

Received: February 24, 2009
Office of the Town Clerk

Board of Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
7:00 p.m., Monday, February 23, 2009
3rd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Meeting Minutes

Call to order and roll call

L. Francis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led with the pledge of allegiance. Laura Francis and John Szewczyk present. James McLaughlin absent.

Approval of the agenda

MOTION BY LAURA FRANCIS SECONDED BY JOHN SZEWCZYK TO APPROVE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. ALL AYE

Public comments

Rick Parmelee thanked town officials for giving back their salary stating it is more than a show of good faith. He also stated he is pleased that the town is moving on with the range issue making reference to previous precedents the town has set. He commented that people should be safe in and around their homes. L. Francis stated that a letter has been sent to the Blue Trail Range formally requesting permission to conduct the study.

R. Parmelee also commented that he feels the town should contract out; should not build up staff and equipment.

Proclamation 2009 Girl Scout Week

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Wednesday, March 12, 2009, marks the 97th anniversary of Girl Scouts of the USA, founded by Juliette Gordon Low in 1912 in Savannah, Georgia; and,

WHEREAS, throughout its long and distinguished history, Girl Scouting has inspired millions of girls and women of courage, confidence and character to make the world a better place; and,

WHEREAS, Girl Scouting's core values of high ideals, patriotism, respect for self and others, and community service permeate its traditional and innovative programs; and,

WHEREAS, through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience girls develop the skills and lessons that will serve them throughout their lives so that they may contribute to their communities; and

WHEREAS, more than 3 million current Girl Scout members nationwide will be celebrating this American tradition, and welcome girls from every background to join;

NOW, THEREFORE WE, the Board of Selectmen, of the Town of Durham, by virtue of the authority vested, do hereby applaud the commitment Girl Scouting has made to support the leadership development of America's girls and proudly proclaim the week of March 8, 2009, as Girl Scout Week.

Laura L. Francis
First Selectman

John T. Szewczyk
Selectman

James W. McLaughlin
Selectman

Dated in Durham, Connecticut, this 24th day of February 2009

MOTION BY LAURA FRANCIS SECONDED BY JOHN SZEWCZYK TO PROCLAIM THE WEEK OF MARCH 8, 2009 AS GIRL SCOUT WEEK. ALL AYE

Public Safety Renovations Committee resignations

MOTION BY LAURA FRANCIS SECONDED BY JOHN SZEWCZYK TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATIONS OF JOHN BROWNELL AND JAY MCKERNAN FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY RENOVATIONS COMMITTEE. ALL AYE

January 2009 fiscal analysis

As of January 31, 2009, the budget stands as follows:

	Original Appropriation	Additional Appropriations	Carryovers from 07-08	Revised Budget	Actual	Balance
Expenditures	25,714,652	309,539	402,793	26,426,984	17,152,863	9,274,121
Revenues	25,714,652	0	0	25,714,652	13,463,270	12,251,382
				YTD Net	-3,689,593	

In the early part of this month, the town needed to dip into its fund balance to cover the monthly check to RSD#13. Revenue losses, especially in earned interest, caused our bank balance to go into the red. Tax collection at the end of the month quickly brought our bank balance up to a more acceptable balance. I anticipate the balance of our State Grant revenue to come in over the next couple of months. These payments will generate some of the revenue necessary to cover anticipated expenditures for the remainder of the fiscal year.

At this time of the year, our cash-on-hand balance is always at its lowest since July tax revenue covers approximately one half of the expenses for the year; but this year our revenue is at an all-time low. Interest, Town Clerk fees, and Building & Health fees continue to come in under budget each month. Interest for the month of January did not even reach \$400 due to a very low average daily balance. Tax collection continues to be steady, with a simplified 93% collection rate as of the end of January. Interest on late tax payments has increased which has allowed the town to stay within its projected revenue loss figures for the year.

Account balances are closely being monitored as we move into the second half of this fiscal year. So far, departments have complied with proposed reduction plans, and as of this time, I would not recommend releasing those funds. Department heads should be encouraged to reduce their spending wherever possible for the remainder of this fiscal year in order to bridge our expected deficit.

Two additional appropriations were approved this month by the Board of Finance. The first was for the replacement of a headwall on Haddam Quarter Road in the amount of \$19,435. The other was to appropriate \$20,000 to the Building & Health Consultant line to cover additional expenses attributable to Crooked Hill Road. This appropriation is offset by a portion of the fees paid by the contractor for said road project.

The Reserve Account is facing the same issue as the general fund - lower interest revenue than anticipated. A portion of the appropriation into the specific reserve accounts is allocated from interest earned. This year, there will be a negative impact due to a major drop in interest revenue in this fund. I will recommend reallocating one dormant reserve fund account to help offset this loss, along with not allocating any interest in the 09/10 budget.

The Water Company Account has been holding its own. We have not reinstated the payment of the loan back to the town, which is helping to balance this account.

L. Francis stated she will be sending out a memo to all boards, commissions, and department heads asking them to be frugal throughout the end of this fiscal year. Martin French asked if the Board had looked at other ways to increase revenue. L. Francis responded that building and health fees were currently being increased and that the board was open to any suggestions.

MOTION BY LAURA FRANCIS SECONDED BY JOHN SZEWCZYK TO ACCEPT JANUARY 2009 FISCAL ANALYSIS.
ALL AYE

Tax refunds

MOTION BY LAURA FRANCIS SECONDED BY JOHN SZEWCZYK TO APPROVE A TOTAL OF EIGHT (8) TAX
REFUNDS TOTALING \$1,335.37. ALL AYE

Approval of Board of Selectmen meeting minutes February 9th and 12th, 2009

MOTION BY LAURA FRANCIS SECONDED BY JOHN SZEWCZYK TO ACCEPT WITH CORRECTIONS MINUTES OF
FEBRUARY 9, 2009. ALL AYE

MOTION BY LAURA FRANCIS SECONDED BY JOHN SZEWCZYK TO ACCEPT WITH CORRECTIONS MINUTES OF
FEBRUARY 12, 2009. ALL AYE

Old/New business

L. Francis discussed the following old business.

1. L. Francis met with the Department of Environmental Protection, Dom DelVecchio Chair of DMIAAB, Town Planner Geoff Colegrove, Town Engineer Brian Curtis and State Representative Matt Lesser regarding a consent order DMIAAB received regarding violations of the General Stormwater Permit. They were able to negotiate a 20% reduction in the penalty in addition to the requirement of bringing the site into compliance. Instead of paying the fine, they want the town to conduct a Supplemental Environmental Project equal in value of \$35,000 that would help improve the water quality of the Coginchaug River Watershed. A meeting is planned in March with members of the committee that developed the Coginchaug River Watershed Based Plan to choose a project outlined in the plan.
2. The winter budget probably went over with this last little storm we had. Still waiting for the numbers to come in.
3. A public works management study, as requested by Board of Finance, will begin on March 6. The purpose of the review is to determine if the staffing of the department is comparable to similar communities, whether the staff is being used efficiently, whether functions should be added or eliminated and if major policies are in place that are required.
4. The town was awarded a grant of 25 hours of technical assistance from the American Farmland Trust and Connecticut Conference of Municipalities to study ways to promote and sustain agriculture. Currently working on setting up a schedule.
5. Francis Willett reported on the receipt of grants for the emergency operations center. He applied for FY09 EMPG grant that requires quarterly submission of his budget, and was awarded monies toward high speed internet and volunteer time hours. He noted that 50% of the EOC budget will be paid for with this grant. He also received two other grants; one for a dedicated laptop, and another to use towards portable equipment to enhance the EOC.
6. A mailer for the 3N notification system will be going out at the end of this week to residents. Signup is also available via the town's website. L. Francis and Francis Willett will be going to a meeting in Middlefield to discuss the system with them on March 2nd.
7. As soon as the weather cooperates the Durham Fair Association will be working to get the green restored.

L. Francis discussed the following new business.

1. L. Francis met with First Selectmen, Finance Directors and Public Works officials from Haddam, Killingworth, Middlefield, and Durham to discuss possible cost saving measures, including joint equipment purchases, collective bidding for goods and services and personnel sharing. It was decided the first course of action will be to go out to bid together for services such as catch basin cleaning, chip sealing, line painting, and tree service.
2. L. Francis attended a technical meeting with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Public Health, Guy Russo - Sanitarian from Middletown, and engineers from Fuss & O'Neill for update on the feasibility study regarding a possible extension of water from Middletown. The study should be completed in draft form in April/May with final delivery sometime June/July.
3. The Public Safety Renovations committee received 17 responses to the Request for Qualifications and will be reviewing them at their next meeting.
4. The Town of Durham hosted a CIRMA Risk Control Advisory Committee meeting. The Town is working very closely with CIRMA on assessing town buildings and property for safety, reducing liability, and personnel training.
5. Town Hall employees had a Go Red for Women heart program and raised over \$100.00 for the American Heart Association on February 6th. On February 13, a luncheon was held with homemade soup and salad to raise money for the Amazing Grace Food Pantry part of the Live United Campaign of United Way. A donation of \$85.00 was collected.
6. L. Francis stated she was pleased to announce the selection of Jennifer Keogh as Durham's new Administrative Coordinator. In this full-time position, she will be providing administrative support and assistance to the Building Official, Health Sanitarian, Road Supervisor, and Regional Planning Director and Fire Marshal. In addition to key clerical and technology skills, Jennifer brings a strong background of program planning, departmental budgeting and oversight, and project management/implementation, which will be instrumental to the daily operations of this busy municipal department.
7. The Board of Selectmen presented their budget to the Board of Finance and will be working closely with them.

Selectmen's comments

None

Public comments

R. Parmelee suggested the use of United Rentals stating they were very successful. He also commented that he felt it was a bad idea to let personnel from other towns use/operate town machines. He talked about public and private sector differences such as licensing, taxes and weight restriction on trucks and heavy equipment.

Adjourn

MOTION BY LAURA FRANCIS SECONDED BY JOHN SZEWCZYK TO ADJOURN MEETING AT 7:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Moncata