Town of Greenwich
Board of Selectmen
Meeting June 23, 2016
10:00 A.M.
Town Hall Meeting Room

APPROVED MINUTES

1. The meeting opened at 10:13 A.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

   a. Attendance:
      I. First Selectman Peter J. Tesei - Present
      II. Selectman John Toner - Present
      III. Selectman Drew Marzullo - Present

   The First Selectman greeted and welcomed attendees commenting that it was a Public Meeting of the Board of Selectmen and that he reserves the right to call on people to ask questions and make comments. Mr. Tesei also explained that the Town Charter requires the Selectmen to meet once a month and that the First Selectman provide an update to the Board about events and activities in Town.

2. Approval of Minutes

   a. Minutes of the Regular Board of Selectmen meeting held on 6-9-2016 were moved for approval as amended by Mr. Toner, seconded by Mr. Marzullo. The motion passed unanimously.

3. First Selectman's Updates

   a. Mr. Tesei congratulated the 19 young Greenwich men who achieved the rank of Eagle Scout and were recognized at the annual Boy Scout Eagle Dinner on June 14.
   b. On June 15, Mr. Tesei signed the agreement with the Greenwich Junior League regarding the group’s $250,000 donation towards the Byram Pool project. The League has pledged to raise $2.5 million for the project.
   c. The town continued its annual tradition commemorating Filipino Independence Day with the raising of the Filipino flag at Town Hall on June 17.
   d. The Town has adopted the Safe Lawns campaign, organized by Greening Our Children, an organization dedicated to organic turf management. Since the mid-2000s, the Town has employed organic turf management on its fields and in its parks. The campaign officially kicked off June 18.
   e. On June 21, Mr. Tesei and Mr. Toner attended the 147th Greenwich High School graduation where ESPN Sports Center’s Hannah Storm was the commencement speaker.
   f. Mr. Tesei noted that he and 17 Town department heads completed the six-week Lean Six Sigma business training on June 22. Town managers teamed up to conduct projects that could improve business operations. He outlined that his team – comprised of Deputy Police Chief Mark Marino, Community Block Grant Director Princess Erfe, Human Resources Director Mary Pepe and Executive Assistant to the First Selectman Barbara Heins – initially set out to review operations in the front lobby of Town Hall. The project evolved into a review with recommendations on improving the beach pass process.
   g. Looking ahead, Mr. Tesei said that the Town will honor descendants of the town
founders, patriots and announce its Good Citizens awards at the annual Fourth of July flag-raising ceremony at 9 a.m. July 4th in front of Town Hall.

4. Old Business

a. A look the governance structure of the Board of Education and expanding membership from eight (8) to 10 members.

I. Town Attorney John Wayne Fox explained that if a commission is appointed to review the issue the Town risks losing Home Rule in its Charter because a referendum will be needed to affect any recommended changes. If a committee is appointed, any recommendations would need approval by the Board of Selectmen and then the Representative Town Meeting. Mr. Fox also said there isn’t any requirement for a timeline in the Town Charter, however, the timing could coincide with an upcoming election. If a commission is appointed, then there is a Charter-mandated timeline that must be followed.

II. Mr. Fox explained that membership of either a committee or a commission must follow minority rules. For example, based upon Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) 9-167 (a), if the committee or commission is comprised of five (5) members, no more than four (4) members shall be from the same political party.

Mr. Tesei made a motion to decide whether to establish a committee to review the proposal. It was seconded by Mr. Marzullo. Mr. Tesei then opened the floor to public comments.

III. Board of Education member Jennifer Dayton asked the Board to articulate the problem it is trying to resolve.

IV. Mr. Tesei responded that there is instability on the board as well as a lack of leadership. He said that during his tenure there have been five school superintendents, which is evidence of a tremendous amount of administrative turnover.

V. Mr. Marzullo stated that he does not believe there is a problem with the current school board. He said that he believes there would be more school superintendent turnover if there was a 10- or 12-member board. He also said there are ways to have competitive elections and that he will vote no to appoint a commission.

VI. Mr. Toner said that he did not see anything wrong in putting together a committee to come up with a solution or suggestion.

VII. School Board Member Debbie Appelbaum said she was elected in a competitive election in 2013. She said the current makeup of the board promotes dialog and consensus. She also suggested that the League of Women Voters review the issue. She also questioned the timing of the review when the board is now seeking to hire a new school superintendent.
VIII. Resident Randall Smith said he applauded the move he said would help find a way of accountability for the board.

IX. Democratic Town Committee Chair Jeffrey Ramer said that what the Board of Selectmen decides would be a benchmark of how the town conducts business going forward. He said that the Town Charter guarantees equal representation to both political parties. Citing five years of school board meeting minutes, he said the board has been successful, having a deadlock vote three times during that period.

X. Former First Selectman Dick Bergstresser recommended the Selectmen charter a nonpartisan group such as the League of Women Voters to review the issue and proposed that political parties that do not nominate more candidates than available positions lose a seat on the respective board.

XI. RTM member Peter Berg discussed voter turnout during the past several elections, saying that the highest turnout is for presidential elections; that the last local election in 2015, drew 34 percent of the town's registered voters.

XII. Sean Goldrick said that there should be accountability in elected government. He said that his fellow Democrats never disagree with the Republicans on the school board and rubber stamp what Republicans want to do. He also said it is time to make both parties accountable.

XIII. Michael Trogni, president of the PTA Council, said that creating nonpartisan school boards has been a plan supported by the Connecticut PTA since 1999.

XIV. Representative Town Meeting Member Chris von Keyserling said that most school board candidates are people who support the school district and the administration. He also said that if the proposal was political maneuvering then the GOP would have 50 percent membership, with unaffiliated voters deserving 50 percent membership and the Democrats having less candidates.

XV. Brian Peldunas said accountability and competitive elections should be the goals and questioned whether the current membership of eight members is sufficient as the board’s workload continues to increase.

XVI. Board of Estimate and Taxation Member John Blankley said the nonpartisan nature of the current school board works and that there is accountability. He said if the system isn’t broke, there isn’t a need to fix it.

XVII. Resident Chris Sandys said he applauded the board for bringing the issue forward.

XVIII. Representative Town Meeting Member Christine Edwards described the effort as the tyranny of the majority.

XIX. Representative Town Meeting Member Karen Fassuliotis said forming a committee within the Charter process will allow for Democratic process and give
residents a choice.

XX. Board of Education Member Peter Sherr spoke in favor of increasing board membership to 10. He said Greenwich is the only town in the state with an eight-member board.

Mr. Tesi made a motion to establish a committee to review the proposal. It was seconded by Mr. Toner. The motion was approved by a 2-1-0 vote, with Mr. Marzullo voting in objection.

Mr. Toner then made a motion to create a five-member committee. It was seconded by Mr. Tesi and approved by a 3-0-0 vote.

Mr. Tesi then said a spreadsheet of all candidates to be considered for appointment of the committee shall be created for the July 14 Selectmen meeting.

5. New Business

a. Establish a 25 mph speed limit for Old Camp Road. Recommendation presented by Traffic Operations Coordinator Melissa Evans

On a motion by Mr. Toner, seconded by Mr. Marzullo, the board voted 3-0-0 to approve the speed limit.

b. Close Old Mill Road and establish a detour for emergency replacement of a culvert, as outlined by Nick Mariani of the Department of Public Works.

On a motion by Mr. Toner, seconded by Mr. Marzullo, the board voted 3-0-0 to approve the road closure and detour.

6. Appointments and Nominations

7. Executive Session

Mr. Toner motioned to enter into executive session at 12:20 p.m., seconded by Mr. Marzullo. The Board voted 3-0 in favor.

Present in Executive Session were: Mary Pepe, Director, HR Department; Tiffany Navarro, HR Department Workers’ Compensation Administrator; Erica Mahoney, Assistant Director HR Department; J. Wayne Fox, Town Attorney; Valerie Maze Keeney, Assistant Town Attorney, Attorney Heather Porto, Executive Assistant Barbara Heins.

Mr. Toner moved to exit Executive Session at 1:11 P.M., seconded by Mr. Marzullo, the Board voted 3-0 in favor.

a. Full and final settlement of Workers’ Compensation claims # 8800029641 and #880011821 for $220,000.
Upon a motion by Mr. Tesei seconded by Mr. Marzullo, the Board voted 3-0-0 in favor of the settlement.

b. Full and Final Settlement of Workers’ Compensation claims # 04330; #04289; #016581; #078799; #094262 for $30,000.

Upon a motion by Mr. Tesei seconded by Mr. Toner, the Board voted 3-0-0 in favor of the settlement.

c. Full and Final Settlement of Workers’ Compensation claims # 0108888 for $45,000.

Upon a motion by Mr. Toner seconded by Mr. Marzullo, the Board voted 3-0-0 in favor of the settlement.

d. Full and Final Settlement of Workers’ Compensation claim #0026348 for $24,500.

Upon a motion by Mr. Tesei, seconded by Mr. Toner, the Board voted 3-0-0 in favor of the settlement.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Toner motioned to adjourn at 1:15 P.M.; seconded by Mr. Marzullo, the Board voted 3-0 in favor.

Next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled on Thursday, July 14, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

[Signatures]

Peter J. Tesei First Selectman

Barbara A. Heins

Prepared by Barbara A. Heins
Recording Secretary