

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
February 11, 2009
5:30PM
Court Room**

1. Call to order

Meeting brought to order by Catherine A. Osten, First Selectman at 5:30PM. Present were Selectmen Edward Meadows and Kevin Generous. Also present: Gerry Meadows, Sue Zimmerman, Peter Silvestri, Richard Douville, Pat Deslandes, Allan Rainville, Kord Jablonski, Claire Glaude, Linda Puetz, Joe Osowski, Mike Riley from Mystic Solar, Glenn Cheney

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by E. Meadows

3. Review and act on minutes of January 14, 2009

*Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by K. Generous to accept the minutes of 1/14/09. K. Generous asked to review a motion which he submitted at last month's meeting; C. Osten stated that the Board will address this issue further on in the meeting. Unanimously voted.

4. Act on request for tax refund of overpayment of taxes

*Motion made by K. Generous, seconded by E. Meadows to accept the tax refund of overpayment for Amy Cloutier in the amount of \$1,283.64 and Joshua Shukis in the amount of \$30.84. Unanimously voted.

5. Presentation by Mystic Solar Energy Power

Will discuss when M. Riley from Mystic Solar arrives.

6. Discuss and possibly act on new policy for the Grist Mill Meeting room.

*Motion made by K. Generous, seconded by E. Meadows to act on the new policy for the Grist Mill meeting room. Discussion: K. Generous' concern on rule #1 if the Town accepts State and Federal funds, then anyone should be allowed to use the hall; rule #13. Asked if concurred with Town Attorney re: damage to property and cost to applicant; C. Osten stated policy was reviewed by Attorney. The only addition to the old policy is rule #4 with an exception that Showers and Birthday parties are exempt from this rule. K. Generous will not support this until his concerns are cleared. E. Meadows and C. Osten in favor of new policy. K. Generous opposed.

**TOWN OF SPRAGUE - BOARD OF SELECTMEN
GRIST MILL MEETING ROOM APPLICATION AND USE REQUIREMENTS**

All requests for use of the Grist Mill Meeting Room shall comply with the following requirements:

- 1.) Use of the meeting room is available only to residents of the Town of Sprague.
- 2.) All applications for the use of the meeting room must be submitted to the First Selectman's office at least 60 days in advance of the event for which use of the meeting room is sought.
- 3.) Each application must designate a Responsible Party at least 21 years of age. The Responsible Party's name, address and telephone number shall be provided with each application, as well as a copy of his or her Connecticut driver's license or other acceptable form of identification.
- 4.) Copies of all applications shall also be submitted to the Fire Marshal and the Zoning Enforcement Officer, who must separately approve or deny each application no more than 7 days before the date of the proposed event. (*Shower and Birthday parties exempt*)
- 5.) An Application fee for the use of the community room is \$50.00, payable in advance at the time of application. This fee is not refundable.
- 6.) A Deposit fee for use of the community room is \$50.00, and may be refunded after inspection for damage and cleanup.
- 7.) Payment of application and deposit fee shall be in separate checks at the office of the First Selectman at the time of application.

- 8.) Qualified non-profit organizations may request exemption from Application and deposit fee, and may be required to show proof of non-profit status. The building is not to be used for political purposes or personal business.
- 9.) The Responsible Party shall be accountable for any damage above the \$50.00 deposit.
- 10.) The designated responsible party shall be accountable for the cost of any cleanup or trash removal made necessary by failure to leave the meeting room in a clean and orderly condition.
- 11.) No serving and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages, nor smoking, are allowed under any circumstances within the building and grounds. All fire and safety code requirements shall be strictly followed.
- 12.) Parking is to be limited to the area provided for the Grist Mill insofar as possible.
- 13.) The First Selectman may require police presence for traffic control, and insurance against general liability, at the expense of the applicant.

7. Review and possibly act on the final draft of the Town Charter

The final draft was submitted to the Board for review. C. Osten recommends that the Board review it for another month. R. Douville was asked by C. Osten if there was anything specific that was changed from the results of the survey.

- A three member Board of Selectmen remains the same for a 2 year term.
- Fifty percent felt that hiring the Tax Collector and the Town Clerk would be an improvement.
- Voting on Town Budget vs. referendum. Majority of the people like the way it is written in the statutes.
- No changes in Boards and Commissions, appointed by Selectmen.

A Public Hearing to be called by the Selectmen; the Board has 15 days from hearing to get back to the Charter Commission.

K. Generous has concerns with how the budget would be passed.

E. Meadows, C. Osten, and K. Generous are appreciative for the work done by the Charter Commission. To discuss again at next meeting

8. Discuss and possibly act on authorizing the First Selectman to call a Special Town Meeting re: storm materials, vehicle repairs and overtime expenditures.

Due to unusual winter storms that occurred this year, storm materials (salt/sand) are over budget as well as the overtime line item for salaries. A number of significant repairs have been made to the 2000 Ford 150; this vehicle is used to clean several of the small and narrow roads throughout town.

*Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by K. Generous to authorize the First Selectman to call a Special Town Meeting for the expenditures of storm materials, overtime and vehicle repairs. Unanimously voted. C. Osten to notify the Board of Finance.

9. Discuss and possibly act on adoption of tax exemption for farm buildings

Arthur Speilman and Alan Rainville have asked the Board of Selectmen to look into adopting a tax exemption for farm buildings.

- Sample ordinances from Woodstock, east Hampton, Lebanon, Ellington, and North Stonington were given to Selectmen for review.
- Board will need to agree upon a dollar amount for this exemption.
- Threshold amount of assessed building completed by Assessor
- Application required by client
- Approval process handled by Assessor/value on property
- R. Cody will draft an ordinance

C. Osten to inform A. Speilman and A. Rainville when ordinance will be voted on. Copies of sample ordinances were given to A. Rainville.

10. Discuss the development of a blight ordinance

- Without an ordinance the Zoning Enforcement Officer does not have the ability of holding people accountable
- Concerns of who will enforce; Planning & Zoning?
- Determination of blight is subjective unless it is written out.
- C. Osten asks the Board where they would like to go with this.
- E. Meadows – States there are places in town that need checking, He agrees with the Zoning Official that an ordinance should be adopted authorizing enforcement.

- K. Generous states this is controversial because someone's junk might be someone else's treasure; should hear from other people.
- C. Osten to contact the individuals who complained at the Planning & Zoning meeting re: blight.
K. Generous to contact other individuals with complaints.

Mystic Solar Energy: Presentation

- Presentation by Mike Riley from Mystic Solar Energy; company was formed last year January 23 2008
- Connecticut based company
- Recommends solar energy, wind power and LED lights.
- Allowing to generate own power w/out cost.
- Technology – system recommended is solar electric with evergreen panels.
- Town has applied for the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund
- Question raised by K. Generous on solar age technology; asking if the town wants to spend money on old technology or wait for new improved technology.
- C Osten is in favor of solar energy, would be the next logical step for the Town.
- System is would be good for 25 years; will we be in this building 25 years from now.
- P. Silvestri to continue researching other companies.

*Motion made by K. Generous to set up an ad hoc building committee, no second to the motion. Motion failed.

11. Selectman's report

- Streetlights – town to assess after lights are taken down and a hearing will be scheduled after CL&P has completed the removal of lights.
- K. Generous states that people are unhappy with lights removed and a hearing should have been scheduled before lights were taken down; people are unhappy and do not want lights taken down. C. Osten says people were told last year by Dennison Allen at the Town budget meeting.
- C. Osten is concerned for public safety. Lights have been assessed to ensure safety.
- Generalized assessment recommendation at last year's budget meeting a replacement for the 2000 truck was put off. Planning for the future informing the Board of Finance of a 20 year plan for capital expenses.
- K. Generous – presenting last year's budget to the Board of Finance did not mean he was in agreement with every item.
- C. Osten states it's the Board of Selectmen's responsibility to forward capital request to the Board of Finance; plan has not been approved, it is just the beginning of the planning process for the 20 year plan and capital projects do not cover operating expenses.

12. Public comment

R. Douville – individuals should put up their own security lights; agrees to keep lights at intersections and corners.

P. Deslandes – agrees. If people want light, they should install their own.

J. Osowski – streetlights concerned about safety; should send out an insert for feedback on street lights. C. Osten states this was done under the last administration.

13. Adjournment

Motion made by C. Osten, seconded by E. Meadows to adjourn meeting at 7:30PM. Unanimously voted.

Respectfully submitted by,

Catherine A. Osten
First Selectman