

The Board of Selectmen held its regular meeting on November 10, 2015, at the Town Hall with the First Selectman Robert Morra presiding. In attendance were: Selectmen Robert Lessard, Robert Neil, Gwen Marrion, and Sandra Pierog; Administrative Officer Joyce Stille and four members of the public.

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

**2. Public Comment:**

**3. Approval of Minutes:**

**A. October 6, 2015 Public Hearing** – R. Neil moved to approve. R. Lessard seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**B. October 6, 2015 Regular Meeting** – R. Neil moved to approve. R. Lessard seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**C. October 14, 2015 Special Meeting** – R. Neil moved to approve. R. Lessard seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**D. October 27, 2015 Informational Meeting** – R. Neil moved to approve. R. Lessard seconded. G. Marrion asked that “five apparatus” be corrected to read “fire apparatus” in the fifth paragraph. R. Neil and R. Lessard accepted the amendment. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**E. October 28, 2015 Special Meeting** – R. Neil moved to approve. R. Lessard seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**4. Correspondence: None.**

**5. Unfinished Business: None.**

R. Morra asked for a moment of recognition in honor of R. Lessard. R. Lessard was presented with an award in appreciation of his service.

G. Marrion moved to advance item 8. First Selectman’s Report: D. Discussion on Propane Tax to follow Unfinished Business. S. Pierog seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**6. Discussion on Propane Tax:**

Pat Morianos asked the BOS for help regarding efforts to repeal the propane tax that has existed for twenty years but has never been enforced until now. She said it is especially unfair to small towns, which are more significantly impacted in the event of loss of electricity. As a result, people rely on generators for basic life necessities, such as water and heat. The tax is not applied when propane is used for regular heating, but once a portion of the propane goes to the generator, the tax is to be levied on the entire tank of propane. She asked the selectmen’s support and encouraged people to contact legislators and representatives to repeal the tax.

R. Morra said that the propane tax is a serious matter for low income households and senior citizens, as generators are often necessary to run life support items. J. Stille pointed out that between 99 and 100 percent of residents were without power for three storms straight a couple of years ago, in which case generators were a crucial survival tool. R. Morra recommended that the BOS request to the state that the tax be repealed. J. Stille also recommended contacting the Council of Small Towns.

S. Pierog moved to go on record as being opposed to the propane tax due to life safety issues in our small towns and to send this resolve to state representatives and senators. G. Marrion seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

## **6. New Business:**

### **A. Charter Oak Greenway Shared Use Path and Path Extension:**

The committee has reviewed the draft plan and shared comments back to the BSC Group. G. Marrion said the path's emphasis was to create a multipurpose trail or path and not just for transportation purposes. Part of the Next Gen Corridor study is expected to include alternative transportation methods. R. Lessard said he thought that the use of "trail" in the title may lead to a misconception of the project, as it connotes woods or a nature-focused use. Once the draft is finalized, the committee will review and then schedule another public informational meeting.

### **B. Lower Bolton Lake Status Report:**

R. Morra said that the October forum was well attended. George Knoecklein will be updating the Board on his findings in the winter. J. Stille said the annual drawdown has begun. Kim Welch, Lake Commissioner, said there was significant interest at the meeting about the catfish.

### **C. Consider and Act on Ethics Ordinance:**

R. Neil moved to adopt the Ethics Ordinance as presented at the public hearing. R. Lessard seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**D. FY16 Budget Report:** The budget is currently 29.69% expensed.

### **E. Capital Projects:**

J. Stille, R. Morra, and the Fire Chief will be meeting to finalize specs for the new fire truck and get it out to bid shortly.

S. Pierog moved to reject the bid for the Heritage Farm Barn improvements from LaRoche Builders as the bid requirements were not met, and though ample time was given for correction, it had not yet been done. R. Neil seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0. R. Neil moved to allow S. Pierog and J. Stille to negotiate and enter into a contract for the Heritage Farm Barn improvements on behalf of the BOS. R. Lessard seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**F. Consider and Act on Budget Transfer and/or Appropriation Requests:**

R. Neil moved to transfer \$24,000 from Regular Payroll to Other Contracts in the Finance Department Budget to cover Interim Finance Director services. R. Lessard seconded. Motion carried 5:0:0.

**7. Ongoing Business:**

**A. Subcommittee Reports:**

**Human Resources:** A summary of proposed FY 2016-17 wages for non-union personnel was presented. R. Neil moved to adopt the wages as presented which do not exceed 2% for any position. R. Lessard seconded. Discussion followed. G. Marrion and S. Pierog wanted the BOS to forego the increase in recognition of the difficult financial season ahead. R. Morra noted the BOS had already agreed to address the issue during the budget process. He also said that as it would be the third year in a row and the amount itself was not an issue, it was fitting to leave it as proposed. Motion carried 3:2:0; R. Neil, R. Lessard, and R. Morra for; G. Marrion and S. Pierog against.

**B. Bolton Lakes Sewer Project:**

R. Morra reported the number of tie- ins continues at a good rate. S. Pierog asked if there was an update on the odor issue at Hillcrest. R. Morra stated that the authority continues to address any odor issues as soon as they are received. He said that since the flow has been highly variable due to the process of adding hookups, it has been difficult to control the appropriate level of bioxide. One sensor was installed on Hillcrest to help monitor the issue. He said it should stabilize after the next group of tie-ins is complete. Area residents can call the number on the town website to report any issues.

**C. Properties and Facilities:**

J. Stille said the check for just over \$500 from the Fire Department for the sold compressor was received. She noted that there will be an Anniversary Celebration next year, for which the Fire Department will be seeking town support, and suggested the money be put towards that use. R. Neil moved to put the funds from the compressor sale into the Founders' Fund, to be utilized for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration next year.

**D. Revenue Sources:** No update.

**8. First Selectman's Report:**

**A. Clean Energy Communities Program:**

R. Morra presented the award given to the town by Eversource. J. Stille said the October meeting had to be rescheduled as there were too many cancellations. She will meet with the chair to get another date.

**B. Economic Development:**

Soil testing at the old drive-in site has begun. There is interest in commercial lot on Route 44.

**C. Plan of Conservation and Development:**

The POCD goes into effect November 26. R. Morra thanked the PZC for its efforts and congratulated them for a job well done.

He also recognized BCS for their Veterans' Day program, which was well attended and well done. R. Morra then gave thanks on behalf of the board and the community to all veterans for their service.

**D. Discussion on Propane Tax** – Advanced to follow Unfinished Business.

**9. Administrative Officer's Report:****A. Request to DOT for Revisions to the I-384 Terminus with Routes 6 & 44:**

J. Stille reported that the Coventry Town Council also sent a letter in support of the Terminus Revision. She has not had any response from the DOT yet. She is working with the CRCOG's Transportation Committee to follow up.

**B. Expressway Properties:**

The DOT is looking at the transfer to the town the land parcels between Notch Road and Route 6. When the land was taken by DOT, it land locked some of the parcels. As a result, DOT is willing to give the properties back to the town without the open space restrictions that will exist for the other properties taken for the expressway. DOT offered some options for the town to consider but wanted the land lock issues to be addressed. Using part of the property at the end of Notch Road Extension for a trail parking area seemed to be supported as an idea.

**C. Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority (CRRA):**

Previously, there had been a concern that a lawsuit might impact the towns that were a part of CRRA. J. Stille received notice that they believe there will be no effect on towns.

**D. Purchasing Council Annual Meeting:**

J. Stille shared information on the impact of the new set aside requirement for public works projects with over \$50,000 in state funds. There are still open issues regarding the requirements. Road resurfacing under Town Aid Road may be affected.

**E. CRCOG Municipal Services MORE Commission Projects:**

J. Stille gave summaries of two projects, an Electronic Document Management and a Human Resources Portal Project.

**10. Appointments:** None.

**11. Adjournment:** R. Neil moved to adjourn. R. Lessard seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sarah Benitez*

Sarah Benitez, Recording Secretary

Please see minutes of subsequent meetings for approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.