**TOWN OF WASHINGTON**

**Board of Selectmen**

**Minutes**

**October 4, 2018**

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

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

Public: Tom Osborne, Bob Papsin, Steve Wadelton, Attorney Robert Fisher, Susan Branson, Chris Charles.

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

**MOTION:** To add subsequent business not on the Agenda. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Jay Hubelbank. Discussion: Agenda for the Annual Town Meeting and transfer of property at 52 River Road. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes:**

* **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the September 20, 2018 meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Dave Werkhoven and unanimously approved.

**Communications:** None.

**Appointments/Resignations:**

* **Resignation of Tony Bedini from the Planning Commission:** Tony Bedini submitted his resignation as an alternate on the Planning Commission effective September 24, 2018. **Motion:** To accept, with gratitude, the resignation of Tony Bedini as an Alternate on the Planning Commission. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

**First Selectman’s Report:**

* **Lake Waramaug Dam:** The new valve has been installed and the job should be finished next week.
* **Dirt Roads:** The Highway Department have been working tirelessly to maintain the Town’s dirt roads that have suffered numerous washouts over the past several weeks.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

* **Follow-up to a Land Use matter brought before the Board of Selectmen:** Stephanie Johnson attended the last Selectmen’s meeting and presented a letter regarding an Inland Wetlands Commission approval for Mr. Jay Kassis. Robert Fisher, Mr. Kassis attorney, attended this evening’s meeting to clarify the legalities of the work performed by Mr. Kassis – stating her concerns are unfounded. Steve Wadelton, Inland Wetlands Commission Chairman, further explained the sequence of events and that Mr. Kassis was entitled to the “agricultural exemption” because of what he intends to do with the property in question however, the process could have been handled differently. Mr. Wadelton submitted the following letter and asked that it become part of the record:

October 4, 2018

To The Board of Selectmen, and the residents of the town of Washington.

With regard to the recent letter concerning the activities of Mr. Kassis, and the associated actions of the Inland Wetlands Commission-recently printed in the Board of Selectman's minutes, it is my concern that the residents of the town that read said letter might be justifiably concerned, and unfortunately may not be familiar with the members of the Inland Wetlands commission. I therefore appreciate this opportunity to say a few words about them.

Dr. Charles LaMuniere, our senior member, comes from a long and distinguished career with the United Nations working in the third world. Mr. Bruce Bennett is a local attorney admitted to practice in the Federal Courts, several surrounding states, and the US Virgin Islands. Mr. Laird Davis retired from a career as an educator and administrator, and has previously served honorably on the region 12 Board of Education. Mr. Bob Papsin, the commission vice chair, retired from the CT DEEP and is currently an independent businessman here in Washington.

I wish to state here emphatically, and without reservation, that the integrity, fairness, impartiality, dedication to service, and professionalism of these gentlemen is beyond question, and speaking as the commission chairman, and honorably retired United States Army Officer, I can assure you that if this were not the case they would not be serving with me on the commission, and I will further state that Mr. Kassis can proudly stand beside all of them, as I do.

For anyone to imply that the actions of any of these men was "gutless", evidenced favoritism, and in violation of any law or regulations in this matter, or any other, would be disgraceful and deeply insulting were it not so laughable.

Thank you.

Respectfully



Stephen L. Wadelton

Chairman, Washington Inland Wetlands Commission

Selectman Jay Hubelbank took exception to Mr. Kassis referencing the Region #12 AGSTEM program in his plans to be approved for the “agricultural exemption”, and felt, that as a Commissioner, Mr. Kassis should have gone before the Commission before beginning work. Mr. Wadelton and Mr. Fisher both acknowledged that perhaps the best judgement was not used by Mr. Kassis but that he had acted in good faith. Mr. Kassis was sent a notice of violation, was fined and he subsequently paid the fine.

Susan Branson asked if there was a Code of Ethics for the Town’s Commissions. The Selectmen said there is no such Code and generally those serving on the Commissions serve honorably.

* **Transfer Station Update:** Jay Hubelbank reported that he has met with RZ Design Association and has received a proposal for the electrical upgrade needed at the Transfer Station for the compactors. Will have information to discuss further at the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Oliver Rubbish has sold their business to All American Waste. The Transfer Station will still accept recyclables from Town residents but All American Waste will be taking the roadside pickup recyclables elsewhere. Therefore, there will be less volume at the Transfer Station.
* **WiFi in the Depot:** Jay Hubelbank continues to work with EdAdvance. Will have information to discuss further at the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

* **Renewal of Contract between the Town of Washington and William T.P. Jenks, Municipal Building Code Official:** First Selectman Mark Lyon explained that Mr. Jenks has served the Town for numerous years. **Motion:** To renew the contract between the Town of Washington and William T. P. Jenks, Building Official, for four years. This appointment and contract shall be in effect until September 30, 2022. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Dave Werkhoven. Discussion: Jay Hubelbank expressed his feeling that he did not have enough information to know if the arrangement is in the best interest of the Town. At present, the Town pays “Jenks” for services at the rate of 74% of the Building Permit fees. Mark Lyon explained that Mr. Jenks covers all his own office expenses, including salaries, insurances, taxes, etc. for the Town and for his assistant(s) here in Washington. If the Town were to hire its own Building Official, it would most likely be a lengthy process, and more costly to the Town. The motion passed with Mr. Hubelbank abstaining.
* **52 River Road:** Mark Lyon explained that when the property located at 52 River Road sold and a title search was done, it was discovered that a strip of land that once was part of the railroad bed had been deeded to the Town and was, therefore, still property of the Town. A variance had been created many years ago to allow the owners of 52 River Toad to pass over the strip. The new owners could continue with this variance however would prefer to have the piece conveyed to them. This will need to be approved at a Town Meeting. **Motion:** To convey to John Haestad (buyer) .78 +/- acres as depicted on Property/Boundary Survey Map, for consideration of their payment of related attorney fees, subject to Town Meeting approval. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Dave Werkhoven and unanimously approved.
* **Annual Town Meeting Agenda: Motion:** To set the Agenda for the Annual Town Meeting as follows:The voters and electors of the Town of Washington are hereby warned that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. at Bryan Memorial Town Hall, Washington Depot, Connecticut to consider and act upon the following:
1. To set the dates for the annual Town Budget Hearing and annual Town Budget Meeting in May 2019.
2. To approve the transfer of property at 52 River Road, Washington Depot, CT 06794

Dated at Washington, Connecticut this 4th day of October 2018. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

**Visitors:**

* **Bob Papsin** asked that Selectmen and townspeople keep an open mind, particularly in regard to the above mentioned Inland Wetlands matter - everyone deserves a second chance.

**Adjournment:**

* **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:14p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Dave Werkhoven, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Greene

Selectmen’s Secretary