

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Waterbury Select Board  
Tuesday December 10, 2024  
Steele Community Room and Zoom**

Attendees: Roger Clapp, Alyssa Johnson, Kane Sweeny, Ian Shea, Mike Bard, Tom Leitz, Chris Viens, Tom Glore, Sandy Sabins, Katie Mandych, Katarina Lisaius, Lisa Scagliotti, Bill Shepeluk, Skip Flanders

Online: ORCA, Whitney Aldrich, Wade Hodge, Nora Miller, Brendan Shea

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

**Approve Agenda**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by K. Sweeney with the addition of discussion of flood preparedness under the Natural Disaster Response Coordinator position item. The motion was seconded by I. Shea and passed unanimously.

**Consent Agenda Items**

a.) Minutes of Meeting December 2, 2024

A motion to approve the agenda was made by M. Bard. The motion was seconded by K. Sweeney and passed unanimously.

**Public**

T. Glore noted that Harwood Budget discussion on Thursday inquired about a liaison to the school board, especially with regards to long term budget planning. M. Bard noted that the superintendent has joined periodically, but that there was not a formal liaison position.

C. Viens noted he had been in touch with School Board members and shared additional concerns about the school budget.

L. Scagliotti mentioned that MadRiverTV recorded a previous meeting with school board members and legislators that was referenced, and that there is an upcoming meeting Thursday 12/12 at 6 pm looking at the budget asking for public comment.

Al. Johnson noted that the Waterbury Roundabout is doing an end of year fundraising campaign, and that all donations in the month of December would be matched.

**Budget Overview / Questions**

T. Leitz provided responses and clarification based on questions posed at the previous meeting. He clarified that the budget includes a 3% Cost of Living for employees. This was the proposed raise for all employees and is about the rate of inflation. It was clarified that anyone can ask for a raise at any time. There are specific increased funding for a position in recreation, and in the library budget to increase a position from 37.5 to 40 hours per week.

Building Security System: The Board discussed the background for need of a stronger security system for the municipal building. T. Leitz proposed starting with a key card system to access the building, noting that it would support enhanced use of the building for staff, as well as those who rent or otherwise use the spaces.

The Board and T. Leitz discussed the situation around gravel hauling and trucking. The draft plan for Local Option Tax (LOT) includes \$150k for gravel and hauling, and the town wouldn't do the hauling ourselves. The gravel plan in the LOT is to buy an excess of material every other year. There is an additional proposal to buy a tandem 15 yd. dump truck.

It was noted that both the Cemetery Commissioners and Library Commissioners have endorsed the draft budget since its initial presentation. T. Leitz addressed concerns about part time employees being reliable for the cemetery and recreation, and noted that he felt the staffing was stable.

Conservation Commission: T. Leitz noted that the group sent a funding request for \$32,000. He had not had a chance to review the request with the Chairs of the Conservation or Planning Commission. Understanding Conservation Commission is subservient to the PC, Conservation requests need to be in alignment with the work of the Planning Commission.

The \$95k for health insurance: In the past, employees could choose a healthcare plan. Now all employees are all enrolled in the MVP Bronze high deductible plan, with the majority of the deductibles paid by the Town. The Selectboard decided to ease the transition to this new model by contributing further funding to account for the portion of the deductible owed by employees. This amount covers the Town's exposure for deductibles as well as the contributions.

Capital Plan: T. Leitz provided an overview of the items included in the document titled "2025 Capital Plan", which is for proposed Local Option Tax spending. The draft proposal includes \$55k for painting shallow end of the pool because it worked well, with the caveat that if the spring reveals it didn't weather well in the winter, it won't proceed. There is \$60k for planning and estimating for a recreation building. T. Leitz had conversations regarding this, and come to the conclusion this work is best accomplished by an architect, as opposed to an engineer, as that work will be cheaper and more informative with designs. The goal is sit with the group and have as that work of estimating a vision for what is needed and find a way to get to the bottom line of cost first. The \$60k cost is not something T. Leitz has been able to ground truth yet. The overall goal for the funding is to figure out what a reasonable cost would be for the design we're thinking. C. Viens volunteered to help with this work.

## **Recreation**

T. Leitz introduced recreation staff K. Lisaius and K. Mandych. K. Lisaius provided an overview of Recreation Programming. The Recreation Department team discussed right-sizing program enrollments to ensure safety of participants, moving up registration deadlines up to align with other programs, scholarship programs, and a need for more management level staff, as well as challenges in hiring generally.

The Board and Recreation Department discussed the potential development of pickleball courts in Waterbury, and discussed possible locations. The group also discussed the challenges in having Waterbury's recreation facilities and resources being geographically so spread out.

T. Leitz outlined the challenges and need for a more comprehensive recreation facility that would meet an array of community needs and wants. Previous designs and estimates were discussed by the Board and the public, which ranged from \$14-18 million after adjusting for inflation.

### **Local Options Tax (LOT)**

T. Leitz discussed how the Local Options Tax wasn't budgeted for this year, but because the bill was acted on by the Legislature and signed by the Governor quickly, the money came in sooner. He estimated that around \$800,000 in LOT will come into the municipality. The Selectboard has previously allocated \$160,000 to pay down debts and pay for paving on Guptil Road, as well as another \$100,000 for a Housing Trust Fund. The Board also discussed other proposed uses of the Local Options Tax, including the Highway Capital Fund.

### **ARPA Funding – Skatepark**

T. Leitz noted that there are some ARPA Funds remaining because the bridge repairs funded by a previous allocation came in under budget. All ARPA funding needs to be allocated by the end of 2024, and expended by 2026. T. Leitz noted that if there was a desire to provide funding to the skatepark through ARPA funding, that allocating it to the Recreation Capital Fund would allow it be used for other purposes if there were any funding delays.

M. Bard made a motion to allocate the \$32,022.40 of remaining ARPA funds to be expensed by 12/31/26 to be used for the mower and pool expenses for recreation. The motion was seconded by K. Sweeney and passed unanimously.

### **Approve Have Your Say Day schedule**

Al. Johnson made a motion to have "Have Your Say Day" scheduled on Sat. Jan 11<sup>th</sup> at 10 am and Mon. Jan. 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. The motion was seconded by I. Shea and passed unanimously.

### **TextMyGov**

T. Leitz provided an overview of the system. While the rollout has been planned for January 2025, it was determined that the potential flooding was a good excuse for an earlier rollout. By consensus, the Board supported the earlier rollout of the system due to the impending flood concerns.

### **Parking - Methodist Church**

It was noted that 51 S. Main St parking would be ending on January 9, 2025. T. Leitz, S. Flanders and B. Woodruff discussed a potential parking agreement for parking at the Methodist church. They outlined broad provisions for the agreement, including paving the lot in the next two years. The church would have the right to close for a special event, and not allow overnight parking. By consensus, the Board supported reviewing a MOU for parking before finalizing plans.

### **Natural Disaster Response Coordinator (NDRC) & Flood Response**

T. Leitz provided an overview of the natural disaster response and preparations for a potential flood event. He reported that public works feels good about culverts and that the Town is providing sandbags, which will be available at the ReStore and Town garage, as well as the Randall/Elm St area.

T. Leitz also provided updates about the TextMyGov software, and its usage in communicating risks to residents. The Selectboard agreed to have an additional check in at 7pm tomorrow. It was noted that the Governor is delivering a press conference at noon.

T. Leitz outlined how a Flood Response Coordinator position based on the input expressed from the Selectboard, Natural Disaster Preparedness Committee and CReW. There was discussion of the challenges of finding a person to fill the position.

K. Sweeney made a motion to authorize the municipal manager to create and advertise for the position. The motion was seconded by M. Bard and passed unanimously.

### **Next Meeting Agendas**

Selectboard agreed to host an Emergency Selectboard Meeting on **Tuesday, Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm** to do a review of Flood Preparedness.

For the next regularly scheduled meeting on Monday December 16, 202, Board members proposed the following agenda items

- MOU on Methodist Church Parking
- Review of Highway Budget with B. Woodruff

T. Leitz highlighted the outstanding material he receives from Highway Supervisor C. Clark. He also noted that he will send a spreadsheet to all Selectboard members to rank interest in proposed LOT topics to inform discussion at future meetings.

### **Adjourn**

K. Sweeney made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by M. Bard.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.