

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

**Wednesday, December 20, 2023**  
**7:30 PM - Town Hall**

The Board of Selectmen's meeting was held in the Main Meeting Room at Oxford Town Hall on December 20, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Attendance:**

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

First Selectman Temple apologized to everyone for canceling the special meeting scheduled to take place before the Board of Selectmen meeting this evening. It was canceled due to an unexpected illness and will be rescheduled soon.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

**1. 11/27/23 Special Joint Meeting**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the 11/27/23 Special Joint Meeting minutes as presented. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**2. 11/27/23 Special Meeting**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the 11/27/23 Special Meeting minutes as presented. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**3. 12/6/23 Regular Meeting**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the 12/6/23 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

## **AMENDMENT OF AGENDA**

### **1. Tax Refunds**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to amend the agenda to add Tax Refunds as Item #10 and move the Report of First Selectman to Item #11. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

### **1. Quaker Farms Fire Company – Appoint 2024 Chief**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to appoint Dan Gramigna as the 2024 Quaker Farms Fire Company Chief. This was seconded by This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

#### **Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple stated that Mr. Gramigna has done a terrific job at Quaker Farms. He is a great addition to the Fire Company; he fully supports this appointment.

### **2. Riverside Fire Company – Appoint 2024 Chief**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to appoint Edwin Hellauer as the 2024 Riverside Fire Company Chief. This was seconded by This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

#### **Discussion.**

First Selectman Temple stated that Mr. Hellauer has done about as good as you can possibly do as a fireman, and he fully supports this appointment.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Troop 1 Ornament Presentation:**

Discussion: It was brought to First Selectman Temple's attention that he forgot to ask the Scouts to lead the pledge of allegiance. First Selectman Temple apologized for not seeing them in the audience and asked them to lead us again in the pledge of allegiance.

Andrew Alves, the Senior Patrol Leader from Troop 1, presented the 2023 Town of Oxford Christmas Ornament to First Selectman Temple. During the presentation, Andrew highlighted that the Boy Scouts have been selling these ornaments since 1990, and this year's ornament is dedicated to the Oxford Police Department.

These ornaments are available for purchase for only \$15.00 each. The Scouts came with a few extra ornaments, which First Selectman Temple helped them sell to the people in the audience. The ornaments were so popular that they sold out quickly. Andrew was accompanied by his fellow scouts, Ben Ciasulli and Sebastian Sudol. First Selectman Temple thanked the Scouts for the ornament and for attending the meeting.

### **2. Chestnut Tree Hill Road Reconstruction LOTCIP Funding Application – Review, Approve, and Authorize First Selectman to Sign**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Chestnut Tree Hill Road Reconstruction LOTCIP Funding Application and authorize the First Selectman to sign. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

#### **Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple asked Town Engineer Bryan Nesteriak to explain the project. Mr. Nesteriak said that the State has approved the Town for \$7.8 million dollars. He went on to explain the process. Once the commitment letter is signed, they move forward with the design. The Town is responsible for the design cost, but after that, the State pays 100% of the construction costs. The program is to reconstruct and renovate Chestnut Tree Hill Road from Route 67 to Route 42.

The project will be approximately 1.6 miles of renovations; about  $\frac{2}{3}$  will be a complete renovation, similar to what was done on Hawley and Holbrook Roads. The remaining  $\frac{1}{3}$  will be milled and repaved with minor widening where necessary. There will be new storm drainage, and improvements will be made to the intersection at Route 67 to make it much more safe.

First Selectman Temple explained to Mr. Nesteriak that he wanted to avoid a lot of overtime costs due to having to direct traffic. Mr. Nesteriak explained that they would look at maintenance, protection, and traffic during the design process. He explained that we could not close the entire roadway since people live on this road, but he explained that

they would try their best to close off the sections as needed and try their best to use one police officer.

First Selectman Temple inquired about the angle of the intersection at Route 67. In response, Mr. Nesteriak stated that the current angle is around 35 degrees, but according to the preliminary design, it will be 90 degrees and then turn. He also mentioned that they consulted with a traffic engineer regarding the preliminary designs, but no mention of a traffic light was made during the discussion. Based on this, Mr. Nesteriak believes a traffic light is unnecessary.

Mr. Nesteriak explained that the process will take approximately one year to 18 months to be approved by the state. Then, it will take 3-4 months to go out to bid and select a contractor and about 12-18 months for construction. Selectman McKane had concerns about the buses being able to get through the roads. Mr. Nesteriak explained that they must work closely with the bus company and schools to ensure they can get through just as with the emergency services vehicles.

3. **Great Oak Middle School Evaluation & Improvement Committee HVAC Air Quality Grant to Complete Cafeteria and Gymnasium HVAC Systems at Great Oak Elementary School – Authorize to Move Forward**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to authorize to move forward with the HVAC Air Quality Grant to Complete Cafeteria and Gymnasium HVAC Systems at Great Oak Elementary School and to authorize the First Selectman to sign the Letter of Intent. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the following Oxford HVAC and Indoor Air Quality Grant Application Required Resolutions and authorize the First Selectman to sign:

a. **RESOLVED**, that Great Oak Middle School Evaluation and Improvement Committee is hereby established as the building committee with regard to the HVAC Indoor Air Quality Improvement Project as it relates to cafeteria and gymnasium improvements.

b. **RESOLVED** that the Oxford Board of Selectmen hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the HVAC Indoor Air Quality Improvement Project.

c. **RESOLVED**, that the Oxford Board of Selectmen authorizes the Town of Oxford Board of Education to apply to the CT Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for the HVAC Indoor Air Quality Improvement Project.

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

**Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple asked Mr. Herman Schuler to elaborate on this matter. Mr. Schuler explained that they are applying for a grant, and three resolutions have to be passed and require the First Selectman's signature. All of these need to be certified by the Town Clerk in order to be entered into the grant, and that is what we are doing in this meeting. We are trying to air condition the cafeteria and gymnasium in the Great Oak Middle School.

First Selectman Temple asked Superintendent Dr. Miller if he had any comments. Dr. Miller stated that, as he had said publicly in the past, the Great Oak Middle School does not have an adequate HVAC system in the building. It is now being replaced; however, the cafeteria and gymnasium will remain without air conditioning. These two areas are used for the children during lunch and gym classes. During the heat wave in the first week of school this year, it was 90 degrees in the gym. We cannot have children in there in that heat. He stated that they are asking the Board of Selectmen to approve the application of this grant to allow them to be awarded by the State of Connecticut so we can upgrade the HVAC to the rest of the building.

First Selectman Temple asked Mrs. Deb Sherman, Chairman of the Board of Education, if she agreed. She stated that the Board of Education fully supports applying for this grant.

Selectman Jensen asked if this motion permitted us to apply for the grant, and First Selectman Temple said yes. The Selectmen's approval of this motion only allows the Town to start the application process.

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve and authorize funding for the Great Oak Elementary School HVAC and Indoor Air Quality Improvement project net of rebates and grants to be taken from the Available General Fund Balance with the anticipation that a bond would be authorized before April 1, 2024. After the Bond is authorized, the General Fund Authorization would be returned to the Available General Fund Balance.

Estimated Project Cost: \$1,500,000

Estimated Grant Award: \$637,500 (42.5% Reimbursement rate)

Estimated Net Project Cost: \$862,500

This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries. This matter will be forwarded to the Board of Finance.

Discussion:

First Selectman Temple asked Mr. Schuler to elaborate on this matter. Mr. Schuler said that the Town is making this application and has until 12/31/2023 to apply. First Selectman Temple asked Mr. Schuler where the Net Project Cost is coming from and Mr. Schuler stated that he did not know. The Town will be responsible for paying, but he does not know where these funds will come from.

Selectman McKane had the same question. He stated that it sounds like it is coming from the general fund balance, but that is not necessarily where it will come from. First Selectman Temple said yes; it also sounds like we will need to forward the request for funds to the Board of Finance.

Selectman Arnold Jensen stated that this also sounds like we are committing the 1.5 million regardless of whether we get the grant. First Selectman Temple noted that this is all subject to his signature and that he will only do something once all the ducks are in a row. This is just the start of the application process. First Selectman Temple stated that if we are approved for the grant, we can request funding and send it to a Town Meeting and the Board of Finance. Supporting this motion shows the State we have the money to support the project.

4. **Great Oak Middle School Evaluation & Improvement Committee HVAC Air Quality Grant to Complete Renovations of HVAC at Quaker Farms School – Authorize to Move Forward**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to authorize to move forward with the HVAC Air Quality Grant for the Complete Renovations of the HVAC Systems at Quaker Farms School and authorize the First Selectman to sign the Letter of Intent. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries

Discussion:

First Selectman Temple stated that the Board has certain reservations regarding school security that he expects to be rectified before he signs anything. But since we are under a time constraint, if the Board approves him to sign the Letter of Intent, he will, but he does expect the security to be done.

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the following Oxford HVAC and Indoor Air Quality Grant Application Required Resolutions and authorize First Selectman to sign.

a. **RESOLVED**, that the Great Oak Middle School Evaluation and Improvement Committee is hereby established as the building committee with regard to the HVAC Indoor Air Quality Improvement Project.

b. **RESOLVED** that the Oxford Board of Selectmen hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the HVAC Indoor Air Quality Improvement Project.

c. **RESOLVED**, that the Oxford Board of Selectmen authorizes the Town of Oxford Board of Education to apply to the CT Commissioner of Administrative Services and to accept or reject a grant for HVAC Indoor Air Quality Improvement Project.

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

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve and authorize funding for the Quaker Farms School HVAC and Indoor Air Quality Improvement project net of rebates and grants to be taken from the Available General Fund Balance with the anticipation that a bond would be authorized before April 1, 2024. After the Bond is authorized, the General Fund Authorization would be returned to the Available General Fund Balance.

Estimated Project Cost: \$5,000,000

Estimated Grant Award: \$2,125,000 (42.5% Reimbursement rate)

Estimated Net Project Cost: \$2,875,000

This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.  
This matter will be forwarded to the Board of Finance.

**Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple explained that these are all estimated costs and nothing in this motion binds the Town to anything; everything here is contingent on making the application. We will see what happens when we get the result. We obviously don't do it if we don't get the desired result. If we do, we will figure out how to pay for it. First Selectman Temple reiterated that the Board of Education knows how he feels about school security. He expects the Board of Education to move forward with the security they discussed so he does not have to repeat himself.

Superintendent Dr. Miller explained that if the state says no, it stops there. This gives us the opportunity to apply and for the state to say yes or no. Dr. Miller explained that no matter what the State says, he ensured First Selectman Temple that the security will get done. Dr. Miller also thanked the Board of Selectmen on behalf of the children, the parents, and the staff for allowing them to apply to improve the air quality in the schools. First Selectman Temple thanked Dr. Miller for being at the meeting that evening.

**5. Water Pollution Control Authority Towner Lane Force Main Replacement Project – Award Bid**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to award the Water Pollution Control Authority Towner Lane Force Main Replacement Project Bid to John J. Brennan Construction Company, Inc. in the amount of \$987,745.00 as presented and recommended by the Town Engineer in his letter dated 12/19/23. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 2 Ayes. First Selectman Temple recused himself. Motion Carries.

**Discussion:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen stated that he strongly feels the town should have gone out to bid to replace the entire sewer line.

Resident Barry Farnham, 16 Barry Road, explained that he has experience with pipelines and wants the Board to understand that there are still concerns about the rest of the line. The pressure is the greatest at the beginning of the line and probably contributed to the leak, but went on to explain that with each leak, they are going to get more and more expensive. No one can determine when the next leak will happen, but it will.

First Selectman Temple asked Mr. Farnham if his position was to replace the entire line. Mr. Farnham said that you will eventually need to replace the whole line. He thinks waiting for it to leak is asking for a much more severe leak and a much more expensive repair. He explained that he understands the financial implications but wants the Board to know that this can continue to get more expensive. We are replacing  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the sewer line; Mr. Farnham is worried the pricing may be higher for the next two-thirds of the line replacement. First Selectman Temple is willing to take the chance of just replacing the  $\frac{1}{3}$  now. Selectman McKane suggested that we approve this tonight and proceed with looking at the rest of the line to determine the cost of replacing the other  $\frac{2}{3}$ . First Selectman Temple said Okay, if you want to look into the rest, he has no objection. First Selectman Temple thanked Mr. Farnham for his input.

**6. Water Pollution Control Authority Emergency Expenditure Request for Airport Road Emergency Generator – Approve**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve emergency funding, in an amount not to exceed \$74,000 to be taken from the General Fund Balance, for the purchase of a Cummings generator in the amount of \$68,881.00 and the rental of a generator for four months in the amount of \$1,650.00 per month; as requested by the Water Pollution Control Authority in their letter dated 12/14/23. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries. This matter will be forwarded to the Board of Finance and then to a Town Meeting.



Discussion:

Mr. Scott Halstead stated that it is required that the Town have emergency generators at all pump stations in case of loss of power. The current generator is a 25-year-old generator, and the alternator no longer works. The company no longer gets the parts. This is not the lowest bidder for the generator, but it is the only company with one available for us to purchase. To order this size generator, it is approximately 40 to 60 weeks out. Mr. Halstead explained that we currently rent a generator at \$1,650.00 monthly. First Selectman Temple explained that this must go to the Board of Finance and then to a Town Meeting.

**7. Main Street Project Phase 2 – Appoint Members to RFQ Review Panel**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to establish a Consultant Selection Panel for the Main Street Project Phase 2 (Dutton Road to Quarry Walk) to review the received RFQ's for Phase 2 and to assign the following members to the Panel:

Jeff Luff, Main Street Project Commission Chairman  
Kristyn Rosa, Administrative Assistant to the First Selectman  
Kevin Miles, Public Works Lead Man  
Karen Cook, Grant Writer  
B&B Engineering, LLC, Town Engineer (consultant)

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

Discussion:

Economic Development Coordinator Jeff Luff explained that for Phase 2, we are asking Bryan Nesteriak and his firm B&B Engineering to assist the town through the extremely complicated logistics. Mr. Nesteriak explained that for a consultant to be hired by the Town, it has to undergo a rigorous qualification process. This is just part of the process. This Selection Panel is part of that requirement process. This Selection Panel will also give their recommendation on who to hire. First Selectman Temple explained that this motion would cost the Town no money. Mr. Nesteriak explained that this process is required in order for the town to use grant funds to pay for the consultant. If the town wants to pay for it, then we won't have to go through this process.

**8. Community Garden – Designate Property as Town Park and Name Garden**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to designate the following portion of town property as a Town Park:

Within the 29.9-acre town-owned property that is also known as Map 19, Block 28, Lot 10, a 3.5-acre portion of property located in the northeast corner. The section is located

along the western end of a previously constructed town-compliant road that connects to the west side of Christian Street, between the properties number 73 and 81 Christian Street.

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

**Discussion:**

First Selectman Temple has expressed the town's interest in converting the property into a park for passive recreation and community gardening. The town has a rich history in agriculture, which presents an excellent opportunity to celebrate the town's heritage while providing residents with a peaceful place to relax. During the discussion, First Selectman Temple reviewed a list of park names provided by his secretary, Kelly. He enjoyed reading the list and her creative use of the word "root" but decided to open up the naming of the park to the town through a contest on the First Selectman of Oxford Facebook page. He asked everyone to stay tuned for more updates on this exciting project!

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to **table** the Community Park/Garden naming. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

Park Name suggestions submitted by Kelly Weymer:

- Root 67 Community Garden
- Back to Our Roots Community Garden
- Establishing Roots Community Garden
- Root for One Another Community Garden
- In Co-Roots with One Another Community Garden
- Down to the Roots Community Garden
- Our Roots Community Garden
- Root Canal Community Garden
- OxRoot Community Garden

**9. Re-Appoint Land Use Counsel**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to re-appoint Attorney Kevin McSherry, of Naugatuck, as Land Use Counsel with a term to commence immediately and expire on 11/21/25 at a pay rate of \$190.00 per hour. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Discussion:**

Selectman David McKane asked if this means we will not hire a part-time planner. First Selectman George Temple stated No. He also said that having a planner

is something that he is very much in support of. We will be looking to hire someone soon.

**10. Tax Refunds**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the tax refunds, totaling \$6,214.46, as presented and recommended by the Tax Collector in her letter dated 12/18/23, and to authorize two signatures. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carries.

Selectman David McKane excused himself at this point from the meeting to attend the Land Trust Meeting already in session.

**11. Report of First Selectman:**

This past Monday, we conducted a Toy Drive Collection at Quarry Walk and Maplewood Orange, in Orange Ct. Last week, we collected toys at Eastern Mechanical Service on Willenbrock, and today, toys were collected from the Oxford Senior Center. The First Selectman thanked the police for our annual toy drive, but he especially thanked Denise Randall and Anna Rycenga for all their hard work behind the scenes. Many hours are put into this event, and many toys are collected. A great job is done by all involved! Thank you to all of you!

Monday night, the First Selectman attended the Oxford Fire Companies Annual Awards Ceremony and Holiday Party at Riverside. At this event, the prestigious Life Savings Awards are presented to those members to recognize their heroic acts in 2023. This year's recipients were:

Louis Luskay  
Jenna Blood  
Dave Ceste  
George Muttick  
Jason Schwartz  
John Yish

Congratulations to all, and thank you for your service!

There will be two Blood Drive's at the Oxford Municipal Annex Building from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. They are scheduled for Friday, December 22nd, and Wednesday, January 17th.

And now it's time for some December 20th Fun Facts:

First Selectman Temple said he is always happy to share some fun facts provided by his secretary, Kelly, who has quite a sense of humor.

December 20th is considered the birthday of the crossword puzzle invented by Arthur Wynne in 1913 and published in the New York World newspaper.

December 20th is also National Sangria Day in the United States!

And finally, It's A Wonderful Life, starring Jimmy Stewart, premiered on this day in 1946 and, as most know, became a holiday classic.

Speaking of holidays. I hope everyone has a fun, safe holiday and a healthy new year!

#### **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

NONE

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM. This was seconded by First Selectman George Temple. All 2 Ayes. Motion Carries.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Kristyn Rosa*

Kristyn Rosa  
Administrative Assistant  
Office of the First Selectman

TOWN OF URBAND, CT  
2009 DEC 21 P 3 43  
TOWN CLERK