

Town of Greenwich

Board of Selectmen Meeting

July 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 10:11 a.m.

a. Attendance

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

First Selectman Camillo requested a moment of silence in memory of Gino Furano, a Glenville resident, business owner and a volunteer firefighter in Town, and Lowell Weicker, a former First Selectman of the Town of Greenwich who then served as a member of Congress, the United States Senate and as Governor of Connecticut.

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular meeting of June 20, 2023

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

- b. Special meeting of June 20, 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 thanked Town Emergency Operations Director Joe Laucella for the preparations before storms that took place the prior weekend and for all the updates he provided during it. Camillo said there were people in town who suffered flood damage as a result of the rain but that the town was for the most part very lucky because it “could have been a lot worse” and the heart of the storm missed Greenwich. Camillo thanked Laucella for keeping the Town prepared along with GEMS, the GPD and the GFD. He said the Town has a “great team in place” and that the Town is as “prepared as we’ve

ever been” for weather emergencies. Camillo said there was a “very successful” July 4 ceremony at Town Hall and urged people to see the video of it that was posted on YouTube. Camillo noted there had been several ribbon cuttings recently for new businesses in Town including Make Modern in Cos Cob and The Card Shop on Greenwich Avenue. Camillo noted that there had been a swearing in for the GPD with four new officers joining the department and three special police officers that Camillo said he was glad to keep within the department. Camillo spoke about the St. Catherine’s Fair in Riverside and how he would be in the dunk tank there if anyone “had it in” for him you “didn’t have to wait until November” to do something about it. Camillo announced there would be a Bastille Day ceremony Friday at Town Hall where the French flag would be raised and then Founder’s Day would be celebrated on Sunday at First Congregational Church in Old Greenwich. Camillo said he and others would be guest chefs at the Boys and Girls Club of Greenwich’s Camp Simmons next Friday and that after that there would be a Town Hall ceremony to honor Greenwich Crew for winning an overseas competition. Then on July 22, Camillo said there would be a park cleanup in Rose Hartman Park at the Stamford border where he walks with his dogs. Camillo said the area needs to be cleaned and things need to be fixed so he had reached out to Stamford Mayor Caroline Simmons and the City was all on board. He said he would also be in Stamford on July 24 to celebrate the retirement of Pam Williams over at UConn. Camillo said that day would also be a celebration for Rick Strain for 40 years as chief of the Round Hill Volunteer Fire Company and in September he would be celebrated for 50 years as a volunteer fire fighter. Camillo then wrapped up by saying that the Board of Selectmen would next meet on July 27 at 7 p.m. and it was something he had pledged to do early in his first term but the pandemic had changed all of that. He said they would see how it worked out and they wanted to make sure people knew that it was at a later start time.

4. Selectwomen’s Updates

Selectwoman Rabin reported on the third community forum for the Central Middle School Building Committee and prior to the forum for the broader community, there was also a forum just for the adjacent neighbors. Rabin said it was “very good” to get community input as the work was ongoing for the final schematic design that would be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Rabin said residents would also have a chance to provide input about the project during the Planning and Zoning review process. She noted how she had been talking with her colleagues on the Board about how many of the issues being brought up are long-standing ones in the area like speeding on Orchard Street and drivers using the area as a cut through and didn’t necessarily have anything to do with the school construction. She said those concerns would be discussed and brought to the forefront in the context of the school construction. Rabin said Free Music Fridays would return on July 14 and gave a “special thank you” to the Parking Services Department and the Department of Public Works for the work they had all been

doing on a brochure for people who might not be familiar with where parking is around Greenwich Avenue. The brochure talked about where two-hour lots are, where handicap parking is, where free parking is located and other pieces of information. She said it would be available electronically and in print form. Rabin said they had looked at getting it in the park mobile app but it wasn't possible yet.

Selectperson Stone McGuigan said there was a "chill feeling" because of summer in Town but it was also the beginning of the fiscal year and budget season would soon enough be starting again. She said she hoped everyone would think about expanding electric vehicle charging stations at Town Hall. Stone McGuigan said a note of appreciation from a resident for the EV charging station there but said it was constantly in use. Stone McGuigan said she took that as a sign of success and that in the next decade half of the vehicles in use would be EV vehicles. She said it was "definitely something to be thinking about" and as the Board of Selectmen's liaison to the Energy Management Advisory Committee she was going to bring the expansion idea back to them so they could work with the Department of Public Works and Environmental Affairs to try and find appropriate places for additional charging stations.

Camillo followed up Stone McGuigan's statements by saying he was speaking with the EMAC chair about it. He said that the Board was "very supportive" about EVs and charging stations but he had questions about fires that are being seen with EVs. He said the placement of charging stations has to be focused on closely. Stone McGuigan agreed and said "safety first" and that the Town should be careful about where the charging stations are placed. Camillo said he was "very confident" this would all be fixed in the coming years.

5. Old Business

- a. Request for relocation of East Elm Street loading zone. (*Second Read*)

Deputy Chief of Police Kraig Gray, director of Parking Services, was at the meeting to discuss the three items that were listed under Old Business because all three involved the Department of Parking Services. All had been discussed initially at the Board's June 20 meeting and Gray noted the media coverage of all items after the June 20 meeting which had alerted the public to what was happening. He said it was "widely distributed" and "everyone knows about it." Gray said his Department had received only one phone call about the proposals and it was not feedback but rather informational.

Camillo said he had not heard anything negative about the proposals and that they “made sense the first time we heard them.” Both Rabin and Stone McGuigan said they had not received any negative feedback either.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board unanimously approved the request for relocation of the East Elm Street loading zone.

- b. Request for conversion of handicapped parking space on Strickland Road to be handicapped van accessible. (*Second Read*).

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board unanimously approved the request for conversion of the parking space on Strickland Road.

- c. Request to update list of 15-minute metered parking spaces to add 30-minute metered parking spaces in Central Greenwich.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board unanimously approved the request to update the list of 15-minute metered parking spaces to add 30-minute metered parking spaces in Central Greenwich.

6. New Business

- a. Request for temporary closure of St. Roch Avenue for the St. Roch’s Feast. (*First Read*).

Feast committee member Frank Cortese appeared via Zoom. Camillo noted that the closure was only for a small part of the road during the Feast and that he was pretty sure he and his colleagues were familiar with it since this was an annual request from the church.

Stone McGuigan said she did not have any questions about the request but asked if the item was meant to be a first read or if the Board would vote on it immediately. Camillo said it was a first read but that it was the same request that had been approved in the past to close the street temporarily from where the preschool for the next block. He said it was a “very small piece” and “no one ever has any issue with it.” Rabin said she did not mind voting on the proposal then and Cortese told the Board that the closure would only be from about 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on the nights of the Feast. Stone McGuigan said she generally liked having second reads but that she had said in the past that when a request is routine she was happy to vote on it. But if there was no time emergency with getting the request approved, she would rather have a second read. Camillo said that was

fine. He said he was “certainly a yes” on the proposal but that it was okay to wait until the July 27 Board meeting to take a vote in case there was someone with a complaint. Camillo said he did not expect that to happen because the closure was for limited hours and was done at night while being done every year.

Camillo asked Cortese if they waited two weeks would it throw off their planning work. Cortese said he didn’t see a problem with it but noted for the record that the Feast was going to take place on Aug. 9. Camillo said it would be done in two weeks.

- b. Request for waiver of Parks and Recreation Department’s insurance requirement for alcohol on private property during St. Roch’s Feast. (*First Read*)

Camillo said the item was not going to be needed to be discussed by the Board. He said there had been questions about some of the additional insurance requirements for the Feast but he believed they had been answered. Camillo thanked Town Risk Manager Megan D’Amato for answering the questions. He said St. Roch Church was “always a great partner for our Town” and was always willing to make sure proper insurance coverage was in place before the annual Feast.

Stone McGuigan said there had been “a number of emails” the Board had received expressing concern about the agenda item and there was concern from the Board of Education that its conditions for the use of the field at Hamilton Avenue School were being met. Stone McGuigan asked for clarification and Camillo said D’Amato had answered the concerns and have told the church’s Feast Committee that there had been changes and explained how to deal with the increase in coverage that was needed. Camillo said he spoke with the committee and they were “good” with what they had been told. Camillo said it was a case of the Town being safe and crossing its T’s and dotting its I’s to make sure every possible scenario is covered.

- c. Request for waiver of Parks and Recreation Department’s permit requirement for St. Roch’s Feast Procession.

Town resident Syl Pecora spoke about the permit requirement and said the parishoners of St. Roch had celebrated their patron saint with the procession since Aug. of 1918 and only recently had they been required to get the permit from Parks and Recreation. He said the procession does not proceed through any Town park or recreational facility and it goes along sidewalks and streets. Pecora said the church had always notified and would continue to notify the Department of Public Works and hire Greenwich Police to escort the procession for its duration to ensure safety for everyone who was participating and the general public. He said the church would continue to seek and acquire all the appropriate insurance

but he was curious what Parks and Recreation had to do with the procession, which Camillo said was his question was well.

Parks and Recreation Director Joe Siciliano spoke and explained that even though Town streets are not under his department's purview, it was still being handled by Parks and Recreation as a special event no different than a bike race that goes around Town or a running race or a walk. He said Department of Public Works would refer it to Parks and Recreation and there were forms to fill out and an application fee. Siciliano said as of that morning the application had been submitted and the fee had been paid along with the insurance being submitted. Siciliano said there was "one little detail" on the insurance which had to be corrected because the date was incorrect on the form. Siciliano said that had to be updated and he had talked to the pastor at St. Rochs about it and told him that once the date was updated the permit would be issued. He said this had been going on for many years and he personally could not remember a time when there wasn't some kind of permit available. He compared it to the Greenwich Sidewalk Sales because he said his department had nothing to do with them but they issued a permit anyway

Camillo thanked Siciliano for the clarification and he was glad the information was now out there so people would know in the future.

d. Request for temporary closure of 203 Sheephill Road for tree removal.

Joseph Kay from the Town of Greenwich's Tree Division appeared before the Board and said there was a "massive" dead elm tree that goes over the road and over the wires. He reported the division had asked for Eversource Energy for help due to the close proximity to the power wires but that the utility had been "slow to react" and the Town couldn't wait any longer to remove the tree. Kay said that in order to remove the tree safely the truck and bucket had had to be set up in the middle of the road to get over the power wires and that it would be a lot easier if the road could be closed. He said the closure on Sheephill Road would go from its intersection with Old Orchard to the one with Palmer Hill with traffic rerouted down Old Orchard. Kay said the closure would be needed for one working day. Kay said if the closure was approved by the Board he would set a tentative day for the work but noted the date couldn't be set in stone because of potential issues with weather.

Camillo asked if it was time sensitive and Kay said that he wanted to get it done "sooner rather than later" because the tree was starting to fall apart. Camillo said that issues of public safety typically override the need for a second read of an item.

Stone McGuigan said she felt people were looking at her because she prefers second reads but in this case she agreed with Camillo about it needing to be done

for public safety which made it time sensitive. She said she was happy to vote on it that day.

Rabin suggested they could put the date between July 20 and July 27 and Kay said he would notify police dispatch when the final date was chosen. Camillo told Kay to let them know too so they could inform the public.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board unanimously approved the request for a temporary road closure at 203 Sheephill Road for tree removal during the time period between Thursday, July 20 and Thursday July 27, 2023.

- e. Request for temporary closure of 22 Guinea Road for tree removal.

Kay told the Board that it was a similar situation to his previous request with several trees that need to be removed. He said he had set things up with a private contractor to do it over the summer but he noted Guinea Road is “tight and very windy.” He said the contractor had set up the bucket truck to do the work but it was discovered no traffic could get by once that was done and the police department told them that the job could not be done without closing the road first.

Camillo asked Kay that since Guinea Road went into Stamford did the Town have to coordinate at all with the City. Kay said he did not believe so because the section of road that was being closed was not in Stamford. He said he was going to close it at the intersection with Juniper Hill because there was a cul de sac that traffic could turn around in to the intersection with Stanwich Road. He said signs would be up in Stamford to alert drivers coming in where the closure would be. Kay said there would also be someone in a truck to direct people and give information. Camillo offered his support for that plan and Kay said he did not think it would take more than one day to do the work. He said if more work was needed to pick up wood it could be done the next day without having to do another closure.

Camillo said because of the same reason for public safety he didn’t feel there was a need for a second read. He noted it was already hurricane season so it should be done the sooner the better.

Upon a motion by Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan, the Board unanimously approved the request for a temporary road closure at 22 Guinea Road for tree removal during the time period between Thursday, July 20 and Thursday July 27, 2023.

- f. Request for reconsideration of Parking Services Department decision to not include Davenport Avenue in Residential Parking Permit Program.

Davenport Avenue resident Lissa Pasternak appeared before the Board and shared photos with the members to be used as a reference point during her remarks. She

said she had lived on Davenport for 10 years and her husband had lived there for 20. She said they completely understood Gray and the Parking Services Department's "cautious approach" to admitting streets into the Residential Parking Permit Program but that she believed she and other residents could show the street has unique circumstances and it should be reconsidered. Pasternak said it was a matter of residents not being able to park on the street at all and that if a resident can't find parking on the street there are "very few options" because Davenport is "surrounded" by commuter parking and meter parking and streets with designated no parking areas. She described Davenport as a very small, dead-end street with approximately six "legitimate" parking spaces on the street, a number she said could go up to seven if squeezed in. She said there were between five and six people on the street who depended on street parking and noted how Davenport was one of the closest residential streets to the Metro North station, Greenwich Avenue, the Bruce Museum and Roger Sherman Baldwin Park. Pasternak said this was not about event parking at these places because that was something they could deal with because it was only occasional and they could plan for it in advance. She said they wanted permit parking because commuters were using the street and people were leaving their vehicles parked in the street all day with no turnover. Pasternak closed her remarks by asking the Board of Selectmen to reconsider the Parking Services Department's decision to not put them in the permit program.

Camillo said he understood where Gray was coming from his decision because not every road could be included in the program. Rabin asked why it wasn't included in the permit program and Pasternak said they had originally considered in January and the communication she received was that Gray believed there was adequate off-street parking for all residents and he did not see a problem with their parking. Pasternak said residents reached out to him after that and he did meet with them in person on the street and noted that Gray himself had difficulty finding parking even though it was 8 a.m.

Gray spoke before the Board next and said there was a high bar to determine where the program could be implemented and it should be used judiciously. He said he recognized the unique aspects of it but his understanding was if they opened up the ordinance for no parking there he would have to do a full traffic review and the "desktop review" that had been done showed Davenport was not conforming and was grandfathered in. To do it now would probably mean no parking on the road, Gray said, because it would be difficult to even put in no parking signs with the unique aspects of the road and how tight it is. He said that informed his decision and suggested, as a path forward, was to have an engineering review to study what parking should be on the road.

Davenport Avenue resident Michael Kramer spoke and claimed there were other parts of Town that had permit parking and didn't conform either. He told Gray "If

you're going to do for one, do for all." Pasternak claimed there was room for signage and "implored" action on a study because people were "suffering" without parking.

Camillo thanked Pasternak for coming and said they would talk more about it offline. He said he appreciated the feedback.

g. Request to establish a Complete Streets Policy and Protocol

Vin Di Marco, from the Active Transportation Task Force, addressed the Board and said the task force applauded the work that had been done to make improvements in Town said they were applying for grants. But he said the task force was concerned they wouldn't be able to get those grants unless steps were taken to have a Complete Streets Policy and Protocol or something similar because that is considered one of the criteria to secure grants such as the Safe Streets for All program that he said could be used to develop an action plan for active transportation improvements in Town. Without it, he said the application would be considered ineligible. Di Marco also urged more work from the Town to educate people about the bike sharrows that were recently approved by the Board and what they are and what they do. He said people were confused by them and didn't know what to do when they saw them. Di Marco said the Town was "moving in the right direction" but that the public didn't know what the Town was doing. Di Marco said this Complete Streets Policy was something the task force had been discussing since 2021 and it was something that had to be customized for Greenwich and its unique challenges like parking and narrow roads. He said Town departments and organizations should get involved in a roundtable with the Task Force to do something and if the Town did that, Di Marco said it might make it easier to get the grant because the Town would be moving toward a complete streets policy. Having the language there, Di Marco said, would allow people to understand what the goals were and what the Town was moving toward.

Camillo said he would email Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation and the Department of Public Works for a meeting to work on a formal policy with states goals, metrics to achieve it and to educate people. Rabin asked which Department would take the lead on this and Di Marco suggested DPW and Michael Kiselak to help coordinate the whole effort with the land use departments involved as well. Camillo said he would be happy to work with Di Marco on the plan around the Town's trails for bicycles and present it to Parks and Recreation. Camillo said he felt there was "so much potential" around what could be done with the trails.

Town resident Peter Alexander spoke and asked Camillo if municipalities were able to lower speed limits on their own. Camillo explained there was a protocol to go through with the State to document average speeds.

- h. Request for consideration of code of conduct requirement for members of Town board, commissions and committees.

Stone McGuigan brought the matter up and said on multiple occasions Rabin had “gently but firmly” cautioned volunteer committee, commission and board members to “please think before you post” on social media. She said the Town’s Human Resources Department was about to release its updated employee manual which included a code of conduct for social media and felt it was the appropriate time to ask Town volunteers to sign the same code of conduct.

Rabin said this was discussed as the Board did interviews for boards, commissions and committees and they had started asking interviewees if they were willing to sign it. She said no one had said no and that as long as there was no legal issue, Human Resources could help facilitate getting it done. She noted it would be for hundreds of people.

Camillo said he had talked with the legal department and Human Resources about it and it was something “we all feel strongly about” but it was “not as easy as we would like it to be.” He said there were different types of volunteers and some were elected so he was not sure how it would be done with members of the BET and Board of Education and if they could compel them to sign something like that. Camillo said this came about because they had someone posting something online they shouldn’t have and they had seen other instances of it following the first time so there had to be a policy in place. Camillo said they wanted to stay ahead of this and prevent things from happening. But there were questions about what they could do.

Town Attorney Barbara Schellenberg said she would speak to HR Director Mary Pepe about it and said Camillo raised a good point about whether elected officials could be compelled to sign it. She said that was worth looking into. Rabin said she felt this should be for volunteers the Board nominates and appoints and the RTM votes on. Camillo also noted the potential difficulty in defining what would be considered “offensive” in a social media post. Rabin said she felt the policy is clear about what is considered inappropriate but Camillo said things change in how things are regarded. Stone McGuigan said the point was to make people think and that when they sign something people have to think about what they’re doing. She said the more people who sign it the better but for the purpose of the discussion she felt it should be for volunteers who would come under the Board of Selectmen for appointment or nomination. Camillo suggested looking at other communities to see how they did it and Schellenberg agreed, saying the Town “didn’t have to reinvent the wheel.” She said it would be the place to start.

- i. Discussion of potential change of time for July 27 Board of Selectmen meeting.

Upon a motion from Rabin and a second by Stone McGuigan the Board unanimously approved moving the start time of the July 27 meeting from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

7. Public Comment

Town resident Peter Alexander spoke about a presentation he was scheduled to make on July 19 to the Harbor Management Commission and asked about material he would be using it. He asked if it was okay to share it with the Board of Selectmen in advance and Camillo said it was okay for him to share it with them but they could not discuss it as a Board without public notice first.

8. Appointments/Nominations

No nominations were made.

9. Adjournment

At 11:28 a.m., Selectwoman Rabin made a motion to adjourn. Upon a second by Selectperson Stone McGuigan, the motion was approved unanimously.