

# April 25, 2002

First Selectman Elaine Luckey called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

Present: Selectmen: Elaine Luckey, Nick Solley, Harry Wyant

Guests: Mario Smith, Waters Construction

Kevin Starchak, S&S Asphalt Paving

Holly Shannon, Simone Rourke - Concerned N. P. Residents

R. W. Fairbairn, Esq., First Congregational Church

Valerie Friedman

**Wykeham Road Bids:** The following bids for the reclamation and reconstruction of Wykeham Road were received:

Waters Construction, Bridgeport, CT \$189,676.50

S&S Asphalt & Paving, Southbury, CT \$214,407.60

Discussion regarding the clarity of the specifications was held. It was noted the bid specs are based on unit price and mirror the State D.O.T. specifications. If additional amounts of material are needed, the clerk-of-the-works would determine this during construction. A meeting will be scheduled with the bidders, the engineer, the selectmen and the clerk-of-the-works for review of the bids. It was also suggested that an engineer from the State D.O.T. be invited to this meeting to answer questions that may arise since this project involves a federal grant. Elaine will confer with the First Selectmen of Roxbury and Kent as they have completed similar projects with the State. Mr. Smith requested that a copy of Items 1-25 be sent to each bidder, as they are public information. He noted that usually it is not the total amount which governs the awarding of the bid but rather unit pricing. After review and compilation, the bids will be sent to the State for their review prior to being awarded.

## **Guests:**

**Church Street - Montessori Schoolhouse:** Holly Shannon and Simone Rourke, representing Concerned New Preston Residents, a group of residents from Hinckley Road, Church Street and New Preston Hill, noted their concern about the proposed housing project planned for renovations to the current Washington Montessori School. They wished to go on record that they are not against a housing project in that location. However, they are concerned with the proposed density and ownership. The Washington Community Housing Trust has proposed twelve rental units, which would increase the population of the neighborhood by 80-85%. The current residents have been given to understand that this is a non-negotiable matter in terms of the density of the units and this many units are necessary to make the project economically feasible in order to support itself in the future. They feel this increase in population is too much in a small neighborhood, which is already one of the densest in the Town, and that an anticipated minimum of 48 people is too many on this small site. Another concern is that the units will be rentals. They feel the community would be more positively influenced and more stable if ownership were involved. They asked the Selectmen for their assistance. Elaine Luckey noted while she supports the project she would also like it to be palatable to the neighbors. While the Selectmen noted their concerns, they also noted the Town does not have authority over the project. They noted the Zoning Commission would be responsible to review the proposal to insure that the Town's regulations are met.

**Referendum on Reapportionment for Region 12:** Valerie Friedman expressed her opinion that the Town should not voluntarily give up a seat on the Board of Education at the upcoming referendum on reapportionment while the 1990 Census Report is being reviewed. Elaine referred Valerie to Ron Harris,

Esq. of the State Office of Legal and Government Affairs and noted it is the understanding of the Town that we are required to follow the reapportionment procedure according to State Statute. If at a later date we can support information to show that an error in population has been made, we may then seek a change. The U.S. Census Bureau is currently reviewing the number of housing units at the Town's request; however, any changes they may make will not change our population figures.

Since the proposed reapportionment is based on population, there does not seem to be a relationship at this time. Bill Fairbairn noted during his seventeen years of tenure as a member of the Board of Education, members never voted in town blocks, but rather voted on the specific issues before them.

**First Congregational Church of Washington - Ellsworth Apartments:** Attorney William Fairbairn requested the Selectmen consider an abatement of property tax on the Ellsworth Apartments on Bee Brook Road on behalf of the First Congregational Church. He noted the Church is the owner of seven rental units that provide housing first to the low-income elderly and, then in terms of preference, other needy individuals. The Church had applied to the Board of Assessment Appeals for this abatement, however, were denied in accordance with CGS Section 12-81(7), which states that after July 1, 1967, housing subsidized, in whole or in part, by federal, state or local government or housing for persons or families of low and moderate income shall not constitute a charitable purpose. Bill noted the Assessor had referred them to CGS Section 8-215, under which the Church may request that the Town establish an Ordinance to provide for the abatement in part or in whole of real property taxes on any housing solely for low or moderate-income persons..... Such abatement shall be made pursuant to a contract between the municipality and the owner of any such housing, which shall provide the terms of the abatement, that moneys equal to the amount of such abatement shall be used for any one or more of the purposes stated in the statute and that such abatement shall terminate at any time when such housing is not solely for low or moderate-income persons or families. Attorney Fairbairn referred to current agreements made with the Washington Community Housing Trust relating to the Dodge Farm Affordable Housing project and the River Woods Senior Housing project. The Selectmen agreed and Bill will confer with Town Counsel David Miles regarding this matter.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the march 14, March 27 and April 11 were approved as submitted.

### **Correspondence:**

**Robinson:** A thank you note was received from Charles Robinson of Nettleton Hollow Road regarding attention given to drainage concerns adjacent to Clark Road. Nick will talk with Dirk Sabin regarding a project Mr. Robinson is planning for his property.

### **Old Business:**

**Shepaug Youth Ass'n.:** The Board will seek an appointee to represent them on this committee. Appointment will be made at the next meeting.

### **New Business:**

**Fire Commission Ordinance:** During review of this Ordinance, it was noted some areas appear to be obsolete. One area noted was that the Board of Selectmen must approve the fire chief. The Selectmen have been reviewing Ordinance with town counsel and the fire company. They will also review the fire company's constitution and by-laws and hope to suggest proposed amendments at the May town meeting for consideration.

**C.C.M. Litigation:** The Town has been asked to consider joining in litigation for municipal officials' liabilities and regulation of billboards. These will be considered further.

**Washington Cemetery, Inc. - Request for Storage Space for Records:** Noting the difficulty in maintaining cemetery records in good condition in the current cemetery vault because of dampness and inaccessibility during the winter, Kathy Gollow inquired if there might be space available in the town hall to keep these records. The Selectmen did not see a problem with this and will review possible closet areas.

**Boat Launch Fencing:** Nick Solley presented estimates from Perfection Fence Company to install a 6' or 7' high fence at the boat launch area (\$4,877 and \$5,549 respectively). The current fence would be taken down and the new fence would be relocated in order to allow additional parking in this area. Nick will complete necessary town land use applications on behalf of the Town.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Gollow  
Selectman's Assistant