

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

FEBRUARY 3, 2011

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:05 pm in the Community Room of the North Haven Memorial Library, 17 Elm Street, North Haven, CT.

Members Present

First Selectman, Michael J. Freda
Second Selectman, Timothy M. Doheny
Third Selectman, Stephen A. Fontana

Mr. Freda introduced himself and Selectmen Doheny and Fontana, and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Public Comments Relative to the Agenda - none

Mr. Doheny motioned to approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Selectmen's Meeting of January 6, 2011.

Voted: Freda - yes, Doheny - yes, Fontana - yes

Selectman's Overview - Mr. Freda provided an overview of the following topics:

Operational

Snow Removal

- Problem and Solutions
 - Road ways
 - Cul de sacs
 - Sidewalks
 - Sightlines
 - Driveways
- Hundreds and hundreds of calls have come in
- Postal Service meeting with Postmaster
- Our goal is to help people and listen to every complaint and provide some level of satisfaction

Water Pollution Control Facility RFQ

- After going out to bid, the town selected Veolia Water Northeast to commence with contract and fee negotiations after 5 companies responded
- Scoping meetings were held in January 2011 and the Town will enter into the first of a 5 year operations, maintenance and management contract within the next couple of months, after approval by the WPCA.

Health Insurance Update

- Anthem currently at a zero percent increase
- We will know tomorrow if we can get that even lower which would be a significant development
- A final decision will be made on what our course of action will be

Grant Updates

- LEEF (Lawn Equipment Exchange Fund) Program
 - PW transmitted grant application to the CT CEP for the replacement of \$60,000 older lawn, asphalt paving and tree trimming equipment. The Town's match would be 20% or up to \$12,000.
 - It is estimated that by March 1, 2011 the Town will receive results regarding grant awards

- STEAP Grant Awards for 2011
 - Clintonville School Playground and Skiff Street Sidewalks
 - Public works is currently preparing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for consultant design services for the Clintonville project, expected to be advertised this month
- Universal Drive Milling and Paving Project
 - Looking to begin sometime after April 1, 2011
 - Estimated to be completed in 2 – 3 weeks.
 - The State of CT has proposed an amendment to the existing agreement to increase the State funding portion for this project from \$376,000 to \$500,320

Financial Update

- Budget Update
 - Town
 - Board of Education
- Current Fund Balance Status
- State Aid Situation
- Budget Workshop Sessions began on January 18th

Completed:

- Board of Selectman January 18th
- Public Works January 19th
- Library January 22nd
- Community Services/Recreation January 22nd

Departments scheduled:

- Board of Education February 12th
- IT February 12th
- Fire February 12th
- Police Dept February 16th
- Admin-Assessor, Registrars, February 16th
- Town Clerk/Tax Collector February 16th
- Finalize Budgets March 16th

Economic Development

- Richard LoPresti appointed as Chairman of the Economic Development Commission
- Yale New Haven Hospital
 - Informational meetings
 - Tuesday March 8th with the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce
- REX (Regional Economic Xcelleration) appointed to the Board to represent North Haven on a regional economic development basis with 4 Mayors and First Selectmen from surrounding towns
- REX Economic Development Board
- The members will now be:
 - Mayor John Picard- West Haven
 - Mike Freda- First Selectman- North Haven
 - Mayor Scott Jackson- Hamden
 - Major John DeStefano- New Haven
 - First Selectman- Ed Sheehy- Woodbridge
- This board will serve to represent the entire South Central Connecticut region and represent a total of 16 towns and cities and will give North Haven a seat at the regional table to attract new businesses.
- Grand Openings and New Businesses:
 - Stellato's Deli and Catering
69 State Street
 - Urgent Care Center
Home Depot Plaza
- Signal 4 Benefit

- Volunteer fire fighter, Andrew Notarino, was recently diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma
- Andrew has 10 years of experience as an EMT and fire fighter here in North Haven
- There will be a benefit for him on Saturday, March 5th at the Hamden Elks
- What will 2011 Bring?
 - A positive focus and upbeat attitude representing our town to move us forward in an optimistic fashion
 - Continued emphasis on cost efficiencies
 - Maintaining a high level of "customer service"- conducting a training program for our employees
 - New economic development
 - Immersing myself into our community and staying visible
 - Returning all phone calls
 - Turning problems into solutions
 - Answering questions, helping to educate the public on town government

Correspondence – none

Resolutions – Mr. Fontana read the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that Michael J. Freda, First Selectman, be, and hereby authorized to sign the Agreement entitled:

"First Supplemental Agreement to the Original Agreement Dated September 15, 2010 between the State of Connecticut and the Town of North Haven for the construction, Inspection and Maintenance of Pavement Resurfacing on Universal Drive utilizing Federal Funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Public Law 111-5 (hereinafter "Act"), and the urban Component of the Surface Transportation Program"

Mr. Doheny motioned to approve the resolution.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Resignations/Appointments –

- Appointment of Peter McPhedran, M.D. (D), 21 Central Avenue, North Haven, CT 06473, to the Library Board of Directors to fill the unexpired term of Raymond Fowler (U) term to expire 12/31/13.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

- Appointment of Paul G. Kottage (U), 185 Fitch Street, North Haven, CT 06473, to the Community Services Commission term to expire 12/31/12.

Mr. Fontana explained that after doing some research it was discovered that somewhere in the past an error occurred in the termination date of a member of the Community Services Commission. In order to get the board back into compliance, this term will be for two years.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

- Appointment of Marc Fasano (R), 25 Round Hill Road, North Haven, CT 06473, to the Community Services Commission term to expire 12/31/13.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Bond Releases / Reductions – Mr. Doheny read the following bond release and motioned to approved same.

- 276 Washington Avenue, Proposed Temporary Shed, Exxon Company USA, release the entire bond balance of \$2,500.00 with the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Commission

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Property Tax Refunds – Mr. Doheny motioned to approve the property tax refunds presented below:

- 75 Old Broadway Holdings Inc, C/O Cornerstone Properties, 231 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, CT 06032, in the amount of \$ 6,780.10.
- Cab East, LLC, Box 105704, Atlanta, GA 30348, in the amount of \$69.48, and in the amount of \$138.25.
- Conlon, Kristine M, 160 Sentinel Hill Road, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$131.16.
- DCFS Trust, 2050 Roanoke Road, West Lake, TX 76262, in the amount of \$119.17.
- GMAC, P.O. Box 8138, Cockeysville, MD 21030, in the amount of \$140.86.
- Honda Lease Trust, 600 Kelly Way, Holyoke, MA 01040-9681, in the amount of \$305.36.
- Innocenti, Joelle M, 43 Manor Drive, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$135.15.
- Pasquariello, David L, 583 Skiff Street, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$63.24.
- Santamaria, Joseph, P.O. Box 29, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$5.45.
- Toyota Motor Credit Corp, Box 105386, Atlanta, GA 30348, in the amount of \$192.24, and in the amount of \$330.02.
- Troxler, Chris J, P.O. Box 4095, Woodbridge, CT 06525-0295, in the amount of \$427.82, and in the amount of \$300.32, and in the amount of \$293.27, and in the amount of \$234.25.
- VW Credit Leasing Ltd., 1401 Franklin Boulevard, Libertyville, IL 60048, in the amount of \$167.03.
- Wan, Bo Kwan, 28 Monroe Street, North Haven, CT 06473, in the amount of \$17.41.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Mr. Freda advised that the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is Thursday, March 3, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library Community Room.

Mr. Fontana addressed Mr. Freda regarding an article he read recently in one of the local papers that concerned him. Mr. Freda made a statement that individuals stepping up to the microphone during the public comment segment of a public meeting should proceed with caution. He was concerned because he felt that the Board individually and collectively has been in favor of free speech and promoting debate and questions and answers during public comment. He wanted to make sure that Mr. Freda's purpose was not to squelch debate or intimate people from coming to the meeting and asking questions. He noted that a few people called him to ask if Mr. Freda was talking about them.

Mr. Freda clarified that the writer asked a specific question about people coming up to the microphone. Mr. Freda responded that we will continue to treat everyone with a great deal of respect. He will stay all night answering questions and enjoys professional discourse. What he said was there are a few, a very small minority, who choose to come up to the microphone and play games, and that they may want to proceed with caution because he will hold them accountable for any misinformation that is purposely spread. He is sensitive to games being played to undermine this great town, and to discredit and or defame individuals. He cares about North Haven and wants to continue to move the town forward. He will treat people with respect, but if he finds that there are one or two people trying to drag the town backwards, trying to hurt the town, then they will have to debate him on the issue. He is committed to moving the town forward. Mr. Fontana expressed that the people he has talked with don't feel like they are playing games, they just want to hold the Board accountable. He has encouraged them to be respectful, but wants Mr. Freda to go on the record as to whether he is trying to squelch public comment. Mr. Freda explained he welcomes public comments, but if there is someone giving misinformation he will debate the issue.

Public Comment –

Mr. Amato, Pool Road, asked about the Workplace Violence Memo that was sent out to Public Works employees and was sent to the other departments. Mr. Freda clarified that it was sent to the other departments, including clerical and supervisors, but not to Police and Fire because the language did not work for those departments; they have to carry weapons. Mr. Freda explained it was sent out as a first step to maintain safety among our workers.

Mr. Amato commented that regarding the Board of Finance meeting he saw the tactic that the insurance company is using. Slap them with 28% increase, hit them hard the first year, and then reduce it, but you are still stuck with the 8 – 10% tax increase. Mr. Freda stated that last year we were faced with several dilemmas, we had to replace \$1.4 million deficit on the Grand List carried over from the previous year. We had to replace one time revenues, fund balances that were borrowed from. At some point in time, the financial initiatives utilizing one time revenue have to be made up in subsequent years. We had to make up \$5.5 million dollars. Regarding the insurance, this year nationally health care is up 14%. He just presented that North Haven could come in at a 0% or less increase.

Mr. Amato stated that on January 7th in the Citizen, Mr. Freda made a comment regarding “proceeding with caution”. Mr. Amato sees it as a threat to open government. He went on to give his opinion as to events that have occurred throughout town at various meetings as evidence to support his belief that we have a closed government. Mr. Freda thanked Mr. Amato for his opinion; however he did state that he totally disagrees with it.

Mr. Brian Testa, Maple Avenue, stated that he has looked into a few items that caught his interest after watching several of the meetings. He mentioned a FOI request that Mr. Amato questioned regarding a police report and a state statue. Mr. Testa looked up the statue that Mr. Freda referred to, regarding uncorroborated accusations. He found it on the internet and then followed up with the State to confirm its accuracy. Regarding the Board of Finance meeting and Mr. Mele’s statements pertaining to the health insurance going out to a sealed bid. He met with Finance department and got the information indicating the Town did not go out to a formal bid, but put out an RFQ (Request for Quote) to the six insurance companies that sell insurance in Connecticut. He is concerned that individuals are getting up at meetings and giving out incorrect information. He also wanted to make the point that he took the time to request the information from the First Selectman and the Director of Finance and both gave him the information he was seeking. He has found every department to be very open and willing to provide information. He doesn’t care about party affiliation but would like everyone to get their facts.

Jennie Caldwell, Kimberly Circle, expressed that she has found her experience with the Board of Education to be very frustrating. They are not open or receptive to the public. She has been to many meetings and has not received a response when she has spoken out.

Billy Leiserson, Cella Terrace, acknowledged that he believes Mr. Freda when he says he would like to have an open and honest discussion, but thinks what he has seen tonight is an indication of why his words may have been misplaced. To say proceed with caution is a warning. He feels there will be people who challenge his notion. He admires Mr. Freda’s optimism and showmanship and thinks he is a great politician. There will be people who have differing opinions. He finds Mr. Freda’s words very disturbing and wonders who the few troublemakers were that Mr. Freda was referring to. Mr. Freda stated that Mr. Testa came to the Board of Finance meeting last week and was appalled at what went on. He came into his office and Mr. Freda gave him the information he asked for. He stated that Mr. Testa said it very well tonight and that is if people are going to come up to the microphone and throw out

misinformation, he has an obligation to engage in that debate to disentangle the rhetoric from the reality. When we look at “proceed with caution”; proceed with caution and present the facts, don’t make accusations and provide inaccurate information. If someone gets up and tries to defame or discredit people, he has an obligation to debate the issues. The discussion continued.

John Heeran, Debra Lane, commented that he resents Mid State’s opposition to the proposed Yale New Haven Medical Facility. He also stated that as a citizen and school bus driver, he has issues regarding the snow. Cars parked in the road when there is a parking ban, the condition of cul-de-sacs and narrow roads due to the snow being pushed into the roads from homeowner’s driveways. He wanted to know if the Town can do anything about it. Mr. Doheny commented on the many, many issues all over town related to the excessive amount of snow we had. He stated that Public Works crews have done a Herculean job and they are beyond exhausted. He agrees with the problems, but feels we are doing all we can under the circumstances. Ms. Sadosky addressed Mr. Heeran’s concerns about the private plowing into the roads. She stated that she has pulled over and informed many independent plow drivers that it is illegal to push the snow into the roads. She also stated that anyone witnessing this can contact the police department and they will issue a warning and/or fine to the homeowner responsible.

Jay Bard, Sherwood Drive, feels that we are being taken advantage of regarding the health insurance. He has also read that Anthem has negotiated with physicians to accept lower payments and that along with our lower claims history should produce a significant decrease in our rates. He also asked Mr. Freda about the possibility of self insurance. Mr. Freda stated that we have had a significant amount of discussion with the agents and they feel it is not a good year to do this. Mr. Freda discussed the issue and noted that the agents are telling us that it may be feasible for next year. Mr. Freda went on to explain in more detail the self insurance model and how it works.

Mr. Amato stated that Ann DeMatteo wrote an article in September of 2009, regarding North Haven going over building process. Mr. Amato was surprised that Mr. Freda had not heard of it prior to taking office. He feels that there are a lot of things being covered up in town. He mentioned a collision involving the Fire Chief’s car. He is trying to get information and was told the car is being repaired. He wants all the details and is calling for a complete extensive investigation be conducted. Mr. Freda stated that the vehicle was backed into on private property while parked and being repaired by the individual.

Mr. Testa remarked that Mr. Amato should come up with facts and proof, and not come to the microphone with allegations of a cover up.

Mr. Freda said there is a report filed, and there is no cover up. Ann DeMatteo stated that she has been looking into this issue and if there is a report for this incidence where is it. Mr. Freda stated that she contact the Director of Finance for the information. Mr. Heeran stated that if the damage is under \$1,000 a police report does not have to be filed. Mr. Freda stated it was minor damage.

Adjournment – Mr. Freda asked for additional questions, and seeing none and hearing none the meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.