

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

June 2, 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 May 5, 2011

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

Mr. Doheny motioned to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Selectmen's Meeting of May 24, 2011

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

Presentation in recognition of the Citizen's Advisory Panel members- Mr. Freda provided an overview of the Citizens' Advisory Panel providing an historical perspective. He then acknowledged with great pride a certificate of appreciation to the members of the panel; Annette and Rico Gattilia, Miriam Brody, Hugh Davis, David Monz, and Thomas Roberts. He also acknowledged several members who were not present to receive their certificates, noting that we will make their certificates available in the Selectman's office; Joelle Innocenti, Ralph Vicinanza, Jr, Nancy Wilson and Joseph Connolly.

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

OPERATIONAL

Cost Savings Measures:

- In addition to the significant savings that we recently captured on Health Insurance through this year's bid process...
 - Legal Fees Cost Reduction
 - 2008 \$436,113/2009 \$378,111 = Total \$814,224
 - 2010 \$309,699/2011 \$235,000 = Total \$544,699
 - Total Savings over 2 years = \$269,525

Energy Savings:

- Town recently went out to bid on our energy contract
- We were able to reduce our rate per kilowatt hour substantially
- New contract savings will be over \$1,000,000 over a 3 year period - or \$366,000 per year starting January 1st 2012
 - Special thanks to Richard Funaro

Grant Updates

- Universal Drive Milling and Paving Project

- The project commenced on May 2, 2011 and is estimated to be completed by the week of June 6, 2011
- Milling by Costello Ind. Was completed the week of May 2, 2011
- Paving by American Industries was completed the week of May 20, 2011
- Present work included the installation traffic control
- Traffic Calming Grant – Spring Road and Laydon Avenue
 - The DPW secured a grant for a Traffic Calming Study through the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) for the Spring Road and Laydon Avenue areas.
 - CHA Consultants were selected by members of SCRCOG and the DPW to perform this effort which will focus on means to calm traffic in that area.
 - A Public Information Meeting has been scheduled for June 15, 2011 from 6:00 to 9:00 pm in the Library Community Room to inform the residents of Spring Road and Laydon Avenue of the study's scope.
 - Residents in the affected areas will receive a letter from the Town regarding the meeting particulars.
- Pavement Condition Study – Town Wide
 - The DPW has formally requested assistance from the SCRCOG in analyzing the condition of pavement on all Town roadways (126+ miles) for the purposes of developing a proposal for a Town wide milling and paving effort to be presented at a Town meeting in the Fall of 2011 for consideration and approval.
 - The Department has heard from SCRCOG and the study will begin in September and most likely take a month or so to complete.
- Small Cities Block Grant ADA Modifications to Town Hall–
 - Application has been completed, signed and sent out to the State.
 - Awards will be announced in the early Fall.
- STEAP Grant Award 2011 – Clintonville School Playground
 - Plans and specifications for the project have been developed and the bid opening date has been set for June 7, 2011.
 - It is estimated that the project will be under construction in July and August and completed on or before September 2, 2011.
- STEAP Grant Award 2011 – Skiff Street Sidewalks Projects
 - The Town continues to await the execution of the Personal Service Agreement from the State DOT for the Skiff Street Sidewalks Project.
- Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECBG) Program
 - Home Energy solution Audits, provides up to 600 free in-home energy audits to Town residents as conducted by United Illuminating Company.
 - Approximately 450 single family residents have already signed up for the program.
 - Audits are presently being conducted and will continue until the total number of audits is achieved. Contact Roxanne Bouchard in Finance Office to sign up.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 297 State Street – Quebecor /Northeast Graphic Building
 - Mountain Acquisition closed on the building
 - We are working with Mountain Acquisition and we are showcasing the building to bring tenants in
- Yale New Haven Hospital
 - Office of Health Care Access will conduct a public hearing in mid July
 - No opposition as of today but the public hearing will be held to listen to any opposition and support
- Economic Development Commission Breakfast
 - Thursday, May 12th - well attended
 - Speakers:
 - Vin Petrini – Yale New Haven Hospital

- Doctor Nicholas S. Perna – Economic Advisor to Webster Financial Corporation
- Economic Development Update:
 - Buffalo Wild Wings Restaurant
 - DSW Shoe Store
 - Chipolte
 - 415 Northern Washington Avenue
 - Marlins
- Public Safety Day
 - July 9, 2011 (rain date: 10th)
 - Police
 - Fire
- Correction !!
 - The North Haven Courier has mistakenly reprinted a notice advising residents that the DPW has commenced bulk pick up and residents should call for appointments.
 - *This was printed in error - the next bulk pick up will be in September during our regularly scheduled bi-annual pick up.*
- Freda's Focus
 - Continue to focus my efforts on moving this town forward in a positive fashion
 - Continue to focus on cost efficiencies
 - Continue to focus on maintaining a high level of "customer service"
 - Continue to focus on new economic development
 - Continue to focus on turning problems into solutions
 - Continue to focus on answering your questions, helping to educate the public on town government
 - Continue to focus on trying to help people in an effort to provide services to enhance the daily lives of our citizens.
 - Continue to focus on the wonderful attributes and people of this great Town!

Follow up to Mr. Raymond Fowler's correspondence regarding Child Abuse – Mr. Doheny thanked Mr. Fowler and explained that he and Mr. Fontana have been doing some research on the subject. Mr. Doheny spoke with Maggie Goodwin from Harbor Health who works in our Community Services Department, and Superintendent, Dr. Cronin along with Annette Sauerbrunn the charge nurse for the schools. He was pleased that they were well versed in the topic. He also mentioned that he learned of the law that requires certain people to report child abuse. Mr. Fontana then commented that he spoke with Chief McLoughlin and Judith Meyers, a resident in town who works in Hartford in the child care field. Their goal is to increase awareness and build upon Mr. Fowler's suggestion. They have set up a broad framework but will need to involve other people in town. He spoke with Donna Malley, the Community Services Commission Chairman, who would like to have the commission get involved. They presented several actions that the Town could carry out including outreach to various PTSA groups, coaches, civic organizations, as well as training sessions for town employees. They also mentioned the need for foster families. Mr. Fontana and Mr. Doheny will continue to work collaboratively to bring this campaign forward with a culmination in September. Mr. Freda suggested issuing a proclamation as the final piece.

Resignations and Appointments –

Mr. Freda noted the resignation of Michael Pepe (R) 59 Blakeslee Avenue from the Community Services Commission and asked Mr. Fontana and Mr. Doheny to work collaboratively to seek a candidate to fill Mr. Pepe's unexpired term. It was agreed by all three selectmen.

Bond Releases / Reductions – None

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

below:

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

- Daimler Trust, Box 685 Roanoke, TX 76262 in the amount of \$1,331.78
- Huang, Lequn L, 19 Cedar Road, Woodbridge, CT 06525 in the amount of \$365.21
- Toyota Motor Credit Corp., Box 105386 Atlanta, GA 30348 in the amount of \$305.13
- VW Credit Leasing, Ltd. 1401 Franklin Blvd Libertyville, IL 60048, in the amount of \$562.53, and in the amount of \$54.61
- Wang Huang Feng Alison, 19 Cedar Road, Woodbridge, CT 06525 \$198.97

Mr. Freda announced that the dates for 2012 Board of Selectmen's meetings – Unless otherwise indicated, will be held on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the North Haven Memorial Library Community Room – January 5, February 2, March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7, July 5, August 2, September 6, October 4, November 1, and December 6.

Mr. Freda advised that the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is Thursday, June 2, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library Community Room.

Mr. Fontana brought up the subject of the Department Head Personnel Policy Manual and permitting the public to have input into the document. Mr. Freda stated that he is allowing Town Attorney, who is an expert in labor relations, to re-write the manual and it will not be subject to public input. Mr. Fontana stated that he believes the last document had the signature of all three selectmen and thinks it's a very serious document and if we are going to be transparent, then the public should have the opportunity to view it before it is adopted. Mr. Freda said he will check into the procedural aspect of the document. Mr. Fontana also noted that he believes this new policy will only apply to new hires going forward, and not to the existing Department Heads.

Public Comment –

Mr. Raymond Fowler, Todd Drive thanked the Selectmen for their attention to his request on increasing child abuse awareness. He then went on to talk about the town budget and his concerns related to it. He is appreciative of the good things happening in town, the grants, the reduction in expenses, etc, however, this year we had to raise taxes and it concerns him greatly. He went on to share his thoughts on the subject.

Mrs. Florence Sinow, Maple Avenue stated that she doesn't think we are in terrible shape and doesn't think there are many towns that are not in similar situations. The Town has lost revenue over the years with the departure of Pratt and Whitney, but it has been that way for a while. She stated that we have had some difficult times but we have come an enormous way since Mr. Freda took over. She would like to see more people vote, and more people to come out to meetings.

Mr. Freda noted that over a 21 year period the residents have had to endure a greater percent of the tax burden. In 1990 when Pratt and Whitney was here, paying about 20% of the revenue, the home owners were bearing about 43% the burden and over the 21 year period since Pratt & Whitney went out the burden is now almost 70%. North Haven has also endured the loss of the 15 year 1 million dollar Upjohn payment, and the loss of revenue from CRRA. So there are some tremendous challenges. He stated that even though the budget number creeps up, we have balanced our budget and our goal is not to spend everything we have in our budget, but rather end up with a surplus. The goal of this government is to raise the top line revenue and we are starting to turn the corner, while controlling costs.

Sherman Katz, Sherwood Drive, felt he had to speak tonight in response to Mr. Fowler's

comments. He commented that we have approximately 22,000 residents all with various interests, schools, roads, taxes, concerts on the green, etc. We should continue things like the concerts because it is all part of living a good life. He doesn't remember Mr. Fowler being concerned about the money that the Town paid to rectify the water problems on Todd Drive. We all need to contribute for each other as a society to enjoy life.

Mr. Doheny commented that the concerts on the green are not funded by the Town, but rather sponsors. Mr. Freda agreed, however the Town does pay for the personnel required to work the concerts.

Billy Leiserson, Cella Terrace, noted that Mr. Freda has spoken about the reduction in legal fees. He wondered if those figures included the legal settlements. Mr. Freda explained legal fees include legal fees and judgments and the figure is \$200,000 a year. We have reduced the number of law firms, and the number of activities since Mr. Freda is able to handle many items himself. Mr. Leiserson noted that there have been some settlements made that cost the Town money. Mr. Freda noted that is correct, however, the previous administration also did not show the settlements as being included in the legal budget. A discussion continued.

Mr. Leiserson also commented that he would be very disappointed if the public was not allowed to participate in the process of the personnel manual. He feels there are a lot of options that an attorney may or may not feel are important. He thinks it would be a political mistake for Mr. Freda to prohibit that from happening.

Mr. Freda stated that he has done everything possible to maintain transparency. We provide a good deal of information during the Selectman's update PowerPoint, we answer questions, return phone calls, and provide documents. We have an attorney along with himself who understand what needs to be done.

Chief Vincent Landisio, High Meadow Road, finds it very disappointing that people would ask to participate in the development of the Department Head Personnel Manual and single out five separate workers when we don't show the public the fire, police or public works union contracts. We don't ask the public for their input and that would cause anarchy. He also finds it very disappointing and ironic that in the previous administration, of which Mr. Fontana was the second Selectman, and majority Selectman, and Mr. Leiserson had a close relationship, there were four department heads hired. Two finance directors, a director of public works, and a director of community services. There was never one discussion by Mr. Fontana or Leiserson as to why they hadn't changed the department head policy manual before hiring four department heads, and now they have repeatedly brought this up to Mr. Freda, and it appears to him to be just pure partisan politics. He asked Mr. Fontana why in 24 months he never brought this up to Ms. McCarty. He replied he did privately. The discussion continued.

Mr. Fowler stated that he had worked for 18 years as director of human resources training and development for a large printing company and feels the idea of public comment on a personnel policy manual is a terrible idea. When it comes to personnel policies there is only one opinion that matters and that is the court. Human resources today has become very complicated and that nobody is really able to make sense of any personnel policy. Many companies are opting out of policy manuals. He agrees with Chief Landisio and does not feel we need public comment on the policy.

John Heron, Debra Lane, stated that Mr. Fowler made some excellent points. As far as the loss of manufacturing this town and others have no control over it, many jobs have gone out of state taking jobs and they never come. Regarding the town, you need to regard it like your house and take care of it. He noted that when he worked for the town several jobs were

eliminated and they never were filled again. He praised Mr. Palma for spending money for good equipment that gets the job done with less manpower and more efficiently.

Adjournment – Mr. Freda asked for additional questions, and seeing none and hearing none Mr. Fontana motioned to adjourn at 8:38 pm.