

Minutes: Annual Town Budget Meeting May 24, 2007

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**TOWN OF WASHINGTON, CT
Special Town Meeting
Bryan Memorial Town Hall
May 24, 2007
Moderator: Hank Martin
Clerk: Sheila Silvernail**

The meeting was called to order by First Selectman Richard C. Sears at 7:34 p.m. welcoming everyone and requesting nominations for moderator. Hank Martin was duly nominated, seconded, and elected.

SYNOPSIS AND MEETING MINUTES

GENERAL FUND BUDGET: RESOLVED: That the 2007-2008 General Fund Expenditures Budget be approved in the amount of \$3,789,094.

Motion : Proposed by: Richard Sears
Seconded by: Jack Boyer
Summarized by: Richard Sears
Moderator: Opened the motion to public discussion.
Participants: Ginny Whittall 33 West Morris Road
Janet Buonaiuto 47 Shearer Road
Reggie Breeckner 31 Winston Drive
Michael Caroe 18 Parsonage Lane
Moderator: Read the resolution.
Vote: General Fund Budget
Favor: majority Opposed: Two Motion: passed

NONRECURRING CAPITAL FUND: RESOLVED: That the 2007-2008 Nonrecurring

Capital Expenditures Budget be approved in the net amount of \$1,069,603.

Motion: Proposed by Nicholas Solley

Second by: Valerie Friedman

Summarized by: Nicholas Solley

Summary of committee process by: Mark Lyon

Context and Explanation by: Michael Jackson, Chairman Board Finance

Participants: Valerie Anderson 171 Blackville Road

Janet Buonaiuto 47 Shearer Road

Ken Cornet 404 Nettleton Hollow Road

Valerie Friedman 36 West Morris Road

John Buonaiuto 47 Shearer Road

Peter Tagley 96 Quarry Ridge

Rex Swain 8 South Street

Jerry Allan 143 West Mountain Road

Anne Potter 195 Old Litchfield Road

Kathy Gollow 171 Kinney Hill Road

Peter Arturi 79 Shearer Road

Discussion: Detailed questions regarding line items and concerns about beach area project being brought to the public. [See transcript for full discussion.]

Richard Sears: [Regarding the beach area project] "You will see it and know the number before you vote because it's your taxes, not mine. It's not...as some of you are suggesting. It will come to the people."

Discussion: Further discussion, explanations, and responses to questions.

Motion : Motion to end debate and bring 2nd motion to vote.

Proposed by: Peter Arturi

Seconded by: Greg Seeley

Motion: passed

Vote: Nonrecurring Capital Fund

Favor: Majority Opposed: Perhaps as many as ten Motion: passed

ELLSWORTH APARTMENTS: RESOLVED: That the Town Ordinance originally enacted on May 23, 2002 and granting a full tax abatement for seven affordable rate rental units owned by the First Congregational Church at Ellsworth Apartments at #16 Bee Brook Road be amended to reduce the number of affordable rate rental units to four, thus allowing this building to be taxed at 43% (3/7) of its assessed value.

Motion: Proposed by: Wayne Hileman, Chairman Housing Commission

Seconded by: Phil Farmer

Summarized by: Wayne Hileman

Moderator: Opened motion to public discussion.

Participants: Valerie Friedman 36 West Morris Road

Edward Griffiths 27 Litchfield Turnpike
Phil Farmer 191 Popple Swamp Road
Linda Frank 157 West Shore Road
Rex Swain 8 South Street
Vote: Ellsworth Apartments
Favor: Majority Opposed: One Motion: passed

BOARD OF EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVES: RESOLVED: To elect two (2) representatives to Shepaug Valley Regional School District #12 Board of Education. Said terms to continue until June 30,

Moderator: Opened motion to public discussion and nominations.
Nomination: By: Liddy Adams
For: Michelle Gorra
Seconded by: John Millington
Nomination: By: Dan Sherr, Cook Street
For: Tony Bedini
Seconded by: Jane Boyer
Moderator: Motion to close nominations
Seconded by: Valerie Friedman
Motion to close nominations passed by majority.
Candidates: Michelle Gorra - brief message
Tony Bedini - brief message
Moderator Suggested a motion be made to vote for both in one vote.
Motion so made by: Richard Sears
Seconded and passed by majority.
Vote: Board of Education Representatives
Nominees: Michelle Gorra and Tony Bedini
Favor: Majority Opposed: None Motion: passed
Moderator: Read memo from Irene Allen, Chair of the Board of Education
Regarding postponement of Referendum
Motion: Motion made to adjourn, seconded, and passed by majority.

Adjourned: 8:46 pm

End of SYNOPSIS

TRANSCRIPT OF AUDIO RECORDING

(An ellipsis as indicated by ... indicates an omission due to an inaudible portion.)

Richard Sears: Ladies and gentlemen, citizens of Washington, welcome to this town meeting in beautiful Bryan Memorial Town Hall...I call this meeting to order.

Our first order of business is to appoint a moderator. Do I have any nominations? Mr. Solley [recognized].

Nicholas Solley: I nominate Hank Martin.

Richard Sears: The name of Hank Martin has been proposed. Is there a second?

Audience: Second, second.

Richard Sears: Any other nominations? All in favor of Mr. Martin...please say aye.

Audience: Aye, aye...

Richard Sears: So moved...

Moderator: Thank you all! Sheila, Will you come up and read the warning please?

Clerk: Good evening.

Town Of Washington, Warning,

Annual Town Budget Meeting May 24, 2007

The voters and electors of the Town of Washington are hereby warned that a Town Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 24, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. at Bryan Memorial Town Hall, Washington, Connecticut, to consider and act upon the following agenda:

1. To consider and act upon the proposed General Fund Expenses for the 2007-2008 fiscal year.
2. To consider and act upon the proposed Nonrecurring Capital Expenses for the 2007-2008 fiscal year.
3. To discuss and consider amending the tax abatement granted to the First Congregational Church for the Ellsworth Apartments.
4. To elect representatives to the Shepaug Valley Region #12 Board of Education.

A copy of all information pertinent to this meeting is available in the Office of the Town Clerk.

Dated at Washington, Connecticut this 7th day of May 2007.

Richard C. Sears, Nicholas N. Solley, Mark E. Lyon Board of Selectmen

Moderator: Thank you Sheila, well done. Tonight's process is as Sheila read to go to four resolutions. For each one of them, we're going to have a motion in favor of the resolution, a second for that motion, and then discussion. Discussion will take place by first having the motion summarized or the issue summarized, whatever the case may be, sort of an abbreviated...then we'll open it up to the public for whatever comments or questions that they have. When that is done, when that is exhausted, we'll then vote on that motion and then move on to the next one.

I have one favor to ask you all, which is that when you wish to be recognized that you raise your hand so that I can recognize you. Then stand up and state your name and street you live on for the purposes of the minutes that...even if you know that we know, Sheila's going to be looking down at her laptop (I used to say notebook, but we've moved ahead into...so we now we have a laptop here.) It's difficult for her to be looking at both to see whose talking. If you can all identify yourself and your street address, I would greatly appreciate it.

Last thing is, please direct all your comments to me. I doubt that I will be able to answer any of your questions, but I will...right person to get the answers. With that, let's go to the first motion.

Richard Sears: We have a portable microphone here.

Moderator: When you stand up...we have a portable microphone we need to get to you so everyone can hear the comments that you're making.

Richard Sears: Thank you. Item #1...make this motion.

RESOLVED: That the 2007-2008 General Fund Expenditures Budget be approved in the amount of \$3,789,094.

Moderator: Do we have a second for that?

Jack Boyer: Second.

Moderator: Ok, Jack Boyer, I recognize the second. Dick, would you summarize the budget that we're going to be voting on?

Richard Sears: Thank you. On behalf of the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen who labored over this budget for many months, this first motion has to do with the General Fund Budget which is the annual...expenses to run this town for the next year beginning on July 1st. This represents 3.1% increase over last year's budget in this section and...actually reduced by about \$20,000 from the budget we saw two weeks ago on the budget hearing night. It's lower than it was then for two reasons. The actual health premiums for our health benefit program have come in from the health insurance company and that represented a reduction. And, we've also increased the salary of the fire marshal who protects us and investigates our fire concerns in town. After studying the fire marshal's salary...other towns, the selectman and the Board of Finance as well that we need to bring our salary to more...so between a reduction in health benefits and an increase of...in the fire marshal's...this budget number is \$20,000 less than last year.

Moderator: ...not \$20,000 less than last year, less than two weeks ago. OK...we open it up to the public, questions, comments, anything.

Audience: Inaudible.

Moderator: Stand up and identify yourself please. Hold on, we'll get a microphone to you.

Ginny Whittall: 33 West Morris Road. My question is that I'm not sure exactly what you've just said that we're voting on for the...?

Moderator: No, we're voting on this motion...the annual budget of the upcoming fiscal year which is...dollars. That's what we're voting on...Any other questions? Yes.

Janet Buonaiuto: Shearer Road. I have a question concerning the beach house, boat storage. Is that what we're voting on right now?

Moderator: I think that the issue for that is on the second motion on the nonrecurring capital budget. This is just the operating, annual operating budget...for things we have to do to run the town. Any other questions?

Audience: Inaudible

Moderator: Certainly, I recognize the First Selectman.

Richard Sears: Thank you. This is confusing. I should have said this at the beginning. The budget represents three major categories...that our tax dollars, every dollar that we give goes to three particular areas. One is...the annual operating budget for salaries

and electricity...it's running the town for a year. That's what we're voting on. The next one will be the...of capital expenditures which Mr. Solley will stand up and explain. And the third one is the education budget which we have already...approved...An interesting statistic...the board of Finance to remind us that the education budget which we've already adopted is \$475,000 more next year than this year. That's just the way it is. It's about 5% increase. That...equivalency about half mill in our tax district alone. So, I just wanted to...three pieces of the budget. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you...any other questions or comments on the first resolution? Yes.

Reggie Breeckner: From 31 Winston Drive...a separate vote, but in the first part it seems to deal with road maintenance, but road maintenance is also on the first page of the highway so...

Richard Sears: Thank you. The second page of...Reggie and others, is a capital...one-time only. The work will be done and it will be finished. The vote...annual budget is primarily for salaries and benefits of the people who do this work.

Moderator: Yes, a question from the rear.

Michael Caroe: Parsonage Lane. In one of the items there is the beach house/boat storage, \$200,000 requested, \$200,000 proposed for...and \$150,000 grants...we can...for \$50,000 which seems to be perfectly...now, with regards to pavilion septic, I'm unclear about that. It says \$20,000 requested, \$20,000 proposed, \$10,000 grants, \$10,000 net. Am I...?

Moderator: I'm not sure about this second set of...the first set of...we're going to get to in the second resolution.

Michael Caroe ...understand the arithmetic? \$20,000 requested, \$20,000 proposed...

Audience: Inaudible.

Michael Caroe: ...so \$10,000 is what we pay, right?

Moderator: OK, the Chairman of the Board of Finance is here to answer that.

Michael Jackson: Mike, I think what you're referring to, and this is going to be taken up under the next resolution when we talk about the Nonrecurring Capital account, but to try and take care of it now. On the sheet you're looking at...the Requested number was what came in from whatever department requested however much capital they needed for a specific project. So the \$20,000 in that instance is would be what they

requested. Then, the proposed piece is what the Selectmen actually approved. So if it's lower, the Selectmen decided they would spend less on that particular item. So I think that will explain it. We'll get to it in the next resolution and Nick's going to explain it in great detail.

Moderator: It seems to me that you're all pretty anxious to jump to resolution number two so, are we ready to vote on resolution number one then?

Audience: Yes.

Moderator: Let me read the resolution one more time.

GENERAL FUND BUDGET: RESOLVED: That the 2007-2008 General Fund Expenditures Budget be approved in the amount of \$3,789,094.

This motion is...so I think we're ready to vote. All in favor of that motion please say aye.

Audience: Aye.

Moderator: Any opposed.

Audience: No, No.

Moderator: Please note I heard two opposed. Thank you. Now we're going to go on to the second motion which is the one you seem to have the most questions on.

Nicholas Solley: Nice full house tonight, nice to see you. #2:

NONRECURRING CAPITAL FUND: RESOLVED: That the 2007-2008 Nonrecurring Capital Expenditures Budget be approved in the net amount of \$1,069,603.

Moderator: Thank you, do I hear a second to that motion?

Valerie Friedman: Second.

Moderator: I recognize Valerie Friedman for seconding it. Nick, would you summarize...this motion to everybody?

Nicholas Solley: ...Selectmen established a capital budget we called a Nonrecurring Budget. These monies are, when voted on, are used for specific projects. If the project is finished and the project maybe cost less than the amount that is budgeted, the

amount of money is returned to the general fund. This money also carries on if we don't finish a capital project in a given year. It will carry on. If we don't get to a project, it will carry on to the next year. We have some projects that we're still working on from...Typically the capital budget is in three-sections: our road program, vehicles and equipment, and buildings and property. This year our budget of \$1,069,603 equals about 15% increase over last year and yet it is not quite as much as some previous budgets. In...our capital budget was \$1,400,000. In 2001/02 it was \$1,269,000. So, this is not out of whack, if you will, with other Nonrecurring Capital Budgets. Just to highlight a few things, in the road program this year we added a second special project, Plumb Hill Road. We want to fund some of these projects over the period of two years. It's a little easier for the town to tolerate the funding over a two-year period as we do a fire engine...last two or three fire engines we...over two years. A revaluation of our...is done typically over a two-year period funding-wise. We have a Plumb Hill Road project, new drainage and repaving that. This is an item that typically is why the road program may be a little bit higher than it normally is. We have the second half of a fire engine this year. We're replacing a dump truck as well as purchasing another pickup truck for the highway crew. And you can see the bottom section on Building and Property we have projects that...every property that the town owns in this town. You can just go through: land acquisition - open space, land acquisition - housing. We philosophically made a decision three and a half years ago to add these line items to our capital budget. They total \$200,000 together. Yes, we have the beach house/boat storage. Let me just explain, as I think Michael Jackson just did, next to the item on the left hand side description, you'll see...a grant that may be applied to that particular project. You'll see the grant listed. The grants are also listed under the Grants column. The Net column, the one to the right, is what the total...is what we're requesting tonight. So the Net is what we're seeking tonight. As you see, the grants...So if there's any questions about the specific way that this page, and most of you have this page, the Nonrecurring page, is set up, I want to just get the confusion out of the way as far as what we're voting on and specifically how we set up the totals here and...our vote tonight. So any specific questions with regards to structure of the page?

Valerie Anderson?

Valerie Anderson: 171 Blackville Road. The beach house/boat storage if I read this correctly is for phase two. And what we're reading here mimics what was in the budget in the...

Moderator: I don't think that microphone is on.

Audience: Inaudible.

Valerie Anderson: In any case, I'll speak very loudly. It would appear that these items mimic what was in the previous budget. This is separate and this is for funding phase two of the beach project. I see specifically beach house and boat storage. Is that correct?

Mark Lyon: I'm on the committee that's looking at the beach property with Ray Reich who's the chair who is not here. What we're doing is...in the budget, another one of these that's probably not going to be fully funded in one year, but we're, the committee that's working on this is going to put together the total plan and bring that to the town. The term we're using is this is what it's going to look like in ten years. Whether it's done in steps or phases or whatever remains to be seen, but what this committee is doing, is we want to do a total plan what it's going to look like when we're all done, and bring that to the town before we do anything.

Valerie Anderson: Is that going to be a referendum on the total amount?

Mark Lyon: At this point, I do not know.

Valerie Anderson: I think a lot of us we're concerned, some of us who signed a petition in fact. We just want to see the entire project. We know that phase one is already started because the money was already approved in the previous year's budget. I'm a little concerned that because we're going to approve this amount, that before we have a town wide...on the entire...of the project as phase two and three, we won't be able to do that because you already...

Mark Lyon: The money is there, but the project but will not be started until there is a complete plan. The complete plan will be open for hearing for the public.

Valerie Anderson: ...a referendum?

Mark Lyon: I told you before, I don't know at this time.

Moderator: Thank you Mark. Michael do you wish... or answer...?

Michael Jackson: What's incorporated in this budget is \$200,000...with grants. So it's a \$50,000 net expenditure which will not take place until there's been a hearing on the project. It isn't going to be a referendum necessarily, but there's going to be a hearing. What we're trying to get at is to make sure that people had what financial facts there were that we have at the time so that we'd know what we're doing. The most that can be spent would be the \$200,000 plus the \$150,000 grant on the...phase. You'll have the rest of the details by the time that gets spent. That's what Mark said.

Moderator: Ok, I'll recognize...

Janet Buonaiuto: Shearer Road. By the first phase, Michael, do you mean phase one of the boat launch project? Is that what you're talking about?

Moderator: Let Nick answer it.

Nicholas Solley: Phase one has been funded and it's going to be started this summer. Phase one is the boat ramp only. For the sake of confusion, phase two and three no longer exist. It's the next phase is what Michael referred to as far as there will be a hearing regarding the next phase. Any hopefully, that phase as Mark just pointed out, will...include the entire remainder of the project, at public hearing.

Janet Buonaiuto: So my question is, has phase one, the building of the ramp and the...of the boat launch, has that gone out to bid and our prices available for the public to see that?

Nicholas Solley: That has not gone out to bid yet.

Janet Buonaiuto: So we don't know exactly what that phase one is going to cost us yet. Am I right in assuming that?

Nicholas Solley: Phase one?

Janet Buonaiuto: Phase one.

Nicholas Solley: We have a pretty good idea of what it's going to cost.

Janet Buonaiuto: But, it has not gone out to bid yet?

Nicholas Solley: It has not...

Janet Buonaiuto: I'm worried that we are giving approval for phase two not even knowing what phase one is going to cost the taxpayers.

Nicholas Solley: The moneys have been appropriated for phase one.

Janet Buonaiuto: But you don't know how much it's going to cost?

Nicholas Solley: It's going to be, I'd say, approximately \$225,000. We don't know exactly until the bids come in.

Mark Lyon: And that's already funded.

Nicholas Solley: And that's already funded.

Mark Lyon: This money is for whatever is going to be done with the rest of the property. But there's nothing going to be done with the rest of the property until there's a completed plan for the rest of the property. That will be presented to the public at that point.

Janet Buonaituo: Well, I'd like to suggest that it does come to a referendum at that point because a lot of people are really worried about the takeover of the beach area...the playground area. I think it should come to the public in the form of a referendum.

Mark Lyon: I'll take that message back to the committee.

Unknown: Inaudible.

Moderator: I'm going to recognize some other people...

Ken Cornet: Nettleton Hollow Road...what Janet and Valerie said. Now are we talking about two \$50,000 grants from the state? \$100,000 which was in last year's budget that we're...for phase one? And another \$100,000...that's two \$100,000 grants...This is what's very...

Nicholas Solley: Ken, you've been...all along and it's not confusing. We got a DEP grant for \$100,000 to offset the cost of building the boat ramp. Phase one...that's been funded, approved, and we're going to bid, and construction hopefully mid to late-summer.

Ken Cornet: So then the \$100,000 you're talking about in grants, that's another \$100,000? So in other words, we got \$200,000 in grants?

Nicholas Solley: The \$100,000 LoClp grant, which is a local capital improvement grant, is available to the town as we see fit for a local capital improvement project. We have funds available to us. Basically the state has funds available to us. We pay upfront and get reimbursed.

Ken Cornet: So you're talking...

Moderator: Clarify in my mind...two \$100,000 grants. One...here for the boat ramp, and one in this appropriation. Does that answer your question?

Ken Cornet: I think so, that's \$200,000. Yes, ok...clear, the second part of it is, I still do not understand why the Town of Washington selectman would give a state operation, take on a state operation, pay for the improvements, on a 1.3 acre property when the state has almost 100 acres to do the same thing and pay for all of this. I still do not quite get why we're doing this.

Moderator: Ok.

Unknown: That's not in this budget meeting.

Audience: Inaudible.

Moderator: That's not for tonight's discussion.

Ken Cornet: You're asking us to give you the money for this. You're asking us for \$50,000 for this...and you're not telling us what it's about.

Unknown: Inaudible.

Ken Cornet: No you didn't. I still don't know what it is.

Nicholas Solley: You came to most of the meetings and I think that you do understand the complexity of the situation.

Ken Cornet: What is it? Please explain.

Nicholas Solley: I'm not going to get into why we're having a boat ramp at our town beach. That has been gone over a million times...

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: OK, I want to give everybody a chance to ask a first question before we go back to people to ask a second one. Valerie.

Valerie Friedman: West Morris Road. I just have a general question. What happens if the grants don't come in as anticipated? How does that impact the budget?

Nicholas Solley: The grants that we have offsetting some of these capital items are for the most part sure...we know that we have in effect credit with the state for our LoClp grants. We know that we have so much that we can draw from. We get...annually tallies at how much we have there. So the LoClp is assured.

Audience: Inaudible.

Nicholas Solley: ...is another...We have monthly tabulations of our revenue account. We draw...our road program. So this is not, we're not drawing off of grants that...might be changed in a matter of months.

Audience: Inaudible.

Moderator: The nature of the motion itself is to approve the net figure. So I think that the motion is protective for all of us. Yes, in the rear, hold on for microphone.

John Buonaiuto: Shearer Road. Continuing on, two questions. Suppose there are cost overruns. Where's that money going to come from? And...beach play area, \$13,000 and zero was appropriated. If we can afford, is that for beach equipment for the kids, or? If we can afford \$200,000 for the boat ramp, why can't we afford \$13,000 for the beach?

Moderator: Nick.

Nicholas Solley: Where you see a capital project and you look across to the right and in the net you see zero, these are projects that we're putting out to the public to look at. We don't plan on doing them this year, but every year not only... make up a capital budget for the upcoming new fiscal year, but we have to go out five years and create capital budgets for the next year and...five years. So, the tennis court resurfacing, beach play area, this is in the works, but this is not being funded this year.

John Buonaiuto: Why not do that with the first line item, the boat...house...?

Respondent: Because there is...inaudible...We're looking at the whole of the remainder of the beach property, so there may be play area included in that coming out of that \$200,000 we talked about. But it didn't seem prudent to fund the play area if we don't know what we're going to do with the whole property.

Moderator: OK...

Unknown: I have a technical question. I see people have problems...

Moderator: Hold on.

Peter Tagley: ...we have...line items...if you have a problem with any one of these line items, could a motion on the floor to reduce that particular bottom line number by whatever it is...can you amend any line item...capital...or do you have defeat the motion that's placed on the floor? I'm asking this question because there's been a lot of verbiage here talking about line items. If you're having a problem with a line item, put

a motion on the floor to amend it or put a motion on the floor to defeat the proposed Nonrecurring Capital rather than sitting here and having a lot of discussion. Can you do that? If someone's not happy with a particular line item, Capital Nonrecurring Fund, motion on the floor to amend the Capital Nonrecurring...specifics.

Moderator: Thank you, let me answer that. My answer to that is independent of the merits of the question, but the answer is from a Robert's Rules viewpoint is yes, you can. If an amendment to the motion is raised and seconded, I will rule it in order based upon Robert's Rules. Any other questions?

Rex Swain: I live on South Street. I guess I can say I'm not either for or against this boat ramp project mainly because I don't know what it is yet and the new committee has just been formed to decide what the remainder of the boat/beach project is. And, I've heard Mark Lyon say several times that they want to determine now what the total project is before going forward. I think that's terrific. What I don't understand and what I think a compromise that might make everybody feel better about this is why the Selectmen are being awfully cagey about the approval process for this project. Mark says we're going to have a completed plan and then I believe Mark said we're going to have a hearing. And then Nick said we're going to have a public hearing. And then Mark said we're going to present it to the public and then said the committee would decide. Now this committee has been formed by the Selectmen and it seems to be that they're really evading their responsibility in pushing this down on some committee. What, I really think that if the Selectmen would simply say that we will, once we have a plan, we will bring this to a town meeting. And we won't just say well it was approved at the town meeting because it was approved in this part of the budget. But, that we will have a town meeting. It doesn't need to be a special town meeting. The next town meeting, the specific agenda item and say if the voters of Washington want to spend what we now think is roughly \$400,000 completing this project. I think that as long as everyone is saying...approvals...maybe we need zoning approvals, maybe we need, I don't know what they need. I would like to see...verbally said it tonight that it will bring this to a town meeting that everybody will calm down about it.

Moderator: Does anybody wish to comment on that or should I move on? From the Board of Selectmen?

Mark Lyon: I have no reservations about bringing that to a town meeting. I cannot speak on behalf of the committee or the board of Selectmen, but it is obviously a point of contention with a number of people. I think a town meeting to vote on it, whether it's been funded to Nonrecurring Capital or not, it's a good idea and I would support that.

Moderator: Dick.

Richard Sears: Where to begin. You know there's a whole lot sense to getting the people of the town to support a \$400,000 project because it's your money and it's my money. It's our money. That's the way it's always intended to be...fund any part anywhere...on any of these motions through phase one of the boat ramp that this...widely representative of we the people...stand up here and make an...plea and say this is going to be a great thing if you support it. His wife is in the hospital and he couldn't be here. I know that he would stand up and say give us time to work the plan. We have...you about the protecting the beach. We, meaning the committee...most eloquent about this. And, a finished...will be presented in toto...on that. And it cannot be done, or any part of it be done...that's supported by you. Whether it's at a special town meeting or the next...meeting, after it's all together, the remainder of the amount of money next year...to finish the project, yea or nay. It's the people's park. It's one of the two gems that we have for recreation in town that the public owns. The other is the Titus Road property which is being prepared for use and this one. And the beach looks to be...regular basis...and the cottage facility and the safety facility, the lack of...and the multi-use that's already...vastly improved. The draining...is wrecking the beach...that will be...The children's play area...\$13,000 will probably be as much as...the overall plan of this very fine and beautiful park. You will see it and know the number before you vote because it's your taxes, not mine. It's not a...as some of you are suggesting. It will come to the people.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Michael.

Michael Jackson: Let me just add one sort of historical practical fact. We had a capital budget and we're trying to set a tax rate every year. What we try to do is even things out so that your tax rates don't go up a lot in one year. The easiest way for us to do that with capital items that we know are going to occur over a long period of time. We've got bridges we know are going to have to be built over a five-year period of time. We appropriate in the Nonrecurring budget every year...\$125,000 for bridges. The bridges aren't done for three or four years. By the time you get there four years after the fact, rather than approving a \$500,000 or \$600,000 item, all you have to approve is \$125,000 and we're done. We evened it out over time. Now we do that also with fire trucks because they are so expensive. They cost \$4-\$600,000. Rather than have them in each year, we'll...over a couple years. So we'll spend \$200,000 a year. This project falls in the same thing. We know that something is going to happen of some significance. So, what we decided to do and what the Selectmen suggested was let's take the first phase of it (which is really the second phase the way we're describing it) the \$200,000. We know we'll get a grant. It's net \$50,000. Let's put it in

this year's budget. Then next year we're going to have to worry about the rest of it and the whole project. So there's nothing unusual about what's going on. What we're doing is evening things out over a long period of time. It's in your interest for us to do that because you won't get wild swings in the Nonrecurring Capital Budget, which isn't in your interest, unless you like mill rates to go up a mill or mill and a half in one year. I don't think that's in anybody's interest. And we've never tried to do that. So that's the historical context in which this occurs.

Moderator: I promised that the gentleman in the far...

Jerry Allen: West Mountain Road. Peter Tagley brought up a very good point and you folks up front confirmed that there can be amended line items in this budget. If we get into that tonight it will take a very long time. My question is, is it in iron that this budget has to be approved this evening? Could it be revisited and re-voted on?

Moderator: ...speaking as the moderator, I would certainly like to resolve each of the four items we have as business tonight. I...possibly can. The night's still young and I'm prepared to stay here all night long...

Audience: Inaudible.

Moderator: The lady in the back, thank you.

Anne Potter: Old Litchfield Road. Having participated in this project before, I'm going to say first thank you to the individuals who have worked on this process and giving their thought we are considering tonight. I think that we need to have faith in the individuals that we've elected to be...

Audience: Clapping.

Anne Potter: And, I think as well, that we need to be careful and kind in the way that we approach our questions about the work that we're doing here as a community. All of this is important to us as a group and the consideration we give tonight is absolutely vital to the community. Thank you.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: In the front.

Kathy Gollow: Kinney Hill Road. I just wanted to say that this is basically the same format that's used each year for the town budget. And I want to make everyone aware that the town has a purchasing ordinance. Any expenditure over \$6000 or estimated to

be over \$6000 has to go out to bid. So invitations to bid are sent out all the time. We have \$35,000 in there for a highway truck. We have not yet...how much that's actually going to cost. It's the estimate of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. That hopefully would cover it. But, that has to be put out to bid and there's nothing that I've ever seen is trying to be slid by...

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Also, when I...with a smile on my face when Dick said that...expenditure for this project would go to town meeting. I've just been informed that statement is in the minutes of this tonight's proceedings. Over here...

Peter Arturi: Shearer Road. I don't think any further discussion is going to change anybody's mind therefore I move the question.

Audience: Clapping and inaudible.

Moderator: Do I have second...?

Audience: Second, second [Moderator recognized Greg Seeley.]

Moderator: We have a motion to move. It's been seconded, so we're going to vote on the sub-motion of moving the question and thereby ending debate on this. In order for that motion to carry, two-thirds majority that is in favor of moving the question and ending debate is required. So all in favor of moving this question and ending the debate, please say aye.

Audience: Aye.

Moderator: Those opposed?

Audience: Silence.

Moderator: I guess it's more than a two-thirds majority, so we are now going to vote on the motion. The primary motion, NONRECURRING CAPITAL FUND:
RESOLVED: That the 2007-2008 Nonrecurring Capital Expenditures Budget be approved in the net amount of \$1,069,603. That motion...seconded. With that all in favor of that motion, please say aye.

Audience: Aye, aye.

Moderator: Any opposed?

Audience: Nay, nay.

Moderator: Please note that there were several, perhaps as many as ten, that were opposed. Thank you.

Moderator: On to the third motion. Who's going to make the third motion?

Wayne Hileman: Good evening everyone. Those of you who don't know me, I'm Wayne Hileman and I'm chairman of the town's Housing Commission. At this time I would like to move the following with regards to:

ELLSWORTH APARTMENTS: RESOLVED: That the Town Ordinance originally enacted on May 23, 2002 and granting a full tax abatement for seven affordable rate rental units owned by the First Congregational Church at Ellsworth Apartments at #16 Bee Brook Road be amended to reduce the number of affordable rate rental units to four, thus allowing this building to be taxed at 43% (3/7) of its assessed value.

Moderator: Thank you very much Wayne. Do I have a second to that motion?

Phil Farmer: Second.

Moderator: I see Phil Farmer in the back.

Moderator: Would you present a little bit of background on this?

Wayne Hileman: Yes, thank you. As many of you know, the Congregational Church has owned the Ellsworth Apartments and offered them to the community as affordable apartment rentals for upwards of thirty years now. They've done so as a mission of their congregation. About five years ago, in fact almost exactly five years ago to the day, in this very room, this...body of the town meeting granted a full tax abatement on the Ellsworth Apartments in light of the fact the church had been renting those apartments as affordable and in fact were not making any money and that were probably losing some money on them. Recently the congregation has decided to begin renting three of those seven apartments at market rate. The congregation felt through it's church council that it was inappropriate for the church to be awarded full tax abatement on that property if in fact three of the seven apartments were not being rented as affordable. So the church has approached the town in amending this tax abatement to reflect their desire to begin partial payment, property tax payments on a prorated basis. There's also one other thing I should say just for the record. As well as being the Chairman of the Housing Commission, I'm also a member of the Congregational Church. In fact, I sit on the church council. So that may put me in an

awkward position of actually sitting on two on advisory bodies at the same time. I want to assure everyone that in this matter and in every matter that comes up with Ellsworth, that I actually interests of the town in this matter and not the interest of the church. In fact, in any meetings of the council or congregation that involve Ellsworth, I typically recuse myself.

Moderator: Thank you, very much. Just to confirm that, I have here a letter from the First Congregational Church dated April 5th where they specifically initiated this request...abatment to their disadvantage. Are there any questions about this motion? Valerie?

Valerie Friedman: West Morris Road. Wayne, do the four units that are affordable now have deed restrictions on them that allow them to count towards the town's quota? ...previously...

Wayne Hileman: No, as of yet they do not have deed restrictions in place despite my repeated attempts to acquire those deed restrictions. As of tonight, I still do not have them in hand although they have been trying to get them in place. And in fact, the church has asked on several occasions when they would be ready so that they could sign them and make them valid.

Valerie Friedman: ...I'm confused by that.

Wayne Hileman: I wish I could be less confusing with the answer. I can only tell you what I have done as chairman of the Housing Commission. I have made several requests to get those restrictions. I have met with the town's attorney. I have even supplied the model deed restriction language that the state supplies the commission, but as of yet, I do not have those documents.

Moderator: ...I want to read before...the letter I referred to...

"....Phil Farmer, the...council to the Board of Selectmen, Washington. Gentlemen, as you may know the congregation...First Church had decided to implement the deed restriction on the Ellsworth property and would have had four of the seven apartments being officially denoted on the town's affordable housing inventory. This document is nearing completion and will soon be filed with the Town Clerk."

This is dated April 5, so the church has...and in writing it stated its intention to get the deed restriction. I'm not sure what the delay is, but I think with this documentation, it would reasonable for us to make the assumption that the restrictions will in fact occur. If it doesn't, we can visit it again at a future town meeting.

Yes, in the back.

Edward Griffiths: Litchfield Turnpike...back to the statement. It has been known...over two-thirds of their income for accommodation...at Ellsworth and the...increasing taxes there would take increased rent and make it less affordable.

Moderator: I can tell you that for my own that the reason...that this town sets, they've got a...of what is affordable and what isn't. This is done by the State of Connecticut and it is what it is. In order to get deed restrictions and get these units certified, they must meet that definition of the state's standard.

In the back there, Mr. Farmer.

Phil Farmer: Popple Swamp Road. I wrote the letter requesting the change in the taxes, the tax abatement. Council of the First Congregational Church of Washington has had this as a mission. The last five years we've had a tax abatement on this property. In terms of certifying these four units, we have...consultation with the town directed through Wayne Hileman of trying to get the paperwork done. I have talked to him several times over the last year in trying to get it done. Any delay is not as a result of the First Congregational Church. The paperwork is just not ready. We will sign it...ready and actually we have identified those on our, for our annual meeting to recertify four units...and hope they will be ready at that time. Thank you.

Moderator: ...to the rear, thank you.

Linda Frank: West Shore Road. On behalf of the town I'd like to thank the First Congregational Church for making four units of affordable housing available to our town. It's a great gift.

Moderator: Thank you...

Rex Swain: South Street, again. I'd just like to point out in case anybody missed it at the beginning, that prior to now, we have been getting no tax revenue from the Ellsworth complex. Under this resolution, the town will be receiving 43% of the taxes we might get from a strictly commercial operation there. So I think that's a great improvement and I think that if the church is willing to go on record here...the meeting is proceeding with that, that I think that's a great idea.

Moderator: Thank you. Any other questions or comments on this issue? OK, I think we're ready to vote then. Let me read the motion again.

ELLSWORTH APARTMENTS: RESOLVED: That the Town Ordinance originally enacted on May 23, 2002 and granting a full tax abatement for seven affordable rate rental units owned by the First Congregational Church at Ellsworth Apartments at #16 Bee Brook Road be amended to reduce the number of affordable rate rental units to four, thus allowing this building to be taxed at 43% (3/7) of its assessed value.

That's what we're voting on. All in favor of that motion, please say aye.

Audience: Aye.

Moderator: Any opposed.

Audience: Opposed.

Moderator: I note one opposed. Thank you very much. We're onto the last item on the agenda, which is the Board of Education representative nominations. Do I have any nominations for the Board of Education? Yes. Hold on for the microphone.

Liddy Adams: My name is Liddy Adams, 164 Wykeham Road and a life-long resident of Washington.

I have the honor and pleasure of bringing forth the name of Michelle Gorra for a second term of service on the Region 12 Board of Education.

The first time I came before you with Michelle's bid for election, she was new to our community and was very busy getting her family settled here in town. Having only been in town for several months, she got involved immediately with the schools and jumped right in to a seat on the Board. Michelle got involved because the education process is one of her passions and she cares tremendously how that process evolves here in town.

Most of you here in the room read almost daily one or more newspaper accounts of the many Board of Education meetings, and the often repeated "quotes" that round out the articles. One of the things I admire and respect about Michelle Gorra, is when she is quoted, she is level-headed, polite, to the point, and thoughtful and respectful of the other members. That probably sounds like the conduct section on a student's report card - but her demeanor and focus at the Board meetings has gained the respect of her fellow members and those in the audience. Michelle doesn't maintain an agenda, personally or otherwise. Her willingness to chair the Communications Committee comprised of herself and two Bridgewater representatives speaks for itself - most of us wouldn't dare take on that responsibility for fear of what might not get accomplished. Michelle has chosen to help where she is needed.

Anyone who has attended a Board of Education meeting knows how long into the night they sometimes venture - subcommittee reports, executive sessions, stalemated votes, an endless list. Yet Michelle still has time to raise her two daughters, work many hours for the family business, and participate in community activities - well after a past midnight Board meeting. She has earned my utmost confidence that she is the best for a seat on the Board of Education and is more than willing to take on a job that most of us would consider thankless. She more than deserves your vote and support here this evening.

I submit to you Mr. Moderator, and to the Voters here tonight, the name of Michelle Gorra, candidate for a seat.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Thank you very much. Are there any other nominations? Yes?

Daniel Sherr: I am Dan Sherr. I live at 19 Cook Street here in the Depot and I place in nomination Tony Bedini for a position on the Board of Region 12 Schools. There are four fundamental things that you need to bring to this role. The first of these is a real commitment. What we are talking about here is an enormous expenditure of time. And what you need is someone who will stay with this over an extended period of time. The position we are bringing this person to actually spans four years. The interesting thing about Tony is that when he initially indicated some interest, one of the comments was, "You better pay your dues." And he has done that over the last eighteen to twenty-four months by virtually attending every meeting of any importance in the current Board. That's without being a member of the Board. And he has been an active participant in the conversations around all of those issues.

The second thing that we need is dedication. These are really significant and major questions that are raised. They need to be researched and Tony's science background makes him almost comfortable with doing all of the detail and the legwork that is important to really understanding the range that needs to be considered as choices are made.

The third thing that is required, because of the unique constellation of people on the board, is the ability to function in a team environment with an attitude that...and the region rather than my own personal interest. And Tony's experience here the last five or six years in town in a variety of areas has certainly shown him to be an important team player.

The last thing that you need clearly is a sense of humor. And Tony, while it's a quiet one, brings that to all of the conversations that are called at the Board level as well as

all of the towns. So I am very proud to be able to place Tony Bedini's name in nomination for a position on the Region 12 Board.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Are there any other nominations?

Sheila Anson: We need a second to this nomination...nominations for Gorra.

Moderator: I don't believe we do need a second. Are you sure of that?

Respondent: I think we need a second?

Moderator: I'll tell you what. I don't think a second is necessary, but it's safe to have one...compared to needing one and not having it. So, let me settle that and ask for a second on Michelle Gorra's. I recognize John Millington as a second. And do I have second on Tony Bedini's. I recognize Jane Boyer. Thank you very much. We'll all check out Robert's Rules afterwards, but we've covered the bases here. Are there any other nominations? OK, I would like to make a motion that the nominating process be closed.

Audience: Second, second.

Moderator: ...second on the nominating process...

Audience: Inaudible.

Moderator: OK, the nominating process is closed. Before we vote, I just want to give...if they're here...either of the two candidates a chance to say a few words to you, if either or would like to...Would you like...to come up or not necessary?

Audience: Come up...

Moderator: Thank you.

Audience: Clapping.

Michelle Gorra: Hi, I'll just be very brief since there are only two of us. I just wanted to let everyone know that I really don't see my work on the school board as thankless. I see it as one of the most valuable things I do. It's an investment in my children's future and an investment in this town. We have a fantastic school system. We have wonderful teachers and you can compare Region 12 using...and we rank right up there with the best...taxpayers have supported this region. I feel very strongly that you will

continue to do that, no matter how some of the political issues are resolved. We're going to keep working on that and the role of the Board is to make sure that the education continues regardless of what happens with the building. So I just want to thank you very much for supporting...

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Thank you. Would Tony like to come up if he's here? Thank you.

Audience: Clapping.

Tony Bedini: Well thank you all very much...Several months, I don't want to keep you much later, several months ago, realizing that the town spends 65% to 70% of it's budget on education, I decided that...go find out what they do. And so that's what started my going to the meetings and low and behold, it's a lot more than what's written up in the paper. There's a lot interesting information there. It's wonderful to see them bring in the children from elementary, middle, and high school to report on their projects and so forth. One of the reasons I am interested in this is because having worked in a scientific background, it is absolutely important for our country, for our town, for everyone that we stay ahead of the curve. The technology curve is a very, very steep one. So we do need the very best education we can possibly afford.

Now, I also live here and also pay property taxes and so I think that our job, my job, is to provide, to make sure we provide the very best education we can and getting the best bang for our buck. So that's where I'm coming from.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Let me make it clear that we have two candidates running for two positions as representatives on the Board of Ed. So there's no competition here. I think we can do this on a...vote and by unanimous...vote for these great individuals for the Board of Ed in one motion. So we have a motion from the First Selectman and Jack Boyer made a second. Thank you. Is there any further discussion before we vote on these two nominees?

Richard Sears: How about we stand in support of these people?

Moderator: Sheila, yes, in the back?

Sheila Anson: I think you should just note Larry O'Toole did serve on the Board of Education and thank him very much for his service.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Let me just...who may not have heard, Sheila is noting the great service that's been done by Larry O'Toole and thanking him for his service...

Audience: Clapping.

Sheila Anson: ...granddaughter today, Christina Fernandez-O'Toole received the Stephen Reich Citizenship Award...he should be a very, very proud grandfather.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: OK, any further comment before we vote? OK, all in favor of the motion to elect Michelle and Tony as representatives, our representatives, to the Board of Ed, please say aye.

Audience: Aye, aye.

Moderator: Any opposed?

Audience: Silence (none opposed).

Moderator: Great, congratulations to both of you.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Before we adjourn, I'd like to read just one thing [email/memo from Irene Allen, Chair of Board of Education]...congratulations to both of them. [Statement reads as follows] "Because of procedural issues with posting one of the required notices, we have been advised that we should not proceed with the scheduled referendum on Juneth."

Moderator: So I would say that these two representatives do need all of our support.

Audience: Clapping.

Moderator: Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Respondent: So moved.

Moderator: Seconded?

Respondent: Second.

Moderator: All in favor?

Audience: Aye, aye.

Moderator: Thank you very much.

The moderator adjourned the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

End of Transcript

I, Sheila R. Silvernail, do hereby certify that the foregoing pages are a true and accurate transcript of the Town Meeting of the Town of Washington held on May 24, 2007, to the best of my ability.

_____ Dated at Washington, CT this 29th date
of May 2007.

Note: Copies of minutes, transcript, and audio recording of said meeting are available in the Office of the Washington Town Clerk.