms, fisheries, and others could be included and also noted the process of calculation for abatements is cumbersome and verified with R. Roberts they are confined by the items listed and can't go broader than prevailing statute and both BOS and BOF must be involved in process while the assessor acts as gatekeeper for the process. The variations in levels of detail to prove eligibility while simplifying the eligibility process was also discussed. M. Alberts said the process can be streamlined, but farmers are concerned with intrusiveness.

While the State's statute has a limit of up to 50%, R. Roberts didn't see why not a lower percentage or dollar cap couldn't be used. M. Alberts asked R. Roberts to suggest towns that have decent language to use as a base or guideline and briefly discussed qualification details.

S. Morse, C. Paquette, and F. Olah discussed traditional vs. non-traditional agriculture.

L. Bernardi asked if the 2018 grand list bills would be on hold until the adjustments for abatements were addressed; M. Alberts said they were not being put on hold for ordinance revision. He also noted the list has been compiled and according to B. Cotnoir's calculations the net impact is \$9,761.76, which reflects a decrease from what was presented to the BOF. Per the assessor an itemized listing is needed, and a 50% abatement level identified for each person. L. Bernardi also asked if BOF approval is needed; M. Alberts said no, however the mill rate needs to be set first, which will be after the budget gets passed on May 14, 2019.

4. **Discuss Town Beaches:**
C. Paquette had concern with people from out of town using and disregarding Woodstock beaches and felt Woodstock residents should not have to feel uncomfortable at the town beaches. Through several means including social media, drug deals and drug use has been noticed on the premises.

C. Adams talked about Black Pond, which she has always understood to be a public boat launch, the

town beaches were at Crystal Pond or Muddy Pond. She said when the thread about the town beach began (July 8, 2018), she noted the examples of the bad behavior and also noted ideas to curb the problem that were suggested by citizens, in addition to discussing with two of the Town Constables. C. Adams said there were fewer complaints after having the Town Constable present for four hours over the weekends at various times and intervals. Chief Constable Jay Swan said cars slow down, and when they see us in uniform they turn around and leave.

C. Adams talked about the weekly cleaning schedule for the beach and restrooms and added that she personally rakes the beach weekly. Requesting identification for proof of town residency was also discussed.

5. Bill Brower to Discuss Damages to the Arboretum Done in the Fall:

Bill Brower said in 2012 the Arboretum received a \$14,000.00 grant for a state of the art rain garden to fix the problems with drainage off of the parking lot, which have existed for more than 15 years. He went on to explain what a rain garden is and its function, noting that over the last 2 years the rain garden has filled up and no longer functions as it should.

B. Brower talked about the numerous storms and fallen trees that have damaged the patios, noting that the tree parts left are dangerous and are a liability but also costly to remove, in part due to the inability to get any large machinery to the affected areas. Mr. Brower said he could get estimates from Ben Young who is always fair and provides a break on the costs; he noted the BOS has cut the Arboretum budget by 30% and is not comfortable using the money that was raised for improvements for maintenance purposes instead, as it is misleading to those who donated.

B. Brower had estimates for some of the work that needed to be done, totaling \$4749.00, which he gave to the selectmen. He said the estimate for the bridge was \$6583.00 and added the Putman Area Rotary has offered to help with bridge. Mr. Brower also said the Arboretum was to be on the Connecticut Historic Gardens website this year, however now this is not possible.

M. Alberts asked K. Fitzpatrick about options that could help with the Arboretum, they along with B. Brower and J. Navarro discussed; K. Fitzpatrick also suggested help from the Recreation Commission account which may contribute funds since this is a community park.

6. Jim Stratos to Present Resolution Supporting Participation in the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification Program:

Item **TABLED** until the next meeting.

7. Tax Rebates:

Tax rebate is an adjustment for vehicle sold in September 2017

Tax rebate is an adjustment for vehicle sold to Leasee in October 2017

C. Paquette **MOTIONED to APPROVE:**

the tax rebate to JP Morgan Chase Bank in the amount of \$278.32

the tax rebate to JP Morgan Chase Bank in the amount of \$366.43

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. Correspondence and Announcements:

M. Alberts reviewed the following:

The Connecticut Municipal Employees Retirement System regarding the contribution rate increase to 14.22% monthly.
Chamberland Mill.

Parker Cemetery Services.

Colliers International to market the Crabtree & Evelyn facility.

Robert DeCrescenzo regarding the US attorney correspondence regarding DOJ voting policies.

Lee Wesler regarding modification of the Conservation Commission Ordinance;

Crystal Adams will be submitting her resignation from the Conservation Commission until this is corrected, as currently no salaried employee can be on the Conservation Commission.

M. Alberts noted the PZC will be appointing CME as the interim ZEO at their meeting this evening. He added there is one potential upcoming ZEO interview and also a new ad will be published in the Turnpike Buyer next week for ZEO, Inland Wetlands Agent, and Rec Director.

M. Alberts said he was contacted by a resident with concerns of a neighbor's rapid fire gun adjacent to their home. Although Troop D responded, they stated it was not within their enforcement action and suggested reaching out to the BOS for a possible ordinance.

M. Alberts noted that subsequent to the vote on Fire Marshal ordinance, there were changes by the Town of Thompson, therefore Thompson didn't execute the agreement. The focus of the changes were in regards to who would be processing the payments for compensation. The new language contemplates the payment to go from the town, to the town of the marshal who will then pay the marshal.

M. Alberts talked about the NE Delegation and meeting with the Governor; many of the attending selectmen emphasized the numerous things done on a cooperative basis, for example the regional animal shelter, regional planning services, and sharing of equipment. When the Governor was asked about MBR relief (since a major portion of the budget goes to education) he seemed receptive to determining if something could be done to assist. M. Alberts said the Governor showed interest in the Woodstock Fair and Labor Day weekend activities and perhaps visiting at that time.

F. Olah noted his concern for the ECS. K. Fitzpatrick said the 2nd installment of town aid road has been received which gives Woodstock \$400,000.00 of additional aid; more money for ECS has been received than what the Town had budgeted for fiscal year 18-19 which was approximately \$5.1 million, while approx. \$4.6 million had been budgeted for ECS. K. Fitzpatrick said typically surpluses stay in the general fund and what is used on the revenue sheet will go toward budgeting for the next fiscal year.

M. Alberts reminded everyone of the town meeting next week which will adjourn to referendum.

9. Citizen's Comments:

Paul Miller said being adjacent to Woodstock Fair he would like to be kept informed as to what is progressing; M. Alberts said the president of the agricultural society will be handling discussions. He added that he is sensitive to the fact that the Governor controls the bonding agenda, and we have a state senator and state representative that have worked hard on the potential funding for a \$650,000.00 bridge.

Kevin Withers asked on behalf of the American Legion if busses were set for Memorial Day; K. Fitzpatrick said the selectman's Executive Secretary and the Office Manager typically work on the Memorial Day logistics.

S. Morse commented on the rules posted at the Town beach, noting if the size of the sign is to be adjusted the sign content should be adjusted as well.

Diane Miller asked about the next steps for the tax abatements; M. Alberts said he needs to review the calculated list and present it back to the BOS, it will then be provided to the tax collector to be implemented.

10. Other From Committee: None

11. Adjournment:

C. Paquette **MOTIONED** to **ADJOURN**; **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

The meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 5:21 pm.

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