

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

**MINUTES**

**Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting**  
**Thursday, March 28, 2024**  
**7:30 PM**  
**Community Room at 33 Route 37**

**Members present:**

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

**Other Town Officials Present:**

Olga Melnikov, Finance Director  
Thora Perkins, BOF member  
Claudia Willard, BOF member  
Linda Fox, Community Garden Committee  
Elissa Johnson, Community Garden Committee

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

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Public Comment**

Keith Landa spoke of an ethics complaint that was filed against him regarding a recent public comment. He noted that this complaint was dismissed and that remarks made at public comment are protected free speech. He spoke of concerns with the direction of the Republican party and the possible loss of opportunities.

Tom Quigley spoke in support of reappointing current members to the Inland/Wetlands Commission and the Water Pollution Control Authority instead of appointing new members.

**Correspondence and Announcements**

First Selectman Melissa Lindsey noted that the 2022-2023 Municipal Town Audit was accepted by the Board of Finance and is available for review on the Town's website.

The Lions Club will host the Annual Earth Day event on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. More information will be available soon.

The Selectmen's office received multiple requests for appointments to various board and commissions. These appointments will be made later at tonight's meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

Tom Perkins made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 14, 2024. Pat Del Monaco seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

**Budget Transfers**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to approve a transfer from the Building Repair Reserve Fund for Emergency Fiber Repair in the amount of \$4,663.20 and Emergency Shut Off at the Fueling Station in the amount of \$3,825.00 for a total transfer of \$8,488.20. Tom Perkins seconded the motion.

**Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Tom Perkins made a motion to approve the following Intra-Departmental transfer in the amount of \$27,420.00. Pat Del Monaco seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

<u>\$</u>	<u>Transfer From</u>		<u>\$</u>	<u>Transfer To</u>	
\$2,000.00	001-4161-0000-002/332.01	Professional Services-Legal Tax	\$2,000.00	001-4161-0000-008/332.01	Professional Services-Legal ZBA
\$20,000.00	001-4210-0000-000/110.00	Police-Salaries	\$20,000.00	001-4210-0001-000/130.00	Police Overtime
\$3,300.00	001-4151-0000-000/801.00	BOF Contingency	\$3,300.00	001-4151-0000-000/336.00	BOF Town Audit
\$2,120.00	001-4151-0000-000/801.00	BOF Contingency	\$2,120.00	001-4151-0000-000/610.00	BOF M & S
<b>\$27,420.00</b>			<b>\$27,420.00</b>		

**Approve Tax Refunds recommended by the Tax Collector**

Pat Del Monaco made a motion to approve the Tax Collector’s refund requests for March 28, 2024 totaling \$34,903.79 as presented. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

**Personnel Report**

Tom Perkins made a motion to approve the Personnel Report dated March 28, 2024 as presented.

Pat Del Monaco seconded the motion. **Vote: 2-1-0 (Motion approved- Pat Del Monaco opposed)**

There was a discussion of the candidate for temporary part-time director of public relations and outreach specifically his background as a political consultant and campaign manager for the Republican party. It was noted that he was still listed as the Deputy Treasurer for the New Fairfield Republican Town Committee despite no longer living in New Fairfield. Pat Del Monaco spoke of her concerns of an employee being paid with taxpayer money for political gain. It was decided that a report be provided at every Board of Selectmen meeting of what’s been implemented, what messages have gone out, who they have gone out to and the method of delivery.

**Appointments**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to reappoint Myke Furham to the Economic Development Commission. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to reappoint Margaret Kathleen DiTullio to the Economic Development Commission. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to reappoint Greg Manning to the Economic Development Commission. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to appoint John Apple to the Economic Development Commission. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to reappoint Carolyn Rowan to the Conservation- Inlands/Wetlands Commission. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to reappoint Christina McCartney to the Conservation- Inlands/Wetlands Commission. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

The BOS thanked Tom Dube for his interest in the Inlands/Wetlands Commission and noted that they will keep his resume on file in the event that a spot opens on the commission in the near future.

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to appoint Olivia Micca as an alternate member of the Water Pollution Control Authority. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to reappoint Peter Viola as a member of the Water Pollution Control Authority. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to reappoint James Mellett as a member of the Water Pollution Control Authority. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

**Old Business**- None

**New Business**

**Donation of 26 Merlin Avenue**

Melissa Lindsey noted that 26 Merlin Avenue was left in a trust and was noted to the Town. This piece of property will help with the Ball Pond drainage project. The BOS thanked the donors for this property.

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to accept the donation of 26 Merlin Avenue. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

**Vote on Community Garden Intern**

Melissa Lindsey spoke of a request from the Community Garden Committee to have an intern to do some work on the pollinator garden in the field adjacent to the Community Garden. This would be an unpaid 80 hour internship for a graduate student in the Integrated Biological diversity program at Western Connecticut State University. The student will help manage and do research on the wet meadow strip adjacent to the Community Garden.

Elissa Johnson gave a brief description of the Integrated Biological Diversity Program and the role that the student will play with the Garden.

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to approve the Community Garden Intern. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

**Vote on Authorizing Resolution Homeland Security Grant**

Melissa Lindsey noted that the following resolution is approved every year for a grant that is used to offset the salary of the OEM Director.

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to approve the following Resolution. Tom Perkins seconded the motion.

**Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

I, Holly Z. Smith, the Town Clerk of Town of New Fairfield, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Selectmen at its duly called and held meeting on March 28, 2024 at which a quorum was present and acting throughout, and that the resolution has not been modified, rescinded, or revoked and is at present in full force and effect:

RESOLVED, that the Town of New Fairfield may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Melissa Lindsey, as First Selectman of the Town of New Fairfield, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Board of Selectmen and to do and perform all acts and things which she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents.

The undersigned further certifies that Melissa Lindsey now holds the office of First Selectman and that she has held that office since November 21, 2023.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF: The undersigned has executed this certificate this 28th day of March, 2024.

### **Vote on BOS Fiscal year 2024-2025 Budget**

The BOS had a discussion of ways to cut the budget in response to the BOF's request to show them what \$100,000 of cuts would look like. Melissa Lindsey noted that she spoke with department heads and reviewed last year's budget specifically unemployment and technology expenses. There was a discussion of Communications Center overtime and the truck needed for Public Works.

There was a suggestion of adding \$21,000 to the budget for an assistant for the Animal Control Officer. This led to a discussion of the role of the BOS in the budget process.

The BOS discussed the Fire Department Apparatus Reserve Fund and the Equipment Reserve Fund.

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to reallocate \$225,683 to the Apparatus Reserve Fund and \$64,317 to the Equipment Reserve Fund. Tom Perkins seconded the motion. **Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

### **Public Comment**

Laurie Landa spoke in support of hiring an assistant for the Animal Control Officer. She spoke of concerns of what the alternatives would be in the event that the current Animal Control Officer were to leave her position.

Keith Landa spoke of the role of the BOS regarding the budget. He noted that the First Selectman should advocate for the town present impacts of budget cuts to the Board of Finance.

Khris Hall spoke of concerns with the background of the newly hired Director of Public Relations and Outreach. She spoke of his political background and requested an outline of the tools that he will use in the outreach efforts and assurances that he will only use town emails for these initiatives. She

further asked for assurances that if the director is planning to reach out to the Republican Town Committee (either directly or indirectly) that he will similarly reach out to the Democratic Town Committee.

John McCartney thanked the BOS for reappointing members to their respective boards and commissions. He noted his concerns of hiring of the new Director of Public Relations and Outreach. He further spoke in support of salary increases for elected officials and encouraged the BOS to advocate for the Town employees.

Olivia Micca thanked the BOS for appointing her to the WPCA. He spoke of her concerns with the political affiliation of the new Director of Public Relations and Outreach. She also spoke of her disappointment with a salary for this brand new position despite not being able to fund appropriated raises for elected officials.

BOF member Thora Perkins thanked the BOS for the discussions at tonight's meeting. She referred to issues that came up at the March 27<sup>th</sup> BOF meeting and noted that she believes that they will be addressed in the near future.

### **Adjournment**

Melissa Lindsey made a motion to accept meeting at 8:41 pm. Tom Perkins seconded the motion.

**Vote: 3-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos

Received by email on 04/04/2024 @ 9:38 a.m.  
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield