

**TOWN OF SOMERS  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING  
Monday, May 24, 2010, 6:00 p.m.  
Town Hall Auditorium**

- 1 Call to order – First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
- 2 Members present – Kathleen Devlin, Lisa Pellegrini & Joseph Tolisano. Also present Marcia Mitchell, Exec Asst/Ops Mgr, recording; Kim Marcotte, CFO; Chief Ed Pagani; and several interested citizens.
- 3 Pledge of Allegiance
- 4 Correspondence
  - 4.1 Governor’s letter regarding MIRMA – Ms. Pellegrini explained that, as a member of MIRMA, the town has been assessed \$248,000 due to MIRMA’s deficit situation. Other MIRMA members have been assessed based on a formula related to their loss histories and the length of time they participated in the program prior to the assessment. To her knowledge, only one member has paid their assessment; many others are refusing to pay. Ms. Pellegrini wanted the selectmen to be aware of the situation; also to let them know that MIRMA would no longer underwrite workers’ compensation only, that they wanted all lines of business or none. She said that she had received a quote from CIRMA, the town’s current insurer for Liability, Property and Auto lines of business, for all lines including workers’ comp that was competitive. The proposed budget amount for insurance is \$268,400; the amount of the CIRMA proposal is \$216,700. There also is the matter of the Agency fee, which is approximately \$22,000. Ms. Devlin commented that the agency fee had been questioned in the past and that she would support questioning it again. She asked Ms. Marcotte how insurance had been handled in Enfield; Ms. Marcotte said that Enfield had all lines direct through CIRMA without an agency relationship. Ms. Pellegrini said that she wanted all this information out in front of the BOS, and asked the other selectmen if they saw any reason to proceed with obtaining a bid from MIRMA given its financial situation or a bid from Travelers, which is the other competitor in the municipal market in Connecticut. Mr. Tolisano said that having another bid was always a good thing. Ms. Mitchell told the BOS that in the past, the Travelers’ bids had not been competitive with either CIRMA or MIRMA. Ms. Devlin said that she was really glad Ms. Pellegrini had brought the insurance information before the board, since the board had not been informed in this regard for several years. ***Motion (Ms. Devlin), seconded (Ms. Pellegrini) and unanimously voted to accept the CIRMA bid for town workers’ comp and liability/auto/property insurance coverages.***
- 5 Old Business
  - 5.1 Board/Commission appointments, reappointments & vacancies
    - 5.1.1 Resignation of John Cowles from the Cultural Committee accepted by the BOS with thanks and regrets. Linda Abbott, chair of Cultural, has recommended Nancy Barbosa as replacement. ***Motion (Ms. Devlin), seconded (Mr. Tolisano) and unanimously voted to appoint Nancy Barbosa to the Cultural Commission to fulfill the term vacated by John Cowles that expires on 12/22/10.***
    - 5.1.2 Resignation of Susan King from the Advisory Commission to the Elderly accepted by the BOS with thanks and regrets. In her resignation letter, Ms. King nominated Karen Norrie as a potential replacement. Ms. Devlin said that the BOS had discussed appointing Aileen Henry to this commission in the past, and recommended that she also be considered. The selectmen agreed that both should be interviewed prior to making an appointment.
    - 5.1.3 Elinor Labutis of the WPCA has not responded to letters inquiring about her interest in re-appointment for the last two years since her term expired on 12/22/08. Ms. Devlin said that Ms. Labutis had not been well for sometime and recommended that a letter be sent to her thanking her for her service and acknowledging her lack of response as a resignation. Ms. Devlin suggested that Jim Botellio, Chair of the WPCA be asked for recommendations for a

replacement as well as the chairs of both the Republican and Democrat town committees.

- 5.1.4 Resignation of Thomas Mehl, Jr. from the Fire Commission accepted by the BOS with thanks and regrets. The selectmen agreed that there were no ready candidates for this opening, and recommended to Ms. Pellegrini that she solicit recommendations for a replacement from the chairs of both the Republican and Democrat town committees.
- 5.1.5 Ms. Pellegrini said that now that the selectmen had decided not to proceed with the combination of the Planning and Zoning commissions at this time, several reappointments and vacancies needed to be reviewed. Ms. Mitchell said that she would get complete lists of both commissions out to the BOS prior to the next meeting.
- 5.2 Re-authorize participation in joint Housing Rehab STEAP Grant with Ellington – Ms. Pellegrini said that this is a grant that requires annual renewal and helps needy Somers residents with rehab projects on their homes. *Motion (Ms. Devlin), seconded (Mr. Tolisano) and unanimously voted to renew the joint grant and to authorize Ms. Pellegrini to sign the required papers.***
- 5.3 Anti-blight ordinance – the selectmen asked if this draft had been reviewed by counsel and Ms. Pellegrini said that it had not. All three of the selectmen said that they had concerns about the level of detail in the draft and about how the ordinance would be enforced. Ms. Devlin recalled that Barry Moynihan had brought former First Selectman Pinney a copy of the Enfield anti-blight ordinance, but that the selectmen as a group had not reviewed it. Carole Pyne, 46 Sunset Drive, pointed out that the POCD recommended that a demolition delay ordinance be appointed and wanted to know if that would go along with an anti-blight ordinance. The selectmen said that they believed they were two separate subjects. Ms. Pellegrini asked Ms. Marcotte, who recently left Enfield to join the Somers staff, to obtain the ordinance for BOS review. The selectmen agreed that they would compare the Enfield ordinance to this draft and come up with a version that they would be comfortable referring to counsel.
- 5.4 Recreation STEAP Grant RFP process – Ms. Pellegrini said that the RFP was ready to bid out the work on the field road tennis and basketball courts, that the prevailing wage information had been received from the state, and a preliminary timetable established for the process: RFP published 5/26; walk-thru on 6/1; Written questions on the RFP/walk-thru due from contractors 6/3; Answers to written questions posted 6/7; bid opening 6/9; contract award 6/11, beginning of work 6/17. Ms. Pellegrini said that she had spoken to town attorney Carl Landolina regarding the use of staff vs. the use of outside volunteers to evaluate RFP responses; as well as the establishment of a committee, whether internal or external, to evaluate the responses. Atty. Landolina said that any committee established should post agendas and minutes in compliance with FOIA regulations. Ms. Pellegrini's question for the other selectmen was whether they wanted employees to evaluate the RFP responses as part of their work and make a recommendation to the BOS as to selection; or to appoint a committee of employees, volunteers or some combination. Mr. Tolisano said that either way, the weighted criteria for selection should be determined in advance. Ms. Pellegrini said that the criteria had been developed, but weights not yet assigned. Mr. Tolisano said he believed it was too much to ask employees to do this type of evaluation as part of their work. Mr. Tolisano also stated that paving companies probably had filled their summer work schedules and would likely not have capacity to begin this work before the fall. The selectmen agreed that they would like to appoint an external committee to evaluate the RFP responses and recommended to Ms. Pellegrini that she ask Karen McGuane from the Recreation Commission, and Ed Burns and Roland Henry from the Tennis Association. They also said that someone with paving/construction experience be made part of the group – Chief Ed Pagani said that he was responsible for paving in his job, and offered his assistance. The selectmen thanked him and agreed that Chief Pagani be added as a non-voting advisor to the committee. The selectmen asked that a selection recommendation be made to the BOS at its regular meeting on 6/17, with commencement of work as soon as the vendor is able and completion no later than October 31.
- 5.5 Sunset Drive Consent Order – Ms. Pellegrini said that she had received from Karl Walton, 45 Sunset Drive, a copy of minutes from a special town meeting dated 8/13/09, wherein the legislative body unanimously voted to appropriate \$255,377 for the design and construction of a water main on Sunset Drive. Mr. Walton wants to know when the funds will be appropriated and the project begun. After brief discussion, the selectmen agreed

that an appropriation would be prepared and approved for referral to the Board of Finance.

- 5.6 Budget changes – Ms. Pellegrini proposed the following cuts to address the \$42,000 cut made to the proposed Town budget:

\$15,000 – Reduction in the tipping fees budget;

\$19,000 – Reduce the Sanitarian’s hours to 25 per week as a result of the data gathered by the Efficiencies Committee; and

\$8,000 – Eliminate the Operations Manager’s position and replace with an administrative assistant.

Mr. Tolisano stated that he believed the Sanitarian’s position should not be changed until the issue of whether or not the Town would join the health district is settled. Ms. Devlin said that she would not eliminate any position; that over the years the town staff had been cut to very thin, and that the deficit should be made up by selling excess assets. Both Mr. Tolisano and Ms. Devlin said they would not support the elimination of the Operations Manager position. After further discussion regarding the potential for turning back funds at the end of the year, involving the Director staff in identifying potential cuts, and other revenue streams (fees, etc.) the selectmen agreed to wait until after the referendum to decide. Mr. Tolisano also said that the Directors should be invited to an upcoming BOS meeting, as they had not been invited since last fall.

6 New Business

- 6.1 Street light variance for Somersville streetscape – Ms. Pellegrini explained that the decorative streetlights chosen for the streetscape improvements did not meet statutory requirements for “cutoff” of the amount of light cast; however the same statute allows for a variance that could be requested by the Board of Selectmen. ***Motion (Mr. Tolisano), seconded (Ms. Devlin), and unanimously voted to request a waiver from the Department of Transportation to accommodate the streetlights chosen for the Somersville streetscape improvements.***

- 7 Authorization of Transfers & Scheduled Payments – ***Motion (Mr. Tolisano), seconded (Ms. Devlin) and unanimously voted to authorize scheduled payments in the amount of \$67,607.91.***

Chief Pagani wanted to know if the Board of Selectmen would match 5% of the Federal Grant the Fire Department was in the process of applying for. Since this item was not on the special agenda, the selectmen asked Chief Pagani to raise it for the agenda at the next meeting.

- 8 Adjournment – ***Motion (Mr. Tolisano), seconded (Ms. Pellegrini) and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia L. Mitchell  
Exec Asst/Ops Mgr  
Recording Secretary

***MINUTES ARE NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING***