

# Minutes

## Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting

Wednesday, May 1, 2024  
7:30 PM - Town Hall

The Board of Selectmen's meeting was held in the Main Meeting Room at Oxford Town Hall on May 1, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### Attendance:

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

### ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

#### 1. 4/17/24 Regular Meeting Minutes

#### MOTION:

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the 4/17/24 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carried.

### AMENDMENT OF AGENDA

Selectman David McKane moved to amend the agenda to include discussion and action on the Planning and Zoning Commission Appropriation for Audio Visual Equipment in the Main Meeting Room of Town Hall. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carried.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

### **1. Affordable Housing Committee Appointments**

#### **MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to appoint the following to the Affordable Housing Committee:

- Mr. Patrick Cocchiarella
- Mr. Arnold Jensen
- Mrs. Jessica Pennell
- Mr. Herman Schuler
- Mr. Peter Zbras

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

Discussion: First Selectman Temple explained that the people selected are very knowledgeable in the area of Zoning. This committee is being formed because the Town is required to create an Affordable Housing Plan and provide it to the State of Ct. Mr. Temple explained that each member has years of knowledge in working in this area. As part of their efforts, the committee will collaborate with town planners from the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Savannah-Nicole Villalba, and Phoebe Ploof.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Honor Oxford High School Girls' Basketball Team:**

The Board of Selectmen recognized the incredible achievements of the Oxford High School Girls' Basketball Team and their coaches. The team made history this past season by setting new records for the best regular season record (17-3) and the most wins in a season (19). They also advanced to the Semi-finals (Final 4) for the first time in their 17-year history, and ultimately, they became the Brass Division Champions. Recognizing these impressive accomplishments, the Board presented the girls and coaches with a certificate of achievement and an Oxford coin. The Town is proud of their hard work and dedication, and we look forward to seeing what the future holds for these talented athletes.

**2. Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments Naugatuck Valley Active Transportation Plan**

Mr. Christian Damiana, who works as a Transportation Planner for the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, informed the audience that the council is currently working on the Naugatuck Valley Active Transportation Plan (NVATP) to identify ways to improve and expand the pedestrian and bicycle network in the region. Mr. Damiana also shared a QR code (ATTACHMENT A) to an online survey seeking public feedback. The QR code can be found on the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments website at <https://nvcogct.gov/>.

**3. Tax Refunds**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the tax refunds, totaling \$508.72, as presented and recommended by the Tax Collector in her letter dated 4/29/24, and to authorize two signatures. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carried.

Discussion:

Tax Collector Helen Leung explained that the tax refunds are a result of adjustments made by the Assessor's office. First Selectman Temple thanked Ms. Leung for attending the meeting.

**4. TaxServ Agreement – Approve and Authorize First Selectman to Sign**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Agreement for Professional Services between the Town of Oxford and TaxServ Capital Services, LLC, as presented, and to authorize the First Selectman to sign. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carried.

Discussion:

Tax Collector Helen Leung explained that Tax Serve is a collection agency that works with collectors to recover unpaid motor vehicle and property taxes. The Town does not incur any expenses for their services, as they are compensated by charging a 15% fee to the delinquent taxpayers.

**5. Arcadis Proposal 2024 - 2025 Quaker Farms School Site O&M Groundwater Monitoring and Reporting Contract – Approve and Authorize First Selectman to Sign**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the Arcadis Proposal 2024 – 2025 Quaker Farms School Site O&M Groundwater Monitoring and Reporting Contract as presented and to authorize the First Selectman to sign. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carried.

**Discussion:**

According to First Selectman Temple, an oil leak at Quaker Farms School resulted in the town having to monitor the situation until four consecutive clean readings were received. Although the town has received three clean readings, they are still waiting for the fourth one. While the Selectmen hope to obtain a fourth clean reading soon, they must abide by the regulations until then. As such, First Selectman Temple emphasized that the town has no choice but to continue monitoring the situation until the fourth reading is also clean.

**6. Woodruff Hill Industrial Park Electrical Project Emergency Appropriation**

**MOTION:**

Selectman Arnold Jensen moved to approve the emergency appropriation, in the amount of \$173,892.50 to be taken from the general funds for the installation of electrical wires on East Commerce Drive in Woodruff Hill Industrial Park for continued construction of a 65,000-square-foot building and a town pump station; as presented and recommended by the Economic Development Director in his letter dated 4/24/24. This was seconded by Selectman David McKane. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carried.

This matter will be forwarded to the Board of Finance and Town Meeting.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Scott Halstead, a resident at 229 Chestnut Tree Hill Road, WPCA Foreman, and a member of the Economic Development Commission, shared some insights about the Woodruff Hill sub-division that the Town owns. According to Mr. Halstead, the lots in that subdivision are currently being sold, and electrical power is needed for each lot, as well as a pump station.

Eversource has provided the Town with an estimate for running the electrical wires. The Town will have to pay the upfront cost but will be able to recover the expense once the lots are sold.

Mr. Halstead also noted that the development of these properties would result in continuous tax revenue for the Town.

#### **7. Planning and Zoning Commission Appropriation Adjustment for Audio/Visual Equipment**

Selectman David McKane moved to spend up to \$40,000.00, which is a slight increase to the original Audio/Visual Equipment proposal that was approved at the March 20, 2024, Board of Selectmen's Meeting. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carried.

Mr. Peter Zbras is a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission and a resident of Autumn Ridge Road. At the March 20, 2024, Board of Selectmen's meeting; he submitted a request for \$35,000.00 to purchase new Audio/Visual equipment for the main meeting room at Town Hall. The board approved his request not to exceed \$35,000.00. Upon further investigation, it was discovered that additional amplifiers and speakers are necessary to minimize the echo in the room. As a result, Mr. Zbras is requesting an increase in funding of an additional \$5,000.00 to ensure that the new equipment meets the room requirements. First Selectman Temple explained that this request must be forwarded to the Board of Finance.

#### **FIRST SELECTMEN'S REPORT**

- Earlier tonight, I attended a rebranding Event at Tea with Tracey, Dinner with Joel. It was a great time with delicious appetizers.
- Tomorrow Town Hall employees will participate in the annual Town-Wide Cleanup.
- Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> the Cultural Arts Commission will hold their Spring Fair Event at Town Hall from 10 – 2. There will be arts & crafts, an educational zone, a flower sale, a touch-a-truck, and an adventure course. The event is rain or shine.
- Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup> is the Annual Budget Town Meeting at 7:00 PM at Quaker Farms School. I encourage everyone to come out and support the budget. We all worked hard to produce a smart, sensible budget.

#### **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:**

LINDA CZAPLINSKI OF 30 FREEMAN ROAD:

Ms. Czaplinski shared her concern about the referral-based process for board or commission seats and suggested that the Board of Selectmen broaden its scope to include the entire town. She also recommended adding this information to the Town website. First Selectman Temple agreed and thanked Ms. Czaplinski for her suggestion.

Ms. Czaplinski asked about the current balance of the Miriam Strong Trust. In response, First Selectman Temple shared that he believes there is still about \$1.2 million remaining in the Trust, which is overseen by the Board of Selectmen acting as Trustees. First Selectman Temple states that Miriam Strong was very generous to the Town of Oxford.

AMY SARRIS OF 120 FREEMAN ROAD:

Ms. Sarris raised a question to the board about the purchase of the Schreiber property for open space. She inquired whether the citizens of Oxford had any say in this matter. In response, First Selectman Temple explained that the citizens do have a say, and the town holds town meetings where the citizens can vote on the purchase. However, Ms. Sarris expressed her concern that the town has not yet presented a map of the property to the citizens so they can see what the town is purchasing. Furthermore, she was unclear about the next step in the land purchase process and requested clarification.

First Selectman Temple clarified that the Town is currently working on creating accurate property descriptions. While there will not be a map available, there will be a clear outline of property descriptions, which will help residents determine the location of each property. Additionally, Mr. Temple explained that the decision to purchase the property would be held in a Town meeting, where the citizens of Oxford have the opportunity to vote and voice their opinion on whether or not to approve the purchase.

First Selectman Temple explained that the state was interested in purchasing this property as passive recreation. The problem with this is that the State does nothing in terms of parking, trash pickup, regulations and in terms of policing. This is a burden to the Town. It would be foolish if the Town did not purchase the property.

A resident who did not state her name asked if the Town would be taking on the cost of maintaining this property. First, Selectman Temple explained that, of course, we would eventually if the Town decided to create a trail, etc., but there is no plan for that to be done right away; he explained that when the Town buys open space, it is bought for the future of the Town. The land may not be used for passive recreation with this administration or even the next administration, but when someone decides to use that land for passive recreation, yes, the Town would be responsible for the cost of maintenance.

Mr. Temple also mentioned that another thing to consider is that the price of land never goes down, certainly not in this town, he added. If we take this opportunity now, we will have that reserve of land that people in the future may want to work with.

Selectman David McKane referred to himself as an original tree hugger of Oxford, and he helped purchase the land at Rock House Hill Sanctuary. He explained that he is happy to have that land as open space today. Mr. McKane explained that he supports this purchase; it is a great opportunity for the Town and a great benefit to the Town.

Ms. Linda Czaplinski stated the importance of a map or a visual being available at the Town meeting so citizens know what they are voting for. Mr. Temple explained that he had been waiting a long time for this land to become available and did not realize it would be controversial. There will be visuals and proper land descriptions at the Town meeting.

TONYA CURTISS- 619 CHESTNUT TREE HILL ROAD:

Ms. Curtiss voiced her support for the Audio/Visual equipment for the Main Meeting Room. She also raised concerns about Town email addresses for commission and board members. Ms. Curtiss pointed out that providing a town email address for each member would make it easier for residents to contact the relevant person directly without having to resort to using their personal email. In response to this concern, Ms. Kristyn Rosa, Administrative Assistant, explained that town email addresses are expensive and not feasible. However, she reassured residents by offering assistance to help them contact a board member if needed. Ms. Rosa assured them she could facilitate the connection.

### ADJOURNMENT

### MOTION:

Selectman David McKane moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 PM. This was seconded by Selectman Arnold Jensen. All 3 Ayes. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

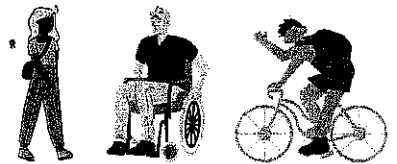
*Kristyn Rosa*

Kristyn Rosa  
Administrative Assistant

TOWN OF OXFORD, CT  
*Arnold Jensen*  
TOWN CLERK

2024 MAY - 8 A 11:30

# Walking Rolling Cycling



## Let's Talk About Active Transportation

To advance its goal of mobility equity, the NVCOG is currently developing the Naugatuck Valley Active Transportation Plan to enhance walking, rolling, and cycling. Once finalized, the plan will guide future infrastructure investments to improve the experience for pedestrians and cyclists.

## Share your input!

The NVCOG published an online survey to learn about your walking, rolling, and cycling experiences and challenges.

Visit <https://arcg.is/yKyKW> or scan the QR code to participate.

SCAN ME



**NAUGATUCK VALLEY**  
COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS