

## • **February 22, 2007**

**Present:** First Selectman Richard C. Sears, Selectmen Nicholas N. Solley and Mark E. Lyon.

**Press:** Ann Compton-VOICES

**Public:** Valerie Andersen, Steve Waddleton, Ken Cornet, Joe Mustich, Larry O'Toole, Janet Buoniauto.

**Call to Order:** First Selectman Sears called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

### **Minutes:**

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the February 8, 2007 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Dick Sears, seconded by Nick Solley and unanimously approved.

### **Visitors:**

- **Joe Mustich** requested to speak later when discussing the boat launch.
- **Valerie Andersen** requested that First Selectman Sears attend tomorrow morning's Inter-municipal Agreement meeting in Roxbury. She spoke of a note she received from Estelle Bronson thanking her as a member of the Board of Education for exploring the Build-to-Suit option. Although Washington stated it would not join in the IMA until Bridgewater and First Selectman Stuart dropped their lawsuit and paid two past due bills to the Region (the lawsuit has now been dropped and one bill has been paid), Valerie felt the Town of Washington had nothing to lose by attending and owed it to the people of Washington to present all options. The Selectmen felt that Bridgewater did not meet all the conditions and therefore may not attend. (Further discussion takes place later in the meeting.)

### **Communications:**

- **Email from Kristen and Mike Dowler regarding possible cell tower placement in Marble Dale** was received and noted.
- **Letter from the Republican Town Committee requesting a referendum be held on the Town Beach/Boat Launch matter** "to enable all interested voters and taxpayers an opportunity to participate in voicing their opinion on this question."

**Appointments/Resignations:** None.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- **\*\*Motion: To set the agenda for a Special Town Meeting on March 1, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. as:** 1) To authorize First Selectman Sears to enter into a contract with the DEP for the board launch; and 2) To amend the Ordinance Tax Relief Program for Elderly and Disabled Homeowners. By Dick Sears, seconded by Nick Solley. **Discussion:** Dick Sears explained that in order to receive the \$100,000 grant from the DEP to implement the Lake Waramaug Agreement, a designee must be approved by the townspeople for the purpose of signing the paperwork. The Elderly Tax Relief Ordinance was passed at a Town Meeting and therefore any adjustment to it (as requested by the Assessor) must also be approved by Town Meeting. **Joe Mustich** asked to speak about the Boat Launch matter. He asked what would happen if the authorizing of Dick Sears to sign the DEP contract did not pass at a Town Meeting. Dick explained that the monies from the State would not be forthcoming and the Town would have to absorb

the whole cost. Nick Solley explained that both the Lake Waramaug Agreement and the monies have already been approved at Town Meetings and that this is merely a formality to allow Dick to sign. Joe read into the record a letter he received from Gina McCarthy, Commissioner of the DEP (attached to filed copy of these minutes). Joe feels that it is hypocritical for the State to be involved in building a launch on "the Town's one little acre" when it owns over 100 acres at the other end of the lake. He feels the Town speaks of affordable housing needs but where are the people who live in these affordable houses supposed to go? He, and others, feel not only will the boat launch take space away from the beach but so will Phases 2 and 3 (boathouse and caretaker's cottage) and perhaps all phases should have been presented together. The request for a referendum is because some may feel hesitant to stand up and give an opposing opinion at a Town Meeting and a referendum would afford them anonymity. **Ken Cornet** voiced similar concerns. **Valerie Andersen** felt the Selectmen should also look into the guidelines of the Heritage Lake program. Dick also explained that this entire matter has been discussed for years and goes back to Selectmen who were in office previously. He further explained that the beach and bathers area will not be affected by any of the current plans. **Janet Buoniauto** expressed her concern that all the facts are not known - in particular the total cost to the Town of the whole project. She also questioned the meaning of "public access" and whether this would also apply to "people" using the beach who are not Town of Washington residents. There was some further discussion on the amount of monies that may be coming from Warren and Kent (still to be determined) and as the LWA allows for unlimited access for car top boats, how will they be inspected. The Selectmen will research the Lake Waramaug Agreement and will have it available for future questions. Dick called for a vote on the motion. It passed unanimously.

**\*\*The date of the Special Town Meeting has been changed since this meeting to *March 8, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.***

- **Larry O'Toole**, Washington Board of Education member, requested to speak to the Selectmen about the IMA with the hope of encouraging Dick Sears to attend tomorrow's meeting. He strongly supports the right of taxpayers to have a choice. By attending the meeting and possibly joining into the IMA, it gives the taxpayers in all three towns the options to explore and make educated decisions. Dick assured those present that Washington would make certain the townspeople were presented with the options and information, that the ed specs for Washington have been met and that it is important for the people of Washington to be aware of the State reimbursement amount as part of the decision making process.

#### **Adjournment:**

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Dick Sears, seconded by Nick Solley and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Greene

Selectmen's Secretary