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REC'D BY: 

**THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING OF
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 19, 2025
6:45 P.M.**

Selectmen present: Colin Moll, Kathleen Harrington, Klaire Bielonko and Mel Chafetz

Selectmen Absent: Pete Hill

Also Present: Lee Corbert – Public Works Director (6:55 p.m. arrival) and Bill Hawkins – Director of Planning & Development

First Selectman Moll called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. and asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Tom Frenaye, 489 Warnertown Road

Open Public Hearing on Landfill Fees Increase

First Selectman Moll opened the Public Hearing on Landfill Fees Increase at 6:47 p.m.

Neil Hornish of Thrall Avenue and Tom Frenaye of Warnertown Road expressed concerns about the lack of access to the document before the Public Hearing. First Selectman Moll and Attorney Donnelly clarified that the town had fulfilled all legal requirements. Selectman Harrington suggested continuing the Public Hearing to allow the public time to review the revised fee schedule.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to continue the Public Hearing to the next scheduled Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting and in the interim post the Landfill Policy and Fee Schedule Update Summary online on the town website. Vote: 3 in favor (Bielonko, Chafetz and Harrington) and 1 opposed (Moll.) Motion carried.

Close Public Hearing on Landfill Fees Increase

First Selectman Moll closed the Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m.

First Selectman Moll MOTIONED to add agenda item 7a “Discussion and approval to waive the bid and purchase policy for the Board of Education to purchase band and music equipment.” Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of the minutes from the March 5, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the minutes from the March 5, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and appointment to fill the vacant alternate member position on the Parks and Recreation Commission through June 30, 2028

Selectman Chafetz MOTIONED to appoint Rick Stromoski to fill the vacant alternate member position on the Parks and Recreation Commission through June 30 2028. Vote: 1 in favor (Chafetz) and 3 opposed (Bielonko, Harrington and Moll.) Motion failed.

Selectman Bielonko MOTIONED to appoint Chad Lemmons to fill the vacant alternate member position on the Parks and Recreation Commission through June 30, 2028. Vote: 3 in favor (Bielonko, Harrington and Moll) and 1 opposed (Chafetz.) Motion passed.

Discussion and approval to fill the vacant town elector position on the Emergency Management Office Council through July 31, 2028

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to appoint Saeed Akbar to fill the vacant town elector position on the Emergency Management Office Council through July 31, 2028. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval to waive the bid and purchase policy for the Board of Education to purchase band and music equipment

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to waive the bid and purchase policy for the Board of Education to purchase band and music equipment as presented. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of Water Pollution Control Authority Collective Bargaining Agreement

First Selectman Moll reviewed the details of the proposed agreement for the selectmen.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED to approve the Water Pollution Control Authority Collective Bargaining Agreement as provided. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of proposal to accept the cemetery property on Mountain Road owned by West Suffield Cemetery Association

First Selectman Moll explained that the town is in discussions with the West Suffield Cemetery Association to acquire the cemetery, as the association is no longer able to operate and maintain the property. Attorney Donnelly clarified to the selectmen that, under state law, the town is obligated to accept the donation. The association will need to complete certain internal steps before formally proposing the arrangement to the town, with the aim of making the transition as smooth as possible.

The plan is for the cemetery land to be donated to the town, and the trust funds will be transferred into a special trust account established by the town to ensure continued care of the cemetery. The West Suffield Cemetery is a large, active cemetery, with available plots for sale and a Septon managing the day-to-day operations.

Additional discussions will take place, and a town meeting will be necessary before the donation can be officially accepted. The selectmen raised several questions regarding the transaction and other cemeteries in town, all of which Attorney Donnelly addressed.

Discussion and approval for the transfer of Town owned cemetery on Phelps Road to the Mountain Burying Ground Association and refer to Town Meeting

Bill Hawkins, Director of Planning & Development, presented a memorandum to the selectmen that he had sent ahead of the meeting. The memorandum outlined the proposed approval for transferring a town-owned cemetery on Phelps Road to the Mountain Burying Ground Association. The 0.65-acre parcel on Phelps Road was deeded to the town in 1788 and has been maintained by the Mountain Burying Ground Association since 1867, without any financial support from the town. Mr. Hawkins explained the reasoning behind the request and assured the selectmen that there would be no financial impact to the town if the transfer is approved.

Selectman Harrington MOTIONED that the Board of Selectmen approve the transfer of the Phelps Road Cemetery property to the Mountain Burying Ground Association and refer to Town Meeting. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of a Right to Farm Ordinance

First Selectman Moll discussed the Right to Farm Ordinance and referred to a memo he had distributed to the board last week. He noted that the state already has laws protecting farming and related operations, but he believes this ordinance would simply reaffirm the board's and the community's commitment to our agricultural heritage and support for local farmers. Attorney Donnelly also provided insight on the ordinance, explaining how it would affect both the town and the farmers in the community. The selectmen discussed the ordinance and asked questions, which Attorney Donnelly addressed. It was suggested that the ordinance be posted on the town website as soon as possible for residents to review.

Public Comment

Paul Kulas, 120 Ellison Street

Tom Frenaye, 489 Warnertown Road

Sandra Janik, 380 Prospect Street

Selectman Updates

None.

Adjournment

Selectman Bielonko MOTIONED to adjourn at 8:01 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary