**Board of Selectman**

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday June 27, 2013**

**6:30pm Clifford B. Green Memorial Center**

**Present:** Austin Tanner, Bob Kelleher, Drew Dionne and Melissa Bradley; Secretary

**Public Present:** Gene Michael Deary, Jeff Otto, Mike Gaudreau, Steven Phillips, John Filchak, Kim Conroy, Rick Ives and WINY radio.

1. **Call to Order:** Mr. Tanner called the meeting to order at 6:35pm.
2. **Approve Previous Minutes:** Drew Dionne made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes from June 18th. Austin Tanner seconded the motion. Mr. Kelleher requests the minutes reflect he did not attend the meeting because he was out of the county. Motion passed 2-1, Kelleher abstained.
3. **Public Participation:** Ms. Conroy asks if there will be public time later in the meeting to allow the residents to comment on business being done during the meeting. Mr. Tanner states this is public comment time. Mr. Otto requests the board to consider adding a public participation to the beginning and end of the meeting. Drew Dionne made a motion to amend the agenda to add public participation after item #12. Bob Kelleher seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.
4. **Appointments:** Bob Kelleher made a motion to reappoint Joe Cooper and John Harris to the Board of Ethics with terms expiring 6/26/2016. Drew Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0. Mr. Tanner states the health department board of director’s term will be expiring in October, and Pat McCormick is interested in serving again. There is also an alternate vacancy, Mr. Tanner asks for suggestions to fill it.
5. **Appointment of Tax Collector:** Mr. Tanner states the Tax Collector is appointed for a five year term, and it up on July 1st. Bob Kelleher made a motion to reappoint the Tax Collector for purpose of discussion. Drew Dionne seconded for discussion. Mr. Dionne questions a special meeting to be held to discuss this. Mr. Tanner states he did perform an evaluation and Mr. Kelleher was present. A letter received from the auditor was derogatory about her abilities and the things she does. Mr. Tanner spoke with the labor attorney and there are some conflicting opinions on what bases there is to not reappoint her. Backup is needed not to reappoint her. Mr. Tanner quotes a portion of the ordinance 2-4 “Should the Board of Selectmen find in their evaluation that in their opinion the Collector is not fulfilling the requirements of the position, they shall dismiss the Tax Collector pursuant to the Connecticut General Statutes as amended from time to time. Reappointment of a Collector for a succeeding five (5) year term shall be carried out after the evaluation and before the appointment expires. Failure of the Board of Selectmen to make a reappointment shall result in the Tax Collector’s renewal of a five (5) year term.” Mr. Kelleher states the question is can you decline appointment without just cause. He states it is a difference of legal opinion. Mr. Kelleher states he is not comfortable reappointing her and Mr. Dionne agrees. A long list of issues was given by the auditor such as the uncollected taxes have tripled since 2003 and the outstanding interest has increased from $50,000 to $350,000. Mr. Dionne receives a note from the public (Kim Conroy) and passes it to Mr. Kelleher who replies “It is on the agenda”, and passes it to Mr. Tanner. Mr. Tanner states this has been sliding for a while but it has not been documented until recently of her inability to perform properly. Mr. Tanner states he has been on her case for a few months and she has been doing better. Mr. Tanner is unsure of the ramifications if she is not reappointed, but that is a terrible reason to just reappoint her. The task of the Tax Collector is to get taxes collected in the best way possible and Mr. Tanner states it is on his back to be more aggressive and disciplinary. Mr. Dionne recalls two requests made of her at budget time that went unanswered. One was a postage amount figure and the second was a policy to be created on collecting taxes. The second was finally met with resistance. Mr. Kelleher suggests if she is reappointed for the First Selectman to require some kind of monthly reports of her activities. Mr. Dionne would suggest bi annual reviews be done and a diligent effort that the work be done in the proper way. Mr. Kelleher is conflicted because he is concerned of the ramifications, they may be significant. Mr. Tanner states he has not been happy with her abilities. Motion defeated unanimously 0-3.
6. **Discussion with John Filchak Regarding Position Study:** Mr. Filchak states he interviewed the employees and found most current job descriptions are accurate and employees have an understanding of their purpose and functions. A few highlights of suggestions he made were panic buttons in the Town Hall, a new phone system, and eliminating the time clock at the Town Hall because it is not productive and appears to be creating a wall of distrust. Mr. Filchak gives an overview of each department and his findings:
   * Board of Selectman Office: No continuity of management and would suggest a Town Administrator with good financial skills coupled with the retention of an outside firm or person to compile the Town’s financials.
   * Assessor’s Office: Needs a full time Assessor with a part time assistant.
   * Tax Collector Office: Mr. Filchak declines to comment due to the recent discussion in tonight’s meeting. He was not aware of any of the stated issues.
   * Town Clerk’s Office: An appointed position opposed to the current elected position would serve the complex office better. Functions are well understood with current staff.
   * Parks and Recreation Office: Increase assistant to fulltime and coordinate fully with the Highway Department on field maintenance and special events. Also on line registrations should be looked into.
   * Land Use Office: This office works with the building department and would benefit from a licensing/permitting software program. The Planner/ZEO position may need to be split in the future.
   * Highway Department: Department lacks a strategic plan or annual work plan. Safety training and personnel training should be provided.

Mr. Tanner states a bigger crowd may be needed to make these decisions. Mr. Kelleher disagrees with the Town Administrator and the process suggested to obtain this. The Selectmen would like to review the report and discuss at a later date.

1. **Discussion on State Police Consolidation Response:** Mr. Tanner received a response back from Commissioner Reuben Bradford concerning the dispatch consolidation. He states this will be a cost savings as well as improve public safety by taking troopers preforming dispatch duties to perform the hazardous duty functions they were trained for and are paid for. There will also be an emergency operator box outside the troop that will connect a caller to an emergency operator who will dispatch appropriate emergency personnel. Mr. Otto states consolidation is a necessary function and technology today has proven we can dispatch from different locations.
2. **Discussion on Proposed Regulatory Change to PSAPs:** Selectmen will review letter and discuss at a later date.
3. **Discussion on Tax Exemption for Certain Motor Vehicles:** Drew Dionne made a motion to table until next meeting. Bob Kelleher seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.
4. **Calls For Service:** No discussion.
5. **Single Family Dwellings:** No discussion.
6. **Other Business:**

* Mr. Dionne questions if Mr. Tanner has looked into the space at the School for the Recreation Department. Mr. Tanner met with Fran, the principal, not Dr. Berry, and she was under the impression this was only being used as storage space and was not aware of offices going in. This is used as a PTO and book room and she was not anxious to give up. The quote from WB Mason to renovate the upstairs at the Town Hall came in at $15,374 plus approximately $2,000 for installation and some electrical work will also be needed. Recreation and Planning were moved towards the back of the room so they could both utilize a table. Mr. Tanner called Dr. Berry and she could find a room in the school if it was needed and she would talk to Fran about it. Mr. Tanner states he has room at the Town Hall for Recreation and he feels it would be more efficient, there is a vault available for money taken in and it is less of a safety issue. The Town Hall is not handicap accessible but he feels is a good option. Mr. Tanner is concerned if the rooms at the School were used, it would put the School in a tough position and cause hard feelings.
* A walk through was done at the Clifford B. Green Memorial Center for renovations for the Probate Court. Bids are due next week.
* Presented to the Town Clerk was a “Petition to call a town meeting under section 7.1 of the Conn. General Statutes to require the Board of Selectmen to convene to a Town meeting to adopt an ordinance requiring Town meeting approval before entering into any agreement, contract or lease of any Town owned property or equipment with a value exceeding five thousand dollars”. The Town Clerk verified all signatures on the petition. It will be given to the Town Attorney for review.
* Probate lease was just received, will be reviewed.
* Interstate 395 will be renumbering the exits to match the mileage. We have the option of putting tourist attractions for the Town on the signs.
* A memorial is being built in Hartford’s Minuteman Park to honor our veterans and the public has the option of purchasing a permanent marker. The information will be added to the Town Website.
* Painting of the Town Hall will begin in August.

1. **Public Comment:**

* Mike Gaudreau, chairman of the Recreation Commission, reiterates he is against the Recreation Department moving at all. He feels, and the commission voted, that the Town Hall is too small to accommodate the department. The school seems to be the best of the bad situation. Mr. Gaudreau also asks that Mr. Filchaks statements be considered from the function study that the Recreation Department is in need of a full time assistant. The commission agrees and has voted for this, the department is growing and is in need or more help.
* Steven Phillips, Recreation Commission member, agrees with Mike’s statements and is also concerned with space. Spooky nights require much room for preparation and the sound tests will be an issue.
* Rick Ives, chairman of Board of Finance, met with Dr. Berry and that conversation was very different than what Mr. Tanner’s was. Dr. Berry promised a room with a separate entrance for Recreation and storage. Recreation requires two types of storage, equipment storage that is not used on a daily or weekly basis, and supply storage, that is used daily for programs and must be at their fingertips. Mr. Ives states he cannot support a plan to move this office to the Town Hall. There will be a huge noise disruption to the other departments and it appears Mr. Tanner is the only one for Recreation moving to the Town Hall.
* Kim Conroy, Board of Finance member, does not agree with the move at all. It is not efficient and there is not enough space for their needs. This seems to be a quick fix instead of looking at a long term solution for this department or any within the Town Hall as well as how the Town funds can best be spent.
* Gene Michael Deary, Board of Finance member, believes the instincts with the function study were in the right direction, but a larger body of people is needed to look at it. A next step needs to happen. Recreation seems to be better served at the School with more opportunity to grow where at the Town Hall; it will outgrow the space quickly.
* Jeff Otto urges the Board of Selectmen to do better planning of personnel matter and not to discuss them openly. He is disappointed on how the matter was handled tonight and the possible consequences.
* Drew Dionne is more in favor of investigating the school for Recreation after tonight’s testimonies. Moving to the Town Hall is not the solution, and he would not support the lease for the Probate if it meant Recreation moving to the Town Hall.
* Bob Kelleher agrees with Mr. Deary that the function study needs to be looked at by a larger body.
* Mr. Tanner will get all parties together; Selectmen, Recreation and Dr. Berry, to discuss the ongoing issue of the Recreation Department move.

1. **Approve Bills:** Drew Dionne made a motion to approve the bills. Bob Kelleher seconded the motion. Mr. Tanner will look into a bill submitted by Milone & McBroom that appears to be a double bill. Motion passed 3-0.
2. **Adjourn:** Drew Dionne made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:36pm. Austin Tanner seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted;

Melissa J. Bradley

Secretary