

MINUTES

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

APRIL 13, 2006

A regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 11:20 a.m. by First Selectman, Kevin J. Kopetz. Also present were William F. Mitchell and Janet M. McCarty. The meeting was held at the North Haven Memorial Library.

Mr. Mitchell moved approval of the minutes of the regular Selectmen's Meeting of February 9, 2006, with a correction of paragraph #5 to include the following selection offered by the Third Selectwoman: Ms. McCarty pointed out that she interested in pursuing discussion on this matter. She noted that the Town of Tolland does not discriminate between married and single seniors in determining the qualifying income requirement and that she had asked the Assessor for information on the cost impact for North Haven to change the program requirement, but it was not available at that time. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Ms. McCarty moved approval of the minutes of the regular Selectmen's Meeting of March 9, 2006. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Mr. Mitchell moved to add to the agenda two items proposed by the Third Selectwoman. The first is: The members of the Board of Selectmen refuse to accept all salary increases in fiscal year 2006-2007. The other is: The Board of Selectmen rescinds the policies that reimburse condominium associations for trash (1989) and recycle (2000) pick-up. This item replaces language submitted on the agenda by the First Selectman. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Mr. Kopetz introduced a letter from Ann M. Ruocco, 23 Ansonia Drive, requesting that signs be constructed and installed on town property to alert voters of the budget referendum. She offered to contact businesses to donate signs or funding to assist with the effort. Mr. Kopetz said he would ask the individual who donated the Town Green sign to do so again this year.

On April 10, 2006, a petition was signed by the appropriate number of voters and filed in the Town Clerk's office, requesting a partial deferring or "phasing in" of the amount of any increase in the assessed value of real property included in the October 1, 2005 revaluation. Since the goal of the petitioners is to include this question at the May 8, 2006 Annual Budget Town Meeting and on the referendum ballot May 16, 2006, the Board of Selectmen accepted the language verbatim, as proposed by the petitioners. In so doing, the Selectmen are bypassing a 21-day stipulation, from the time the petition is submitted, to the date when a Town Meeting is held on the matter, so the question may be considered along with the budget ratification timetable. If passed by voters at the referendum, the "phase in" of revaluation would occur over a period of three consecutive years.

Mr. Kopetz and Mr. Mitchell expressed concern over the fact that the question proposed by the petitioners does not include an appropriation. Town Attorney,

Jeffrey M. Donofrio and Finance Director, Vincent Palmeri, conducted separately research with professional revaluation consultants, and both estimated the administrative costs of “phase in” to be about \$80,000. Ms. McCarty feels that this amount is not a solid figure and may discourage and confuse voters, who would save more money with a “phase in” than it would cost. Mr. Kopetz disagrees and feels that the voters understand all the implications and can weigh the costs against the benefits in their decision making process, as is done with other town projects. State Law does not require that the appropriation be included. He added that the \$80,000 is not a speculative amount. Mr. Mitchell emphasized the fact that voters must remember that taxes will increase, each year, for the next three years, because of “phase in”, albeit by lesser amounts than if this occurred in one year.

Mr. Palmeri, stated that “phase in” is an unfunded mandate that unlike other overexpenditures, is foreseeable and an appropriation should be included. He believes its execution is equivalent to an “administrative nightmare” and simply shifts the tax burden back to commercial properties. Ms. McCarty added that “phase in” would assist residents with the burdensome tax increase of revaluation. Mr. Kopetz implored the State to correct the heart of the problem, the overreliance on property taxes to fund municipal services and education.

Mr. Kopetz read the Call for the Annual Budget Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 8, 2006, at 7 p.m., in the auditorium of North Haven High School. The recommendation is for a referendum to be held on Tuesday, May 16, 2005. The question regarding “phase in”, written verbatim by the petitioners without an appropriation, is included for a vote. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Ms. McCarty moved to rescind the policies that reimburse condominium associations for trash (1989) and recycle (2000) pick-up. Considering challenging economic times, she feels that this policy is too generous and unfair, as all residents do not utilize all Town programs and services and are not reimbursed accordingly. Mr. Kopetz explained that he has analyzed the program’s costs and controls, and he feels they are reasonable. These residential, single-family condominium owners contribute substantial tax revenue to the Town and do not enjoy these and other public works services, and the great majority do not have children in the school system. Mr. Mitchell agreed that they are taxpayers and should not be denied this benefit. Vote to rescind: Kopetz-no, Mitchell-no, McCarty-yes

Ms. McCarty moved to rescind salary increases for the Board of Selectmen for fiscal year 2006/2007, in an effort to minimize costs and establish an example for the Town’s labor unions. Mr. Mitchell responded that the Selectmen did forego increases last year, and to do so again is unfair, particularly for the First Selectman who works full-time and is responsible for a \$72 million operation. He added that numerous other employees earn more than the First Selectman. Ms. McCarty replied that other top-earners should consider refusing increases

as well. Mr. Kopetz and Mr. Mitchell noted that this issue was not raised at the Public Hearing on the budget by speakers, other than the Third Selectwoman. Vote to rescind: Kopetz-no, Mitchell-no, McCarty-yes

Mr. Kopetz, who explained that purchases have been made from past grants, moved the following resolution for the FY 2004 Homeland Security Grant Program:

RESOLVED: That the First Selectman, Kevin J. Kopetz, acting by a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen, is empowered and hereby authorized to apply for and enter into an agreement with the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, for participation in the FY 2004 State Homeland Security Grant Program. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Mr. Mitchell moved the following property tax refunds:

Ronald J. Brockett, 161 Montowese Avenue, North Haven, CT 06473-3806, in the amount of \$88.95, Assessor's Correction #33862

Chase Manhattan Auto Finance Corp., Box 5210, New Hyde Park, NY 11042-5210, in the amount of \$296.77, Assessor's Correction #33821

DCFS Trust, PO Box 685, Roanoke, TX 76262-0685, in the amount of \$373.33, Assessor's Correction #33822

F & F Mechanical Enterprises, Inc., 375 Washington Avenue, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$212.42, Assessor's Corrections #33867-33869

Ford Motor Credit, PO Box 67000, Dept. #231601, Detroit, MI 48267-2316, in the amount of \$245.16, Assessor's Correction #33794, and in the amount of \$230.20, Assessor's Correction #33793

GMAC, c/o Semperian Administrative Services, Inc., PO Box 3100, in the amount of \$913.18, Assessor's Corrections #33728, #33762 and #33829, and in the amount of \$462.01, Assessor's Corrections #33721, #33826 and #33831, and in the amount of \$373.53, Assessor's Corrections #33720, #33731 and #33824, and in the amount of \$1,250.54, Assessor's Corrections #33757, #33759 and #33830

Honda Lease Trust, 470 Granby Road, S2, South Hadley, MA 01075-3215, in the amount of \$508.57, Assessor's Correction #33785, and in the amount of \$37.38, Assessor's Correction #33823

Jaguar Credit Corp., Box 680020, Franklin, TN 37068-0020, in the amount of \$96.63, Assessor's Correction #33768

Mazda American Credit, PO Box 680020, Franklin, TN 37068-0020, in the amount of \$25.83, Assessor's Correction #33578

Carrie A. Mikolinski or Kevin G. Costa, 135 Millbrook Road, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$38.96, Assessor's Correction #32971

Frank J. and Edwina M. O'Neill & Survs., 11 Gail Drive, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$86.28, Assessor's Correction #33876, and in the amount of \$91.59, Assessor's Correction #33875, and in the amount of \$96.51, Assessor's Correction #33874

Penske Truck Lsg., Co. Lp., of Route 10 Green Hills, Reading, PA 19607, in the amount of \$121.15, Assessor's Correction #33744, and in the amount of \$1,290.47, Assessor's Corrections #33745, #33754 and #33755

Saab Leasing Co., PO Box 7101, Little Rock, AR 72223-7101, in the amount of \$492.07, Assessor's Corrections #33137 and #33738

Stony Island, LLC, 76 State Street, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$494.01, Tax Collector Correction #15628

Subaru Auto Leasing, Ltd., Box 6000, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-6000, in the amount of \$694.39, Assessor's Corrections #33771, #33817 and #33820

Volvo Car Finance North America, 1700 Jay Ell Drive, Richardson, TX 75081, in the amount of \$273.67, Assessor's Correction #33766, and in the amount of \$751.27, Assessor's Corrections #33739, #33742 and #33743

Volvo Car Finance NA, Inc., 25 Philips Parkway, Montvale, NJ 07645-1810, in the amount of \$859.72, Assessor's Corrections #33773, #33796 and #33797

Wheels, Inc., 666 Garland PL, Des Plaines, IL 60016, in the amount of \$56.66, Assessor's Correction #33809, and in the amount of \$198.81, Assessor's Correction #33810, and in the amount of \$148.85, Assessor's Corrections #33806-33808

Voted: Kopetz=yes, Mitchell=yes, McCarty=yes

Mr. Mitchell moved a total bond release for SCJ Inc., DBA Acura by Executive, 527 Washington Avenue, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$20,000 and a partial bond release for Quality Associates, Inc., (Stonehill Estates), 124, 126, 128 & 138 State Street, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$75,000, leaving a balance of \$25,000. Both are recommended by the Planning & Zoning Commission. Voted: Kopetz=yes, Mitchell=yes, McCarty=yes

Mr. Mitchell moved the reappointment of Charlotte Suraci, 520 Pool Road, Unit 111, as the Catchman Area Representative, Mental Health Coordinator, term to expire 4/30/08. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Mr. Mitchell moved the reappointment of Audrey McClure, 1 Bowen Road, to the Board of Directors of the Quinnipiack Valley Health District, term to expire 5/4/09. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Mr. Mitchell moved the reappointment of Anthony P. Rescigno, 7 Beach Lane, as Municipal Director, to the Greater New Haven/Connecticut, Convention & Visitors Bureau, term to expire 6/30/09. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Mr. Mitchell moved the appointment of Judith P. Cormier, 138 Sugar Hill Road, to the Board of Directors, Greater New Haven Transit District, to fill the unexpired term of Jeanette D'Andrea, 17 Overbrook Road, term to expire 9/10/08. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Mr. Mitchell moved the appointment of Judith P. Cormier, 138 Sugar Hill Road, as the Senior Center Director, Co-Municipal Agent to Provide Information to the Elderly, to fill the unexpired term of Jeanette D'Andrea, 17 Overbrook Road. Community Services & Recreation Director, Joseph Ierardi, is the other Co-Municipal Agent. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes

Before adjournment, Mr. Kopetz advocated voters pass the budget as presented. Ms. McCarty urged an affirmative vote on "phase in". There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Mitchell moved for adjournment at 12:25 p.m. Voted: Kopetz-yes, Mitchell-yes, McCarty-yes