

# **Town of Greenwich**

Board of Selectmen Meeting

April 13, 2023

10 a.m.

Town Hall Meeting Room and via Zoom webinar

## **APPROVED MINUTES**

### **1. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m.

#### **a. Attendance**

- a. First Selectman Fred Camillo - present
- b. Selectwoman Lauren Rabin – present
- c. Selectperson Janet Stone McGuigan – present

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

- a. Regular meeting of March 22, 2023

Upon a motion by Ms. Rabin and a second by Ms. Stone McGuigan, the minutes were approved unanimously.

- b. Special meeting of March 22, 2023

Upon a motion by Ms. Rabin and a second by Ms. Stone McGuigan, the minutes were approved unanimously.

### **3. First Selectman's Updates**

First Selectman Camillo said there had been lots of fun events in the past few weeks, signaling that spring was here. He said that day, April 13, his office would honor town resident Sam Buck and called him a “great, great kid.” He said he would be attending the final day of the Zac Foundation’s swimming camp at the Boys and Girls Club of Greenwich, which he said was a very important event that was done every year to teach kids swimming safety and thanked the Cohn family for doing it every year. Camillo said there would be a First Responder Mass on Sunday at Second Congregational Church. He announced there would be an official sister city ceremony with Ukraine on April 17 in the Town Hall Meeting Room and on April 18 he would deliver a proclamation for At Home in Greenwich Day. On April 19, Camillo said they would be doing interviews with candidates for the open deputy chief of police position which reminded him that on April 12 he swore in new Deputy Fire Chief Justin McCarthy. He wished McCarthy well and

said he came “highly recommended.” Camillo said he looked forward to many years of McCarthy’s service to the Town. Camillo said he would be part of the monthly lunch with first selectmen from Fairfield County on April 12 to exchange best practices and said that day he would also be taking part in honoring State Rep. Chris DePino at the Italian American Legislative Dinner in Middletown. Camillo called DePino “a good friend of Greenwich.” Camillo said on April 21 he would be part of the ribbon cutting for Greenwich Play in Old Greenwich and on April 22 he would be part of a cleanup of Mianus River Park and then one at Greenwich Point for the Live Like Luke cleanup there. Camillo said that usually brings hundreds of people to Greenwich Point and said “the beach is never cleaner” than it is right after that event. Camillo said he would also be presenting a proclamation at the Greenwich Choral Society event on April 22 and on April 24 he would be part of the Greenwich Public Schools Community Service Awards and the Circle of Friends Fellowship Awards. On April 25, Camillo said he would be giving a “fireside chat” for the Greenwich Chamber of Commerce and said he was looking forward to it. On April 26, Camillo said there would be Greenwich Leadership get together at the Junior League of Greenwich.

#### **4. Selectwomen’s Updates**

Selectwoman Rabin said her work on the Central Middle School Building Committee which she said was keeping everyone on it busy. She noted that June is when a lot of members of Town boards, committees and commissions have their terms come up so the Selectmen’s Nomination Advisory Committee was very busy looking at candidates. She said they were looking for alternate candidates for the Historic District Commission and the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency. She said people with those skill sets and the ability to volunteer should contact SNAC. Rabin said the Reimagine Greenwich Committee was getting “back on track” and there would continue to be Free Music Fridays as part of its work. Rabin said they had found that Friday evenings were better because daytime events weren’t as well attended. She added they were also exploring permits to do more than just Greenwich Commons for the concerts and were looking to do things in Cos Cob, Old Greenwich and Byram to spread things open more. Rabin said the committee was also working with the Town’s Architecture Review Committee on the barriers for the outdoor dining on Greenwich Avenue to make them more attractive. She said a skin, which she compared to putting covers on textbooks at school, was being explored and said this was something that could be done without distracting from Greenwich Avenue businesses.

Camillo spoke up about people seeking to serve on Town boards, committees and commissions and how three years ago they were told there weren’t enough people willing to do it but now they have more than enough which he said was “a great problem to have.”

Selectperson Stone McGuigan noted that April is Earth Month and said the calendar was filled with great events. She said she wanted to highlight just a few of them and talked about the April 15 Kite Flying Festival at Greenwich Point co-hosted by the Town's Department of Public Works and the Greenwich Arts Council. On April 20 she said there would be an Earth Day program co-hosted by Greenwich Library and the Greenwich Sustainability Committee called Chasing Water. She also mentioned the April 22 Live Like Luke beach cleanup at Greenwich Point and noted that several sustainability minded groups would be there including the Greenwich Sustainability Committee. Stone McGuigan said that next week would be Volunteer Appreciation Week and said the Town has more than 22 boards and committees and "countless civic minded volunteer organizations" that were all served by volunteers whose "commitment and qualifications are incredibly impressive" and whose "contributions are the reason our quality of life is what it is." Stone McGuigan said she felt a thank you wasn't adequate enough but she wanted to express her "deepest gratitude" to the volunteers.

Camillo added that he didn't believe the Town could function without all of the volunteers and he wanted to thank "each and every one of them."

## **5. Old Business**

- a. GEMS request for Hillside Road closure for Kids Triathlon (*Second Read*).

GEMS Deputy Director Patrick O'Connor said the request had not changed from when it was first made at the Board of Selectmen's March 23 meeting. He said they wanted to close the section of Hillside Road for the triathlon on June 11 between 8 and 10 a.m.

Camillo said he had not heard any response from residents and he said that was the purpose of having a second read. And since there had not been any negative response, the Board of Selectmen was now ready to vote.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board of Selectmen unanimously approved the temporary closure for the triathlon.

- b. Request for approval of lease with Greenwich Arts Council (*Second Read*).

Assistant Town Attorney Aamina Ahmad said unless there were any questions the Board of Selectmen could approve it because it was a second read of what had been submitted at the March 23 meeting. She said that once approved it would go to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a municipal improvement review and vote. If it was passed by the Commission, it would ultimately be sent to the Representative Town Meeting.

Camillo said he had not heard any complaints or objections from the community.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board of Selectmen unanimously approved the lease agreement.

- c. Request for Municipal Improvement status for the Old Greenwich School project (Second Read).

Old Greenwich School Building Committee Chair James Waters said the Building Committee was asking for a vote of support to allow it to start the municipal improvement process. Waters said it would be “the very beginning of a long process” and there was a lot of work still to do. But he said based on the performance of the Building Committee, he had no doubt that they would get there. He said there was a “heightened sense of urgency” in the community around the project. Waters noted that the Board of Estimate and Taxation had not provided funding in the 2023-24 municipal budget for the school’s renovation project, which he said would delay the start of construction until the spring of 2025 unless they found a way to qualify for emergency consideration from the state which he said they would be looking at in the coming weeks. Waters said that there has been no change to the committee’s ask for the MI from when they first made it to the Board on March 23 except that there was “more urgency now.” He said the BET did provide the committee with \$1,860,000 in incremental architecture and engineering funding and he thanked Camillo for advocating for it so the project wasn’t delayed two years. Waters said the sense of urgency came from the three conditions in the \$1.860,000 that were placed on the funding by the BET. In order to get the money, the BET will first hire an independent estimator to be finished in June, the committee will have to provide an update on construction funding based on schematic design in June and, third, the project needs municipal improvement and preliminary site plan approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission. Waters said the committee anticipated running out of funding in the fall prior to being able to satisfy the final condition unless the MI process was “expedited this summer.” He said that was why the committee was not changing what it was asking for. Waters said they had been getting “expert guidance” from the Planning and Zoning Commission and Department and said they were told by the owner’s rep that the committee would be ready for a pre-application in May or June and then start the formal application in June or July. Waters said there would be plenty of public hearings for people to continue to weigh in on the project.

Camillo thanked Waters for a “thorough presentation” and that a lot of his questions had been cleared up. Rabin said she wanted to make clear to everyone that a selectmen’s vote was not to grant MI status but rather go to the Planning and Zoning Commission for MI status. Rabin asked if the funding decision from the BET changed anything with the request but noted Waters had made it clear in

his presentation. Rabin said she had been speaking to Stone McGuigan about their experiences on building committees and felt there was no playbook and one was needed. Rabin said “everyone is operating slightly differently” and it made things very confusing. She said understanding and sharing best practices could be useful for everyone. Waters said he was willing to help work on that playbook if needed.

Stone McGuigan said it would be on the Board of Selectmen to create a playbook and agreed it would be “wonderful” to document best practices. She said she was absolutely on board with that idea.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to authorize the building committee to seek MI approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

d. Request for action on statement on antisemitism in Greenwich (*Second Read*).

Myra Clark-Siegel from the American Jewish Committee was joined by Sue X who chairs the Connecticut Government Outreach Committee and said several members of the committee watching via Zoom. She thanked the Board of Selectmen for the leadership it has shown “in celebrating the diversity of our communities here in Greenwich.” She also thanked the Board for what it has done to make the Jewish community feel “safe and protected here” and for taking up the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s working definition of antisemitism. She Clark-Siegel noted that it was very timely to be taking up the item at the meeting because it was happening on the final day of Passover and how they were “taking a stand” against hatred. She said the AJC stood “proudly and strongly” with “every diverse community” and that surveys have found that 41 percent of the American Jewish community feels less safe today than it did even a year ago. By adopting the IRA working definition of antisemitism, Clark-Siegel said it would be a tool to help people understand “what this kind of hatred is and how it can manifest” while also making the point that “hate has no room here in Greenwich.”

Camillo said “we stand with you in celebrating all of our diversity here in Town and also in our stand against anyone who promotes intolerance especially in this day and age.” Camillo said he felt the Internet helped promote some of it and felt there was “never a wrong time” to make a statement like the Board of Selectmen was making by approving the working definition.

Stone McGuigan thanked the AJC for that it does as well as other organizations like the Anti-Defamation League. She said it was “so important in this community.”

Rabin echoed the thanks and said it was a “perfect day to adopt this.”

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to adopt the IRA definition on antisemitism.

## **6. New business**

- a. Request for temporary closure for water main replacement work on Greenwich Avenue between Elm Street and Grigg Street.

Ken Petrini and Don Snyder from Snyder Civil Engineering appeared to request the closure for Aquarion Water Company. Petrini said the project was anticipated to start in the spring of 2023 and run until the spring of 2024. Throughout the duration of the project he said there would be impact to the roadway with times where connections needed to be made that would require a road closure. He said there needed to be permission for intermittent road closures over the course of the next year. Petrini said they were not looking to close the road every day but there would have to be closures “as needed” during the course of the project.

Camillo said they would have to get the word out to the community if it was not going to be done on a set schedule and said he assumed there would have to be digging into the roadway, which Petrini confirmed. Petrini said they were coordinating with the Town’s Department of Public Works and pledged they would be “transparent in advance” throughout the process about the dates of the closures. Camillo said he wanted to work with Snyder and other utilities to see if there was an opportunity to move lines underground while the road was already dug up.

Stone McGuigan noted that there were many restaurants and businesses in that area and an already existing concern about parking spaces. She wondered how the road closures would have an impact on accessibility to those parking spaces and what it would mean to those businesses and restaurants. She asked how much notice there would be about closures “so we can get the word out,” Petrini said due to the complexity of the project and the heavy use of Greenwich Avenue, some of the work was proposed to be done at night to mitigate the impact on businesses and restaurants. He pledged there would be an on-site inspector to coordinate things with business owners and over the parking. Snyder said there was also ongoing discussions with the Parking Services Department but said by morning commute hours everything would be open every day.

Camillo said there had been instances in the past of people living in the areas objecting to night work because of the noise. He said there was never going to be a “perfect situation” because of it being so busy and “anything we do is not going to be easy or totally welcomed.” He said it was helpful that Snyder was working

with Parking Services and will be reaching out to the businesses. Camillo pledged to monitor the situation because of the night work and said they would have to “balance it.” Camillo said notices about the closures should go out “as early as possible” to make sure people knew ahead of time and could make plans.

Rabin said she had concerns about the impact of the roadwork given the return of outdoor dining to Greenwich Avenue. She said she believed the work might end up being more disruptive than the road closures and wanted to make sure notice got out not just for the businesses and restaurants but anyone who lived in apartments in the area. She agreed people were going to be concerned about the noise but the Town was stuck in between a rock and a hard place with the work needing to be done.

Petrini said the main amount of the work would be between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Stone McGuigan noted this was a first read item and predicted there was going to be “a lot of public comment” on it before a vote was taken. Camillo said they knew “this has to be done” and pledged to work with Snyder and Aquarion to make it “as painless as possible” while adding they would listen to comments over the next two weeks before a vote.

- b. Request for temporary closure on South Stanwich Road for pipeline replacement project.

Gary Simard from AECOM addressed the Board and requested a short-term road closure for the Aquarion pipeline replacement. He said the pipeline that needs to be replaced goes under North Street and a drill rig needs to first be deployed into Rockwood Reservoir in order for geotechnical test borings to be done. The drill rig would be offloaded onto a barge from Stanwich Road via a crane that would lower it into the reservoir so it could go to the North Street area. Once the borings are done everything would be lifted out by crane. Sinard said a four to eight hour period would be needed each time for the crane work. The first closure would be on May 15 and, if all goes well, it would be removed on May 19. Sinard said no excavation is being proposed for the road and the road closure would only be for loading and offloading. The road would be open when the crane was not being deployed.

Camillo said they had heard from residents about other projects in that area and he was sure this project “would be no different.” He said any comments over the next two weeks would be sent to AECOM.

## **7. Public Comment**

Town resident Molly Saleeby, a member of the Old Greenwich School Building Committee, said she wanted to bring the same message she had just said to the Board of Education chair to the Board of Selectmen. She said in her view, building committees should be “ready to go” once funds are available on July 1 at the start of a new fiscal year. She said once the BET has its decision day on a Town budget all the parties involved should be thinking about forming, noting late starts for building committees on both Old Greenwich and Central Middle Schools. As soon as money is approved, Saleeby said the Board of Education needs to signal to the Board of Selectmen that building committees to be formed instead of waiting.

Camillo told Saleeby what she said “made a lot of sense” and he has requested to meet monthly with Superintendent of Schools Toni Jones. He said “this is definitely something we would put on the agenda.”

## **8. Appointments/Nominations**

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to appoint Nancy Duffy to a new term on the Selectmen’s Nominations Advisory Committee expiring June 30, 2026. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Anne Marie Hynes (R6) to a new term on the Commission on Aging expiring June 30, 2026. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Ellen Wolfson (R5) to a new term on the Commission on Aging expiring June 30, 2026. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Kip Burgweiger (R7) to a new term on the Commission on Aging expiring June 30, 2026. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Edward Keller (R4) to move up to being a regular member on the Harbor Management Commission expiring March 31, 2025. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Danielle Goodwin (R3) to a new term on the Board of Health expiring June 30, 2027. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Matt Popp (R8) to a new term on the Board of Parks and Recreation expiring June 30, 2026. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.



Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to nominate Scott Johnson (R7) to a new term on the Board of Parks and Recreation expiring June 30, 2026. Selectperson Stone McGuigan seconded it and it was approved unanimously by a vote of 3 to 0.

## **9. Adjournment**

At 11:01 a.m., Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to adjourn. Upon a second by Selectperson Stone McGuigan, the motion was approved unanimously.