**TOWN OF WASHINGTON**

**Board of Selectmen**

**Minutes**

**April 21, 2016**

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

**Present:** First Selectman Mark E. Lyon, Selectmen David Werkhoven and Jay Hubelbank.

Public: Ralph Averill, Leslie Anderson, Joan Lodsin, Nick Solley, Jane Boyer, Tony Bedini.

**Call to Order:** First Selectman Mark Lyon called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

* **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the April 7, 2016 meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

**Communications:**

* **Eversource Energy** sent information regarding the Energize CT program explaining that through their programs and other initiatives, the Town of Washington and its residents saved $54,158 in 2015, and 251,474 Kilowatt hours.
* **Zoning Commission** has sent notice to the Town for two public hearings: 1) George Verrastro, Washington Food Market, would like to install a propane tank between the Liquor Store and the former Grapes in the Shade building; 2) 6 Green Hill Road is applying for a change of use. The Selectmen felt no action on the part of the Town was required.

**First Selectman’s Report:** First Selectman Mark Lyon reported the following:

* **Annual Town Budget Meeting:** The Agenda for the May 19, 2016 Annual Town Budget Meeting will be set at the next Board of Selectmen’s meeting on May 5, 2016. The Town Budget Hearing is scheduled for Thursday, May 5, 2016 at 7:30 p.m.
* **Re-designation as a Heart Safe Community:** thanks to the efforts of the Washington Ambulance Association, the Town has met the criteria to be re-designated as a Heart Safe Community due to the efforts to improve survival from sudden cardiac arrest. This designation is made by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program and the Office of Emergency Medical Services.
* **Earth Day Clean-up:** The Washington Environmental Council is sponsoring this annual event on Saturday, April 23rd from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. A dumpster is located in the front of the Town Hall for residents to deposit what they collect from road-side cleanups. Garbage bags are available in the foyer of the Town Hall. The dumpster will remain until Tuesday morning.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

* **Discussion of the proposed 2016-2017 Budget:** The proposed budget for the 2016-2017 fiscal year is available on the Town’s website. The Town’s Budget Hearing is scheduled for Thursday, May 5, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. Mark Lyon explained that due to the increase in Washington’s share of the Region #12 budget, some items in the Town’s proposed budget were decreased or deleted. Jay Hubelbank spoke of the need for the Town to re-address the school budget and explore the primary school issue (consolidation) and/or other options. He feels keeping the three primary schools open with the declining number of students in several classes is not cost effective. He feels the Board of Selectmen and Finance should attempt to project the number of students in the primary schools over the next 3-4 years. Dave Werkhoven expressed his belief that educationally these extremely small classes are not good. Discussion followed as to what the Region’s Board of Education is allowed to do with any surplus at the end of the year and whether or not the Town’s Boards of Finance have the right to make recommendations. Jay Hubelbank explained the Region can keep up to 1% and anything above this goes back to the Towns. Jane Boyer stated she understood the Selectmen and Board of Finance trying to keep taxes from increasing too much but feels it is not beneficial to cut items dealing with maintenance of the Town’s facilities, roads, sidewalks, etc. and that safety should be a major concern and priority. Joan Lodsin suggested getting the opinion of the townspeople regarding raising the mill rate to keep items in the budget. Mark Lyon explained this is the purpose of the Budget Hearing on May 5th.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

* **Funding request for Washington Depot signage:** The Economic Development Committee has recommended placing a sign at the intersection of Routes 202 and 47 directing people to Washington Depot. Tony Bedini explained his meetings with the State DOT for approvals (the final approval has not yet been received but should be forthcoming) and three sign companies for estimates. **Motion:** To approve an amount not to exceed $6,000 for the purchase of a sign from Ghi Sign Service to be installed at the intersection of Routes 202 and 47 as recommended by the Economic Development Advisory Committee. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.
* **Economic Development Workshop**: Thursday, April 28, 2016 5:30 p.m. at Bryan Memorial Town Hall. There will be a presentation by CERC (Connecticut Economic Resource Center).

**Visitors:**

* **Jane Boyer** inquired about the fence in River Park (along the river by the old Parks Drug). Tony Bedini advised that installation began today. She also inquired about guardrail replacement/repair in several places in Town as well as repair of the sidewalk in Bryan Plaza. Mark explained that Highway Director, Kevin Smith, was in the process of ordering to begin guardrail repairs. Tony Bedini stressed the importance of the townspeople attending the Budget Hearing and requesting funds be kept in the budget in order to maintain the Town’s infrastructure, removal of hazardous trees, etc. Joan Lodsin agreed that it may be time for the townspeople to agree to spend more even if it meant in increase in their taxes.

**Adjournment:**

* **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:18 p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Dave Werkhoven, seconded by Mark Lyon and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Greene

Selectmen’s Secretary