

## **MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

**May 3, 2012**

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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, Alan J. Sturtz

Mr. Freda introduced himself and Selectmen Timothy Doheny and Alan Sturtz and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Mr. Freda asked for public comments relative to the agenda. Mr. Sherman Katz, Sherwood Drive asked Mr. Freda to explain the resolution on the agenda. Mr. Freda explained that it is a procedural resolution that is made yearly enabling the Town to receive funding from the State for the child day care.

There being no further public comment, Mr. Doheny moved the approval of the minutes of the Regular Board of Selectmen's Meeting of April 5, 2012.

Vote: Freda- Yes, Doheny- Yes, Sturtz- Yes

There being no correspondence, Mr. Freda commended the Clean Energy Task Force for their efforts in signing up residents for alternative energy enabling the Town to receive credits towards free solar panels for Town buildings. Mr. Freda mentioned that the Town is looking ahead and taking on a major initiative to reduce energy costs in Town. We have renegotiated contracts, we are retrofitting all town buildings with energy efficient lighting as well as looking into alternative forms of energy. Mr. Freda also made a plea to anyone interested in joining the Clean Energy Task Force to contact the Selectman's office. He then introduced Mr. Hugh Davis of the North Haven Clean Energy Task Force to present information to the public about their efforts. Mr. Davis gave an overview of where they have come from and where they are headed. He explained the CETF was formed in 2007 in response to the government's creation of the Clean Energy Fund. He advised that their mission has been to raise public awareness on clean energy as well as sign up residents to alternative clean energy options of which the Town benefits from free solar panels. We now have 22 solar panels on the high school which results in about \$5,000 year savings for the taxpayers. He went on to provide additional information on the benefits and advantages to clean energy. Ms. Letty McPhedran also spoke providing an overview of the benchmarking report completed by Chris Fogg, and EPA intern that the Town was fortunate to have last summer. The project documented current and past energy improvement projects and benchmarked 12 municipal building, streetlights, and vehicles for energy use. Mr. Freda thanked the CETF for their presentation and efforts.

Mr. James Leahy, Regency Drive, took exception to the statements and presentation given by the CETF. He feels that there has been a distortion of the facts. The solar panels are not free; they are paid for by the taxpayers. He also noted that they left out natural gas, which is the most cost efficient, and stated that the science behind global warming has not been proven.

Mr. Freda provided an overview of information relative to the Town as follows:

#### OPERATIONAL

##### Bonding Projects

This spring we will start working on our three year plan of paving and milling roads, we will start renovation of one fire house and we will be constructing the new public works garage. Over the next 3 year period, we will see an upgrade of the Town as part of our long term capital improvement plan.

##### Milling and Paving Schedule for 2012 - 2015

The Department met with the SCRCOG Pavement Condition Study consultant, to develop a 4 year plan to mill and pave approximately 25+ miles of Town roadway. The milling and paving plan should be completed by the end of April and will likely address as many as 50 to 75 roadways in Town. The plan when approved by the DPW and Office of the First Selectman will be posted on the Town's website.

##### Sanitation Garage Construction

The Department is working to secure necessary approvals through the Planning and zoning Commission and the Building Department for the proposed structure and related site improvements. The Department received approvals from the Inland Wetlands Commission on April 25, 2012 and construction should be completed on or before August 1, 2012.

##### Stoddard Ave & Elm St Drainage Project

The DPW has commenced with drainage improvements to eliminate flooding, which frequently occurred on Elm St. from Old Broadway to the Town's Recycling Center. The Department commenced with construction, which involves the installation of 580 feet of 30" diameter pipeline, manholes and catch basins on March 29<sup>th</sup> and expects to conclude on or before April 20, 2012.

##### Memorial Field Basketball Resurfacing Project

On April 25, 2012, the Department transmitted specifications for the resurfacing of its Memorial Field Basketball Court. The Department will conduct a bid opening for this project on May 17, 2012. This project will be completed in early June.

#### FINANCIAL UPDATE

Comparison of total Town Government 2012-2013 budget with debt & capital needs: 2011-2012 \$39,744,228; 2012-2013 \$39,330,314, -1% change and -(\$413,914) dollar change.

- Comparison of total Board of Education 2012-2013 budget: 2011-2012 \$44,389,014; 2012-2013 \$45,720,684; 3.0% change with \$1,331,670 dollar change.
- Total recommended 2012-2013 Town/BOE budget including capital: 2011-2012 \$84,091,296; 2012-2013 \$85,050,998; 1.1% change with a \$959,702 dollar change.
- FY 2012-2013 – Education is 54% of the budget and Town is 46% of the budget
- Total Debt is 7% of Budget
- North Haven Mill Rate History: From 1960 – 2011. The Average Mill Rate Has Been 31.81 Over This 51 Year Period. Today, the Mill Rate is 26.54 and will remain at 26.54 with no tax increase this coming fiscal year. The Town has been able to deliver back to back surpluses these past two years. A surplus of \$1,892,000 was carried over from last fiscal year. As a result, we will be using that surplus to offset next fiscal year's 1.1 percent increase and this will result in no tax increase this coming year with the Fund Balance remaining at its current 8%.
- Dates for the Annual Budget Town Meeting Monday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm in the North Haven High School Auditorium and the Referendum is Tuesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

##### Our Proposed Budget:

- Maintains and enhances our level of service to our residents
- Reflects true capital needs that will help enhance those services
- Reinvests back into North Haven with capital upgrades

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Yale New Haven Hospital Update: The Yale New Haven Hospital (YNHH) project will move

ahead with the plans to develop an outpatient center in the former AT&T building at 6 Devine Street. They purchased and will remodel the 120,000 square foot, four story building for a comprehensive ambulatory care program. The center will be open seven days a week and will offer a wide variety of very comprehensive services and treatment.

- Additional Economic Development Updates: Medical Center on State Street with the 24,000 square foot facility, Northern Washington Avenue, Universal Drive, Leon's, Hibachi Grill
- EDC Breakfast held on April 18, 2012, at the North Haven Holiday Inn. Well attended by 125+ businesses. Presentations by Quinnipiac, Yale, Mountain Development, and the Quinnipiac Chamber

#### Citizen Preparedness Class

Last week was National Severe Weather Preparedness Week. North Haven is participating by conducting a Citizen Preparedness Class on Saturday, May 12th from 10 AM to 2 PM at the North Haven Library Community Room

Topics Covered: Types of hazards we need to prepare for; Supplies to stock in your home; Preparing a Go Kit for every member of your household; Establishing a communications plan should you be unable to communicate; Arrangements for pets should shelter be necessary. Class Format: Part informative / Part discussion based; Discussion will be interactive

Citizens experienced two major storms last year, Hurricane Irene & Winter Storm Alfred. To sign up contact Jim Buck at (203) 215-5720. Registration is suggested as seats are limited.

#### Substance Abuse Action Council Pill Return

On April 28, 2012 the North Haven SAAC in conjunction with the DEA conducted a medication disposal event as part of the National initiative. Collected 198lbs. Came in #4 in the state (of all cities/towns who participated on the very same day). Came in #2 in New Haven County (Wallingford came in #1, as this was one of their first take back events). This was North Haven's 5th event. Police Department Welcomes Koda, new dog being trained for narcotics search and seizure.

Following the Selectman's overview, Mr. Sturtz proceeded with reading the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That the First Selectman, Michael J. Freda, is empowered to enter into or amend contractual instruments in the name and on behalf of the Town of North Haven, with the State of Connecticut Department of Education for a **Child Day Care** program if such an agreement is offered, and to have the corporate seal affixed to all documents required as part of any offered agreement.

The motion was moved by Mr. Doheny and seconded by Mr. Sturtz.

Vote: Freda- Yes, Doheny- Yes, Sturtz- Yes

Mr. Doheny moved the reappointment of (R) Audrey McClure, 1 Bowen Road North Haven, CT to the Quinnipiack Valley Health District Board of Directors for a three year term to expire May 1, 2015.

Vote: Freda- Yes, Doheny- Yes, Sturtz- Yes

Mr. Doheny moved the reappointment of (D) Dorothy Logan, 2065 Hartford Turnpike, North Haven, CT as the Catchment area Council Representative Mental Health Coordinator for a two year term to expire May 31, 2014.

Vote: Freda- Yes, Doheny- Yes, Sturtz- Yes

Mr. Doheny read the Resignation of (D) Sarah A. Aziz from the Library Board of Directors term to expire December 31, 2013.

The selectmen noted the vacancies on the Cemetery Commission and now with Ms. Aziz's resignation the Library Board. They each encouraged anyone interested in participating to send their resume in to the Selectman's office. Mr. Freda also noted that we would like to add several members to the Clean Energy Task Force.

Mr. Doheny moved the following bond release as recommended by the Inland Wetlands Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sturtz.

- 14 Woodmere Circle – Deborah L. Forte, release entire bond balance in the amount of \$2,500.00

Vote: Freda- Yes, Doheny- Yes, Sturtz- Yes

Mr. Sturtz moved and Mr. Doheny seconded the following property tax refunds -

- Berner, Robert A. or Berner, Elizabeth K., 15 Hickory Hill, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$170.84
- Lipp, Stacey K., 357 Skiff Street, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$33.80
- Montesi Motors, 444 State Street, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$349.14
- Nick's Char Pit, Inc., 22 Middletown Avenue, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$35.82
- Seneco, Frank, 64 Mountain Brook Road, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$449.95
- Tiffany Warren D. Estate of, 30 Chapel Hill Road, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$350.00

Vote: Freda- Yes, Doheny- Yes, Sturtz- Yes

Mr. Freda stated that the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is Thursday, June 7, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the community room of the North Haven Memorial Library, 17 Elm Street, North Haven, CT. At this time he opened the meeting up to public comment.

Ann DeMatteo, New Haven Register asked where the Leon's Restaurant is moving to in North Haven. Mr. Freda replied in the former Hollywood Video location. Ms. DeMatteo stated that she was confused by Mr. Freda's statement that the tax rate is lower than it was 10 or 20 years ago. Mr. Freda stated that the point he was making is that the average mill rate over the last 51 years has been 31.64 and we are currently at 26.54. He was referring to the mill rate specifically, and the variable of course is the property values.

Mr. Gary Amato, Pool Road, inquired as to whether the union contracts have settled. Mr. Freda explained that right now there are five contracts still in negotiation – fire, police, library, and after July clerical, and public works. Mr. Amato also mentioned the fund balance at \$1.8 million, and if the fire houses didn't pass we would have had \$1.1 million in debt service being returned to the fund balance for a total of approximately \$2.9 million. He feels that is over taxation, and also feels that the administration is now lowering the fund balance to skew the union contract negotiations. Mr. Amato commented on the number of projects in town and if Mr. Freda would be reinstating the Engineer II position. Mr. Freda commented that we are bringing in an intern to work with Jonathan Bodwell in the engineering department and also looking to provide some part time help as well, but we will not be reinstating the Engineer II position. Mr. Amato also asked about the Stiles fund and if more information could be made public. Mr. Freda stated that we have a family in town that is already benefiting from this fund and he would be amenable to providing more information about the fund. Mr. Amato also inquired about receiving monies from the state relative to the two storms, Irene and Alfred. Mr. Freda said we received reimbursement of 75% for the first storm and still in the process for the later. Mr. Amato asked for the cost for the last storm. Mr. Amato also asked if the Town would be using Anthem again and at what increase. Mr. Freda advised yes and no increase. Mr. Amato questioned utilizing the state medical plan. Mr. Freda stated he already researched it, thinks we can do better on our own since it puts North Haven into a high risk pool with

other towns. He will continue to look at it for the future. Mr. Amato also asked why the Town is buying a bucket truck. He feels it puts our men at risk and the insurance costs would be high. Ms. Sadosky clarified that the Town will be saving money because we will be purchasing a used bucket truck and we are presently outsourcing at a higher rate. The return on investment will be about two years. The discussion continued.

Mr. Sherman Katz, Sherwood Drive, stated that at the last BOF meeting he brought up the senior citizen tax relief program and it was recommended that he bring it up to the Board of Selectmen. He also brought up the report on the middle school, and asked if we do in fact have the completed report, are we planning on a new middle school, and if yes, has he selected a committee, and if we do put in a new middle school how does that affect our debt service. Mr. Freda noted that we do have the final report and have not formed a committee. We are nowhere near that stage. However, we do have to do an exhaustive analysis on the middle school and then compile what the costs would be to renovate the school versus the cost of building new. We also have to look into the possibility and cost associated with using Gateway as swing space. We are at the beginning stages. Once the analysis is done over the next 4 to 5 months, he will call a public meeting and present the information at that time to the public.

Ann DeMatteo, asked if there was a committee for the fire house project. Mr. Freda responded yes, the committee is responsible for interviewing architects, construction manager and a possible clerk of the works. The committee consists of town attorney, member of the board of finance, member of the fire commission, our Director of Finance; Ed Swinkoski, and the Town Engineer; Jonathan Bodwell.

Mr. Amato stated that the middle school has been in horrible shape for the past 7 or 8 years. He feels if we didn't push for the firehouses, the \$1.1 million plus the \$1.8 million fund balance we could have redone the school at no cost to the tax payers. Mr. Doheny noted that \$3 million was only to repair the roof. Mr. Amato asked if Mr. Freda got to see the fire commission meeting from December and thinks we need someone to oversee the project. Mr. Freda stated we have a very rigid system with checks and balances and we can't go over the \$9.2 million. Mr. Amato also stated that there was a problem with the permits for the resident who recently had a fire on his property. Mr. Freda stated that the permit issue is a state DEEP issue. Mr. Amato asked how much debris was brought to the property. Mr. Freda stated was unsure specifically.

Mr. Katz asked if the BOS will look into his question regarding the senior tax relief. Mr. Freda stated that he is looking into it and needs to do some research as to what we can do as a town. He is in favor, but must research first. Mr. Doheny brought up the veteran's exemption and Mr. Freda noted that he thinks there may be something we can do there. There is a \$3,000 exemption of the net assessed value and he is looking into the state statutes on this issue.

John Heeran, Debra Lane, reminded everyone that we have a referendum coming up and encouraged everyone to please vote.

Mr. Freda asked for any additional public comment. Hearing none and seeing none, Mr. Sturtz motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 pm.

Vote: Freda – Yes, Doheny- Yes, Sturtz- Yes