

The September 8, 2021, Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen was convened at 6:00 p.m. by First Selectman Beth Heller, via WebEx.

Present via rollcall: First Selectman Beth Heller; Deputy First Selectman Sheila McCreven, Joseph J. Crisco, Jr.; Dr. David Lober; Paul Kuriakose; and David Vogel.

Present for staff: Mr. Genovese, Administrative Officer/Director of Finance; Ms. Ford, Media Specialist; Mr. Weiner, Town Counsel; Ms. Yagla, Assistant Administrative Officer; and Mrs. Shaw, Clerk.

The meeting may be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/dMHimk4cz6E>

FIRST SELECTMAN'S REMARKS

"Good evening, everyone. I first want to send a big "Thank you" to our Human Services team. They organized a group of Town staff members to walk around our Town Center Campus last week to participate virtually in the Walk to End Alzheimer's. The team surpassed their goal of \$500 by raising \$539. Congratulations to them all!

I understand there has been some concerns raised by some Woodbridge residents about the fate of the dog park, as the leadership of the Dog Park Cooperative is seeking new volunteer members. I can assure you at this time that the Town has NO plans to close the dog park. It is entirely run by volunteers as was promised when the Board of Selectmen granted the request to create one. As was discussed for months in 2019 the Board was also promised that there would be no Town tax dollars put toward the park. It is attractive, well used and well run, and I have faith that there will be a new group of volunteers, ready to step and take over to continue managing this asset. Again, I will reiterate that at this time the Town has no intention of closing the dog park.

You as members of the Board of Selectmen recently received a letter with an offer from Doug Gray of Eclipse Development Group, to purchase 25 acres of the 155 acres at the former Country Club of Woodbridge. This is the development group working on behalf of New England Brewing Company, as they seek to expand their operation. The proposal is to build a state-of-the-art brewery and event center along with approximately 10 acres of rental housing with an affordable component. The proposed purchase price is \$1.5M and the desired location is the area where the clubhouse sits and the tennis court area. Developer Doug Gray was invited to make a presentation to you this evening, but he informed that as he is unable to attend tonight, he would like to present to us at our October meeting. I will add him to that agenda.

On August 31st, I attended the continued Evidentiary Hearing of the CT Siting Council. If you recall, Verizon is proposing to build a new cell tower in a residential neighborhood at a private residence at 118 Newton Road. This is a private transaction between a neighbor and Verizon, however the Town has tried to work with the neighborhood to prevent a cell tower from being built in ANY residential neighborhood in Town. I was virtually participating in the hearing from 2-5 pm and was ready to testify but was not called upon. The hearing has been continued to September 21st, and I expect to be called upon to state that the Town's answers to the Council's questions are accurate and also answer any questions the Council or other attorneys might ask.

Tomorrow there will be a crane test to verify Verizon's data at the height of the proposed tower on Newton Road and also at another site behind the Public Works facility. This is being organized and paid for by the residents' group who are opposing the proposed site, along with their attorney Keith Ainsworth and their engineer David Maxson. I will keep you informed. The videos of the two previous hearings have been sent to the Town Clerk, and I believe are also showing on WGATV.

This Saturday is the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Association is holding a remembrance ceremony which will begin at approximately 8:30 a.m., at the front of the new Firehouse on Center Road in front of the 9-11 Memorial. I would encourage everyone to attend. It is hard to believe it has been 20 years...

Last month I told you that the Town earned another audit award from the Government Finance Officers Association. This month I'm excited to announce that our Finance Department is creating a new, more user-friendly, transparent and interactive budget document. I anticipate this document will be on our website later by October. I believe this new format will help residents more easily see how their tax dollars are used, and I encourage everyone to read the budget and the audit to be better informed residents.

Let me say again, I would ask the Selectmen to please encourage residents to get involved in the budget process now. The budget is discussed and debated at public meetings for months before it is presented to the public at the Preliminary Budget Hearing in April and the Annual Town Meeting in May. There are many opportunities to make voices heard and get answers to your questions.

The Town department's capital budget requests are due in November and the Board of Finance will begin discussing them in December. To our residents - if there is a particular budget that you're interested in, or believe you have ideas for ways to improve any budget, please attend that commission's virtual meetings to learn more and offer your suggestions. This is the time to let commissions and departments hear from you!

All town meetings continue to be held virtually due to the higher rate of COVID-19 transmission. The State Department of Public Health updates the COVID-19 data tracker website showing a map of CT towns. Woodbridge, like most of our neighbors are back in the red zone. Red is defined by a transmission rate of 15 positive cases per 100,000 people. This allows the State and residents to compare transmission rates across towns. We are currently at 24.5. We have sent a message to our local businesses strongly encouraging them to require masks, regardless of vaccination status of their employees. The Library has canceled indoor programming, and both the Library and Human Services are still trying to do many programs outside.

Lastly, as you may have heard, the Senior Center is currently closed to indoor programming because it flooded during tropical storm Ida last week. We are in touch with our insurance company, and plan to follow any floodproofing recommendations they have when we complete the renovation.

Thank you all and please continue to do all you can to stay safe."

ACTION TAKEN AT THE MEETING

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT – Benjamin Rickel – Upgrade the Town Bulletin Board

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Vogel – McCreven) to approve Benjamin Rickel's proposal to refurbish the Town Bulletin Board outside the Town Clerk's Office and to install a repainted mailbox to receive American flags to be properly retired. Additionally, the Town Clerk requested that the words "Flags Only" be painted on both sides of the box.

DARLING HOUSE APARTMENT TENANT LEASE – Amity Woodbridge Historical Society

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Vogel – McCreven) to authorize the First Selectman to execute the 13- month lease with Kyla DeRisi and Keven Redline.

TAX REFUNDS

Pursuant to Section 12-124 – 129 of the Connecticut General Statutes and the recommendation of the Tax Collector, the Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Vogel) to refund real estate taxes in the amount of \$3,637.95 and motor vehicle in the amount of \$9,807.28 for a total of \$13,445.23.

ARBOR HAVEN PROPOSAL – Next Steps

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED** (Heller – Crisco) to move forward with the next steps, as described by Ms. Heller, for the Arbor Haven Proposal for the former country club.

VOTE: Aye – Heller, Crisco, McCreven, Kuriakose, Vogel
Nay – Lober

FUNDING REQUEST

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

2122-02 - Interdepartmental Transfer Amount: \$23,120.00

To:	CNR-WGATV-Technology	\$ 7,195	(302-1350/57410/TECH)
	CNR-WGATV-IT	\$ 14,262	(302-1350-00/57410/IT)
	WGATV-Prof. Dev.-Conference	\$ 1,673	(1135-00/54610)

From: Revenue – Grants (1-2-1100/42600)

Purpose: Transfer Grant Funds received from Area Council to budget.

(Heller – McCreven) Unanimously Approved

AWARD – RFP – SMALL CITIES ADMINISTRATION

On the recommendation of Anthony Genovese and Patricia Crisco, The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Vogel – Kuriakose) to award the administration of the Town’s Small Cities Program Income Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program to A & E Services Group of Wolcott, CT.

REQUESTS TO HOLD EVENTS ON TOWN PROPERTY

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** to approve the following requests to hold events on Town property:

Troop 907 – “MUM” Sale – Old Firehouse Triangle – September 26, 2021 – 9a.m. to 4 p.m. (McCreven – Vogel)

Woodbridge Together Luminaria Display – Town Center – March 12, 2022 – Noon – 10 p.m. (Heller – Vogel)

Diversity & Inclusion – Library, Grove – October 2, 2021 – 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. varies activities (Heller – Vogel)

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to acknowledge receipt of the Town Clerk’s reports for the month ending August 31, 2021 and cumulative from July 1, 2021.

MINUTES

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** to approve the following as presented:

June 23, 2021 – Special Meeting (Heller – Crisco)

July 28, 2021 – Special Meeting (Heller – Crisco)

August 11, 2021 – Regular Meeting (Heller – Crisco)

CELL TOWER TEST – CRANE USE

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (McCreven – Heller) to authorize the WNNET Neighborhood Association to place a crane on Town Property known as 15 Meetinghouse Lane for a cell tower coverage test.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:50 p.m., the Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to move into executive session pursuant to: a. CGS 1-200(6)(C) Security/devices re dispatch issues

b. CGS 1-200(6)(B) Litigation – Tax Appeal Settlement – Paul D. Harrigan II, 27 Brook Road

At 8:19 p.m., the Board of Selectmen returned to the Regular Meeting.

ACTION AS APPROPRIATE

With regard to the Tax Appeal settlement for Paul Harrigan II, 27 Brook Road, Woodbridge, CT - Ms. McCreven moved, and Dr. Lober seconded to approve the findings according to the facts and stipulations presented.

ADJOURMENT

On a non-debatable motion by Ms. Heller, seconded by Mr. Crisco, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Geraldine S. Shaw