

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Board of Selectmen
Minutes
March 5, 2020

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

Present: Selectmen Jay Hubelbank and Michelle Gorra.

Public: Chris Charles, Richard Schlossberg, Joan Lodsins, Leslie Anderson.

Call to Order: Selectman Jay Hubelbank called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. Jay explained that First Selectman Jim Brinton was not at the meeting due to his attending at a Memorial Service for Donald "Billy" Williams - a lifelong resident of Town and a life member of the Washington Volunteer Fire Department. Condolences to the family were expressed.

Approval of Minutes:

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the February 20, 2020 meeting of the Board of Selectmen as amended. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Michelle Gorra. Discussion: A copy of the amended minutes are attached to the end of these minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Communications: None.

Appointments/Resignations:

- **Appointment of Robert Tomlinson to the Cable Advisory Council: Motion:** To appoint Robert Tomlinson to the Cable Advisory Council to represent the Town of Washington until 6/30/2020. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Michelle Gorra and unanimously approved.
- **Appointment of Carole Matteo as a regular member of the Planning Commission: Motion:** To appoint Carole Matteo as a regular member of the Planning Commission until 12/31/2020. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Michelle Gorra. Discussion: Planning Chairman Wayne Hileman has requested this appointment moving Carole from an alternate position. She has shown interest – actively participating at meetings and has agreed to this appointment. The motion passed unanimously.

First Selectman's Report: The Selectmen reported the following on behalf of First Selectman Jim Brinton:

- **RRR Maintenance, Fran Hodges:** Mr. Hodges has gotten the appropriate permits to dump "clean fill" on his property in Washington. It has been explained to him that his dumping will be monitored by the DEEP and the Town's Health Department to make certain dumping occurs only on his property and continues to be clean fill only.
- **New Preston Cemetery:** The Board of Directors of the New Preston Cemetery has notified the Board of Selectmen that the Cemetery has several burial plots that belong to the Town of Washington. The Town purchased these plots over 50-75 years ago in the event a Town resident did not have the financial means for a burial – none have been used. The Cemetery is requesting the Town consider giving back these plots so that they may be sold for revenue – the main source of income for the Cemetery. Jim Brinton will contact Town Attorney Randy DiBella. If there are no legal issues, the final approval would have to be by a vote at a Town Meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **WiFi in the Depot:** Jay Hubelbank reported that the antennas at the Town Hall and Washington Primary School can transmit a signal as far as the Pantry on Titus Road with no repeaters. It is planned to install a repeater at the Washington Supply Company that should extend the signal to the GW Tavern. It is still hoped that the system will be operational by the end of the month. Users will need to agree to the terms and conditions when logging in. This signal will be separate from the Town's WiFi (Town Hall).
- **Job Descriptions:** Jay Hubelbank reported that the Board of Selectmen has reviewed the first drafts of the job descriptions and they have been distributed to staff for individual review. Selectmen will review with staff members prior to their being available as the final version. Once this is completed, they will be available to the public.
- **Region #12:** Jay Hubelbank reported that there will be an Open House at the Shepaug Campus (AGSTEM) on April 17, 2020 from 1:00-5:00pm. All facilities are currently in operation and being used by staff and students. Plantings and landscaping will take place early Spring. The project came in under budget. Michelle Gorra noted that although a section of the project was delayed by approximately three months due to funding from the State, it's completion is commendable.
- **Senior/Community Center:** Michelle Gorra reported that she has been visiting several Community Centers in the area. The Center is being discussed on many levels in Town. One of several objectives is attracting young families to Town.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Scheduling of a Public Information Meeting re: Calhoun Street Bridge:** the Town has scheduled a Public Information Meeting to answer questions and hear concerns for the repair/replacement of the Calhoun Street Bridge project on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 7:00pm at Bryan Memorial Town Hall. All residents, business owners and other interested individuals are encouraged to attend. Engineers for the project will be in attendance. Jay Hubelbank and Michelle Gorra spoke of the need to evaluate other bridges in Town for life expectancy and upcoming repairs that may be needed in the future.

Visitors:

- **Richard Schlossberg** attended this evenings meeting to alert the Selectmen of a "natural habitat state of emergency". Mr. Schlossberg explained that invasives are reducing native habitats to as little as 20%. The problem becomes more serious as it effects birds, animals, various tree species, etc. He is suggesting a Task Force be formed to look into the issue more deeply and to begin a plan for the removal of invasives. Both Jay Hubelbank and Michelle Gorra thanked him for his input and suggested that an information campaign also be launched – perhaps with the assistance of the Washington Environmental Council.
- **Joan Lodsin expressed** the hope that once the Job Description project is complete, that individual "titles" will be consistent.
- **Chris Charles** presented the Selectmen and those present with a synopsis of Peter Talbot's "Mill Race Road – A Civic Sustainability Project from 2010. In light of the discussion about the creation of a new senior/Community Center and its possible location at the old town garage site, it is imperative that the Town look at all aspects of the project including septic viability. The Depot Study, Flood Plain Study and Plan of Conservation and Development all have important information. Chris also expressed his support of Richard Schlossberg's concerns mentions above.

Adjournment:

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:20p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Michelle Gorra and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anne Greene
Selectmen's Assistant

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Board of Selectmen
Minutes-As Amended
February 20, 2020

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

Present: First Selectman James L. Brinton, Selectmen Jay Hubelbank and Michelle Gorra.

Public: Leslie Anderson, Joan Lodsins, Susan Smith, Chris Charles, Peter Talbot, Elizabeth Rea, Leclare Ratterree. **Press:** Lance Reynolds.

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 February 6, 2020 meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Michelle Gorra and unanimously approved.

Communications: None.

Appointments/Resignations:

- **Appointment of Ted Bent as an alternate on the Zoning Commission: Motion:** To appoint Edward (Ted) Bent as an alternate on the Zoning Commission to fill the vacancy that expires 11/2023. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Jim Brinton. Discussion: This appointment was discussed at the last meeting of the Board of Selectmen and was tabled until Zoning Chairman, Nick Solley, weighed in. The appointment is at the recommendation of the Democratic Town Committee. Ted has expressed his interest. Jim Brinton stated he has not changed his opinion on the subject but in order to move forward would give his support. Jay Hubelbank pointed out that the Board had followed the new policy it had approved and he believed this is a good step forward for the Board. The motion passed unanimously. Ted will be placed on the ballot at the next Municipal Election to complete the term.

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

- **RRR Maintenance** has again been dumping on property in Washington. The Attorney General's Office as well as the DEEP and Washington's Health Department are again involved. The DEEP has determined it to be "clean fill"; however, the Town's Health Department disagrees because of the size of the concrete blocks. The Town's Enforcement Officer has issued a cease and desist order. Regularly scheduled visits to the site will be scheduled.
- **Land Use Coordinator, Shelly White,** continues to compile Bylaws for the Land Use Boards and Commissions.

- **Bridges:** Jim Brinton explained that due to the amount of bridge work needing to be done in the Town, the budget for the next several years will be affected depending on the amount of funding from the State and Federal governments. **Rabbit Hill Road Bridge** informational meeting was well attended by residents who provided input. Cardinal Engineers is working with the Town and residents to address concerns.
- **Condolences to the family and friends of Tim Cole** who passed this past week. Tim worked tirelessly for the Town in the short time he was involved, particularly on the Plan of Conservation and Development and follow up to the tasks assigned in that document.
- **Condolences to the family and friends of Kathy Leab** who also passed this past week. Kathy was involved and dedicated to many organizations in Town and served on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Tasks assigned to the Board of Selectmen in the Plan of Conservation and Development:** There are 28 tasks assigned to the Board of Selectmen – 10 are currently being worked on or in the process of being worked on. Other items have been touched on in some way. The Selectmen will continue this work and will also ask the Boards and Commissions to do the same – reporting to the Selectmen 1 or 2 times a year. Each Board/Commission should maintain it on their agendas. Michelle Gorra reported that the Economic Development Committee is also following recommendations in the report and suggested that similar tasks be grouped and [prioritized]. She further explained that funds may be available once the Town is approved for sustainability certification.
- **Budget Workshops:** Michelle Gorra thanked all Departments and Commissions who have attended the Budget Workshops with the Board of Selectmen to discuss their individual budgets for the 2020-2021 fiscal years.
- **West Church Hill Road Update:** West Church Hill Road resident Elizabeth Rea, and Architect Peter Talbot, attended this evening's meeting to discuss concerns from abutting property owners. This discussion began in November 2019 when a section of West Church Hill road at the intersection with Lower Church Hill Road was paved – the entire road has previously been dirt. Since that time the road has been approved for scenic road designation by the Town. Peter and Elizabeth presented drawing, photos and maps of the area and provided the Selectmen with several proposed options including possible abandonment of the Road by the Town, or signage, remedial work to restore the paved section to dirt, etc. with the Town maintaining ownership. The Selectmen agreed to review and discuss the options presented along with consultation with the Town's attorney.
- **WiFi in the Depot:** Jay Hubelbank reported that a signal test was performed and the signal was "strong" from the Town Hall to the Pantry on Titus Road with no repeaters being used. Work to finalize the project will continue.
- **Region #12 Building Project Update:** Construction of all new buildings, additions and changes to the existing building is completed. The project is still coming in under budget. An open house will hopefully be scheduled in April following spring landscaping, etc.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Resolution: Special Education Services Center: Resolved:** That the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Washington endorses the proposal for the project entitled "NW CT Regional Special Education Services Center" under the Regional Performance Incentive Program referenced in Connecticut General Statutes, Section 4-124s. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank.

Discussion: The NW Hills Council of Governments in collaboration with EdAdvance supports and recommends endorsement by the Town. The motion Passed unanimously.

- **Juice Bar charging station:** The electric car charging station in the Plaza costs the Town approximately \$2500/year in electricity charges – presently users are not charged. Jim has met with a representation from Juice Bar who has recommended replacing the unit with one that would have two chargers available and users can use credit cards to pay for the charge. This would also discourage people from leaving their cars attached to the charging station for long periods of time as an idling charge would be added to the bill. The initial cost to the Town to replace the unit would be approximately \$6000. It is felt that this cost would be recouped in two years followed by income being generated for the Town. This is being suggested for inclusion in next year's budget.

Visitors:

- **Leslie Anderson** reported there are presently three candidates interested in filling the four vacancies on the Housing Commission.

Adjournment:

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:47p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Michelle Gorra and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anne Greene
Selectmen's Assistant