

Westbrook Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
Thursday, December 22, 2011

Mulvey Municipal Center, 866 Boston Post Road, Westbrook

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Bishop called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was established with the following Board members present: First Selectman Bishop, Selectman Hall, and Selectman Ehlert. Also in attendance: Andrew Urban, Director of Finance, Marilyn Ozols, Pam Fogarty, Katie Marino, Jill Brainerd, Paul Connelly, Pat Labbadia, Mary Labbadia, John Ferrara, Paula Ferrara, Tony Marino, Myrn Keryc, Paul Keryc and residents.

BUSINESS

Possible Appointment of Assessor's Aide

At the 12/5/11 BOS meeting, a job description for the Assessor's Aide position was distributed and approved. The position was posted internally and externally. Three applicants responded to the posting. Jill Brainerd, Pam Fogarty and Noel Bishop determined that one individual, Katie Marino, met the specified qualifications.

Ms. Fogarty reported that in the last 6 to 8 months, Katie has been working in the Assessor's Office and has mastered many areas of the job. Ms. Brainerd commented that Katie has also worked in the Selectman's Office. She is well qualified and a quick learner.

Mr. Bishop reported that this is a 25 hour per week union position, including a benefit package. The position has been unfilled for many years and the salary range is \$14.00 to \$16.00 per hour. If approved, the rate of pay recommended is \$15.00 per hour with a start date of 1/3/12.

Mr. Ehlert made a motion to appoint Katie Marino as Assessor's Aide, beginning 1/3/12 at a rate of \$15.00 per hour. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Appropriation Request

Mr. Loren Baker, Facilities Manager, has requested a \$9,895.00 appropriation for software upgrades as an unforeseen result of Hurricane Irene restoration efforts. This figure does include installation and will bring the software up to current standards.

Mr. Hall made a motion to approve the \$9,900.00 appropriation for software upgrades as discussed. Mr. Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Request for Authorization to Hire Recording Secretary (Planning/TCRC/EDC)

A request to hire recording secretaries for the Planning Commission and EDC/TCRC Committee was included in the BOS packet. This request included two resumes.

This topic was discussed at the 12/5/11 BOS meeting and Mr. Urban, Director of Finance, was charged with developing a policy. However, at this time, a policy has not yet been developed since Mr. Urban commented that he has been busy with other projects as directed by the BOF and he did not realize the urgency of having the documentation ready for this evening's meeting.

Mr. Hall felt it important to have a policy in place prior to hiring recording secretaries.

Ms. Ozols expressed concern that if a decision is not made this evening regarding the Planning and EDC/TCRC secretaries, these qualified individuals may no longer be interested in working for these Commissions. The hourly compensation rates being requested are \$22 per hour for the Planning Commission and \$16.00 per hour for the EDC/TCRC.

Mr. Bishop reported that as a result of a discussion at the BOF meeting last evening, Katie Kelemen has resigned as the recording secretary for several Boards and Commission throughout the Town. Mr. Bishop expressed concern that any rate set this evening for either Planning or EDC/TCRC may set a precedent when the final policy is developed.

The budgetary implications and start date (1/1/12 vs. 7/1/12) for any potential rate of pay changes were discussed.

Ms. Ferrara commented that this is not a new issue. During her tenure as First Selectman, a policy that paid all individuals the same rate of pay was put in place.

Mr. Ehlert commented that the BOS should not make a rash decision as the result of a reaction to the resignation.

Mr. Ehlert made a motion to approve the hiring of Stella Beaudoin as Recording Secretary for the Planning Commission at the rate of \$22.00 per hour and Jerilyn Nucci as Recording Secretary for the TCRC at the rate of \$16.00 per hour. Mr. Bishop seconded the motion. Discussion followed:

Mr. Hall expressed concern that some current secretaries will be making less than the wage stated above. While hiring the above individuals without a policy in place will address Planning and TCRC needs, the lack of a policy may make it more difficult for other Boards/Commissions.

Mr. Ehlert responded that when a policy is established, these individuals may receive a rate increase. Mr. Ehlert was in favor of allowing individual Boards/Commission to set the rate of pay for their respective secretary.

Mr. Urban commented that as long as a Board/Commission has funding, they have the ability to hire whomever they wish.

Vote on motion: All opposed, the motion did not carry.

Mr. Bishop made a motion to schedule a Special BOS meeting 1/4/12 @ 7:00 p.m. to adopt a policy on Recording Secretary rate of pay. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Regional Performance Incentive Resolution

A copy of the Regional Performance Incentive Resolution (RPIP) was distributed to BOS members. This resolution authorizes CRERPA to develop a standardized data base for the region focusing on an economic study with emphasis on small businesses. There is no financial commitment required from the Town.

Mr. Bishop made the following motion:

Be it resolved that, on December 22, 2011, the BOS of the Town of Westbrook voted to participate in the proposed Lower Connecticut River GIS and Economic Data Center and Economic Development Study.

An application for this project is being submitted to the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management by the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency on behalf of its member towns for funding under Section 5 of Public Act 11-61. This program is also known as the Regional Planning Incentive Program (RPIP).

Be it further resolved that this Board hereby certifies that there are no known legal obstacles to provision of services in the manner described in the proposal.

Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Response to Public Hearing on Charter

Mr. Bishop reviewed the protocol for this evening's discussion on the Charter proposal. This evening's meeting is not a Public Hearing. It is an opportunity for the BOS to make comments/recommendations on the proposed Charter. The Charter Commission will have 30 days to respond to any recommendations made by the BOS.

Mr. Ehlert reported that the proposed Charter does need to go back to the Charter Commission so that technical errors can be addressed. He continued that the Charter Commission should also review Attorney Wells' letter and address the various statute conflicts located throughout the Charter document.

Mr. Hall agreed and added that the Charter Commission may want to re-visit a stipend for Selectmen. He commented that it may be difficult to find candidates willing to serve if no stipend is offered.

Mr. Ehlert commented that the Charter Commission may wish utilize funds and authorize Attorney Wells to review his comments with the Charter Commission.

As a result of comments made at the Public Hearings, Mr. Bishop recommended the following:

- The Charter Commission should review the Director of Finance job description and address any "overlaps" between the Director of Finance and proposed Town Manager job descriptions.
- Clarification on the role of a proposed Ethics Commission
- Clarification is needed on the role of the BOF and their relationship with the Town Manager.
- A Charter document without a Town Manager component

Mr. Bishop commented that many individuals expressed support of a Town Charter but not the Town Manager aspect of a Charter.

John Ferrara, Chairman of Charter Commission, clarified that the Charter Commission's task was to present a singular Charter report. They cannot now offer a separate Charter document without the Town Manager component.

Mr. McNamar reported that he has reviewed Charters from other Towns and noted that these other documents have a clearer, easier format making them much easier to understand.

Mr. Bishop thanked the members of the Charter Commission for their attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Hall made a motion to send the Charter document back to the Charter Commission with the above noted comments/recommendations and a copy of Attorney Wells report. Mr. Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Bills/Invoices –none

Vacancies and Nominations

Mr. Bishop made a motion to appoint John Leake to the EDC. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hall made a motion to appoint Preston Pope to the Police Advisory/Traffic Authority. Mr. Ehlert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bishop made a motion to appoint Devin Xenlis to the ZBA (alt.). Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bishop made a motion to appoint Linda Nolf to the Zoning Commission (alt.). Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

There is an "Unaffiliated" individual interested in joining the Harbor Commission. This request will go directly to the BOS.

First Reading

Jeffrey Schatz (D) – Shellfish Commission

Michael Engels (D) – Zoning Commission (alt.)

Re-Appointments

Mr. Bishop made a motion to re-appoint David Stein (D) and Michael Engels Jr. (D) to IWWC with terms to expire 1/1/14. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hall made a motion to re-appoint Dwayne Xenelis (R) and Samantha Crowley (U) to IWWC with terms to expire 11/1/13. Mr. Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Ehlert made a motion to re-appoint Tony Palermo (D) – Parking Violation Hearing Officer and Cathy Wininger (D) – alt. – Parking Violation Hearing Officer with terms to expire 12/20/14. Mr. Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hall made a motion to re-appoint Robert Post (R), Leonard Mierzejewski (R), David Russell (R), Gary Nolf (U) and Keith Rich (R) to the Shellfish Commission with terms to expire 1/1/15. Mr. Ehlert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hall made a motion to re-appoint Arthur Fletcher as the Zoning Citation Officer with a term to expire 12/18/13. Mr. Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Ehlert made a motion to re-appoint Sharon Lessard as MAE with a term to expire 1/1/14. Mr. Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bishop made a motion to re-appoint Virginia Quarti to EDC with a term to expire 12/1/14. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Director of Finance Report

Mr. Urban reported that the Town is moving ahead on the consolidation of accounts with the BOE and Citizens Bank. The BOE has authorized the Superintendent of Schools and Treasurer to sign checks.

All Department and Board and Commission budgets are currently being developed. A draft report is expected in mid-January.

A Fund Balance Policy was passed at the 12/21/11 BOF meeting. The Town will strive to maintain a fund balance of 12 to 15% as recommended.

The FEMA reimbursement project is on-going. This project is well documented and no issues are anticipated.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Ehlert made a motion to approve the BOS meeting minutes dated 12/5/11. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bishop made a motion to approve the BOS meeting minutes dated 12/8/11, with corrections. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Corrections:

Proper spelling: Traut

Page 9 – paragraph 2 – add the word “the” before Commission

Page 10 – paragraph 7 – change the word “Manger” to “Manager”

Page 10 – paragraph 7 – delete the word “get”

Note that Michael Wells is a Municipal Attorney, not a Municipal employee

First Selectman’s Report

Mr. Bishop reported that Youth and Family Service has approached the Town with regard to becoming a Town Agency. Any changes will go through the budget process.

Middlesex Clinic will be re-locating to Flat Rock Place. They have purchased property from Stop & Shop and will go before Westbrook Zoning on 12/27/11. They plan to begin work this Summer and anticipate a completion date of 10/2013.

Mr. Bishop updated the BOS on the \$100,000 that was approved through the Bond Commission for a Regional Animal Shelter. After estimates received from the architect were determined to be too high, the Committee investigated the option of locating the shelter in Clinton. The following resolution was passed at the recent Town Garage Meeting:

Representative Jim Crawford will determine if the \$100,000 bond money for the Regional Animal Shelter can be re-allocated to the Town of Clinton rather than Westbrook as proposed. If the re-allocation is possible, the Administrative Agreement will be presented to the First Selectman of Clinton, Killingworth and Westbrook for their approval.

Gary Gavigan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A letter has been sent to OPM outlining the history of the project and requesting the protocol for re-allocation of funds.

At the appropriate time, a letter of agreement and contracts will be drawn up between Westbrook, Clinton and Killingworth.

Adjournment

Mr. Bishop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Attest,

Suzanne Helchowski
Administrative Assistant

Noel Bishop
First Selectman