

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting

Wednesday, July 20, 2022
7:30 PM - Town Hall

First Selectman George R. Temple called the meeting to order at 7:36 P.M. 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. 6/15/22 Regular Meeting

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the 6/15/22 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

2. 6/16/22 Special Meeting

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the 6/16/22 Special Meeting minutes with the following amendment:

Under Motion, the second sentence, "accept the Tentative Agreement with the" add: ***United Public Service Employees Union Oxford Municipal Employees Union Local 424 – Unit 67*** "for a successor collective bargaining agreement to that." This was seconded by Selectman David McKane.

AMENDMENT OF AGENDA

APPOINTMENTS

1. Cultural Arts Commission Appointment

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to appoint Kathy Johnson to the Cultural Arts Commission with a term to commence immediately and expire on 12/31/24. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion:

First Selectman George Temple stated that Kathy Johnson once served as First Selectman and also on the Board of Selectmen, he knows she will be a great asset to the committee.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Tax Refunds

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the tax refunds totaling \$35,072.42 as presented and recommended by the Tax Collector in her letter dated 07/19/2022 and to authorize two signatures. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane.

MOTION:

First Selectman George Temple moved to table this item for more information. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

2. TaxServ Capital Services, LLC Second Extension Agreement – Approve and Authorize First Selectman to Sign

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Second Extension of Agreement for Professional Services by and between the Town of Oxford and TaxServ Capital Services, LLC and to authorize the First Selectman to sign. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane.

MOTION:

First Selectman George Temple moved to table this item for more information. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

3. Community Support Committee Riverside Firehouse Kitchen Upgrade Application

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to remove this matter from the table. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Community Support Committee's Application for Riverside Fire House Kitchen Upgrade in the amount of \$6,384.47 as presented and approved by the Community Support Committee at their meeting held on 5/16/22. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion: First Selectman Temple Chairman Glen Schumitz explained this was tabled last time for review of financials. The information was forwarded to us, and after a review of the balance, we felt the purchase was justifiable as an investment in the firehouse. The balance is about \$2,800.00 in their account. First Selectman Temple wants to make sure that we are fair to each of the fire departments. He stated he does not want to treat one firehouse better than the other. He asked Chief Pelletier if he had discussed this with the other Chiefs. Chief Pelletier explained that this matter is coming from the corporation side of the fire dept company, not from the fire department itself. Therefore, it doesn't really involve us; it's something they decided to apply for themselves, and it is for the BOS to make a decision. Selectman David McKane stated that he felt different. If two out of three fire dept don't need the money, the one who needs something should be granted the money.

First Selectman Temple expressed concern that if one firehouse is granted money, the others will start applying for things that may not be necessary. Chief Hellauer stated that the town paid for the upgrade for Quaker Farms kitchen recently, and Center Fire has a brand new kitchen. First Selectman Temple agreed but responded that we also paid for Riverside. We are about to invest a lot of money into the Riverside building for structural problems, and Riverside recently put up a new building. He explained that he is not trying to give him a hard time, but he wants to ensure that the Board of Selectman and the Community Support Committee are fair to everyone. He is convinced that the other Firehouses will come back and say, "well, you gave money to Riverside." First Selectman Temple asked Chairman Schumitz how much money was left in the Community Support account. Mr. Schumitz responded that if the two projects on the agenda are approved tonight, there will be approximately \$133,00.00. Selectman Arnold Jensen stated that he thinks these are the types of requests for which this money is set aside.

4. Community Support Committee's Application for Oxford Main Street Project Information and Education on Project

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Community Support Committee's Application for the Oxford Main Street Project Information and Education of Project, in the amount of \$9,335.00, as presented and approved by the Community Support Committee at their meeting held on 5/16/22. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion:

Chairman Jeff Luff explained this money would be used to purchase educational materials such as plaques and signage for the trails in the nature preserve. It will also be used for informational pamphlets and flyers to distribute to businesses for donations. Selectman McKane stated that this is a good place for Eagle Scout projects. Chairman Luff agreed that once the project gets underway, there will be plenty of projects for our Eagle Scouts, YCC, and volunteers. First Selectman Temple asked if we had any money from the grant left over for this. Mr. Luff explained that grant money could not be used for these things.

5. Fire Department's Funding Request for ESO Fire RMS Software – Approve Funding and Purchase

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Fire Department's funding request, in the amount of \$19,200.00, and forwarded it to the Board of Finance for the purchase of the ESO Fire RMS Software, as presented and requested in their letter dated 7/11/22. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion:

Chief Pelletier explained that this request was put into the budget; it was made through the Board of Selectman, but the Board of Finance removed it. Our current fire department software program in the Fire Marshall's Dept is being turned off. This software keeps track of all maintenance, required firefighter physicals, OSHA records, inspections, testing, etc. Other software programs have been researched, but it has been found that ESO is the best program because it's the same company as our current software. All information will port over smoothly with minimal interruption and training. First, Selectman Temple stated this would have to go to the Board of Finance to determine where the funds would come from. Chief Pelletier explained this is a yearly expense; however, the cost will go down in year two. Year one costs approx \$19k, year two approx \$12k.

6. Hire Summer Camp Counselor

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to hire Samantha Fletter as a Summer Camp Counselor for Parks & Recreation as presented and requested by the Director in her letter dated 7/12/22. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion:

Parks and Recreation Director Kyra Nesteriak explained that enrollment is up this year. However, two weeks after we hired the original group of counselors, registration was still open, and the number went off the charts. First Selectman Temple asked how we would pay for these additional counselors.

Ms. Nesteriak's response was from the budget line item for summer staff. She is confident that she can cover it.

7. Oxford Public Schools Pool Diving Board Capital Project Bid – Award Bid

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to award the Pool Diving Board Capital Project Bid to The Fulcrum Guy LLC, in the amount of \$20,292.00, as presented and recommended by the Superintendent in his letter dated 7/12/22. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes. This matter will be forwarded to the Board of Finance.

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to send a memorandum to the Board of Education and Superintendents from the Board of Selectman to proceed with the preliminary stages of the swimming pool capital project immediately and also ask for an update. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion: First Selectman Temple explained this has been put on us to vote on as a capital project. He asked Coach Stochmal to explain. Coach Stochmal stated he was appointed as the Athletic Director last August; shortly after that, he discovered that the diving board stand was unusable because of safety issues. It was deteriorating and had to be removed. The diving board has a life expectancy and this diving board has exceeded the life expectancy. So, we currently do not have a diving board. We have both a girls' and boys' dive team. The season will start at the end of August. We have 40 members currently. Two are potential additions. They are very talented, and it is a necessity to get a diving board. If we do not, we will have to provide transportation and pay for coaching for the students to use a neighboring school's pool. This will be an inconvenience and will incur extra costs. The Parks and Recreation Department swim teams use the pools. The Ct. Custom Aquatics came in at approx \$26k, and The Fulcrum Guy came in significantly less, around \$20K. He stated that he vetted both companies out and Fulcrum Guys come highly recommended. First Selectman Temple asked Facilities Mr. Renzoni what the amount of the capital project would be \$250k for the entire pool.

The diving board is a piece of the capital plan but has to be done now due to lead time in purchasing and the start of the season. The amount of the diving board will be deducted from the \$250,000.00. Selectman Jensen asked to confirm this was part of the budget. Chairman of the Board of Finance, Jack Kiley stated that the Board of Education was told in March to start the project and they would fund the capital project, but nothing has been done yet. He was concerned it won't get done and wanted to ensure the pool work gets done this year. First Selectman Temple asked Mr. Renzoni why the work had not been done. George stated that they were waiting for it to get approved; it just came thru the town budget. First Selectman Temple noted that the last budget meeting was a few months ago. Renzoni said he has to get specs and is working with Bryan Nesteriak . First Selectman Temple explained that the Board of Education needs to get moving. First Selectman Temple noted that the Board of Selectman would send a memorandum to the Board of Education.

8. Hire Youth Conservation Corp Members

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to hire the following students to the Youth Conservation Corp at pay rates of \$14.00 per hour and a start date of 7/20/22; as presented and recommended by Commissioner Joe Lanier:

- **Katie Alexis Ames**
- **Scarlett Mary Formato**
- **Lila Sinclair**
- **Tanner Andrew Shupp**
- **Cassandra Osterholm**
- **Scarlet Serena**
- **Sadie Shaye Leonard**
- **Kenneth Lee Freel**

This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes

Discussion: This is the biggest bargain in the Town, stated First Selectman Temple. We all know their excellent work, and it is great to help these kids out. Selectman McKane asked if the kids still were required to do a certain amount of hours before being paid, and it was stated that they were required to fulfill 50 hours for free and then were eligible to be hired by the Town.

9. Meadowbrook Estates Maintenance Bond Release Request

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to remove this matter from the table. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion: None

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the release of the Maintenance Bond for Meadowbrook Estates, in the amount of \$30,000.00, as approved by the Town Engineer in his letter dated 3/10/22, the Planning & Zoning Commission at their meeting held on 5/17/22 and also as approved by the Fire Marshal in his letter dated 6/21/22 explaining the installation of the flag markers for the fire hydrants. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

10. Hire Library Clerk

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to hire Gabriela Fernandes as a Part-Time Library Clerk with a pay rate of \$14.00 per hour and a start date of August 1, 2022. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion: Library Director Robbi Costigan explained that Gabby would be filling in for the College Students who are returning to school at the end of the month. Gabby has been a patron for years and was a volunteer at the library. First Selectman Temple complimented Robbi on her great job at the Library.

11. Plumbing Permit Refund Request

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to remove this matter from the table. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Plumbing Permit refund request from Gary Franco's Plumbing, LLC for 23 Tilquist Road in the amount of \$34.12 (\$45.50 original permit cost minus 25% administrative fees). This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

Discussion: This should not have to come before the Board of Selectman. The First Selectman should be able to approve a refund and the amount being refunded.

MOTION:

Selectman David McKane moved to withdraw the motion. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

MOTION:

First Selectman George Temple moved to approve the First Selectman thru his administrative powers to authorize refunds as he sees fit. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

12. Ride for Hope Motorcycle Ride Revised Dates – Approve Oxford Routes and Authorize First Selectman to Sign Special Permit

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the revised date for the 10th Annual Ride for Hope Motorcycle Ride from Sunday, June 12, 2022, to Sunday, September 18, 2022, from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM, due to inclement weather on June 12th, and to authorize the First Selectman to sign the Special Use Permit. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes

Discussion: First Selectman Temple stated that we had approved this request every year since he has been in office.

13. Funding Request for Fireworks for Oxford Cheers Event

MOTION:

Selectman Jensen moved to approve the request for funding for fireworks, to be taken from ARPA funds, for September 3, 2022, Oxford Cheers Event. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion Carries. All 3 Ayes.

First Selectman Temple stated that we are having a town party, a Band, Food trucks, Pep Rally for all fall sports teams, school organization fundraisers, and fireworks. The entire town is invited!

14. Report of First Selectman

- Library Awarded an ALA COVID Library Relief Fund Grant of \$20,000 – Only Library in CT an award!

Discussion: Congratulation and thank you to our Director Robbi Costigan and staff. We are the only library in Connecticut to receive this award. Ms. Costigan explained that the money would be spent on collection development and digital platforms. Also, to buy educational material for adults. The Oxford Library is averaging about 100 people per day. Ms. Costigan stated that we have a great summer reading program. First Selectman Temple also noted that the Children's Librarian Robyn Rivero is doing a fantastic job; she is very innovative, and everyone likes her. She is finishing her master's degree in library science. She has a vision. We are lucky to have her.

- Bocce Tournament at Senior Center was a fun event. We always enjoy playing with our Seniors! They beat us again!
- Center Fire House is holding its annual car show. Spectator admission is free; they do a great job, and it's a great show.
- Quaker Farms is holding its annual carnival. Fireworks on Wednesday and Friday. A fun event for the entire community.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:

A representative on behalf of Jerome Baity spoke regarding the tax assessment on his home at 40 Bee Mountain Road, which stems back to 2018. The house was 40% complete back in 2015-16. Then there was a discrepancy then, and the tax collector issued a check to reimburse him for the difference because the assessment rate was off. They feel they are back in the same boat again because the house's assessed value has been put back to 60% for the last three years. Assessor Penny Mudgett and Sr. Assessor Clerk Kevin Murowsky went to the house and gave Mr. Baity a calculated sheet that equaled 60%, but the percentage equaled 47%. Ms. Mudgett corrected the assessment for 2021 from 60 to 47 percent, but Mr. Baity is requesting consideration of an appeal and reimbursement for 2020. First Selectman Temple explained there is a procedure and statutes we have to follow. There is a Board of Assessment Appeals. First Selectman Temple asked Mr. Baity if he made an application to the Appeal Board and Mr. Baity stated no because at the time he started the process, he found the increase in November and thought working with Ms. Mudgett was enough to resolve the issue. First Selectman Temple said that he would review the information with Ms. Mudgett and would get back to Mr. Baity in the next few weeks.

Board of Finance Chairman Jack Kiley said he would like an additional million dollars to do the bathroom renovation in Great Oak Elementary. Money was allotted to renovate the bathrooms, but the building committee used that money for other projects within the school. The bathrooms are not ADA-compliant and are gas station bathrooms. Mr. Kiley also stated that he does not see anyone making moves on the renovations, and he feels it's a shame we are sending the kids back to school with bathrooms in that condition. In addition, the bathrooms are not up to code. Mr. Kiley asked for 1 million dollars from the ARPA Funds for this project. He mentioned that the Board of Finance approved money three years ago, \$1.4 million, and what happened, the bathrooms never got done. It was used for the driveway, landscaping, and whatever else they did. First, Selectman Temple stated that we might have to bond for it. Mr. Kiley asked why bond? We have the money now. Mr. Temple noted that we have a committee for the ARPA funds. Mr. Kiley stated that he doesn't understand why the Board of Selectman can't be the committee and distribute that money for projects. Mr. Temple explained that because of the terms of the grant. The committee must be a committee of citizens. Mr. Kiley said he would rather not bond when we have the money. Selectman David McKane noted that this is the first time someone mentioned that we need \$1 million to fix the bathrooms. We have had several ARPA fund meetings to determine how to spend the ARPA funds, and no one has come forward, not even a member of the Board of Finance, ever suggested ARPA funds for the renovation of the GOES bathrooms. We have many residents out there putting a lot of thought into how to spend this money, and he doesn't know that any project will get a million dollars. First Selectman Temple also stated that he doesn't think a million dollars are warranted for this project. Unless you have a figure, you can't just ask for a million dollars. He stated that he recalls it being approximately \$300,000.00. Mr. Kiley stated this is not a small job; he will get the numbers.

Selectman McKane suggested that we take it out of the general fund surplus. Mr. Kiley said we had to cover over 2.6 million dollars to cover our regular expenses. So it doesn't take long to eat up that general fund.

Robert Warden, 110 Hawley Road, came to discuss the Hawley Rd. construction project and the grades. He brought pictures taken the same day to show the board. First Selectman Temple stated that he had been out to see the project. He showed a picture just past his garage in front of the stonewall. He explained that this is a 100% slope. That stone wall is his property line. He reminded Selectman Jensen that they reviewed the whole project and discussed trees, retaining walls, and everything. They discussed that if they widened the road, they would be on their property. He later received information from Town Council that they wouldn't touch his property. His concern was that the paving was going to begin this Saturday. He wanted to know what was going to be done with the 100% slope. He wanted to know if the town would put in a retaining wall to correct the slope. First Selectman Temple suggested to Mr. Warden that he let them complete the project. It's not finished yet. The job will be done according to the specifications of the engineer. First Selectman Temple stated if you don't want the town on your property, don't complain if we do not give you the proper grade. The town is willing to work with the neighbors, but if you are going to keep your equipment in front of your property line, we can't work with you.

Ms. Lockwood from 121 Hawley Road seconded Mr. Warden, she also has concerns that her driveway is horrible in the winter, and now it's even worse. First Selectman reiterated that the project is not done. He has visited both properties, and they will be graded to the engineer's specifications. So relax; everyone likes to panic; let the job get done.

Mr. Onofrio from 125 Hawley had concerns that an emergency vehicle couldn't get to his home because his driveway is too steep now and the site line is terrible. First Selectman Temple stated that we would grade further up your driveway, and we can't improve an already bad site line, but we can make sure the grade is not any worse than what you had before.

First Selectman Temple offered all neighbors to come back and meet with Guerrero and the Town Engineer and bring their concerns. Attorney Kulas stated he was invited to the meeting tonight by Mr. and Mrs. Warden. Attorney Kulas had concerns that easements should have been negotiated before the project started. First Selectman Temple explained that the only thing the Board of Selectman can do tonight is to listen. He would like to hold a separate meeting so the residents can bring their concerns to Guerrero and the Town Engineer. We will have the meeting at a time that is convenient for all.

Lastly, John Downs, Sr. was recognized for 65 years of service to the Riverside Fire Department. First Selectman Temple thanked Mr. Downs for his years of service and dedication to the people of Oxford.


ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. Motion carries. All 3 Ayes

Respectfully Submitted,


Kristyn Rosa

22 AUG 12 PM 2:05
TOWN OF OXFORD, CT

TOWN CLERK