

The January 11, 2017, Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen was convened at 5:00 p.m. by First Selectman Ellen Scalettar in the Town Hall Central Meeting Room.

Present: First Selectman Ellen Scalettar, Deputy First Selectman Beth Heller, Susan Jacobs, Tony Anastasio, Joseph S. Dey and Maria Cruz Kayne

Present for staff: Town attorney Gerald Weiner, Administrative Officer and Director of Finance Tony Genovese, Assistant Administrative Officer Betsy Yagla

WOODBIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION – Superintendent Robert Gilbert

Mr. Gilbert reported:

- December was a busy month with holiday programs
- Fourth Grade Robotic Team won a prize in competition in Shelton
- Moving to close out the building project
- Presented Superintendent's proposed budget to the Board of Education in December
 - 2.32% increase to maintain current staffing programs
 - 1.67% increase for obligated education costs
 - .73% increase replacement of technology equipment moved from the Capital Budget to the Operating Budget. Of the 4.72% requested increase, 2.32% is related to maintaining current staffing programs.
- Current budget status is holding steady since December 6th, but still running a \$65,000 deficit due to anticipated outplacements
- Presenting strategic development to Board of Education next week

POSSIBLE SALE OF 31 ENOCH DRIVE

Ms. Scalettar said that public discussion at this time might affect the negotiations for sale of the property; asked for a motion to move into executive session pursuant to §1-200(6)(D), possible sale of real estate.

Ms. Kayne read the following statement into the record: *"I oppose the sale of the open space parcel at 31 Enoch Drive. When the sale of this land was originally proposed by Town Counsel on October 8, 2014, he was under the mistaken impression that the Greenway trail did not cross the property. He asked whether the Board of Selectmen wished to consider a sale of the property "IF NOT NEEDED for access to the Greenway Trail." As we now know, the trail uses the property extensively. In order to protect the connectivity of our town's greenway trail system, I believe it is important to retain this parcel.*

Furthermore, this land was purchased with open space funds. To sell this property would be a breach of trust and would set a dangerous precedent for all open space lands in our town that conservation commissions and citizens throughout the years have worked so hard to preserve."

Ms. Scalettar said that she believes there are some factual errors in the statement. In looking at the trail map the trail is only on a small corner of the property and actually goes onto someone else's property.

At 5:05 p.m., the Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Dey – Heller) to move into Executive Session, pursuant to §1-200(6)(D), possible sale of real estate. Invited to attend the meeting: Mr. Weiner, Mr. Genovese, and Ms. Yagla.

At 5:52 p.m. the Board of Selectmen returned to the regular meeting. No motions were made or votes taken in executive session.

DISCUSSION OF MATTER HEARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Scalettar said the Board reviewed the minutes of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance from the period of time when the property was purchased and discussed the opinion of Bond Counsel as to the ability to sell the property free and clear of any open space restrictions. Ms. Scalettar said that based on the discussion in executive session she entertains a motion to authorize the First Selectman to negotiate the sale of 31 Enoch Drive to the LaTronicas who own the adjoining property at 39 Round Hill Road.

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED** (Heller—Jacobs) to authorize the First Selectman to negotiate the sale of 31 Enoch Drive to the LaTronica's, who own adjacent property, 39 Round Hill Road, for an amount no less than \$190,000 with an easement for the trail depicted on the map dated April 6, 2016, which will be a part of the record of the meeting, and which trail as seen on the map traverses both 31 Enoch Drive and 39 Round Hill Road.

Ms. Kayne said that she has already read a statement that she is opposed to the sale of the property. But she understands that if the Town does not sell the property, the proposed purchaser has the ability to close the trail.

Ms. Scalettar said that she thought that based on the Board's conversation that Ms. Kayne understood that her earlier characterization was inaccurate. Ms. Scalettar clarified that the sale of the land will protect the trail which traverses two parcels, as depicted on the map: the currently owned Town parcel and the currently owned LaTronica parcel.

Ms. Scalettar said that the goal is to preserve the trail people have been using. When the property was originally purchased there was an easement for a trail but no one uses it because it is very steep and very close to the LaTronica's home. This proposed easement would be a slight variation which will create a legal connection of the Greenway.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: Aye – Anastasio, Dey, Heller, Jacobs, Scalettar
Nay - Kayne

Mr. Weiner addressed Ms. Kayne saying that the statements she made at the beginning of the discussion are completely untrue, and that she had attacked his creditability; he requested that she retract the statements.

Ms. Kayne said that her statement contained the facts that she found to be true so she will not retract it.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

George Giering, 8 Crestview Drive – referred to a letter from the Town requesting that as President of the Crestview Association he sign the letter affirming that the Association assumes all future costs of maintaining the drainage ditch. Mr. Giering said that he will not sign an agreement that obligates current and/or future residents.

He also asked that all the water run-off from the Elderslie Development be directed to the Elderslie retention basin instead of the current arrangement where half of the water is directed down the hill eventually ending up in the Crestview drainage ditch.

Ms. Scalettar said that she would discuss the matter with Mr. Gilbertson.

Martha German, 1170 Johnson Road – she thanked the Town for the quick response and repair to the door when the Old South School was broken in to. Nothing was stolen. She said that she is requesting that the Police perform a regular and more thorough inspection of vacant town buildings.

David Lober, 35 Wepawaug Road – re the proposed renovations to the “old Center School” (The Center) – he questioned the square footage of the proposed police department renovations and the cost for a building that still would not be ideal. He also questioned the proposal to renovate the Senior Center, when what is really needed in Town is a Community Center for all ages. It is better to spend the money to turn the club house into a viable community center than waste money on the “old center school” (The Center). He suggested that funding solution should come from the country club property. He mentioned that local realtor Steve Miller told him that he has interested parties. Ms. Scalettar said that she followed up with Mr. Miller regarding a buyer, but nothing materialized. She told Mr. Lober she would follow up with Mr. Miller again.

Katie McGonigal, 4 Fairview Road – would like to see a multi-faceted plan for the country club property; solar panel; disc golf; develop the area into a community and recreational area similar to High Plains in Orange.

COUNTRY CLUB OF WOODBRIDGE

Club House – grill area near the pool is under the dry sprinkler system that has failed. The Fire Marshal has not responded re opening any portion of the building until the sprinkler system is repaired.

Ms. Scalettar said that if the Boards of Selectmen and Finance decide to open the pool, the staff is investigating refurbishing the existing pool house and possible rental of porta-pottys. The pool at the country club is not handicapped accessible. But it did not have to be because there is an alternative – the Beecher Road School pool is handicapped accessible. The club house allows people in wheel chairs to get to the pool. One issue is, if the club house is closed, do the ancillary facilities have to be handicapped accessible even though the pool is not?

Pool – Before the pool can be opened for the 2017 season, the backwash system must comply with DEEP procedures. Most cost effective is to change to a new filtration system method that eliminates the need to backwash. Cost is \$18,000 for the main pool and \$5,000 for the Kidde Pool.

Mr. Hill and Mr. Taddei were present to answer questions from the Board. Mr. Hill said that when the Recreation Commission voted at its December meeting to request that the pool be open for the 2017 season it assumed the club house would be open. He said that staff could work with other accommodations and members would be accepting especially if they knew it was part of a larger, long term plan.

Ms. Scalettar asked if there are any other alternatives that have not been considered because if the Board wants the pool to be open and the club house can be used, options have to be explored. Mr. Taddei responded that Mr. Genovese has identified all points, but he is concerned about food refrigeration if the snack-bar had to be closed.

Summary – Ms. Scalettar said she understands from Mr. Hill that the Recreation Commission is good to go ahead with the pool this summer regardless what happens with the club house. She said that she agrees with the points that the Board of Selectmen would have to know what the alternatives are and the budget for those alternatives. At the same time it is important that the Board of Selectmen talk about a long term plan also – particularly if the club house cannot be used. If the club house can be used this summer it could be a one year plan. She said that as the Boards get to the budget season the problem is going to have to be dealt with anyway. Ms. Scalettar said that it is different if the Boards know it is going to be long term and there is some temporary plan, then maybe a new pool house could be built, but the Board has not gotten to that level of discussion.

Ms. Scalettar said that with respect to the Country Club Property, the current plan is to convert it to open space with possible long term recreation use and a pool would be a good anchor. She also said that to Ms. McGonagall's point, the vision is to have trails, cross-country skiing, and eventually perhaps an ice skating rink and a basketball court. She noted that studies have shown that it is less expensive to demolish the Club House than to try and repurpose it as a community center. But whatever is decided it has to fit the budget. She thanked the Recreation Commission for confirming that pool members will probably be accepting of a short solution with the understanding that it may lead to a long term proposal.

Ms. Scalettar further stated that, contrary to Mr. Lober's belief, the Town is not promoting Toll Brothers, and Ms. Kayne, Mr. Anastasio, and Mr. Dey have stated that they will not support any plan that requires a change of Zone classification. She also said that she takes strong exception to any suggestion that there has been any proposal to the Board or any turning away of people. She said that every single inquiry or proposal has been followed-up on and they all fade away. The Town needs to make a decision and move forward.

Consensus – It was the consensus of the Board that it does want to open the pool for the 2017 season if fiscally reasonable and that future plans will be explored; that the Board will follow up with the Fire Marshal as soon as possible; and that the Recreation Commission is to hold a special meeting and to inform the Board of any further recommendations and of any need to change pool membership fees.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/DIRECTOR OF FINANCE'S REPORT

Monthly Report – Mr. Genovese through December 2016 he is projecting a budgetary surplus of approximately \$260,000 at the end of the fiscal year. This would result in a projected fund balance of \$4.7 million or 10% of the annual projected expenses at the end of the year.

Funding Request - The Board of Selectmen **VOTED** to recommend the following funding request to the Board of Finance:

#1617-06 – Allocation Amount: \$ 13,195

To: Fire Dept. Technical CNR-Machinery (1230-00/55120)

From: Board of Finance Contingency (1170-00/56800)

For: Replacement of equipment damaged during fire on December 5, 2016

(Scalettar – Heller) Unanimously Approved

Bid Waiver – Police Dept. Telephone System Replacement: The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Scalettar – Anastasio) to forego the bid process for the replacement of the Police Department telephone system pursuant to the recommendation of Mr. Genovese and Police Chief Frank Cappiello.

Funding Request – The Board of Selectmen VOTED to recommend the following funding requests to the Board of Finance:

#1617-05 – Allocation Amount: \$ 15,528

To: CNR-Police Machinery (302-2100/57410/PHONE)

From: Board of Finance Contingency (1170-00/56800)

For: Replacement of phone system at Police Department

(Scalettar – Heller) Unanimously Approved

#1617-07 – Allocation Amount: \$ 6,000

To: Country Club of Woodbridge – Repair & Maint. – Building
(1192-00/53530)

From: Board of Finance Contingency (1170-00/56800)

For: Repairs to HVAC system as well as emergency pump repairs.

(Scalettar – Heller) Unanimously Approved

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Subsidence Agreement – has been signed by the State. The Town may now move forward on the project.

Microgrid – The Fuel Cell at Amity that will power the Microgrid has been energized. A press conference will be held at a date to be determined.

TOWN COUNSEL

Mr. Weiner said that due to the efforts of the Tax Collector the Town has a very low rate of uncollected taxes. However, about six months ago a significant amount of arrears occurred. The decision was made to begin foreclosure proceedings on some very delinquent tax payers, and In December 2016, the Town collected almost \$93,000 in back taxes.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Personnel Committee Meeting was delayed so there is no report.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Scalettar –Jacobs) to acknowledge receipt of the Town Clerk's Report.

FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

Budget - Ms. Scalettar said that the Town receives funds under the State LOCIP program that are used mainly for paving. She said that the State has reached its capacity on the distribution of LOCIP funds and some towns that had not put in their paperwork in a timely fashion may not get their funds at all, but Woodbridge had all its paperwork in on time so if anyone should read an article about LOCIP – don't worry, Woodbridge is okay.

Notable Trees Project – Met with Paul DeCoster regarding his project to identify notable trees in Woodbridge. The Town of Hamden recognizes a "Notable Tree of the Month" or periodically. Mr. DeCoster's committee will distribute information on how to decide if a tree on your property is "Notable".

Business Visit – visited "Mathnasium" a tutoring business.

Cub Scouts – met with a group of Cub Scouts to explain the role of Town government

LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Scalettar: Amity Regional School District #5 – has it audited financials from last year including a surplus which will result in a refund to the Town \$220,000.

Amity Regional District #5 – Finance Committee – the Committee, comprised of representatives from the Boards of Finance of the three towns, has worked very well for several years. There has been an ongoing discussion regarding modifying the language.

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Anastasio –Dey) to suspend liaison reports until the following meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Jacobs –Dey) to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Transcribed from Official Recording
Geraldine S. Shaw, Clerk