

## **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**January 9, 2014**

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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, Sally J. Buemi

Mr. Freda introduced himself and Selectmen Timothy Doheny and Sally Buemi to the meeting.

Mr. Freda asked if there were any public comments relative to the agenda, Mr. Katz of Sherwood Drive asked if item 6 C, hiring of the architect, on the agenda would be governed by the Town of North Haven rules of bid. Mr. Freda replied that it would give the building committee along with Director of Finance the ability to go out to bid. Mr. Katz asked if the consultant was chosen by the bid process. Mr. Freda explained they were not, since they are a professional service, we were not required to and had we gone through a bid process, we may have missed the deadline for the referendum resulting in the possibility of a lower reimbursement rate from the State.

Mr. Doheny motioned to approve the minutes from the Board of Selectmen's Meeting of December 5, 2013 with a second by Ms. Buemi.

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

There being no correspondence, Mr. Freda introduced Robert and Sue Iverson of the Mayflower Society who gave a brief presentation regarding the history of the society and the details regarding their 119<sup>th</sup> annual banquet. The Society was established to commemorate the pilgrims' landing at Plymouth Rock in 1620, the Mayflower Society of North Haven is open to all residents regardless of whether or not they have ties to any direct Mayflower descendants. Dues are \$5 per year. The group's goal in hosting this annual event is threefold: to keep a tradition; to remember our system of free government; and to honor local history.

Mr. Freda provided his Selectman's Overview.

### **OPERATIONAL**

- Grover Wyman Bike Path and Park Rehabilitation Project. Over the past several months we have been meeting with a community interest group to discuss the construction of a bike path. Construction work was completed by TradeMark Contractors on October 31<sup>st</sup>. Remaining work will include the installation of asphalt curbing and crosswalk lining and refurbishment of the existing playscape. Construction is expected to commence this summer.
- Canna Park Tennis and Basketball Court Refurbishments. STEAP grant provided for the replacement of 2 tennis courts and one basketball court. Recently the OPM approved the addition of swings and a playscape to the scope of work. Tennis and basketball court refurbishments completed by Maisano Brothers on October 31, 2013. Bid opening held in December for replacement of swings and playscape.

- Work is expected to commence as soon as weather permits.
- Annual Christmas tree removal. On January 2<sup>nd</sup> The Department began its annual Christmas tree removal program. Pick up and removal continues through January 31, 2014. Please remove all ornaments and tinsel and place tree at the curbside. Please remove plastic disposal bag. Tree may also be brought to the Recycling Center on Elm Street.
- Energy Savings Update. North Haven is recognized as one of 35 towns and cities out of 169 total to achieve energy efficiency. North Haven saved 21,129,665 kilowatt-hours of power. Avoided emission of 12,451 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide), which is equivalent to taking 2,171 cars off the road for one year. Solar Panel Park – old landfill. Hundreds of thousands of dollars in annual savings.
- Middle School Update. At the Annual Town Meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup> 10 people were appointed to the Middle School Building Committee. The committee has met biweekly to review the options. Tonight we will be calling a Special Town Meeting for January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014.
- Recycling Update. Depositing our trash costs \$70 per ton. Once Paying \$36 per ton to deposit recyclables - Now getting paid \$10,000 for our recyclables. Our goal is to get paid \$20 per ton for our recyclables

#### FINANCIAL UPDATE

- Budget workshops begin on January 14<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Freda presented the schedule of workshops. The public is invited to attend.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Tax Phase In- 4 year tax phase in: Year 1= 25%, Year 2= 50%, Year 3= 75%, Year 4= 100%. No relaxation of building fees and permits. Critical to North Haven's Economic Development. Special Town Meeting planned for end of February early March.
- Economic Development Updates- 297 State Street, Red Thread Spaces, LLC1-800 Pack Rat, LLC, Village on State Apartments (55+). Housing – Northern Washington Avenue for Quinnipiac University, Animal Surgical Center, North Haven Shopping Center
- Challenges Remain: Pratt & Whitney, Staples, X-Pect

Following Mr. Freda's update the second and third selectmen had several comments. Mr. Doheny commented on the ability to use multiple green recycling bins to maximize resident's recycling efforts resulting in savings to the Town. Ms. Buemi inquired about the solar panel park being built on a landfill and if this has been done before. Mr. Freda explained that we are working with experts and they have a great deal of experience. He also explained that the responsibility of the park will be theirs, and not an expense to the Town to maintain or repair. Mr. Doheny feels that the company is professional and certain they looked into the viability of putting the solar park on the land fill.

Ms. Buemi also expressed several issues regarding the tax phase in. She stated she is in favor of the idea, and supports it, however, she has some questions regarding Amazon and the situation with them not coming to North Haven. She wondered if Mr. Freda could have negotiated with the Amazon and then brought the deal to the Town Meeting. Mr. Freda did not feel that would have worked. We could not negotiate a potential deal and then ask them to wait while we brought it to a Town meeting. The discussion continued at length among the selectmen including research that Ms. Buemi conducted on the details of the deal between Amazon and the Town of South Windsor.

Following the discussion among the Selectmen, Ms. Buemi and Mr. Doheny read the Call for a Special Town Meeting to be held Tuesday, January 28, 2014 in the auditorium of the North Haven Middle School, 55 Bailey Road, North Haven, Connecticut, at 7:00 P.M., to consider and act upon the following resolutions:

- A. Resolved, that the North Haven Board of Education is authorized to apply to the Commissioner of Education of the State of Connecticut for a grant in connection with a “renovate as new” plus “new” addition construction project at the North Haven Middle School (“Project”) and to accept or reject a grant for the Project;
- B. Resolved, that the North Haven Middle School Building Committee is hereby established for the Project (“NHMS Building Committee”) and the members of the NHMS Building Committee are as follows: Michael R. Brandt, Miriam E. Brody, Luigi (Lou) G. Coppola, Sr., Gary Johns, David Mikos, Bruce Morris, Walter J. Nester, Jr., Joseph M. Porto, Michelle L. Spader, Dyann M. Vissicchio; and
- C. Resolved, that the NHMS Building Committee is authorized to procure an Architect for the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the project, as well as other incidental pre-referendum professional services.

Ms. Buemi motioned and Mr. Doheny seconded the Call.

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

Following the approval of the Call, Ms. Buemi motioned and Mr. Doheny seconded the appointment of Steven Miller (R), 5 Round Hill Road to a full seat on the Blight Appeals Board for a two (2) year term to expire December 31, 2015.

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

Mr. Buemi motioned and Mr. Doheny seconded the appointment of Joseph Louis Tenedine III, P.E. (U), 170 Kings Highway to the Inland Wetlands Commission for a four (4) year term to expire December 31, 2017.

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

Following the appointments Mr. Doheny motioned and Ms. Buemi seconded the approval of the following tax abatements.

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

- Nissan Infinit LT, Box 650214 Dallas, TX 75265-0214 in the amount of \$217.27, and in the amount of \$61.99, and in the amount of \$52.46, and in the amount of \$48.39, and in the amount of \$313.94
- Nissan Motor Acceptance, Box 650214 Dallas, TX 75265-0214 in the amount of \$69.07
- Williams, Christopher, 1298 Hartford Tpke, Apt 7A, North Haven, CT 06473, in amount \$429.85
- Young, Katherine 67 Rakoczy Avenue, Fairfield, CT 06484 in the amount of \$360.52

Ms. Buemi motioned and Mr. Doheny seconded the approval of the following bond releases:

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

- 105 Quinnipiac Avenue – Jarrett Rousseau release the entire bond balance in the amount of \$40,000.00 with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Freda stated that the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is on Thursday, February 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the community room of the North Haven Memorial

Library, 17 Elm Street, North Haven, CT.

Mr. Freda then asked if there was any public Comment. Mr. Raymond Sonazzaro, Elm Street, North Haven commented on his dissatisfaction regarding the fire house renovations and his opinion on the projects.

Mr. Sherman Katz, Sherwood Drive, asked if the referendum for the middle school would be one or five polling places. Mr. Freda was not sure at this time. Mr. Katz asked if with regard to the Affordable Care Act, at the last Board of Finance meeting Mr. Freda mentioned an additional cost of approximately \$500,000 to the Town due to this insurance. Mr. Freda explained that the figure will end up being determined by the cost of the premium. He also stated that now that all individuals are entitled to insurance, employers now have to pre fund or pay a levy to the National Health Care Act. Mr. Katz noted that Hamden has a cost saving program for solar energy for residents to participate in and asked if North Haven has a similar program. Mr. Freda explained we do not, however, he is exploring the potential for a private company like Solar City to provide discounts to residents through a purchase power agreement. He will be following up on this.

Mr. Katz inquired about the boiler problem at Ridge Road School. Mr. Freda explained that although that is a question best directed to the superintendent, he would provide a general overview of the situation. A pipe burst, flooding the boiler room with over three feet of water. The insurance adjusters are working on it and they are determining the extent of the damage. The children have been temporarily relocated to the Middle and High Schools.

Mr. Katz asked if Mr. Freda had a feel for what the tax mill rate will be for the next year. Mr. Freda articulated his goal, but advised it is just a goal, and is very ambitious. He feels that he can't have a tax increase before going to referendum on the middle school. He would like to institute senior tax relief, plus a veteran's exemption increase plus a no tax increase in May. He stated this is a big if right now and is very dependent upon what the BOE will be asking for with regard to their needs. Mr. Katz asked about the BOE surplus and whether they are over estimating their budget or cost savings. Mr. Freda stated that primarily is due to health insurance and energy costs.

There was a brief discussion on consolidating the two referendums (Budget and Middle School) to achieve cost savings. The consensus was if it is possible that would be preferred among the selectmen. Mr. Freda suggested bringing it up at the Town Meeting.

Mr. Katz asked for an update regarding his previous inquiry into splitting automobile property taxes into two payments. Mr. Freda asked Stacey Yarbrough, Town Clerk/Tax Collector to address Mr. Katz's question. Ms. Yarbrough gave a very detailed explanation of the pros and cons. However, the cons prevailed for many reasons. Mr. Katz agreed.

Al Warren, Charles Court, inquired as to whether the State would collect the car tax directly or we would collect and send to Hartford.

Mr. John Heeran, Debra Lane, asked if the \$2,000 was found from the Tax office. Mr. Freda explained the auditors completed report, investigation completed, however was not found. Systems have been put in place, four drawer system and video cameras and the insurance company will cover the loss. Mr. Heeran thanked Gary Amato for taping the Middle School Building Committee meetings. He also commented on the tax phase in. He then expressed his dissatisfaction over time it took to plow his road during the December snow fall.

Jay Bard, Sherwood Drive, commented regarding the tax phase in and including verbiage regarding a non-binding intent to make a best effort to employ North Haven residents. Mr. Freda explained we have in essence done that verbally, and his only concern may be how it is measured. He is open to including that. Mr. Doheny wondered how the brokers would feel about it. Mr. Bard asked what happens if the company leaves after the four year phase in and can we put a contingency clause in the language to protect the Town from that. The Selectmen discussed this issue in greater detail.

With no further comments from the public, Ms. Buemi motioned to adjourn. Mr. Doheny seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.