

Town of Greenwich

Board of Selectmen Meeting

April 27, 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 10:08 a.m.

a. Attendance

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

- Prior to the minutes being approved, Mr. Camillo asked if there was a motion to be considered to take an item out of order on the agenda and to add an item to the agenda. Ms. Rabin then made a motion requesting taking the appointment of a Deputy Chief of Police out of order and adding discussion of an Old Greenwich road closure for the Department of Public Works. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stone McGuigan and was approved unanimously.

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Special meeting of April 12, 2023

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

- b. Regular meeting of April 13, 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 would be a bunch of commissionings to be done on May 6, including one at Old Greenwich Yacht Club and one at Indian Harbor Yacht Club. On May 7, Camillo said there would be a 5K for Hope for the Breast Cancer

Alliance starting from the Richard's parking lot. On May 9, Camillo said there would be a ceremony with Pathways Inc. to mark Mental Health Awareness Month and noted that day would also be when he was swearing in the new Deputy Chief of Police. Camillo said the YWCA's Stand Against Racism would take place on April 28 and tonight, April 27, would see the St. Jude's benefit at the Hyatt Regency with Cos Cob residents Gabby and Rick Feinstein serving as two of the sponsors. Additionally on April 28, Camillo said it would be the annual Greenwich Tree Conservancy Tree Party and the annual Red Cross Red and White Ball as well as an Abilis event on April 29. On Sunday, April 30, Camillo said there would be a pet therapy day with a proclamation outside of Town Hall. Camillo said he had attended the Greenwich Public Schools' Community Service Awards which he said was a "really nice event" and that he did a "fireside chat" for the Greenwich Chamber of Commerce where he said there were a lot of good questions. Camillo said he had received the Pemberwick Dam report and thanked Department of Public Works Deputy Commissioner Jim Michel for working "extremely hard" on it. Camillo said the report would be shared with the Pemberwick-Glenville Association and said the dam report was a "long time coming" because the dam had not been inspected since 2012 and no one was claiming ownership of it, necessitating lots of work from DPW and the town's legal department. Camillo said that after today's Board of Selectmen meeting they would all be going to the Greenwich Police Department's John Clarke Luncheon, which honors the police officer of the year and then he would deliver an Arbor Day proclamation at Eastern Middle School and go to a ribbon cutting at Timo and Violet at East Elm Street. Camillo also noted the opening on April 29 of Mike's Organic and said everyone in Town was awaiting it.

4. Selectwomen's Updates

Selectwoman Rabin said there had been a lot of emails, phone calls and texts about "various building committee members and their behaviors outside of building committees." She said it was unfortunately not just isolated to the Central Middle School Building Committee. Rabin said she had gone to school to be a teacher and her first job out of college had been as a technical trainer. She recalled a colleague telling her at the time that "adults are just kids in big bodies" and she wondered if that explained some of the behavior and the inability of some members to control their impulses and not have self-control before they say things or behave in certain ways. Rabin said she shared the acronym "THINK" with the Central Middle School Building Committee which stands for: Is it Truthful? Is it Helpful? Is it Inspiring? Is it Necessary? and Is it Kind? which she said was her favorite. She said she was imploring everybody to think before they speak and before they act. Rabin said another "Rabinism" was "Be wary of giving advice because wisemen don't need it and fools won't heed it."

Selectperson Stone McGuigan said that April 26 had been Administrative Professionals Day and she wanted to give a shout out to the team in the First Selectman's Office including Angie Kaether, Ben Branyan, Jenny Larkin and Wendy Zhou. Stone McGuigan said she was looking forward to attending a program presented by the Anti-Defamation League at Temple Sholom called The Future Fight Against Extremism and For Democracy. Looking ahead to May, Stone McGuigan said her family would not mow their lawn to mark No Mow May, a national program design to protect tiny pollinators. She said she suggested the Town do the same but was reminded the Town has a nuisance ordinance. Instead, Stone McGuigan suggested anyone interested in participating to reach out their neighbors about the purpose of the program and listen to any concerns they had because "After all, strong neighborhood connections are as important as healthy pollinator populations." Stone McGuigan closed by saying there would be a public hearing on Strickland Brook drainage on May 10.

5. Old Business

- a. Request for temporary closure for water main replacement work on Greenwich Avenue between Elm Street and Grigg Street. (*Second Read*).

Ken Petrini from Snyder Civil Engineering and Justin Xenelis from Aquarion Water Company appeared via Zoom. Xenelis said he appreciated the opportunity to "express how excited we are" to be able to upgrade the water company's infrastructure. He said the plan had been in the works for "quite a while" and that he wanted to assure the community over any anxiety it was feeling that it would "work hand in hand" with the community. Petrini said nothing had changed in the plan from the first presentation on April 13 and that they have not heard any community comments in response. He said he understood the need for community outreach and that it was something they were going to do during the beginning stages of the project.

Camillo asked if anyone had reached out to the neighbors in the two weeks since the project was first brought before the Board of Selectmen and Petrini said they had not yet but planned on doing so. Camillo said he had not heard from any of the neighbors but had heard from some property owners in the area. He said they understood the need for the project and were not against it but they were looking for more information to "calm the nerves" of business owners who were worried that parking was being taken away. Camillo said he had also heard from the Town's Board of Health that the project needed approval from it first and he asked Petrini if that had been done. Petrini said they had not done that because the first step on their end was to go to the Board of Selectmen. Camillo said he appreciated that but he said the project team needed to respond to the Board of Health first and there had been a little confusion on the sequence of approvals.

Camillo said he was not comfortable until that was settled and Snyder started reaching out to neighbors to let them know what was happening.

Stone McGuigan said they had said at the April 13 meeting that all permits had to be in hand before they gave their approval. She expressed reservation about a one-year “carte blanche” approval for the project. Stone McGuigan said she would rather do a three-month approval with an assurance that if everything ran smoothly they would just give an automatic renewal of the approval after the three-months. Camillo said he understood where Stone McGuigan was coming from but he wasn’t sure if that could be done. Stone McGuigan said she wanted to make sure everything ran smoothly for the first three months and then, if it did, they could very easily extend the approval and make everything more transparent but Camillo repeated he was not sure how it would work to do that. Camillo said they could discuss it over the next two weeks before the May 11 meeting.

Rabin said the Board of Selectmen needed to be clear about what approvals were needed before any project came to them because she believed Snyder had the impression it was the first stop and not the last stop.

6. New Business

a. Appointment of Deputy Chief of Police

Per the earlier passed motion, the appointment of the Deputy Chief was taken out of order from where it was on the original agenda. Chief of Police James Heavey thanked the Board of Selectmen for accommodating their request and noted that the John Clarke Award for officer of the year was that afternoon and they wanted to make sure everything had been set up. He added this was a significant event for the police department. Heavey nominated Capt. Mark Zuccerella and said it was “not an easy task” to pick and there were “outstanding candidates” for the position. Heavey praised Zuccerella’s leadership for his close to 25 years on the GPD and said they would have wanted to be heard even earlier in the meeting but Zuccerella wasn’t available because he was in the Town’s Human Resources Department helping another officer with an issue. Heavey said this was “very emblematic of his commitment to the Town and the police department.” Heavey told the Board that Zuccerella is a native of Greenwich who attended St. Mary’s High School and Sacred Heart University and has a Master’s Degree. He said Zuccerella had positions of great responsibility at different ranks as a sergeant in the detective bureau and as a lieutenant in patrol. He said Zuccerella had been at the forefront of things like the GPD’s juvenile review board and “other innovations in community policing” and he recommended him to be deputy chief “without reservation.”

Camillo said he had sat in on the interviews for the position with Human Resources and others and noted that his colleagues had not. Camillo said he had known Zuccerella and his family for many, many years and said he believed he would do a great job for many years to come.

Stone McGuigan said she was thrilled to offer her congratulations to Zuccerella but said she was planning on abstaining from the vote. Stone McGuigan said she and Rabin had not been included in the interview process even though, under charter, the Board of Selectmen serves as the police commission in Town. While acknowledging she was not a lawyer, Stone McGuigan said her reading of the charter was that she and Rabin should have been involved in the interview process. She said she did not want her abstention to make it seem like she was questioning anyone's judgement or qualifications or that she was trying to slow down the process. Stone McGuigan said she was thrilled Greenwich had someone as qualified as Zuccerella but going forward all three members of the Board of Selectmen should be involved in the interview process.

Heavey said he respected Stone McGuigan's opinion but in his looking at the charter and past practices, positions of deputy chief are recommended by the chief of police. Heavey said he would defer to the Town's law department on this but it has not happened in the past where the police commission had ever been in interviews for command staff except when it came to interviews for chief.

Camillo said when he was in the state legislature they would update language in laws and statutes that didn't match up with the times anymore or had been mistakes. He said the chief was right in that it had historically always been done this way but he was happy to revisit it and see if there was a way to look at this.

Rabin said she would agree based on her own reading there were words that could be interpreted one way or the other. She said they were thrilled to see Zuccerella promoted but that going forward she would like to see this clarified. She said this was not the first time she had voted on somebody without being part of the interview process.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Camillo, the Board of Selectmen voted by a two to zero vote, with one abstention, to approve the appointment of Mark Zuccerella to be Deputy Chief of Police. Camillo and Rabin voted in favor of the appointment and Stone McGuigan abstained.

Zuccerella spoke briefly after his appointment and thanked the Board of Selectmen for their confidence in him and that he looked forward to his new position.

7. Old Business

- a. Request for temporary closure on South Stanwich Road as part of pipeline replacement project. (*Second Read*)

Gary Simard from AECOM appeared via Zoom and said that the temporary road closure would be needed to offload and then reload some equipment into the reservoir for geotechnical borings for work that had to be done on North Stree. He said the closure would begin on the morning of May 15 and would likely only be half a day but potentially a full day. It would then need to be reclosed on May 19 to take the equipment out of the water. He said there was no plan for road excavation or road opening and he had spoken to DPW about it and there was support as long as the crane was not placed in the causeway which he said they did not intend to do. Simard said he was not aware of any comments about the proposal.

Camillo said he had not received any comments over the past two weeks.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to approve the temporary road closure on South Stanwich Road

8. New Business

- a. Request from Boys and Girls Club of Greenwich to use Arch Street Teen Center. (*First Read*)

Camillo said that this request was something that had been discussed for a while and asked BAGCG CEO Cristina Vittoria to explain what its plan was. Vittoria said the Club was hoping to start the renovation on its headquarters in September and as part of that renovation she said it was “vitally important” to not have a lapse in services during the period of the work. She said they had arranged with Arch Street Teen Center to use its space for its after school program. Vittoria said this would be a modified after school program from the end of August 2023 through January 2025. She said the Club planned to serve approximately 100 to 150 members age 6 to 18 for after school and some enrichment programs. She said the Club would only be operating Monday through Friday and during the summer of 2024 it would operate its Camp out of the Teen Center as well. Vittoria said they also hoped to be open and use the facility during non-school days like school vacations. Vittoria asked for approval from the Board of

Selectmen and said Arch Street had been “very kind” about allowing them to use the building and collaborate with them to help the kids who need the affordable after-school programs.

Camillo said he wanted to acknowledge the Arch Street Teen Center for always being “a great partner” and helping out the last few years when there have been requests similar to what the BAGC had made. Camillo said he was grateful to them.

Stone McGuigan said she was thrilled for the BAGCG and said it sounded like a great plan. She clarified that this was a first read item and would come back to the Board for approval at its next meeting.

Rabin said she loved to see the partnership and looked forward to seeing the item again in two weeks. Camillo said he doubted there would be any negative comments to it but the Board would follow its normal process. Stone McGuigan asked if there were any more permits for it to get and Camillo said he did not think so.

b. Town of Greenwich State of Sustainability Report – Julie DesChamps

Julie DesChamps presented the 2023 State of Sustainability Report from the Greenwich Sustainability Committee. She spoke about how the committee was first formed in 2019 and since that time it has “encouraged the adoption of sustainable practices through the promotion of goals” that had been established in the 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development and the actions that had been outlined in the Sustainable Connecticut Certification program where Greenwich had received the highest honor at Silver Status. She said the volunteers on the Committee were collaborating with Town staff and government officials to “advocate for a community wide strategy to safeguard a healthy, high functioning ecosystem for the benefit of all residents.” DesChamps said the report is meant to provide a “snapshot of sustainability in our community across the committee’s eight sectors” : business, climate resiliency, community culture, food systems, land and water, legislative and advocacy, transportation and air quality and waste reduction. DesChamps said the report highlights the priorities, goals and challenges of each sector and the accomplishments of the Committee’s partners, Town departments, non-profits, businesses along with “supportive actions taken by the Committee.” DesChamps said the report primarily focused on initiatives within Greenwich it also looked at state initiatives with local impact. She said the report would be updated annually and made available to the public via the Sustainability Committee’s website. DesChamps said the committee wanted the report to be a “valuable resource for the community and a tool to effectively

communicate the accomplishments of our members and community partners to the public.”

Camillo thanked DesChamps and the Committee for all their hard work on the report and said it was “very impressive what had been done” over the last three and a half year. He acknowledged that not everything had been easy because there was some pushback on things but that had been expected. Camillo noted Greenwich’s Silver Status and that he read there was going to be a new Gold Status. Stone McGuigan, a co-chair of the Committee, said that was a possibility but that Greenwich had just gotten its certification a year ago and that it came up every three years. She said it was something that the Committee would probably revisit in the next year or so. Camillo said what was being done was exciting and it benefited the Town from an environmental standpoint but also financially as well.

Rabin praised the report from her marketing background and said she and Camillo first ran on this in 2019 as a vision. She thanked Camillo for his continued support and said while it had not always been easy she wanted to applaud the team for “progress over perfection” and keeping things moving “even if was little by little.” She thanked the Committee for its enthusiasm and perseverance up.

- c. Update on the status of the Town of Greenwich’s Sustainability and Climate Resiliency Plan – Elizabeth Evans, Director of Environmental Affairs.

Elizabeth Evans, the Town’s Director of Environmental Affairs, told the Board that she wanted to bring them up to date on what this subgroup from the Conservation Commission was working on to fulfill the 2022 Board of Selectmen resolution directing the Commission to come up with a Climate Resiliency Plan. She said the working group began its work in January and thanked all the members and staff that were a part of it. Evans said they were working to bring a structure to the plan and had started out looking at other resiliency plans from other towns as well as information that had been put out by Connecticut DEEP and Save the Sound. Evans said that allowed them to develop “a working table of contents” and they have also been working on a mission statement on the purpose and scope of the plan. She said while it has not been finalized, the working group has attempted to identify the climate related challenges facing the coastal community of Greenwich. Once those challenges are identified, Evans said they would be able to suggest adaptive strategies for individuals, institutions, neighborhoods and the Town as a whole that people can adopt and work toward to “combat threats to public health in our environment.” She the working group all realized they needed a lot of input from the community and they have been working hard to develop a survey for residents that she hoped would go out in the next few weeks to gather information about what community priorities and points

of interest and concerns are. She said that would allow the working group “to focus our plan to meet the community’s concern” and they would also reach out to Town departments and others working on the issue to try and build a resilient community to get their input as well. Evans told the Board there were a lot of people working on this and the working group wanted to bring all that information together in one place to identify the priorities for the community. Evans said by December 2023 they hope to have identified the priorities, identified what needs to be done and what has been done and find sources of funding for initiatives at the community level.

Camillo said that this was important because the “flood issue is not going to go away” from Byram to Old Greenwich and there were issues in the backcountry as well. He said people were looking for some kind of plan and recalled the debate last year over doing this and how some didn’t want the Town to be backed into something and felt the wording ended up “just right.” He said these are goals he wants to see achieved and the more people feel the impact of bad weather, the more urgent it becomes to have a plan of how to do it. Camillo said in some places it would be “very expensive” to do things so the Town would have to figure that out because people are waiting for it.

Rabin said she had been concerned about how this was going to get done by December 2023 because of how much would have to go into it to do something meaningful. She thanked Evans for the progress that the team is making.

Stone McGuigan thanked Evans and said she did not want to get ahead of the plan but there would have to be resources invested into taking actions. She added there were some actions that could be taken that were not so expensive that “would ultimately save us a lot of money.” Stone McGuigan noted the State’s waste management problem and said if Greenwich was able to make progress on composting “that would go very far.” She said cars on the road are a big problem and that it was projected by 2040 all new cars would be electric and the question was how to get from here to there. She said a plan would help the Town “prioritize and move forward.”

Evans stressed the need for education and said she hoped the plan would educate everyone who reads it so everyone can work together.

- d. Request from Department of Public Works for Old Greenwich road closures on Harding Road, Tomac Avenue and Forest Avenue for drainage improvements. (*First Read*).

Per the earlier motion, the Board of Selectmen considered this item that had been added to the agenda for the meeting. DPW Civil Engineer Ian Brown requested the road closure for the roads near the construction site for the new Eastern Greenwich Civic Center. He said the Flood and Erosion Control Board had identified a number of areas around Town that are in need of drainage improvements, including the area around the civic center which he said sees “regular flooding to roadways during heavy storm events” and in order to combat the flooding, DPW is doing drainage improvements to the pipe network within Tomac Avenue and Forest Avenue. It includes the removal of the existing 18-inch reinforced concrete pipe and replacing it with a new, two-foot by four-foot box culvert that would run 350 feet from Forest Avenue to Tomac Avenue before terminating at the nearby channel south of the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center near the train tracks. Additional improvements would include the installation of three new catch basins and three new junction boxes. Brown said given the location of the pipe network being worked on, DPW felt it was safest to close the road while the construction took place. He said the road closures would vary depending on where the work was taking place but it would span between Tomac Avenue and Forest Avenue. Brown said the construction would begin on Tomac and move toward Forest as progress is made. He said DPW knew road closures could be “troublesome” for drivers, especially in Old Greenwich so they would work to complete it “as promptly as possible.” He said it was a necessary project to increase the capacity of the drainage network and fight flooding. Two detour routes would be used, Brown said, one for Tomac and one for Forest. Mid to late May has been circled as a start date and the detour time frame would be three months with a complete closure during construction hours of Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The roads would be reopened at the end of the day.

Camillo said he was certain there would be some feedback before the May 11 meeting but agreed it was a necessary project and that “after every storm people wish for things like this.” He said he appreciated the work that had gone into rerouting the traffic and having “as little disruption as possible to people in their daily lives.”

Rabin wondered if there was any conflict with the construction at the new Eastern Greenwich Civic Center and Brown said they were “actively working” with the Building Department to make sure there was not an impact so it would be a “combined effort.”

9. Public Comment

No public comment was heard.

10. Appointments/Nominations

No nominations were made.

11. Adjournment

At 11:09 a.m., Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to adjourn. Upon a second by Selectperson Stone McGuigan, the motion was approved unanimously.