

**Minutes  
Board of Selectmen's  
Regular Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 7, 2024  
7:30 PM - Town Hall**

The Board of Selectmen's meeting was held in the Main Meeting Room at Oxford Town Hall on February 7, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Attendance:**

First Selectman George Temple, Selectman David McKane, Administrative Assistant Kristyn Rosa

Remote: Selectman Arnold Jensen

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

**1. 11/15/23 Regular Meeting Minutes Correction**

**MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to approve the following correction to the 11/15/23 Regular Meeting minutes:

Under Audience of Citizens, remove the last paragraph on page 9 and the first paragraph on page 10 and replace with:

Amy Sarris, of 120 Freeman Road, addressed the Board and referenced the 2016 district wide school facility study that was presented at a joint Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance meeting with the Board of Education on April 12, 2016. This study referenced \$25 million in estimated costs for repairs, upgrades, and ADA compliance at the Town's four schools: \$5 million at Quaker Farms School; \$10 million at Great Oak; \$8 million at Center School; and \$1.6 million at Oxford High School. Ms. Sarris stressed that it has been 7 1/2 years and these costs have largely been unaddressed by the Town. Ms. Sarris noted that Center School (formerly 3rd-5th grade) is no longer operating as a school and is now being considered for the Town's community center. In the fall of 2020, the Town's former middle school, Great Oak, became the Town's 3-5th grade elementary school. Ms. Sarris referenced the initial agreement with the Board of Education was that Great Oak would be a "Renovate as New" project, with partial funding through a state grant; however, with the new middle school being built, Mr. Temple determined it to be too costly for the Town to renovate Great Oak "as new." Ms. Sarris referred to a Republican American article from February 3, 2019, entitled, "Oxford First Selectman Balks at Price

of Great Oak Middle School Renovation, "according to Mr. Temple, at a minimum, a new heating, ventilation and air condition system, opaque windows, security upgrades and any asbestos abatement would be needed before the children from Oxford Center School can move in." Mr. Temple then appointed the Great Oak Middle School Evaluation & Improvement Committee to address the "new" Great Oak Elementary School renovations, in phases. The Committee was given \$1.4 million for initial renovations, which occurred over the summer of 2020. However, Ms. Sarris noted that in the fall of 2020, when the Committee presented the Board of Selectmen with the next round of proposed renovations at Great Oak, which included HVAC, the request for funding was removed by Mr. Temple for further discussion. The only project that continued to be discussed was the HVAC because of the State's new public school COVID HVAC grant. Ms. Sarris added that the current Great Oak Elementary School HVAC project does not include the gym and cafeteria portion of the building, because the gym roof needs to be replaced first and roof replacement was determined to be too costly. The Town has known for 7 1/2 years that HVAC has been needed at both Great Oak and Quaker Farms. The Board of Education has requested funding for these projects in their Capital Improvement Plans, in line with this 2016 study. Current classroom heating units no longer have functioning temperature controls. Children have nose bleeds and chapped lips because of uncontrolled temperatures and no humidification. Windows have to be opened because the temperature is so hot. This increases the energy costs. Sometimes the units constantly blow cold air. Children are wearing coats in classrooms. Children should be concentrating on learning in a stable environment. There is an opportunity to request a state grant so the cost is not solely on the Town's taxpayers. She asked the Board why the Town is not going after those funds.

This was seconded by First Selectman George Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**2. 1/17/23 Regular Meeting**

**MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to approve the 1/17/24 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. This was seconded by First Selectman George Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**AMENDMENT OF AGENDA**

## **APPOINTMENTS**

### **1. Economic Development Commission Appointment**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to appoint Shawn Burch to the Economic Development Commission with a term to commence immediately and expire on 12/31/28. This was seconded by First Selectman George Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

#### **Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple explained that Mr. Burch has done a lot of work for the Town and is well known in the Town of Oxford as an expert on home and business security. He is an intelligent person who will add a lot to the commission. First Selectman Temple indicated that he is very much in favor of this appointment.

### **2. Fire Chief and Assistant Chief Re-Appointments**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to appoint Scott Pelletier as the 2024 Chief of Chiefs and to appoint Daniel Gramigna and Edwin Hellauer as 2024 Assistant Chiefs; as approved by the Board of Chiefs at their meeting on 1/10/24. This was seconded by First Selectman George Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

#### **Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple that these men do a terrific job and work together well. Mr. Temple stated that he very much is in support of this re-appointment.

### **3. Housing Authority Re-Appointment**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to re-appoint Kathy Johnson to the Housing Authority with a term to commence immediately and expire on 12/31/28. This was seconded by First Selectman George Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

#### **Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple expressed his appreciation for Kathy's consistent good work. Mrs. Johnson emphasized the importance of the committee, particularly for the senior

community. Mrs. Johnson explained that since the meetings are during the day, it is challenging to find available members. However, she is happy to feel like she is contributing to something.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Acknowledge Sandy Brown Community Car Volunteer**

#### **Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple invited Mrs. Sandy Brown to come to the front of the room to recognize her for generously donating a car to the town. For over a decade, Mrs. Brown has been organizing volunteer drivers to provide transportation to those in need. As a volunteer driver herself, Mrs. Brown noticed that the Town's 2012 Lincoln MXK had been accumulating miles and was no longer functioning properly, which led to increased repair bills. To solve this issue, Mrs. Brown decided to donate a 2024 car to the Town of Oxford.

Mrs. Brown explained that she believed she made the right decision. The previous car had over 130,000 miles and was leaking fluids, and it became more difficult to find replacement parts for this vehicle. Mrs. Brown acknowledged that typically, in order to purchase a new community Town car, she would have had to go through a grant process, which she appreciates. However, she felt that applying for a grant would take too much time and that her passengers, who are mostly elderly and in need of medical transportation, could not afford to wait.

Mrs. Brown took a moment to acknowledge the selfless efforts of the volunteer drivers who have been serving the Town's residents. She kindly requested the drivers present in the audience to stand up and be recognized for their outstanding service.

First Selectman Temple said he would present Mrs. Brown with a key to the Town as a token of appreciation for her generous contribution.

### **2. Library Services and Technology Act Summer Enrichment Grant Application – Approve Submittal and Authorize Director of Municipal Library/Media Operations to Sign**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to approve the submittal of the Library Services and Technology Act Summer Enrichment Grant Application and authorize the Director of Municipal Library/Media Operations to sign the grant application on behalf of the town. This was seconded by First Selectman Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

### Discussion:

Director of Municipal Library/Media Operations Robbi Costigan mentioned that she is currently working on a grant proposal to improve the summer reading program. Mrs. Costigan had applied for the same grant last year and was successful, so she decided to apply again this year.

First Selectman Temple asked about Mrs. Costigan's experience with the grant. She replied that, if awarded, they would use the grant to hire Homework Help, hold writing workshops for kids, conduct tech projects, purchase books, and use some of the funds for printing surveys, instructional materials, and flyers.

Mrs. Costigan explained that the grant would be an excellent addition to the existing summer reading program and would help increase attendance. By applying for the grant, there would be no cost to the town.

Selectman Temple praised Costigan for her hard work at the Library, saying he always sees new and innovative things happening there. He also expressed his support for the grant proposal, stating that if Costigan believes it is essential for the library, he is behind it.

### 3. Tax Refunds

#### MOTION:

First Selectman Temple moved to **TABLE** the tax refunds, totaling \$14,210.89, as presented and recommended by the Tax Collector in her letter dated 1/5/24 and to authorize two signatures. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

### Discussion:

First Selectman Temple explained that there are some questions regarding the tax refunds. Since Tax Collector Leung could not attend the meeting, the refunds will be tabled for further discussion.

### 4. Lions' Club Jackson's Cove Pavilion Discussion

Mr. Mark MacKinney, the secretary of the Lions Club, informed the Selectmen about three requests made by the Lions Club. The first and most important request was to repair the leaking roof of the Jackson Cove Pavilion. The Lions Club requested the Town include this repair in this year's budget.

The second request was to install the appliances that the Lions Club had purchased for the concession area at the pavilion. They would appreciate it if the sink could be installed and functional.

Lastly, the Lions Club asked for preferential treatment to use the pavilion on each month's 2nd and 4th Wednesdays.

First Selectman Temple acknowledged the Lions Club's contribution to the project and assured them that the repair would be included in the upcoming budget. He also said that the pavilion is an asset to Jackson Cove and encouraged people to visit it.

Regarding the second request, Mr. Temple explained that the Health Department had to be involved in installing a working kitchen. He also expressed concerns about renting out the kitchen to different groups with varying cleanliness levels.

Ms. Nesteriak, the Parks and Rec Director, informed the board that only the sink in the kitchen needed to be connected; all other donated items/appliances were being used. She also said there are no plans to turn the concession area into a working kitchen at this time.

Mr. MacKinney asked Ms. Nesteriak about the possibility of a discussion between the Lions Club and her office regarding the sink hookup. Ms. Nesteriak explained that the Parks and Rec Commission and the Board of Selectmen would need to be involved in the discussion and that the commission would be the one to make the recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. MacKinney explained to Ms. Nesteriak that the Lions Club was only there to help. Ms. Nesteriak said she understood and addressed the concerns related to the Lions Club's usage request of the pavilion by assuring them that the Parks and Recreation Department had always granted their requests.

First Selectman Temple said we would continue to honor the Lions Club's request to use the pavilion. He also stated that the Town has a lot of respect for the Lions Club and directed Ms. Nesteriak to move along with the request to repair the roof. Ms. Nesteriak noted that she had already submitted a capital plan request.

Selectman Jensen agreed with it all: let's get this roof repaired! Selectman McKane pointed out that the Lions Club has given a lot to this Town. He stated that they do not ask for a lot, and he feels they should be allowed to meet there as they request. First Selectman Temple thanked the Lions Club for enhancing the Pavilion at Jackson Cove.

## **5. Garden Homes Management, Release Soil & Erosion Bond -- Approve**

### **MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to approve the release of the Soil and Erosion Bond, in the amount of \$100,000.00, for Garden Homes Management; as approved and

recommended by the Conservation Commission/Inlands Wetlands Agency in their letter dated 1/17/24. This was seconded by First Selectman Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple stated that he sees no reason not to honor this request. Selectman Arnold Jensen asked if Garden Homes was really done with all their construction there. Temple stated yes or at least with any construction that pertains to the release of soil erosion.

**6. Revised Part-Time Senior Center Transportation Scheduler/Dispatcher Job Description – Approve**

**MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to approve the revised Part-Time Senior Center Transportation Scheduler/Dispatcher job description, which is now titled Part-Time Transportation Coordinator (Attachment A). This was seconded by First Selectman Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple explained that Senior Center Director Sandra Arbur and Administrative Assistant Kristyn Rosa worked on the revised description.

Selectman Jensen asked for clarification about two job descriptions he had received to review. Mrs. Rosa explained that the two job descriptions were actually for the same position, which was being renamed and updated. The new name for the position will be Part-Time Transportation Coordinator, and the duties will now include not only transportation scheduling and dispatching but additional front desk reception duties.

Mrs. Sandra Arbur added that we just wanted to clean up the job description a bit to make it more readable and more conservable for the person who is in the position to understand exactly what the expectation is. It relies a little more heavily on the office duties. She explained that she has been doing the transportation for a few months now, and a lot of the calls come through the front desk. Many of the documents are kept at the front desk so it makes sense for this person to have more responsibilities around the front office desk area.

Selectman Jensen asked for clarification. It was his assumption that this was the duty of the Assistant Director. Administrative Assistant Kristyn Rosa explained that this is not a new position that is being created. It is an existing position that is vacant. We are renaming the position and adding additional responsibilities. One person will be responsible for the scheduling unless, of course, that person is out the Assistant Director or the Director will need to schedule.

First Selectman Temple has explained that Mrs. Arbur has been running the entire center by herself, and it has been tough on her, but she has been doing a great job. He thanked her for a job well done.

**7. Hire Part-Time Transportation Coordinator**

**MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to hire Kim Mitchell as the Part-Time Transportation Coordinator at a pay rate of \$18.00 per hour and a start date of Monday, February 20, 2024. This was seconded by First Selectman Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Discussion:**

Selectman Temple asked Senior Center Director Sandra Arbur to provide some background information about Mr. Mitchell. She explained that he is a retired Colonel from the US Army and has extensive experience in multitasking under high-demand situations. In addition, Mr. Mitchell also owned his own trucking company, which gave him ample experience in creating routes, dispatching drivers, and managing the various requirements of a transportation position.

Selectman Temple mentioned that some people might argue that Mr. Mitchell is overqualified. However, he acknowledged that no one is better suited for the job given his knowledge, experience, and rank. Furthermore, Mr. Mitchell seeks something to do after retirement, making him an ideal candidate. First Selectman Temple joked with Mr. MacKinney, who is also a retired veteran that they will have to salute Mr. Mitchell.

**8. Hire Part-Time Custodian**

**MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to hire Stephen Coote as the Part-Time Custodian at a pay rate of \$16.00 per hour and a start date of Tuesday, February 20, 2024. This was seconded by First Selectman Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple explained this is a part-time custodial position for the Senior Center. He emphasized the importance of keeping the center clean and tidy, just as one would want it to be if their parents were there.

Mr. Coote was selected for the position and will be responsible for the regular daily upkeep of the center after a one-time deep cleaning, which will take place soon.

Furthermore, Mr. Coote's plumbing experience will be beneficial for any related tasks that may arise.

Selectman Jensen inquired if a new position was being created. Administrative Assistant Kristyn Rosa and Finance Director Jim Hliva confirmed that this position existed some years ago and has been vacant since the previous custodian passed away.

Mr. Jensen then asked about the budgetary implications of the new position. Finance Director Jim Hliva stated that he could not recall if it was already included in the current budget. Mr. Jensen asked whether the Senior Center could fund it through their budget for this year or if they would have to request contingency funding from the Board of Finance. Hliva explained that they would have the money this year and would add it to the budget for next year.

**9. Oxford Space & ARPA Funds Advisory Committee – Town Annex Building Improvements Discussion**

**MOTION:**

Selectman David McKane moved to table this item. This was seconded by Selectman George Temple. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple explained that Chairman Luff requested that the board table the discussion since the Committee was not ready to present.

**10. Report of First Selectman:**

I attended the Football Banquet on Sunday at the Aria Banquet Facility in Prospect. The banquet was well done and I am very proud of all the athletes and their great sportsmanship.

Yesterday, I met with the Town Engineer and NVCOG regarding the reconstruction of Chestnut Tree Hill Road from Route 67 to the intersection with Chestnut Tree Hill Road Extension. A Public Hearing will be held in the near future.

I am attending a ribbon-cutting ceremony tomorrow at 11:00 AM for Dr. Torre in Quarry Walk. I encourage everyone to get his or her skin checked yearly and wear sunscreen.

Next week, the Board of Selectmen will meet with the department heads to review and discuss their proposed 2024 – 2025 budgets.

### **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:**

Mrs. Jessica Gernat from 145 Coppermine Road raised concerns to the Board of Selectmen regarding information on past years' Capital Plan. She wanted to ensure the town is following the requirements outlined in the Town's Charter. First Selectman Temple clarified that there is a plan and department heads are responsible for gathering necessary information and estimates. The Board of Selectmen oversees the town's budget but does not actively seek items to be added to the capital plan. Mrs. Gernat's concern was appreciated, and First Selectman Temple emphasized the need for more people on the boards. Anyone can stop by his office to discuss this or any other topic.

Mr. Steve Brown of 8 Bonnie Lane raised concerns about certain school-related projects that were not being addressed in the Capital Plan. In response to his concerns, Mr. Temple explained that it is the responsibility of department heads to bring up any projects to the Board, even if they are already listed in the Capital Plan.

Mrs. Amy Sarris, 120 Freeman Road, also expressed concerns about the capital plan projects, specifically the High School Pool Pak, that need repair. Selectman Temple reiterated that the Board of Education must provide the Board of Selectman with the necessary documents, including the reason for the request, repair estimates before the project can move forward. Although the project is in the capital plan, it must be presented to the relevant boards before being approved at the Town meeting. Selectman Jensen wanted to remind the audience at the end of last year the Board of Education had a million dollar surplus and ARPA funds, so if the Pool Pak was such a priority, they could had it fixed.

Ms. Hite, 84 Old Church Hgwy, raised concern about the Pool Pak during the meeting. She asked how she could help ensure the repairs were made to the pool serving high school students and the community. Mr. Temple thanked her for coming to the meeting and for her concerns and explanation of what a Pool Pak is. However, he explained that it is not her responsibility to provide repair information; the board must obtain it from the district.

## ADJOURNMENT

### MOTION:

Selectman David McKane moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 PM. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Kristyn Rosa*

Kristyn Rosa  
Administrative Assistant

TOWN OF OXFORD, CT  
*Amelia Hill*  
TOWN CLERK

2024 FEB 12 P 3:50