

Town of New Fairfield
Board of Selectmen
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, CT 06812

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 25, 2024
7:30 PM
Via Zoom

Members present:

Melissa Lindsey, First Selectman
Pat Del Monaco, Selectman
Tom Perkins, Selectman

Other Town Officials Present:

Olga Melnikov, Finance Director
Shareen Langdon, Tax Collector
Holly Smith, Town Clerk
Patty Mota, Purchasing Agent
Elisa Beckett-Flores, Registrar of Voters
Doug Jendras, BOF Chairman
Thora Perkins, BOF member
Cheryl Reedy, BOF member
Claudia Willard, BOF member
Peggy Katkocin, BOF alternate member
Tim Blair, BOE member
Sue Huwer, BOE member
Samantha Mannion, BOE member
Ed Sbordone, BOE member/PBC member
Kevin Van Vlack, Zoning Commission Vice Chairman
Ken Huwer, Zoning Commission Alternate member

Quintin Flower gave a brief description of the rules and regulations for a virtual meeting.

Call To Order First Selectman Melissa Lindsey called the meeting to order at 7:32pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Addition to the Agenda

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to add agenda item #2B “Public Comment” to the agenda. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Public Comment

Millie Kellogg, Eileen Hacaj, Andrew Lund and Allison Morose spoke in favor of having the former Consolidated School site as the bus lot. They both encouraged the BOS to reconsider the decision to not continue with the judge’s decision about the bus lot.

Olivia Micca thanked the BOS for adding “Public Comment” back to the agenda for tonight’s meeting. She spoke in support of the bus lot at the former Consolidated School site. She further spoke of an email

that she sent to the BOS and BOF asking for an apology from Selectman Tom Perkins regarding comments at the BOF meeting of January 17th.

BOF member Thora Perkins noted that she sent an email to the BOF members with an accurate account of dialogue at the January 17th BOF meeting. She asked anyone looking for clarification to contact her directly.

Selectman Tom Perkins clarified remarks made at the January 17th BOF meeting and urged everyone to be more civil in the future.

Joshua Beckett-Flores encouraged elected officials not to respond to public comments made by members of the public.

Lore White spoke in support of First Selectman Melissa Lindsey and thanked her for all her hard work and noted that she enjoyed her article in the Town Tribune. She further spoke in support of finding other options besides the Consolidated property for the bus lot.

Angel Tersitni spoke in support of finding an alternate option besides the Consolidated School property for the bus lot.

Solar Project Presentation

Kevin Siebrecht from Greenleaf Energy Solutions gave a presentation regarding solar energy for Town buildings. He spoke of specific sites and incentives for municipalities that would benefit from solar energy. He spoke of tax credits and grants that will reduce energy costs and the timing of the project. He explained virtual net metering that would allow other buildings to take advantage of this energy that will be housed at the drop-off center on Bigelow Road. There was a brief description of the funding for this project. Members of the public including some town officials asked questions of Mr. Siebrecht regarding the system.

Correspondence and Announcements

First Selectman Melissa Lindsey explained that the main reason for withdrawing the lawsuit for the bus lot was that funding was coming from the bond for the school projects and the BOS was advised by Town Counsel not to continue with the lawsuit.

Approval of Minutes

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 11, 2024. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Budget Transfers

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to approve the following Intra-Departmental transfer of \$200.00. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

\$	<i>Transfer From</i>		\$	<i>Transfer To</i>	
\$200.00	Communication Center- Part-time salaries		\$200.00	001-4215-0000-000/322.01	Communications Center-Training EMD
\$200.00			\$200.00		

Approve Tax Refunds recommended by the Tax Collector

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to approve the Tax Collector's refund requests for January 25, 2024 totaling \$3,260.75 as presented. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Personnel Report

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to approve the Personnel Report for January 25, 2024 as presented. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Appointments

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to appoint Hannah Schiering to the Ball Pond Advisory Committee. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to appoint Jeff Main to the Candlewood Lake Authority Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Pat Del Monaco thanked Jeff Main for his expertise and for volunteering on the Candlewood Lake Authority.

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to appoint Rory Languth as an alternate member of the Permanent Building Committee. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 2-1-0 (Motion approved- Pat Del Monaco opposed)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to appoint Ann Brown as an alternate member of the Inland/Wetlands Committee. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 2-1-0 (Motion approved- Pat Del Monaco opposed)**

There was a brief discussion of the letter of intent sent by Selectman Pat Del Monaco to serve on this commission and whether Selectmen should serve on other boards.

Old Business- None

New Business

Barn Brook Phase III Bond

Melissa Lindsey noted that the Planning Commission gave a positive referral for this bond release.

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to release the bond of \$156,435.60 from Hearth Home Builders, LLC. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Vote on Finance Department Policies and Procedures

Finance Director Olga Melnikov gave a brief explanation of the policies and procedures for the Finance Department.

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to adopt the Finance Department Policies and Procedures as presented. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Public Comment

Ken Huwer encouraged the town to get more information and not rush into any decisions regarding the solar project.

Sue Huwer asked who will be in charge of the solar project. She encouraged the Town to confer with surrounding towns regarding their solar projects.

Millie Kellogg asked the BOS to reconsider the bus lot lawsuit. She and Don Kellogg spoke in support of the solar project.

BOF member Cheryl Reedy encouraged the town to act quickly regarding the solar project.

Cynthia Ross-Zweig asked for clarification regarding bond money used for the bus lot lawsuit. She encouraged the Town to move more closely into the solar project.

Keith Landa spoke in favor of the solar project.

Patrick Bower spoke in favor of the solar project.

Amber Fidel asked the town to reconsider finding out the judge's decision regarding the bus lot. She spoke in favor of the solar project.

Eileen Hacaj spoke in support of the solar project. She encouraged the BOS to get the judge's decision regarding the bus lot.

John McCartney spoke in support of the solar project and getting the judge's decision regarding the bus lot.

Olivia Micca spoke in support of the solar project and getting the judge's decision regarding the bus lot.

Cheryl Reedy encouraged everyone to put political opinions aside and to support the solar project.

Melanie Welsch spoke in support of finding out the judge's decision regarding the bus lot and to put the bus lot at the former Consolidated lot. She spoke in support of the solar project.

Lore White encouraged the town to get more information regarding the solar project. She further spoke against putting the bus lot at Consolidated School and the possibility of finding out the exact funding source for the bus lot lawsuit.

Rory Languth noted that the Town solar project cannot be compared to individual homes with solar. He further spoke of negative environmental concerns regarding the solar panels.

Adjournment

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:53 pm. Tom Perkins seconded the motion.

Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos