

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JULY 24, 2024
7:00 P.M.
Zoom Meeting Only**

Selectmen present: Colin Moll, Kathleen Harrington, Pete Hill, Mel Chafetz and Jerry Mahoney

First Selectman Moll called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

Kathy Bielonko, 981 East Street North – Ms. Bielonko questioned where the idea came from regarding sharing access to parks and pools with Windsor Locks, as she could not recollect any previous discussion on the subject. She posed questions regarding possible use of taxpayer’s money to hire additional employees and to add security. She feels that there are existing problems with both of our town parks that need to be fixed immediately and this does not seem to be the appropriate time to enter a shared agreement. She cited excessive trash, fighting, and parking and security issues as reasons for concern. Ms. Bielonko suggested the town consider building a public pool at the site of the former Bridge Street School.

Kaitlin Butterfield, 357 Halladay Drive – Ms. Butterfield also spoke on the subject of shared use of parks and pools with Windsor Locks. She feels it is a great idea, however, she does not think it should be completely free on either side. Ms. Butterfield lives near Babbs Beach and described what she has seen during the summer months, including excessive trash being left at the beach, impacts to wildlife, out of control parking and non-residents who park on side streets and gain access through gaps allowing them to avoid paying the required entrance fees. She would like to see action taken to correct these problems.

Discussion and approval to appoint a new member to the Charter Revision Commission to fill the remainder of Frederick Dubour’s term

First Selectman Moll explained that Frederick Dubour officially resigned on Thursday, July 18th leaving a vacancy that must be filled before the Charter Revision Commission can move forward with their work. As there are already three Republican members on the commission, this vacancy must be filled by an individual of a different party. He noted that Sandra Janik had previously volunteered for this position and would be the only one who remains eligible from the original group considered. Recently, Elizabeth Kaplan, a registered Democrat, came forward and expressed interest in the position as well.

First Selectman Moll opened the subject for discussion.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to appoint Elizabeth Kaplan to the Charter Revision Commission to fill the remainder of Frederick Dubour’s term.

Discussion ensued among the group with Selectman Chafetz offering his thoughts and support for Ms. Kaplan and Selectman Hill offering support for Ms. Janik who he feels has displayed her passion to serve the town by attending all meetings in person, being a vocal participant and being one of the original volunteers to express interest in this commission.

Vote: 4 in favor (Moll, Chafetz, Harrington and Mahoney) and 1 opposed (Hill.) Motion passed.

Discussion and approval of “Mutual Use of Recreational Areas” agreement with the Town of Windsor Locks

First Selectman Moll explained that the idea of shared recreational areas originated approximately a year ago while the Town of Windsor Locks was repairing one of their pools. At the time, it did not make sense and the idea did not move any further. The idea gained traction this year with the new First Selectman of Windsor Locks. First Selectman Moll explained how the agreement will work and stated that no need for additional staffing is anticipated. The agreement will be reviewed on an annual basis. He thanked Windsor Locks First Selectman Scott Storms for all of his hard work and the Suffield Conservation Commission for their approval. All selectmen were in favor of the idea and shared their thoughts while also encouraging First Selectman Moll to make sure that the concerns being raised this evening are addressed. First Selectman Moll shared with the group what recent actions have been taken with regard to the parking problems and the trash issues and promised to look at what can be done from a legal standpoint regarding the access from nearby side streets.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the Mutual Use of Recreational Areas agreement with the Town of Windsor Locks. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Mahoney MOTIONED to adjourn at 7:19 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary