

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, July 21, 2016
6:00pm
Selectmen's Conference Room**

Call to Order: Ms. Pellegrini called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Members Present: First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini and Selectmen Kathy Devlin and Bud Knorr. Also present were CFO Mike Marinaccio, Senior Accountant Brian Wissinger and Somers Resident State Trooper Grimes. A few interested residents were in the audience.

Anticipated Executive Session for Purpose of Discussing Attorney/Client Communications:

Ms. Pellegrini asked to move this agenda item to the end of the meeting.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to move this agenda item to the end of the meeting, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Boards and Commissions

Resignations and Appointments:

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to accept the resignation of Ms. Jeanne Reed from the Cultural Commission effective July 11, 2016 with regrets and thanks for service, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to appoint Mr. Andrew Rockett to the Zoning Board of Appeals as a full member, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Mrs. Devlin made a comment regarding the importance of meeting with and interviewing potential Board and Commission Members to ensure that they are able to best represent the Town and to also treat individuals fairly and with respect and a high standard of professionalism.

Staffing:

Ms. Pellegrini read a letter from Library Director Francine Aloisa announcing her intent to retire from her position at the Somers Public Library effective October 1, 2016.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to accept the retirement of Library Director Francine Aloisa with much regret, many thanks for years of service and best wishes in retirement, seconded by Mr. Knorr.

The Human Services Director recommends hiring Mr. Stephen Reid for the position of part time Senior Services Bus Driver.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to hire Mr. Stephen Reid for the position of part time Senior Services Bus Driver pending background check, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Town Clerk Ann Logan wishes to hire a part time Assistant Town Clerk for a maximum of 20 hours/week, on an as needed basis and to also provide office coverage of up to 35 hours/week during her vacations. Discussion followed regarding coverage for the Town Clerk's Office. Ms. Logan commented that she supports a change to the Town Charter to make the position of Town Clerk appointed rather than elected, providing the position of elected First Selectman changes to an appointed Town Manager position.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to approve the changes to the job description for the position of Assistant Town Clerk (Ms. Logan to provide the final copy to the Selectmen's Office), and once received, to post the job, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Local Traffic Authority:

Four Town Fair Parade:

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to grant Local Traffic Authority Approval for the Four Town Fair Parade on Saturday, September 17, 2016 based on a recommendation from Lt. Claudio, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

South Forest View Trail Improvement Grant and Contract:

Mr. Knorr made a motion to accept the South Forest View Trail Improvement Grant and to authorize First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini to sign the contract and any other necessary documents associated with the grant, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. A unanimous vote followed.

At this time, Mrs. Devlin wished to discuss grants provided for drug abuse and prevention, as well as grants in general. She hoped to educate residents regarding the grant funding process and assure them there is a specific process that prevents misuse of funding. She asked the CFO to describe the process of using grant funding. The CFO stated that it was not possible to use grant monies for items outside of grant parameters due to the elaborate reporting process each grant has, as well as the check and balance system in place to prevent such abuse. In addition, every grant is audited each year by the outside auditors and there have been no deficiencies noted.

Mrs. Devlin asked for clarification as to what grant funding was used to provide the Drug Drop Box. Ms. Pellegrini replied that ERASE grant funds were used for the Drug Drop Box. Mrs. Devlin asked about the regional youth services grant the Town recently applied for. Through this grant Somers residents will have access to counseling and education for drug addiction problems. Ms. Pellegrini stated the Town had applied for the Partnership for Success Grant along with the Towns of Enfield, Ellington, Suffield, East Windsor and Windsor, with Enfield taking the role of lead coordinator for the grant. Information on funding has not been received and it is unknown if the towns will receive the funding. The CFO clarified that in the case of regional grants the administration and reporting requirements are the responsibility of the lead town.

Request from Zoning Commission to Hire Traffic Consultant to Perform Peer Review of Traffic Study for 529 Main Street:

Mr. Knorr made a motion to approve the request from the Zoning Commission, based on a recommendation from the Town Attorney, to authorize First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini to work with Land Use Staff and the Town Attorney to hire a Traffic Consultant to perform a Peer

Review of Traffic Study for 529 Main Street pursuant to Town of Somers Ordinance Establishing Fees for Significant Land Use Applications Affordable Housing Applications, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. A unanimous vote followed.

Mrs. Devlin stated that she learned that the behavior of some citizens at the Zoning Commission meeting the previous night was very disappointing. Mrs. Pellegrini added that our attorney was accosted by one of the townspeople on his way to the car. Mrs. Devlin commented: When did it become acceptable to use social media to spread gossip, develop negative comments, lies and innuendo toward volunteers, public officials, and private citizens? It is disappointing to see Somers citizens adopt the negative bullying approach that has become commonplace at times. It is not unique to Somers, but troublesome. She urged the Board of Selectmen to require Standing Rules, Orders of Conduct for hearings and meetings. It had been done before and the way people are acting everywhere, it is important for our staff and volunteers that we take this action. We must provide a safe environment if we are abiding by our Charter which allows for public forum. Further, Mrs. Devlin would like to have the presence of the police department for meetings when needed.

Authorization of Scheduled Payments:

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to approve the authorization of scheduled payments for the sum of \$632,121.03, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Transfers/Appropriations:

The Selectmen reviewed the Summary of End of Year Transfers. Mrs. Devlin asked if any department had not stayed within the budget guidelines. All departments with the exception of the Registrar's Office were on or below budget. She was guided to look at the Registrar of Voters' budget prepared by Mr. David McCaffrey, as it was overspent by \$17,005 (62% of total budget). Two of the factors were caused by not planning for the Presidential primary and an unanticipated caucus for the Republican Town Committee from an opposition group, the cost of which was \$8200. Another expense therein was an additional salary payment when a former registrar retired due to illness and the registrar preparing the budget had requested earlier than usual remuneration for services for both registrars. Costs for supplies were also extremely high. Measures were taken early on to curb and control spending and recently all purchasing authority was removed from the office.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to approve the End of Year Transfers and forward them to the Board of Finance for Approval, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Approval of Minutes:

June 23, 2016 Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Knorr made a motion to approve the June 23, 2016 Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes, seconded by Ms. Pellegrini. Mrs. Devlin abstained as she was not at the meeting. The motion passed.

July 18, 2016 Special Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Knorr made a motion to approve the July 18, 2016 Special Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. A unanimous vote followed.

Anticipated Executive Session for Purpose of Discussing Attorney/Client Communications:
Ms. Pellegrini made a motion to go into Executive Session at 6:45pm, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. A unanimous vote followed.

Those present in Executive Session included First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini, Selectmen Kathy Devlin and Bud Knorr, Somers Resident Trooper Grimes and Labor Attorney Pat McHale (on conference call). Executive Session ended at 7:29pm.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to support and share the following statements with the community and the staff:

- 1. The Board of Selectmen, concerned with safety of Town Hall Employees, engaged the firm of Budlong & Budlong LLC and is satisfied with the results of the action that was made.***
- 2. The Board of Selectmen is taking action to protect employees by accepting CREC Security Audit and Training Proposal for the Town of Somers with regard to Review of Policies and Procedures, Review of Security Needs and implementation and Training and authorizing First Selectmen Lisa Pellegrini to enter into contract with CREC for the above mentioned.***
- 3. To send a letter to all employees regarding working after hours.***
- 4. to support police presence in any public meeting.***
- 5. To establish Standing Rules and Orders of Conduct to be read before each Public Hearing and Town Meeting.***

Seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Adjournment:

Mr. Knorr made a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 7:35pm, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Pellegrini-Recording

Minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting.