**TOWN OF WASHINGTON**

**Board of Selectmen**

**Minutes**

**July 17, 2014**

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

**Present:** First Selectman Mark E. Lyon, Selectmen Richard O. Carey and Jay Hubelbank.

Public: Chris Charles, Leslie Anderson, Tony Bedini, Nick Solley.

**Call to order:** First Selectman Mark Lyon called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

* **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the July 2, 2014 meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Dick Carey and unanimously approved.

**Communications:** None.

**Appointments/Resignations:** None.

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

* **Alden, Novak & Dodd,** the software provider for the Tax Assessor and Tax Collector, has notified the Town it will be retiring. The Town has signed a contract with Quality Data Services to be the new provider.
* **Homeland Towers** ha submitted their D & M report to the CT Siting Council. It will be voted on at the Council’s August 7th meeting. Homeland Towers will then be able to begin work on the necessary permitting through the Town for construction of the cell tower.
* **Recycling Contract:** Mark Lyon and Craig Nelson, Warren First Selectman, met with Winter’s Brothers to discuss using their facility for the Towns single stream recycling. The Selectmen feel at this time, both towns will most likely stay with the Murphy Road facility which currently handles our single stream recycling.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

* **Awarding of Bid – Clear & Grub – Town Highway Department:** Four bids were received for this project. Stone Construction and Towne & Aurell were the two low bidders and only $56 apart. Mark Lyon contacted both to determine when they could begin and how long they anticipated the job to take. Stone is able to begin next week (July 21st) and can complete the job within 4-5 days. Town & Aurell would be able to complete the job by August 8th. **Motion:** To award the bid for clearing and grubbing of 1.25 +/- acres on the Town Highway Department property to Stone Construction of Southbury, CT for $9,000. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Dick Carey and unanimously approved.
* **Awarding of Bid – Central Air Conditioning – Town Hall:** Three bids were received for this project. Mark Lyon and the Buildings and Properties Commission reviewed the bids. **Motion:** To award the bid for the installation of two stand-alone air conditioning systems to B & D Controlled Air, Corp of New Milford, CT for $19,641. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Jay Hubelbank. Discussion: B & D were the low bidders and have performed very satisfactory work for the Town before. Once the bid is awarded, CL&P will also review the project for efficiency. It was also recommended that the work be completed by late summer (if possible) in order that it can be fine-tuned, etc. prior to next cooling season. The motion passed unanimously.
* **IT Meeting:** Jay Hubelbank reported that he, Tony Bedini, John Gueniat and John Irwin and Bill Chin of Software Matters met to discuss present and future technological needs of the Town Hall including training of staff, changing the email system to Gmail, correct backups of information, internet access to the public at a reasonable cost to the Town and maintaining security. John Irwin will be working on several proposals and cost information gathering. The “committee” will meet again in late August. Chris Charles voiced his concern that the Town’s new website only contains information/ minutes for the past three years. Accessibility to information older than three years is not available – making it necessary to research this older information “the old fashion” way – paper files or by asking staff to go back in their electronic files. There also is a problem with some offices not being able to send electronic files through their email. The Selectmen agreed to contact Virtual Town Hall re: the years of information that was on the old website – is it somehow accessible?

**NEW BUSINESS:**

* **Highway Safety Grant – Speed Enforcement:** Resident Trooper Steve Sordi is applying for a Highway Safety Grant. If approved, the purchase of radar equipment and overtime hours over a six weekend period, would be 100% reimbursable. Jay Hubelbank voiced his concern that the speed limits set on many of the Town’s road are unrealistic and ticketing people is not right based on these speed limits. Mark Lyon explained that speeding is one of the largest complaints received in the Selectmen’s Office. The DOT has done numerous speed limit analysis on the Town’s roads and feel the posted limits are appropriate. This grant would give the police department the ability to enforce safer driving within the Town. Tony Bedini expressed his belief that speeding through the Depot is a major problem and concern. Chris Charles agreed and felt that if records of the speeds people are travelling could be provided, it would be very helpful in the Depot/Plaza Study conversations. **Motion:** To support the application of the Highway Safety Grant and to approve the signing of it by Mark Lyon. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Dick Carey. Jay Hubelbank voted against the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 2 to 1.
* **Tax Abatement Application re: property acquired by Steep Rock Association:** Mark Lyon explained per Connecticut State Statute 12-124, a Tax Abatement Committee needs to be formed for the Town of Washington. This committee has the right to abate taxes assessed by the Town. **Motion:**  As per CSS 12-124, the Board of Selectmen will serve as the standing Tax Abatement Committee for the Town. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Dick Carey and unanimously approved. Steep Rock Association acquired property on West Mountain Road in December 2013. The deadline for listing their properties for tax exemption status was September 2013 for the October 2013 Grand List billing. Therefore, they were billed the taxes for the new acquisition in June. Steep Rock is a tax-exempt organization and does not pay taxes on their other acquired properties. **Motion:** As the Tax Abatement Committee for the Town of Washington, the Board of Selectmen approves the abatement of taxes for 89 West Mountain Road which is owned by the Steep Rock Association. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

**Visitors:**

* **Chris Charles** inquired as to the status of the pedestrian bridge at Hidden Valley. Mark Lyon explained that due to the lack of response on the first invitation to bid for the concrete work and glulam decking, it was re-bid with a due date of tomorrow – July 18th. These bids will be reviewed by Mark Lyon, Steep Rock and Gray and Organschi (the company that designed the proposed bridge). The concrete work and decking is what will be covered by the $150,000 STEAP grant that was approved for the Town. Chris inquired what would happen if the $150,000 was not enough. Mark explained that the difference would be the responsibility of Steep Rock along with any additional costs associated with the construction of the bridge. They will need to make a decision by early August. If Steep Rock decides not to spend the funds necessary to construct their bridge, the Town will proceed with the $150,000 STEAP Grant money and build a pedestrian bridge along the Bee Brook Road Bridge. Use of the DOT Right of Way has already been approved for this.

**Adjournment:**

* **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Dick Carey, seconded by Mark Lyon and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Greene

Selectmen’s Secretary