

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen's Special Meeting

Wednesday, January 5, 2022
5:00 PM – Town Hall

First Selectman George R. Temple called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Present: First Selectman George R. Temple, Selectman Arnold Jensen, Selectman David McKane and Administrative Assitant Kristyn Rosa.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

1. 12/15/21 Regular Meeting

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to approve the 12/15/21 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. This was seconded by Selectman McKane. All (3) Ayes. Motion carries.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Cultural Arts Commission Re-Appointment

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to re-appoint Ellen Fox to the Cultural Arts Commission with a term to commence immediately and expire on 12/31/24. This was seconded by Selectman McKane.

Discussion: First Selectman Temple stated that he needs to speak with Ms. Fox and the item will be tabled until further notice.

MOTION:

First Selectman Temple moved to *table* this matter. This was seconded by Selectman Jensen. All (3) Ayes. Motion carries.

2. Riverside Fire Company 2022 Fire Police Appointments

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to appoint Daniel Wiemer, Victor Noll, and John Downs, Sr. as Riverside Fire Company's 2022 Fire Police, as presented and recommended in their letter dated 12/15/21. This was seconded by Selectman McKane. All (3) Ayes. Motion carries.

Discussion: First Selectman Temple stated that these are all good Firemen and good people; he supports this.

3. Quaker Farms Volunteer Fire Department 2022 Fire Chief Re-Appointment

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to re-appoint Daniel Gramigna as Quaker Farms Volunteer Fire Department's 2022 Fire Chief; as presented and recommended in their letter dated 1/1/22. This was seconded by Selectman McKane. All (3) Ayes. Motion carries.

Discussion: First Selectman Temple stated that Dan is doing a great job at Quaker Farms; they moved forward since he was in office. Chief Pelletier indicated that he was the best man for the job.

4. Quaker Farms Volunteer Fire Department 2022 Fire Police Appointments

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to appoint Edward Roman, Louis Mazzucco, Ronald Stebar, and Jeffrey Lyder as Quaker Farms Volunteer Fire Department's 2022 Fire Police, as presented and recommended in their letter dated 1/1/22. This was seconded by Selectman McKane. All (3) Ayes. Motion carries.

Discussion:

First Selectman Temple stated that they are all good people and are doing excellent.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Fire Department's Capital Projects Funding Request

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to approve the funding for the following Fire Department's Capital Project requests:

- Motorola Mobile APX8500 Radios for \$198,000.00 (price increase after 2/28/22)
- 12 portable Minitor VI pagers for \$7,200.00
- Chief's Vehicle for \$62,000.00
- Ford Explorer for Fire Marshal Deputy for \$59,000.00

As presented and requested in their last letter dated 12/23/21. This was seconded by Selectman McKane.

Discussion:

First, Selectman Temple asked why these items were not in the budget or set for next year's budget? Chief Pelletier explained that our mutual aid towns such as Southbury are converting to a digital system, so none of the mobile radios in the apparatus will be able to communicate with them any further. This project from a few years ago was never funded because of COVID. Chief Pelletier stressed the importance of communicating from the apparatus. He also explained that there would be a \$24,000.00 increase in the cost after February 28th. Selectman McKane asked if this equipment would be able to support Seymour. Chief Pelletier confirmed that it will.

First Selectman Temple stated that the vehicles should be a budget request and not come out of funding. This request would be difficult to get through the Board of Finance. As for the pagers, he did not sense the urgency for them. Pelletier explained that all new members get pagers, and at this time, they do not have any to hand out. He mentioned that they have been trying to buy parts to repair the old pagers.

First Selectman Temple asked Pelletier when he needs the Motorola radios. Pelletier explained that there is a lead time on shipment, and if the order is not placed soon, it will be a problem as Southbury will be switching over to digital soon, and they will not be able to communicate with them. He also reminded everyone that Southbury is their primary mutual aid.

Selectman McKane asked why is Oxford incumbent upon Southbury changing; since the two towns are primary mutual aid, shouldn't this have been discussed between towns before making the change? Chief Pelletier explained that many towns are headed in the direction of digital. Southbury is not the only town. Woodbridge has already converted, Monroe is next, and Seymour has already been using some digital radios.

Selectman McKane asked if the towns could collaborate for better pricing. Chief Pelletier explained that there is no collective bargaining with Motorola. First Selectman Temple commented that McKane had a good point. Selectman Jensen noted that the 330k exceeds the contingency of the budget by 30K. Selectman Jensen asked if the firemen could use cellphone instead of pagers since pagers are outdated in today's world. Pelletier explained that notifications could be delayed depending on the cell service, or calls can be dropped with a cell phone. He stated that cell phones are not as efficient as pagers for this type of emergency notification.

First Selectman Temple said he has sticker shock. He will support the 12 pagers for \$7,200.00. He doesn't know why a mutual aid town would decide to change without the other towns agreeing, and now we are forced to make the change.

Selectman Jensen asked if we could use some of the ARPA money coming to the town for first responders? First Selectman Temple stated that we need to discuss the funds' use with NVCOG and the Town's people. Temple said that he is not prepared to commit to putting money aside without approval and a town vote. Temple then stated that a forum would be held soon for this type of discussion. The forum date is before Chief Pelletier's request of 02/028/2022, so he suggests tabling the other items and approving the pagers tonight.

MOTION:

First Selectman Temple moved to approve the 12 portable Minitor VI pagers for \$7,200.00 and then forwarded to the Board of Finance. This was seconded by Selectman Jensen. All (3) Ayes. Motion carries.

First Selectman Temple moved to table the Motorola Mobile APX8500 Radios for \$198,000.00 (price increase after 2/28/22) till after the ARPA Funds Forum. It was suggested that the vehicles be included in the department's budget. This was seconded by Selectman Jensen. All (3) Ayes. Motion carries.

2. Conservation Commission/Inland Wetlands Agency Request to Restore Funds

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to restore funding in the amount of \$2,000.00 to the Conservation Commission/Inland Wetlands Agency budget for the Southwest Conservation District line item, as presented and requested in their letter dated 12/15/21. This request will be forwarded to the Board of Finance. This was seconded by Selectman McKane. All (3) Ayes. Motion carries.

Discussion: Inland Wetland Officer Mike Herde explains that the conservation has had an agreement with the Southwest Conservation District since originated, and they are part of a USD independent organization. The annual budgets of the towns support them. The Town of Oxford has been paying \$2,000.00 for its consulting services for many years. A few years ago, the organization went down the tubes, and Herde suggested that the town stop paying until they get back on their feet. They are now back on their feet and have provided the town with great information/advice. Herde said the men running the organization are very knowledgeable. They do not do independent billing; it's an annual membership. Chairwoman Sue Gibbons stated that she concurs with Mike and the town has been using them in the past and rely on them. She stressed we do need this money back in our budget right away. First Selectman Temple said that this would require a transfer and go to the Board of Finance. He also stated that it impresses him that the commission cut them off for not doing a good job, but they are back on their feet and doing a good job, so he feels this is money well spent. Herde explained that the money was pulled from the last budget, but they have been using their services this past budget period, so the Town owes them the money. First Selectman Temple reminded the commission that they do not have authority to bind the Town \$2000.00. The money needs to be budgeted, or they should have asked for approval.

3. Solid Waste/Recycling Permit License – Approve

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to approve the following Solid Waste/Recycling Permit Application:

- Oak Ridge Hauling. LLC, 307 White Street, Danbury, CT (Solid Waste and Recycling)

This was seconded by Selectman Dave McKane.

Discussion:

First Selectman Temple stated that we do this every year, and we have not had a problem with them. So, therefore, he supports this motion—no other comments.

4. Report of First Selectman

(none)

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:36 PM. This was seconded by Selectman Dave McKane.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristyn Rosa
Administrative Assistant
Office of the First Selectman

22 JAN 12 AM 10:39
TOWN OF OXFORD, CT
Christopher A. West
TOWN CLERK