

January 6, 2011

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

Present: First Selectman Mark E. Lyon, Selectmen James L. Brinton and Nicholas N. Solley.

Press: Jack Coraggio – Litchfield County Times.

Public: Tim and Andrea Coakley, Bill Ahearn, Pat Devlin, Kerry Dorton, Robert and Simone Odom, Christine and Idam Afiouni, Ulrich Vilbois, Rocky Tomlinson, Chris Charles, John Meeker, Bill, Joslyn, & Danielle Pollock, Pat and Ed Werner, and possibly several other residents of Washington and Warren who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Call to Order:

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

Motion:

To add subsequent business not already on the agenda.

By Mark Lyon, seconded by Nick Solley.

Discussion – this additional item is to appoint a representative to the Region #12 primary school maintenance committee.

The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes:

Motion:

To approve the minutes of the December 22, 2010 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

By Mark Lyon, seconded by Jim Brinton and unanimously approved.

Communications: None.

Appointments/Resignations: None.

First Selectman's Report:

First Selectman Lyon reported on the following:

The Special Selectmen's Meeting with Consultant Dick Comi of Municipal Solutions, was held earlier this afternoon to discuss, along with members of the Cell Tower Committee, items of importance to be included in lease negotiations with Verizon for the proposed telecommunications tower on the Town's Highway Department property. Those present will be meeting again to prioritize issues discussed.

Blizzard snow removal and cleanup went well during and after the storm that hit the area December 26th.

OLD BUSINESS:

Scheduling of Public Information Meeting re: proposed AT&T cell tower at 17 Warren Road:

First Selectman Lyon again explained he would recuse himself from discussions and votes on the subject of this proposed cell tower as he is an abutting property owner.

Motion:

To schedule a Public Information Meeting, at which AT&T representatives and attorney will be present, for Saturday, January 29, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.

By Jim Brinton, seconded by Nick Solley.

Discussion – AT&T will be making their application to the CT Siting Council in February. The Selectmen felt that more concerned residents of Washington and Warren would be able to attend a Saturday meeting as opposed to an evening meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

Region #12 Primary School Maintenance Committee:

As part of the primary school lease agreement between the Towns and Region #12, a committee made up of representatives of the Facilities Committee, a representative from each Town's Board of Selectmen and Region #12's Facilities Manager, is to be formed to review the primary school repair and maintenance needs. It was unanimously decided that Mark Lyon would be Washington's representative.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

Visitors:

17 Warren Road Proposed Cell Tower was the subject of a lengthy discussion by many Washington and Warren residents. Pat Werner, Head of School for Washington Montessori, began by explaining that Montessori property is abutting the property where the AT&T tower is proposed and is within 1200 feet of the school. Although health concerns may not be proven, the perception of possible health issues, what might not be known, is a real concern. If the tower is constructed she feels some parents may take their children out of the school and perspective parents may no longer consider sending their children. This creates a large economic concern, in addition to the other concerns. She and as discussion continued, others present asked the Board of Selectmen to take a public stand against construction of the tower. Many expressed the opinion that they are not against cell towers but are strongly against this site. Other key points discussed:

- o this proposed tower does not comply with many of the Town's zoning regulations;
- o health concerns – proven and perceived;
- o there are environmental concerns in an area that the State has deemed sensitive to wildlife and eco systems;
- o decreased property values;
- o visually offensive & destroying rural character;
- o use of existing towers in the area on which to co-locate;
- o public safety;
- o ability of emergency vehicles and personnel to access the site;
- o etc.

Selectmen Brinton and Solley both explained the Selectmen's historical stand on cell towers on private land, expressed their understanding of all the concerns voiced by those present and the Siting Council's ability to approve the application regardless of zoning regulations or public sentiment/statements by the Town and it's Selectmen or money spent on engineers, lawyers, etc. Both offered to continue to listen, to gather more information from AT&T and others and the importance of working together and to continue this discussion at the January 20th Selectmen's Meeting.

Chris Charles expressed his opinion that the Town should develop a comprehensive plan for telecommunication towers rather than reacting to each application that is made - as has been the case over the past 12 years.

Adjournment:

Motion:

To adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m. as there was no further business for discussion.

By Mark Lyon, seconded by Nick Solley and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Greene

Selectmen's Secretary