

**TOWN OF WASHINGTON**

**Board of Selectmen**

**Minutes**

**December 7, 2023**

**HYBRID MEETING**

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

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

**Public:** Fran Caco, Rod Wyant, Susan Smith, Bob Papsin, Joan Lodsins, Leslie Anderson.

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

**Approval of Minutes:**

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the November 8, 2023 meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

**Visitor:**

- **Fran Caco** requested to be placed on the Agenda and presented the following statement:

Safety First! Good Evening Selectmen & Community Members.

My name is Frannie Caco. I have been a fulltime resident of Washington/New Preston since 1995. I have raised a family. I have run a family daycare. And I have been active in the community (Board of Education, Washington Primary School PTO, Shepaug Middle and High PTO, Girl Scout Leader & Martial Arts Instructor for a Washington Parks & Rec Program) We use to be able to safely walk on Flirtation Avenue, push baby carriages and walk dogs. I use to be able to safely leave my home and walk/run down my road and around the entire lake (9-mile loop). Nomore!

Over the years, I have discussed my concerns with the First Selectmen (Sears & Lyons), privately in their offices. This time, I am choosing to address it publicly at this meeting. Flirtation Avenue is used as a cut through to get to and from the lake. Drivers speed down the road. It is not safe to even pull out of my own driveway. It looks like the coast is clear and then NOPE! A vehicle comes out of nowhere flying.

It has gotten steadily worse over the last three years. We now have to drive to walk our dogs. Even those, once thought to be safe walking roads have become high traffic roads:

**Poppleswamp, Rumsey, Gunn Hill.** It is justinsane!

And walking at any of the **Steep Rock Preserves** is out of the question with how busy and crowded the parking lots and hiking trails are, not forgetting to mention the **free roaming unleashed dogs.**

It is like no one cares about anyone or anything anymore. It is so sad, and extremely frustrating!

Thatsaid, I'd like to return our attention to **Flirtation Avenue.**

Currently: Speed limit is **25 mph.** There are **Slow Children at Play** signs. There are **No Through Truck** signs. There are "**Lake it Slow**" signs. It is not the signage that is the issue, it is the drivers. Even law enforcement uses Flirtation Avenue at excessive speeds, with or without lights and sirens. I know it is important for Troopers/EMS to get quickly and safely to an incident, but the emphasis needs to be on **SAFETY.** This has not been the case. I am simply thankful that my children are older.

What should be done is:

**REDUCED SPEED LIMIT**

**NO THROUGH TRAFFIC SIGNS**, local traffic only like on Whittlesey Road

**SPEED BUMPS**, permanent speed bumps (just like the ones on Main Street in New Milford). These bumps are easily plowed as they are part of the road.

All of the above would address the safety of our residents, our children and our visitors. Thank you for your prompt attention.

The Selectmen thanked Fran for attending the meeting and discussed the pros and cons of her suggestions, i.e.: No Thru Trucks signs are not enforceable, speed bumps whether they be permanent or temporary have their drawbacks. Jay Hubelbank expressed his support to again explore the installation of speed bumps. Jim Brinton offered to reach out to the DOT re: permanent speed bumps. Jim also explained that he, along with the Council of Governments, has reached out to State Representatives regarding speed limit signs that not only show the speed a vehicle is going but can take a picture of the license plate and issue a ticket. Currently, Connecticut is one of only a few States that do not allow this type of sign. The Selectmen also offered to keep Fran informed of information as it is available and to continue to address the problem.

**Appointments/Resignations:**

- **Resignation of Shane Mongar from the Housing Commission and Linda Frank from the Conservation Commission:** The Selectmen accepted the resignation of both and thanked them for the time served. A special thanks was given to Linda Frank for having served on the Conservation Commission for over 20 years.
- **Motion:** To reappoint:
  - Susan Payne and Loretta Stagen to the Conservation Commission until 1/1/27.
  - Thomas Hollinger as a full member of the Historic District Commission until 1/1/29.
  - Brandon Ferreira as an alternate member of the Historic District Commission until 1/1/27.
  - Darryl Wright to the Housing Commission until 1/1/27.
  - V. Charles Jackson as a full member of the Housing Commission (moving up from an alternated) until 1/1/27.
  - Sheila Anson and C.J. Kersten to the Parks and Recreation Commission until 1/1/27.
  - Jennifer Averill to the Planning Commission until 12/31/28.
  - David Varnish and Shane Mongar as alternate members of the Planning Commission until 12/31/26.
  - Karen Silk as Poet Laureate until 12/31/25.
  - Patrick Kessler, Richard Innaimo and Thomas Accousti as Constables until 12/31/25.By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

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

- **Holiday in the Depot** is tomorrow evening, December 8<sup>th</sup>.
- **Slices with Santa** is Saturday evening, December 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Selectmen's Report:**

- **Jay Hubelbank** reported on **EV Charging Stations** throughout Town. New new stations will charge users by accepting credit cards. Jay has been working with Titan Energy regarding programs that will provide financial incentives to reduce costs to the Town. The goal is to have stations in the Depot, the Pavilion, New Preston and Marble Dale. Having stations are good for economic development of the Town by bringing visitors to charge their vehicles. Jay also discussed ways to curtail **noise** by implementing policies – possibly through the Building

Department which would specify hours in which construction can take place. The Selectmen briefly discussed amending the **Driveway Ordinance** to deal with damage that is often caused to Town roads due to construction.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Discussion of Washington Art Association parking space:** Jim Brinton explained that the Washington Art Association is looking to expand. In order to do this, they would need the space that is currently taken up by three parking spaces. Final approval to convey the space would need to be approved at a Town Meeting. There does not appear to be any Land Use permitting issues.
- **Approval of the Master Municipal Agreement for Construction Projects: Motion:** To authorize the First Selectman to sign the Master Municipal Agreement for Construction which enables the Town to receive grants and reimbursements for municipal construction projects involving the Connecticut DOT. Prior to signing, the Agreement will be reviewed by Town Attorney. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.
- **Approval of 2024 Board of Selectmen Meeting Dates. Motion:** To approve the following Meeting Dates for 2024 with the understanding they may be subject to change: January 4, 18; February 1, 15, 29; March 14, 27; April 11, 25; May 9, 23; June 6, 20; July 3, 18; August 1, 15, 29; September 12, 26; October 9, 24; November 7, 21; and December 5, 19. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Jim Brinton and unanimously approved.

**Visitors:** See Fran Caco above.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 5:57p.m. to enter into Executive Session to discuss two real estate proposals. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

The Selectmen re-entered the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 6:05p.m. having taken no action.

**Adjournment:**

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:05p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Anne Greene  
Selectmen's Assistant