

TOWN OF WASHINGTON

Board of Selectmen

Minutes

January 7, 2021

Meeting held via Video Conferencing.

Minutes are subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: First Selectman James L. Brinton, Selectmen Jay Hubelbank and Dean Sarjeant.

Public: Joan Lodsins, Susan Smith, Susan Branson, Chris Charles, Michelle Gorra, Howard Barnet, Todd Peterson, Wayne Hileman.

Call to Order: First Selectman James Brinton called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the December 23, 2020 meeting of the Board of Selectmen as amended to read under Old Business, Sustainability Committee (sub-Committee of Planning Commission): Jay Hubelbank reported that, as mentioned previously in Appointments/Resignations, Carole Matteo, who is a member of the Planning Commission, will also be serving on the Sustainability Committee. He also mentioned that he will be attending a workshop sponsored by the Connecticut Green Bank regarding funding for solar projects on municipal buildings on January 7th. He will report back following the workshop. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

Communications: None.

Appointments/Resignations:

- **Resignation of Tony Bedini from the Buildings and Properties Commission.** The Selectmen accepted, with deep gratitude and incredible thanks, Tony's resignation from Buildings and Properties. Tony deserves great credit for the many projects he has overseen for the Town. Susan Branson added "if you wanted to get something done, ask Tony!"
- **Appointment of Bob Papsin to the Buildings and Properties Commission: Motion:** To approve the appointment of Bob Papsin to the Buildings and Properties Commission until 7/1/22. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Dean Sarjeant and unanimously approved.
- **Appointment of Christina Fernandez-O'Toole as an alternate to the Zoning Commission: Motion:** To appoint Christina Fernandez-O'Toole as an alternate to the Zoning Commission until the next municipal election (to fill the term that expires 11/23). By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank. Both the Democratic Town Committee and the Zoning Commission support this appointment. The motion passed unanimously.

First Selectman's Report: Jim Brinton reported the following:

- **Judea Cemetery fence** was damaged by a tree coming down in a storm. Cemetery Commission Chairman, Phyllis Allen, has notified the Town that funds may be needed for the repair if insurance does not cover the expense.
- **COVID-19 Vaccines:** Through the State's Phase 1A, emergency service personnel, health care workers have received or are schedule to receive. More information will hopefully be released in the next week regarding Phase 1B – the number of vaccines, when they will be available and who will be eligible. Information will be provided to the Town as soon as it is available.

- **Statement from the Board of Selectmen:** In response to the event that took place at the Nation's Capital yesterday, the Board makes the following statement:

"The role of the Board of Selectmen is to oversee all aspects of governance for the Town of Washington. We do not represent a political party or ideology. We represent all residents of Washington and are honored to do so. However, there are times in our nation's history that demand a response from local leaders. The tragic events that took place in our nations capital yesterday are one of those rare times.

What was witnessed was nothing short of a treasonous act committed by thugs and cowards and incited by our own President. An armed incursion on what is arguably the symbol of our democracy; the United States Capital building. An attack that took place while congress was attempting to carry out their constitutional duties. Tragically, four people lost their lives. When actions such as this occur, they must be condemned in the strongest terms possible.

The acts of these individuals have left a stain on our nation that will not go away. It will forever be a dark part of our history. As we move forward, it is the responsibility of all of us to see that this never happens again.

Jim Brinton

Jay Hubelbank

Dean Sarjeant

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Gunn Hill Road:** Jim Brinton explained that a section of Gunn Hill (from #58 to Ash Swamp Road) is in need of extensive repair. As Gunn Hill is a designated scenic road, Jim has researched what work can or cannot be done to address safety issues, drainage and washouts, etc. – all of which is extremely costly to the Town. The question would be; could a section of the scenic designation be rescinded in order to address the repairs needed. Planning Commission Chairman, Wayne Hileman, explained that work – including paving – can be done without rescinding the scenic designation if the work is considered an emergency, is a threat to safety or if there is a change of use. The Scenic Road Ordinance does allow alterations or improvements with certain procedures being followed. The Selectmen would need to submit a proposal to the Planning Commission outlining what work needs to be done. Property owners on the road would be notified and would have time to respond prior to a determination to allow the work.

Visitors:

- **Susan Branson and Michelle Gorra** applauded the Selectmen for issuing the statement regarding the storming of the Capital building in Washington DC. See First Selectman's Report.

Adjournment:

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 5:55p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Jim Brinton and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anne Greene
Selectmen's Assistant