

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting

Wednesday, September 6, 2023
7:30 PM - Town Hall

First Selectman George Temple called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

In Attendance: First Selectman George Temple, Selectman Arnold Jensen, Selectman Dave McKane, Administrative Assistant Kristyn Rosa.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

1. 8/16/23 Regular Meeting

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the 8/16/23 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

AMENDMENTS

MOTION:

First Selectman George Temple moved to add discussion and possible action to give the Board of Education office a new address designation. Seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

1. ARPA Funding Request for Oxford Center Fire Department Sign – Approve

Discussion:

First Selectman George Temple would like to see more information and the cost of the Fire Department's sign. He also stated he would like to see a similar type of sign in-person and is working on going to view a digital sign. Selectman David McKane stated he believed the cost is \$55,000 for the sign.

First Selectman George Temple asked ARPA Chairman Jeff Luff how much was left in the ARPA account; Mr. Luff stated \$2.2 million dollars.

Selectman David McKane stated he would like to see the sign in front of the Grange gone; it has out-used its services and is currently an eyesore.

First Selectman George Temple would like to see the precise cost and he feels more information is needed. First Selectman Temple went on to say he understands the new sign would be beneficial for recruitment. He also stated he has not had the time to go over everything and has been unable to go to Thomaston to view their sign. He is planning to go next week.

2. Police Department Copier Lease – Approve Monthly Extension

MOTION:

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

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve to change the Police Department's Copier Lease from 36 months to 60 months, for a monthly fee of \$102.00. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. 2 Ayes, 1 Nay (D. McKane). Motion carried.

Discussion:

Selectman Arnold Jensen had concerns and thought they were going to buy a new printer because it would be cheaper to buy one then lease one. He also mentioned that the police stated they didn't have a line-item in their budget to purchase a copier, but they have a large budget.

Economic Development Director Jeff Luff stated he spoke with Finance Director Jim Hliva and Mr. Hliva stated that it is cheaper to lease it then purchase one. There was discussion as to the monthly amount of this lease for the 60 month period. First

Selectman George Temple stated he trusts the Finance Director's opinion. Mr. Luff explained that Mr. Hliva stated that this makes good financial sense.

3. ARPA Funding Request for Oxford Babe Ruth to Install Lighting at Posypanko Park – Final Approval

MOTION:

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

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to reaffirm the approval of the ARPA funding request for Oxford Babe Ruth, in the amount of \$240,365.00, for the installation of lighting for the Posypanko Park ball field; approved by the Oxford Space & ARPA Funds Advisory Committee at their meeting held on 6/13/23 and the Board of Selectmen on 6/21/23. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion:

First Selectman George Temple stated that we had approved this but did so without bringing the matter to a Public Hearing. He explained that a Public Hearing was held and we were able to hear from many people in the neighborhood. From the public's input, restrictions were added stating that the lights cannot operate after 10:00 PM on any night.

4. Tax Refunds

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the tax refunds, totaling \$18,862.91, as presented, and recommended by the Tax Collector in her letter dated 8/31/23 and to authorize two signatures. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion:

Selectman Arnold Jensen spoke with Tax Collector Helen Leung today and there are two big refunds. One is a change in assessment. That assessment went from around \$2 million to \$900,000. There is a difference from what they paid to what is still due. The second big refund is from ION Bank; they made three payments, instead of two. They are being refunded the one payment.

First Selectman George Temple stated he also spoke with the Tax Collector and confirmed this information as well.

5. 2024 Revaluation Contract Amendment – Approve

Discussion:

Selectman David McKane stated that he believed this was already approved. First Selectman George Temple stated it was but Tax Assessor Penelope Mudgett was looking for someone with commercial property as there is a dispute.

Tax Assessor Penny Mudgett joined the meeting via phone.

First Selectman George Temple asked Mrs. Mudgett to give an explanation. She explained that eQuality was approved at the last meeting to do the 2024 reevaluation. She pointed out that she would like to concentrate on five commercial properties specifically and wishes to get a solid assessment of those properties: Oxford Commons, Quarry Walk, Oxford Greens, the Airport and Algonquin Gas Transmission Pipeline. Mrs. Mudgett has found a very good commercial appraiser who will work with the reevaluation company and he will do these commercial/industrial appraisals. His fee is \$28,000.00. eQuality had quoted \$25,000.00 to do that work, so it will cost the town an extra \$3,000.00 for the commercial appraiser. eQuality also reduced their proposal by \$25,000.00, so their total proposal would now be \$55,000.00.

First Selectman George Temple stated this needs to be done; he doesn't see any way around it.

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to increase the previously approved reevaluation contract by a total of \$3000.00. This was seconded by Selectman David. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

6. Hire Parks & Recreation Gate Attendants

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to hire Maryse Chandler and Matthew Bizak as Parks & Recreation Gate Attendants to close Agnes Tetlak Park and Jackson's Cove gates from Labor Day through November 15th and from March 15th through Memorial Day each year, both with a pay rate of \$15.00 per hour; as presented by the Parks & Recreation Director in her letter dated 8/30/23. This was seconded by Selectman David. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion:

Selectman David McKane asked if we already have someone to open the gates. Parks & Recreation Director Kyra Nesteriak stated we used to but now we do not have someone to close the gates in the evening. We have someone in the morning, but it's not feasible

for him to come back in the evening to close the gates. There was a family that lived nearby that was shutting the gate for us, but they have moved. The lifeguards used to help as well, but the season is over and they went back to college.

Selectman David McKane asked if this would only be for one hour of pay. Ms. Nesteriak stated yes.

First Selectman George Temple inquired how much is it going to cost us to close the gate. Ms. Nesteriak stated it would be \$105 per week for each person.

First Selectman George Temple stated that this is a problem as the gates need to be closed. Ms. Nesteriak stated she can't find anyone to close the gates and reaffirmed that this is necessary.

7. FY 2022 – 2023 Transfer Requests

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the FY 2022 – 2023 transfer requests (Attachment A) as presented by the Finance Director in his letter dated 8/29/23. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion:

Finance Director Jim Hliiva discussed the first three transfers. He went on to say he is in discussion with the Board of Education to find out what their portion of the gas bill would be.

First Selectman George Temple asked if that issue had been resolved. Mr. Hliiva stated yes, they just forgot to pay the month of February.

First Selectman George Temple asked that once these transfers are approved we will be caught up for that fiscal year. Mr. Hliiva stated he believed so. He explained that there might be a couple small items, but nothing huge. First Selectman Temple asked what was left in the Contingency budget. Mr. Hliiva stated there is still \$250,000.00 left.

8. 2022 – 2023 Annual Report

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the FY 2022 – 2023 Annual Report. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried. This report will be made available on the Town's municipal website and in the office of the Town Clerk by January 15, 2024 per Town Charter.

Discussion:

First Selectman George Temple stated that everyone has had the opportunity to go over the Annual Report. Selectman Arnold Jensen commented on some portions of the report. It was noted that Water Pollution Control Authority, Fire Chief and Police Departments contact the Administrative Assistant to discuss the concerns of their Annual Reports.

9. Board of Education Address Allocation

MOTION:

First Selectman George Temple moved to give the Board of Education the address number of 48 Great Oak Road subject to approval and further action of the First Selectman. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

First Selectman George Temple stated that the further action is going to be to discuss and receive approval of the Assessor, Fire Marshal and the Post Office and that the Board of Selectmen get cooperation from the Board of Education with the solar panel project by making the necessary monthly note payments.

MOTION:

Selectman David McKane moved to move Audience of Citizens before Executive Session. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

10. Report of First Selectman

- On Monday, August 28, 2023 the First Selectman met with Jim Himes. We went to lunch at the Sitting Duck in Quarry Walk where the First Selectman updated the Congressman on the Town of Oxford. We then went to Tradewind Aviation and had a tour of their offices, which were very impressive. It was a very good meeting and the Congressman is very supportive.
- Town Hall had new carpet installed. The old carpet was under warranty and was not installed properly, so this new install did not cost anything more to the town.
- The Affordable Housing Committee will be meeting on Thursday, September 7th at 1:00 PM to discuss their Affordable Housing Plan draft. This is something the town is required to do. The town has been making great strides on affordable housing. Eventually the town may have to place a moratorium on affordable housing.
- Oxford High School's first football game is this Thursday at 6:30 PM at the high school. At 6:00 PM we will be dedicating the press box in memory of Todd

Romagna. Todd was an outstanding Seymour High School football player where he still ranks fourth in the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference for career sacks; 45 of them! Todd also was the founder and president of Oxford Youth Football and Cheerleading. He was also an outstanding father and friend. Todd was very instrumental in the construction of Wolverine Field. Everyone is invited to attend this dedication.

- On Saturday, September 9th is the Cheer for Oxford Event at Oxford High School. Gates open at 4:30 PM, the event begins at 5:00 PM. A Pep Rally will be at 7:00 PM and a phenomenal fireworks display will begin at 8:00 PM. If this event is anything like the last three, it will be sure to entertain the entire family.
- First Selectman Temple stated that he is planning on meeting with our town engineer within the next few weeks to discuss our community gardens. He feels that this is a very viable move with a great location on Christian Street. Residents with no back yards will now have a place and opportunity to grow vegetables.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Jay Niel Silberkleit from 22 Middlefield Road stated that it has come to the attention of the residents that the town plans on installing speed humps in his neighborhood. It is the opinion of the residents that there are other options the town could have pursued besides installing speed humps. It is felt that these would be a devaluation in their properties. They would also be an inconvenience to all the residents. Instead of these speed humps, the town could fix the bridge on Park Road and the traffic lights on Route 67 could be fixed so traffic would not back up and cause vehicles to cut through his neighborhood.

Mr. Silberkleit presented the Board with a petition from people that live on Middlefield Road that are against the speed bumps (Attachment B).

First Selectman George Temple explained that these speed humps do cost the town money to be installed. He will now not install them on Middlefield Road, but he will install them on Fairfield Road. First Selectman Temple will take Mr. Silberkleit at his word that traffic won't come down Middlefield Road. Mr. Silberkleit stated that if the speed humps were to be installed on Middlefield Road then they would also have to be installed on Crest Road or Edgewood Road also. First Selectman Temple reiterated that he will not install them on Middlefield Road. Mr. Silberkleit pointed out that the residents were upset because they were not notified of this. He felt that out of courtesy the residents should have been notified of the installation as these humps make the road impassable for many of the residents who have sports cars that would not clear the speed humps very well.

Another resident stated that the fire trucks have a hard time going over the speed humps and that firefighters in the neighborhood would have a hard time responding to a call, having to stop to go over the humps.

First Selectman George Temple was appreciative of the input and again stated that he will remove Middlefield Road from the list.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. G. Soules Settlement

MOTION:

First Selectman Temple moved to enter Executive Session at 8:40 PM. Those invited to attend Executive Session are: First Selectman Temple, Selectman Jensen, Selectman McKane and Administrative Assistant Kristyn Rosa. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

MOTION:

First Selectman Temple moved to exit Executive Session at 8:50 PM. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

First Selectman Temple recused himself.

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Settlement Agreement and Release between Gary Soules and the Town of Oxford and authorized the First Selectman to sign. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 2 Ayes. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 PM. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kathleen Sundstrom

Kathleen Sundstrom
Clerk

2023 SEP 13 P 4:48
TOWN OF OXFORD, CT
Kathleen Sundstrom
TOWN CLERK

Attachment A

To: Board of Finance

August 29, 2023

From: Finance Director

Re:2022-2023 Transfer requests

Item #	Department	Account Number	Account	Amount
1	TO: Fire	5325-590	Education	268.34
	TO: Fire	5325-613	Facility Maintenance	659.35
	FROM: Finance	5320-560-5320	Finance Contingency	927.69
	Motion			
	Seconded			
	Vote			
	Comments			
2	To: Police	5433-570-1000	Trooper Overtime	1,934.14
	From: Police	5433-590	Education	1,934.14
	Motion			
	Seconded			
	Vote			
	Comments			
3	To: Police	5433-799	Water	167.01
	From: Police	5433-590	Education	167.01
	Motion			
	Seconded			
	Vote			
	Comments			
4	To: Public Works	5456-610	Gasoline	77,128.98
	From: Public Works	5455-515-65	Wages Utility Me	21,952.25
	From: Public Works	5455-521-1000	Wages Overtime	25,777.22
	From: Public Works	5455-517-73	Wages Summer Workers	11,400.00
	From: Public Works	5455-522-71	Wages Buybacks	8,319.44
	From: Public Works	5455-517-73	Wages Snow Plowing	8,828.12
	From: Public Works	5456-605	Equipment Maintenance	851.95
	Motion			
	Seconded			
	Vote			
	Comments			

Attachment B

No Speed Bumps

We the undersigned do not want speed bumps installed on Middlefield, Fairfield, Crest, or Edgewood. If these speed bumps are installed the undersigned agree to enter a class action suit against the town to have them removed, the roads repaired, and compensate the homeowners and pay attorney fees.

Signatures

Name / Address / Signed / Date

CM Wallace, 5 Middlefield Rd. [Signature] 6 Sep 23

Harold Conicelli, 28 Fairfield Rd 09-06-23

Jim Pangborn, 19 Middlefield Rd 09/06/23

William Fedy, 16 Middlefield 9/06/23

[Signature], 20 Middlefield 9/6/23

Susan Bonchert, 21 Middlefield Rd O.Sad 9/6/23

[Signature], 20 Middlefield Rd O.Sad 9/6/23

[Signature], 20 Middlefield Rd, Oxford 9/6/23

[Signature] 8/1/23

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Signatures

Name / Address / Signed / Date

Jane Johnson 4 Middlefield Rd 9/6/2023

Brian H 10 Middlefield Rd 9/6/2023

Wendy Hqn 15 Middlefield Rd 9-6-2023

Beth Hope 15 Middlefield Rd ^{off rd} 9/6/23

Lauren Hope 4 Anthony Pond Rd

Matt 4 Anthony Pond Rd

Frank Tadduri 19 Middlefield Rd

Frank Tadduri 19 Middlefield Rd 9/6/23

Frank Tadduri 19 Middlefield Rd 9/6/23

Frank Tadduri 19 Middlefield Rd 9/6/23

Frank Tadduri 19 Middlefield Rd 9/6/23