

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 21, 2013
6:00pm
Selectmen's Conference Room**

Call to Order: First Selectman, Lisa Pellegrini called meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Members Present: First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini and Selectmen Kathy Devlin and Bud Knorr. Also in attendance were several Somers Residents.

Pledge of Allegiance:

All members participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Correspondence:

Mrs. Pellegrini made a request to make a motion to move up Correspondence on the agenda to address Summer Camp concerns with the residents attending the meeting.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to move correspondence to the beginning of the meeting, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Mrs. Pellegrini recognized that several residents had concerns regarding the removal of the Summer Camp program and stated the Board was willing to listen to everyone's concerns as well as clarify why the Board made the decision it did. A lengthy discussion followed between members of the Board and the residents. Primary concerns from residents included concerns that without camp kids would be home alone, they believed camp provided structured activities that were enjoyable and kept them out of mischief and harms way. The Camp alternatives listed were too expensive for many and they wanted to be able to have an affordable camp program in Town rather than out of Town. While half day rec programs offered were good they believed that there was a real need for an all day camp program due to the work schedules of many parents. Some were concerned that parents and the Recreation Commission were not involved in the decision. Mrs. Pellegrini stated that the Board was aware that this decision would cause complaints and objections however the Board made the decision based on safety and liability concerns due to lack of proper facilities and excessive heat/dehydration risks. She explained that she had been gaining more experience regarding risk management due to her participation on the CIRMA Claims Advisory Committee and the CIRMA Operations & Underwriting Committee as well as participation as a member of the CIRMA Board of Directors. Due to the information she has learned during these meetings she's become more aware of risk and is working to reduce the Town's liability. As a result the Town has hired a Risk Manager and during the last few years she has had various conversations with the Risk Manager and CIRMA about avoiding risk in several areas and departments. It is part of a continuous improvement process the Town is working on. This is beneficial to the Town not only in decreasing risk liability but also in assisting in controlling the Town's Insurance costs. She explained that the health, safety and welfare of the residents is primarily her and the Board's responsibility and that she will not pawn that off on the Recreation Commission (which is very busy with other items) or on anyone else regardless of the personal consequences. She explained that while several improvements were made last year (such as counselors being required to go through an interview process and also be trained and certified in CPR and First Aid) more needed to be done. Unfortunately, the existing staff is maxed and is not able to address it at this time. The Board felt that since other alternatives were available it was best to make the announcement as soon as possible so that parents had enough notice to make other arrangements as well as letting job seekers know that jobs were not going to be available. Mrs. Devlin addressed the group regarding camp costs,

acknowledging that costs to address risk would likely increase the cost of camp and she asked what their threshold for cost was. Some parents acknowledged that a \$175/per week cost was okay but others stated that it became expense when you had multiple children going to camp. More discussion followed with some parents offering to help and volunteer in an effort to bring back camp. Mrs. Pellegrini stated that while the Board decision is held firm for now she is interested in working with parents to look for ways to reduce risk which may bring back camp. She also stated that the Board recognizes that the Human Services Department is overwhelmed with work due to increased need for Social Service Programs/Senior Service Programs and as a result has budgeted additional dollars towards recreation in the 2013/2014 proposed budget while remaining at a level funded total budget. She asked the group to appoint a liaison and said that she is very willing to work with the liaison. She then distributed a copy of her letter which was sent to approximately 89 people as well as a letter from the Town's Risk Manager. (See attached both letters for the record.) She did clarify that since the Board is aware of risk and liability then the risk must be reduced. If not then the Town would be sued in the event of an injury.

Selectmen's Update:

POCD:

Mrs. Devlin gave an update on the POCD. No action taken.

Elderly Bus Grant for Fiscal year 2014:

Mrs. Pellegrini requested approval to sign the application for the Elderly Bus Grant for FY2014. *Mrs. Devlin made a motion to authorize First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini to apply for and sign the necessary documentation for the FY2014 Elderly Bus Grant, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.*

RX Program:

Mrs. Pellegrini informed the Board the CCM/Town of Somers Prescription Discount Card Program is underway. Cards were sent to every household in Somers. The official press release has gone out to the news media and has also been posted on the website with contact information if any questions arise.

CIRMA Insurance:

Mrs. Pellegrini gave an update on the future costs for workers comp and LAP insurance for the Town. For 2013/2014 the Workers Cope rate increase is 3% subject to exposure changes and payroll audit. For 2013/14 LAP coverage she was pleased to inform the Board that there will be a 0% increase and requested permission to sign the Extension Letter of Commitment for Budget Stabilization Program between CIRMA and the Town of Somers and Somers Board of Education which details maximum rate increase for of 3% for 2014/2015 and 3% for 2015/2016. She was advised to sign the agreement letter by Risk Manager Roy Ivins as rates are looking to be increasing up to 5%-8%.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to authorize First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini to sign the Extension Letter of Commitment for Budget Stabilization Program between CIRMA and the Town of Somers and Somers Board of Education, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Little League Batting Cages:

Mrs. Pellegrini updated the Board on the installation of the batting cages at Town Hall Little League Field. An updated Building Policy revision addressing the cages will be coming to the Board within the coming weeks.

Kibbe Building/Exercise Equipment:

Mrs. Pellegrini updated the Board of Selectmen on the exercise equipment at Kibbe Fuller. A letter went out last week and signs have been posted that the equipment will be removed as of April 1, 2013.

Senior Center Roof:

Mrs. Pellegrini informed the Board that the Senior Center Roof is being replaced this week.

Testimony at the State:

Mrs. Pellegrini updated the Board of Selectmen on her testimony at the Appropriations Committee last week and the progress on the Solar Exemption Bill.

CCM Meeting:

Mrs. Pellegrini attended the CCM meeting and updated the Board in regards to the Motor Vehicle Tax exemption and the consensus that it will most likely die.

CIP Requests:

Mrs. Pellegrini presented a CIP request for 2 Senior/Disabled Ambulatory & Wheelchair Shuttle Busses.

Mr. Knorr made a motion to approve the CIP request for the 2 busses, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. A unanimous vote followed.

Boards and Commissions:

Mrs. Pellegrini updated the Board on the Corrections to the previous minutes:
Term expiration for Rob Martin on the Zoning Commission is 12/22/13 not 12/22/16.
And Term expiration for Paige Rasid on the Zoning Commission is 12/22/17 not 12/22/18.

Ellington Regional Small Cities CDBG Grant:

Mrs. Pellegrini requested authorization to approve the Resolution and sign all associated documents with the Ellington Regional Small Cities CDBG Grant.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to approve the resolution and authorize First Selectman, Lisa Pellegrini to sign all associated documents for the Ellington Regional Small Cities CDBG Grant.

Emergency Plan for Elections:

Mrs. Pellegrini gave handouts of the proposed Emergency Plan for Elections for the Board to review; the Board agreed that it was an excellent plan and moved to approve.

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to approve the Emergency Plan for Elections as proposed by the office of the Registrar of Voters, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

HEAT Safe Community Designation:

Mrs. Pellegrini was pleased to announce that Somers has met the criteria for re-designation as a Heart Safe Community. She shared with the Board the certificate the Town was given.

2013/2014 Budget:

Handouts of the 2013/2014 Budget Summary were given to the Board of Selectmen.

Minutes for Approval: None

Transfers/Appropriations: None

Authorization of Scheduled Payments:

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to approve the authorization of scheduled payments in the amount of \$121,280.08, seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote followed.

Adjournment:

Mrs. Devlin made a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting at 7:35pm, seconded by Mrs. Pellegrini. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim LaFleur-Recording

Minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting.