

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 17, 2011
SELECTMEN'S CONFERENCE ROOM – 6:00 pm**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

First Selectman, Lisa Pellegrini called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

2. MEMBERS PRESENT:

Members present included: First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini, Selectmen Kathleen Devlin and Joseph Tolisano, CFO Kim Marcotte, and Town Clerk Ann Logan. Also present: Planning Commission Chairman Brad Pellissier, Planning Commission Member Greg Genlot, Zoning Commission Member Karl Walton and Jeff Bord, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

5. JOINT MEETING WITH PLANNING COMMISSION CONCERNING:

5.1 Open Space and Trails

Ms. Pellegrini opened by mentioning her discussions with Mr. Pellissier, regarding Open Space and Trails, and her commitment to Open Space for the Town. She stated that the Open Space and Trails Committee was previously disbanded as it was an illegally formed committee and the purpose of this meeting was to see how to adequately address Open Space and Trails issues, such as trails maintenance, summarize updates to the Plan of Conservation and Development and get the Planning Commission's opinion of the Design Review Ordinance.

Mr. Pellissier reminded all that the Town previously had an Open Space and Trails advisory committee for over 20 years; acting as a liaison that brought resources to the Town for Trail maintenance, advised the Town of available land parcels which be considered in the Open Space Plan, and worked in conjunction with the North Central Land Trust. Ms. Pellegrini questioned the legality of re-forming such a committee, and how the Land Trust got involved. Mr. Pellissier explained the Land Trust's role as providing an overall plan for the region.

Mr. Walton added that the Open Space Committee kept a list of agricultural spaces in Town, as prospective parcels the Town might purchase, which would be at risk of being developed. He said that because the Committee maintained the Trails, they would know if a piece was important to the overall Open Space plan. They would recommend parcels of land as they became available to the Planning Commission. On an advisory basis only, Mr. Genlot inserted.

Ms. Devlin asked if the Town Charter allowed them to create such a committee. Ms. Logan answered the BOS can appoint such as an ad-hoc Committee, as an off-shoot of the Planning Commission. Ms. Pellegrini questioned whether a staff liaison would be needed. Mr. Walton responded there had been one previously. Mr. Pellissier added that other groups, such as the Boy Scouts, could also get involved, without needing appointment, to help maintain the Trails. He offered to draft a copy of the Committee's overall mission and

benefit to the Town. Ms. Logan mentioned such a document would need composition of membership, goals and objectives.

5.2 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Ms. Pellegrini said she had seen this item on a Planning Agenda and was interested in getting a better sense of what their overall Plan was. She was concerned that the updates would not be made in the appropriate time period thus requiring a new POCD. Mr. Pellissier stated their first step was to meet with the BOS, determine the BOS interest and move forward. Ms. Pellegrini said the POCD should be updated as required and is committed to the process. Ms. Devlin also stated her interest in the POCD. Ms. Pellegrini added that some funds had been budgeted, and asked the Planning Commission what was needed to support the POCD.

Mr. Pellissier responded that the Commission needs to determine where they would like to initially take the POCD, and at that point, they would come back to the BOS with specific needs.

5.3 Design Review

Mrs. Pellegrini told the group that Design Review was voted on at a Town Meeting long ago but never had an effective date. This was addressed at a recent Public Hearing. Ms. Pellegrini stated that at the Public Hearing questions concerning the Design Review Ordinance was brought up and the Board of Selectmen needed to consider their options of changing the ordinance, abolishing the ordinance or charging the Design Review Committee with reviewing the ordinance, but wanted to touch base with the Planning Commission first. Ms. Devlin asked the Planning Commission's input on how they felt about the Design Review Ordinance. Mr. Pellissier pointed out that a Design Review document only acts as an advisory practice. He added that if the Design Review process is sold, it would allow them to maintain the character of the Town as a rural town.

Mr. Walton said the Design Review Board had been primarily meant for a big-box store type of development, vs. private development. He added that the Planning and Zoning Boards, to some extent, act in an advisory capacity to applicants regarding design currently. Mr. Genlot told members that citizens' complaints would focus on being told what to do with their home/property. Ms. Devlin reminded all that the Design Review Board is not intended for housing, but for commercial properties and multi-family housing.

Mr. Pellissier asked if they have a current Design Review document. Ms. Pellegrini said yes, however it is believed that some minor changes should be made to it. Mr. Pellissier suggested that amendments can be added to the document as they become aware of Design issues that become a problem. Ms. Pellegrini asked if they should have another joint meeting. Ms. Devlin questioned the need for a Public Hearing. Mr. Pellissier stated that as long as the Design Review process meets Planning and Zoning regulations he didn't think a Public Hearing would be required.

It was agreed that more discussion on Design Review would continue at a future meeting.

6. BOARDS and COMMISSIONS:

As a final item for the Planning Commission members, Ms. Pellegrini said a Planning Commission member needed to be appointed as representative to the Conservation Commission, and asked if a member would be interested. Mr. Pellissier stated that would be Mr. Genlot.

- *A motion was made by Kathy Devlin to appoint Greg Genlot as the Planning Commission representative to the Conservation Commission; seconded by Joe Tolisano. A unanimous vote followed.*

Ms. Pellegrini stated that the Board of Selectmen needed to also appoint Karl Walton as the Zoning Commission Representative to the Conservation Commission and asked the Town Clerk to confirm this.

- *A motion was made by Kathy Devlin to appoint Karl Walton as the Zoning Commission representative to the Conservation Commission, moving Mr. Walton from an alternate Conservation position to a full membership, seconded by Joe Tolisano. A unanimous vote followed.*

7. RESIGNATIONS and APPOINTMENTS:

7.1 EDC Resignation

Ms. Pellegrini informed members she had an email of resignation from Maura Gardiner, of the EDC as she was moving out of state.

- *A motion was made by Joe Tolisano accepting the resignation of Maura Gardiner; seconded by Kathy Devlin. A unanimous vote followed.*

7.2 Board of Recreation

Ms. Pellegrini said stated Bruce Urbon was interested in serving on the Board of Recreation. Mr. Tolisano felt it would be a conflict of interest as he works in the parks division of DPW. Ms. Devlin agreed.

7.3 Housing Authority

A Housing Authority appointment was needed to replace Diane Yenson who had moved out of state.

- *A motion was made by Kathy Devlin to appoint Nancy Waniewski to the Housing Authority for a term expiring 12/22/2013; seconded by Joe Tolisano. A unanimous vote followed.*
- *A motion was made by Kathy Devlin to re-appoint Bob Landry to the Housing Authority for a term expiring 12/22/2015; seconded by Joe Tolisano. A unanimous vote followed.*

8. ANNUAL BUDGET REVIEW:

Ms. Pellegrini informed members the Board of Finance recently held a Capital Improvement Projects (“CIP”) Meeting, and will vote for a new CIP process at their next regular meeting. She added that the BOF opted to adopt block grants to the BOE and the Town for CIP funding, rather than individual requests for the 2 groups. Mr. Tolisano asked how they define a Capital Improvement Project. Ms. Marcotte answered, as a large 1-time sizeable \$ purchase, not an operating expense or a lease.

Ms. Devlin asked what the Town would be asking for. Ms. Pellegrini said their most immediate needs were a phone system for the Town Hall, a police cruiser, and upgrade for lights and computers for the State Police Explorer. A copy of the CIP list for the next 5 years was distributed.

Ms. Pellegrini asked about funding for the POCD. Ms. Devlin wondered if the Planning Commission staffer could also fill this role. Ms. Pellegrini said the Town Engineer, Jeff Bord, is already acting in multiple capacities, and has too much on his plate. She offered the idea of expanding the Zoning Enforcement Officer’s position, which is part-time, to also work with the POCD.

Mr. Tolisano suggested speaking to the BOF regarding the Library Reserves, and asked why those funds were not under consideration. Ms. Devlin stated funds were a Hartford Foundation Grant for Library expansion, and did not think any reserves would be accessible to the Town.

9. DPW STAFFING

Ms. Pellegrini told members they had used temporary and part-time workers for snow removal over the winter, but that after the storm analysis Todd Rolland, Deputy Director of Public Works is proposing he hire back 2 full time positions rather than hiring temporaries.

Ms. Marcotte distributed a current and proposed budget analysis from Mr. Rolland. Mr. Tolisano asked about the cost of benefits, which were not included within the analysis. Ms. Marcotte estimated it to be approximately \$18,000 for family coverage, although the figure depends on overtime costs which are considerable. Mr. Tolisano said he would recommend a 3 year cost analysis. He added that Mr. Rolland had assured the BOS previously that his current staff, along with the hiring of temporaries could meet the needs of the Town. Ms. Pellegrini suggested they continue with temporary workers through the end of June, which had been the original plan. She recommended re-visiting the need at that time.

10. CELL TOWER:

Ms. Pellegrini mentioned that a company was interested in purchasing the cell tower, however they did not supply her with the information about it. Thus this matter would be tabled until the info was received.

11. APPROPRIATIONS/TRANSFERS:

Ms. Pellegrini presented the following transfers:

From Volunteer Fire Dept. - New Equipment Other to Fire Department, New Equipment: \$5,190.00

- *A motion was made by Kathy Devlin to approve the transfer; seconded by Joe Tolisano, followed by a unanimous vote as approved.*

From Volunteer Fire Dept. - New Equipment Other to Fire Department, New Equipment: \$1,877.00

- *A motion was made by Joe Tolisano to approve the transfer; seconded by Kathy Devlin, followed by a unanimous vote as approved.*

12. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Lisa Pellegrini to adjourn the March 17, 2011 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 7:20 pm, seconded by Joe Tolisano, followed by a unanimous vote as approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly E. Dombek, Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING.