

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2012
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING ~ 5:30 P.M.**

Call to Order: First Selectman Leo Paul, Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Also present were Selectmen Jeffrey Zullo, Paul Parsons, Diane Knox and R. Christopher Blake.

Approval of Minutes: **Motion:** C. Blake moved to approve the special 1/17/12 minutes and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Requests/Comments: None

Selectmen's Requests: L. Paul said the bond issuance was complete. The Town got a BAN rate of .66% for a total of \$425,000 (for the school project), and 1.99% on bonds, totaling \$2.9 million. The rates were very good and probably the cheapest they will ever be. They are trying for an issue date of 2/22/12.

Resignations: None

Interviews, Appointments & Reappointments

- a) Reappoint Malcolm H. Forbes to Milton Historic District Commission, term expiration 1/2017
- b) Reappoint William J. Buckley, Jr. to WPCA, term expiration 1/2017
- c) Reappoint Jack Healy to Tree Warden, term expiration 2/2013
- d) Reappoint Leon Losee, Jr. to Recycling Committee, term expiration 2/2015
- e) Reappoint David R. Wilson to Recycling Committee, term expiration 2/2015
- f) Reappoint Debra Cahill to Recycling Committee, term expiration 2/2015
- g) Reappoint Jeffrey Corning to Social Services Board, term expiration 2/2015
- h) Reappoint Kathleen Orr to Beautification Commission, term expiration 2/2015

Motion: C. Blake moved to reappoint as in a) through h) above, and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried unanimously.

Liaison Reports/Commission-Committee Minutes: 1/17/12 Capital Improvements Committee minutes; 11/22/11 Economic Development Commission minutes and 1/25/12 EDC minutes (draft); 1/12/12 WPCA minutes; 1/18/12 Special Board of Education minutes (draft); 1/18/12 Regular BOE minutes (draft); 11/22/11 Conservation Commission minutes (draft)

Vacancies: The list of current appointed vacancies with term expirations is as follows:

Beautification Commission: 2 regular members 2/2012, 2/2014; 1 alternate 2/2013
Bridge Committee: 1 member, P&Z Liaison
Cable Television Advisory Council: One member 6/2013
Economic Development Commission: One regular member 6/2013; 1 alternate 6/2013
Inland Wetlands Commission: 1 regular member 6/2014
Milton Historic District Commission: 2 alternate members 1/2012
Park & Recreation: 1 regular member 6/2014; 2 alternate members: 6/2013, 6/2014
Pension Commission: 2 alternate members 3/2013
Recycling Committee: 3 members, 2/2012, 2/2013, 2/2014
Veteran's Advisory Committee: 1 regular member 8/2012; 2 alternate members 8/2012
Water Pollution Control Authority: 1 regular member 1/2013

Tax Refunds: **Motion:** C. Blake moved 2 refunds, for a total of \$54.42 in accordance with the Tax Collector's memo of 2/2/12. D. Knox seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Transfers: None

Old Business: None

New Business

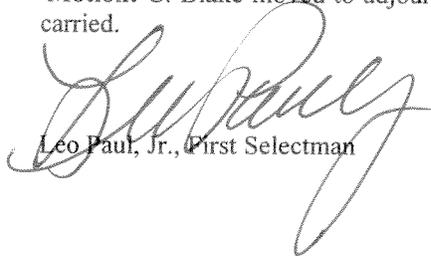
- a) Grand List 10/1/11:** Assessor Kathy Brown said that although there has not been a big increase, given the economy with very little building, the .76% increase over the 2010 grand list is not bad, also considering the Board of Appeals 2010 reduction of \$1,299,490. The total net taxable amount on the 2011 grand list is \$1,108,939,959, compared to \$1,101,894,343 for 2010. She noted that as of October 1st, the law allows her to assess a new building when 50% complete and tax accordingly, then at the certificate of occupancy she'll take the 50% value and the new value and prorate it. However, a charge has been made by a Town of Columbia man who is saying it is illegal to charge taxes until there is a certificate of occupancy. CCM and the Assessors Association have been involved in this court case and have asked the towns for lists of percentage complete buildings and what would be lost in tax dollars if they came off the list. She calculated \$400,000 a year would be lost in taxes in Litchfield. She will follow developments in this case.
- b) Adopt Capital Improvements Committee's Recommended Budget 2012/13:** L. Paul noted that a correction should be made on page 3 of the package under Vehicle and Equipment Replacement. The Net Town Cost should be \$266,430 instead of \$316,430, making the bottom line total capital requests for 2012/13 at \$1,814,409. Capital Improvements Committee Chairman David T. Wilson was present to summarize the requests and field questions. He said it was difficult for the Committee this year, as they were faced with very reasonable requests and would have liked to reduce the total a little further. C. Blake asked for and received clarification on the Sandy Beach request. **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to approve the 2012/13 capital budget as recommended by the Capital Improvements Committee at \$1,814,409. P. Parsons seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- c) Discuss Budget and Set Meeting Schedule:** L. Paul thanked Karl Fisher and Stacey Dionne of the Finance Department for their diligent work on the budget. It now stands at a \$123,553 increase, or 1.75%. He felt good about it, that it was a lean budget, and mentioned some adjustments that were made. He wanted to remind the board that they need to increase the Public Works budget gradually to keep up with tree work. Mr. Paul asked for a consensus for a meeting date with departments. It was decided to hold a special budget meeting with the Oliver Wolcott Library, the Fire & EMS Commission and Public Works at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 15th.
- d) Award RFP for Professional Services for Small Cities Community Development Program:** L. Paul said we do intend to apply for a Small Cities Grant this year with the Housing Trust, so we need a professional services agreement in place. He has received and reviewed three proposals and recommended L. Wagner & Associates, as they have served us very well for a long time. **Motion:** C. Blake moved to award the RFP to L. Wagner & Associates, Inc., and D. Knox seconded. J. Zullo said he has worked with Larry Wagner as a member of the Housing Trust on the successful Northfield Firehouse renovation project. He also mentioned that it is sometimes wise to change firms to inject new blood and a new perspective. He asked for a comparative schedule of rates on all RFP's on the next round in order to better analyze them. **Vote:** Upon voting all voted aye and the motion carried.
- e) Adopt Resolution Authorizing the First Selectman to Sign the Amendment to the Resident State Trooper Contract:** L. Paul explained that this requirement is a matter of procedure to accompany the First Amendment to the contract to reduce from two to one the number of resident state troopers. **Motion:** C. Blake moved to waive the reading of the resolution and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried. **Motion:** C. Blake moved to adopt the resolution and D. Knox seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried. The resolution reads as follows:
- RESOLVED: That Leo Paul, Jr., the First Selectman, be and herewith is authorized to execute an amendment to the contract on behalf of the Town of Litchfield with the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (formerly the Department of Public Safety) to reduce the services from two Resident State Troopers to one resident state trooper effective February 10, 2012 for the remainder of the contract period.
- f) New Town Hall Discussion:** L. Paul said with BANS and bonds just being issued at .66% and 1.99% respectively, it is probably a good time to revisit the review of a new town hall. The maintenance of the Annex, which costs \$250,000 annually, is possible with the rents from the courthouse and post office. The courthouse is leaving the Annex in 2014 and something must be done. It may be possible to move the town

hall employees into the Annex until the new town hall is built. The debt incurred at this time should have only a minor impact on the taxpayers, because of low construction costs and low bond rates over a 15 or 20-year term. He felt it is time to go to the community for the town hall project. To make the necessary repairs for infrastructure and energy upgrades to the Town Hall now would cost \$2.5 million, and the space is still not adequate. D. Knox said it is time to move forward and she is in favor of a project to improve this site. Mr. Paul said we have \$9,000 from a 2002 feasibility budget and \$11,000 from the most recent feasibility study that could be put toward a new plan. J. Zullo said the disposition of the Annex building is important and should be an integral part of this plan. He also thought someone from the Board of Education should be involved. P. Parsons said he supported moving forward and the time is right. They can develop a charge and come to the next meeting with ideas for the formation of the committee. C. Blake did not comment. David T. Wilson thought the bond rates may rise in a couple years, and to act sooner than later may be advantageous.

g) Consider Creation of Ordinance for Election Rule Changes: L. Paul suggested creating an ordinance that would cause an unsuccessful First Selectman candidate to be ineligible for a seat on the Board of Selectman. There would be six candidates running for the four Board of Selectman seats. He felt it would open the possibility for more people to run for the Board of Selectmen. J. Zullo asked for information on what other towns do and C. Blake agreed and also suggested L. Paul consult our Town Attorney. Treasurer David T. Wilson suggested inquiring about the four-year term issue.

Correspondence: None

Motion: C. Blake moved to adjourn at 7:04 p.m. and P. Parsons seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.



Leo Paul, Jr., First Selectman