

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, March 10, 2011 6:00 pm

Selectmen's Conference Room

Call to Order - First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Members Present – First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini, Selectman Kathy Devlin, CFO Kim Marcotte, Donna Caravella (recording), Housing Authority Chairman David Pinney, Housing Authority Members Mary Lou Hastings, Robert Landry and Robert Pettee, as well as a few interested citizens. Mr. Tolisano was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance – All attendees participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Correspondence –

A letter was received from a few members of the Senior Club requesting to share office space in the Senior Center with the Town of Somers Senior Services Staff. Mrs. Pellegrini stated that she had a meeting with two members of the Executive Board of the Senior Club a few weeks ago and that they had mutually agreed to move their office. Town Staff now use the two offices in the Senior Center. Due to the current Town of Somers Building Policy, computer security concerns and the agreement already reached with the Executive Committee Members, it was agreed by Mrs. Pellegrini and Mrs. Devlin to not share the offices with the Senior Club.

Opportunity for Selectmen to add items – Mrs. Pellegrini requested to add a Request for a Road Race to be listed as Item 8.3 under New Business.

Selectmen's Update –

An update was presented from Public Works on the current flooding/road conditions. Numerous culverts and flood basins need to be repaired/replaced. Mrs. Devlin reported that the Battle St. culvert in the Heron Pond area causes severe flooding to houses in the neighborhood. Mrs. Pellegrini stated that a list of priorities is being compiled and repairs are being made according to the list.

Old Business:

Computer Transfer – Whalley will confirm a few issues with the State Police IT staff and the changeover will be made. After the State Police computers are updated, the remainder of Town hall computers will be replaced. At that time the computer policies will be updated.

New Business:

Building Permit Waiver – The craft building at the Four Town Fairgrounds was severely damaged due to the snowstorm and had to be demolished. The maintenance building at the Four Town Fair Grounds also sustained severe structural damage and will need to be repaired. A request was made by Ms. Janice Steinmetz to waive the \$600 building permit fee for the maintenance building, as well as the future building permit fee for the craft building. Ms. Steinmetz stated that the Fairgrounds have always been exempt from permit fees due to their non-profit exempt status. Mrs. Devlin stated they will consider (1) permit at a time. ***Mrs. Pellegrini made a motion to approve the \$600 building permit waiver for the craft building at the Four Town Fair due their non-profit exempt status, Mrs. Devlin seconded the motion, 2 votes in favor.***

Discussion with Housing Authority – A discussion with the Housing Authority centered on clarification of the different Housing Authority Partnerships, the Tax Abatement Agreement and Phase II construction as well as the function of the Resident Coordinator.

Clarification of Partnerships – David Pinney explained the *Somers Housing Authority (SHA)* has not changed; it still exists as stated in the statute of the Town Charter. *Woodcrest Elderly Housing Limited* partnership is 99% (general partner) owned by the Town of Somers. The reason this limited partnership was formed was based on project execution which depended upon tax credit funding. This becomes the control entity of which all appointed Housing Authority members became part of the board. This Housing Authority *leases the property* to the limited partnership. This limited partnership becomes a taxable entity to facilitate the ability for SunAmerica to sell tax credits that remain in effect for 20 years, and at the end of this period to end the tax credits for the investor. At that time the property reverts back to the *Somers Housing Authority*. The group meets regularly and is required to be in compliance with DECD codes and IRS codes. The general partnership is in control of operations.

Somers Housing Authority Management, Inc. is the fully owned entity of the Somers Housing Authority. Somers Housing Authority owns this incorporated entity and appoints directors to the management board. Operations/services were contracted with the management company WINN, but the general partnership, of which SHA owns 99%, controls the operation and all contracting. The general partner fully owns the property and produced the value greater than \$9 million which was sold to investors through SunAmerica, the syndicator. This particular arrangement with SunAmerica refers to what is in existence at the present time with Phase I of the Woodcrest improvement project. It was this arrangement that produced the large two story building currently fully occupied, as well as the rehabilitated cottages as seen from Battle Street.

Tax Abatement: The current agreement has all taxes for Woodcrest abated for 20 years. According to the State requirements for low income and affordable housing, assessed value is fixed within assessor records, usually the same way forests and State prisons are fixed in assets. What can be available is a PILOT fund arrangement. In housing, that is fixed by the rentals

collected. The annual reporting would indicate what that level of PILOT would look like. Currently, the average rental at Woodcrest is between 25% and 75% of rental value. That is based on the ability to pay, which should be no more than 25% of monthly income. Mrs. Pellegrini asked if most of the residents were from Somers. SHA reported that 70% are from the Town or have family connections within Town.

The highest rent for Phase I is about \$750 and there are a few at that level, but over 60% is at the 25% level. The cost for running the facility is about \$35,000 per month; it goes up and down depending on some residents leaving and others coming into the facility. The next four units to be filled have been planned to include two rentals at \$750, and two that could be as low as \$200 per month. The SHA would like to plan to begin to put aside a maintenance reserve for future capital needs. Once the operation is more fluent, then the arrangement through the tax abatement agreement would be a 50% split with the Town of Somers.

Mrs. Pellegrini reported the signed contract was not on file in the Town Clerk's Office until recently and was concerned that items in the contract had never been followed. The contract states abatement should be formally done every year as well as providing financial data to the Town. Mrs. Pellegrini requested that Woodcrest supply the town with yearly data as per the contract and asked that Mr. Pinney assist with information the assessor needs.

Phase II- There is no plan for asking the Town to include this phase in the Tax Abatement Agreement, even though an ordinance exists that could allow the BOS to vote to add the next phase into the plan. Phase II is nearing completion of applications for 4% tax credits and is close to signing an agreement with a syndicator, all construction documents are complete to go forward. A two story multi unit building and cottages are planned. If HUD money is received a large congregate kitchen will also be constructed. The plan includes a full time resident coordinator, social worker and the arrangement includes the intent for a different report to be sent to the Town each year with the assessed value of rentals that would trigger initiation of PILOTS. If they receive the funding, completion of Phase II should be in 18 months.

Resident Coordinator – Mrs. Devlin relayed concerns the Board of Selectmen had regarding the number of lift assist calls the Fire Department had received and asked if a Resident Coordinator was hired. The Housing Authority responded that a part time position has been filled and they are now working on an evaluation process with the resident coordinator.

Road Race – The National Multiple Sclerosis Society's CT Chapter will be hosting their annual bike ride on June 05, 2011 and will be traveling through Somers. Sgt. Claudio has been working with the organizers to review a traffic control plan and does not have any concerns.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to approve the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's Bike Race on June 05, 2011 and Mrs. Pellegrini seconded the motion with 2 votes in favor.

Budget Update :

CIP Meeting Recap – This item was tabled until another meeting in which Mr. Tolisano will be

able to attend.

Authorization of Scheduled Payments-

Ms. Devlin made a motion to authorize the payment of \$191,550.39, which was seconded by Mrs. Pellegrini. The motion passed with two votes in favor.

Appropriations/Transfers –

The following transfers were accepted:

Transfer from: Ambulance Training	1100-4124-026-0322-5-00	\$2500.00
Transfer to: Ambulance Vehicle Maintenance	100-4124-020-0433-5-00	\$2500.00

Mrs. Devlin made the motion to approve the Ambulance Training transfers and Mrs. Pellegrini seconded the motion with 2 votes in favor.

Transfer from: Radio Maintenance	100-2016-020-0432-5-01	\$ 500.00
Transfer to: Equipment Maintenance	100-2016-020-0432-5-00	\$ 500.00

Mrs. Devlin made the motion to approve the Radio Maintenance transfers and Mrs. Pellegrini seconded the motion with 2 votes in favor.

Transfer from: Miscellaneous Expenditure	320-0000-000-0890-5-00	\$4,000.00
Transfer to: HVAC Senior Center	320-5130-070-0730-5-00	\$4,000.00

Mrs. Devlin made the motion to approve the Miscellaneous Expenditure transfers and Mrs. Pellegrini seconded the motion with 2 votes in favor.

Minutes –

12.1 The minutes from the following meetings were accepted;

The 2/24/11 BOS Regular Meeting Minutes should be amended to remove the approval of 2/18/11 minutes, to clarify the approval of the 1/27/11 minutes to read 1/27/11 BOS Regular Meeting Minutes, to clarify the approval of the 2/09/11 minutes to read 2/9/11 Special BOS Meeting Minutes, and to clarify the approval of the 2/23/11 minutes to read 2/23/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting.

Mrs. Devlin made the motion to approve the correction of minutes for 2/24/11 BOS Regular Meeting Minute, Mrs. Pellegrini seconded the motion with 2 votes in favor.

The following meeting minutes were approved:

1/27/11 Special BOS Meeting Minutes,
2/9/11 Special BOS Meeting Minutes
2/10/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting Minutes
2/15/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting Minutes
2/17/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting Minutes
2/23/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting Minutes
2/24/11 Regular BOS Meeting Minutes
3/8/11 Special BOS Minutes

Mrs. Devlin made the motion to approve the 1/27/11 Special BOS Meeting Minutes, 2/9/11 Special BOS Meeting Minutes, 2/10/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting Minutes, 2/15/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting Minutes, 2/17/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting Minutes, 2/23/11 Special BOS Budget Meeting Minutes, 2/24/11 Regular BOS Meeting Minute and the 3/8 Special BOS Minutes, Mrs. Pellegrini seconded the motion with 2 votes in favor.

Citizen Comments –

13.1 No comments made.

Adjournment –

14.1 ***Mrs. Devlin made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mrs. Pellegrini. The vote to adjourn was two votes in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.***

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Caravella - Recording

Minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting