

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
Wednesday April 9, 2008
Court Room
7:00 PM**

Postponed to Tuesday April 15, 2008

1. Call to order

Meeting brought to order by Catherine A. Osten, First Selectman at 7:05PM. Present were Selectmen Edward Meadows and Kevin Generous. Also present: Patricia Olson, Joe Osowski, Richard Douville, Reggie Patchell, and Gerry Meadows.

2. Review and act on minutes of March 19, 2008

- Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by K. Generous to accept the minutes of 3/19/08. Unanimously voted.

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

- Motion made by K. Generous, seconded by E. Meadows to accept the request for tax refund of overpayment of taxes for Hugh Allen for \$50.36. Unanimously voted.

4. Discuss Codes of Ethics

- K. Generous provided the Board with Suffield's ethic code regulations; copies can be obtained on Suffield's web site; K. Generous will e-mail link to Board members.
- Discussed establishing an ethic commission or board of ethics; one concern is not enough people in town for this tremendous responsibility which may be the only drawback. May consider approving the code of ethics and look at regionalizing the Board or Commission.
- C. Osten will review and send to Richard Cody, Town Attorney; will also share information with the Charter Commission. Tabled.

5. Discuss and possibly act on policy for using the Town's Bank Account Tax I.D. number

C. Osten gathering data for policy.

- Motion made by E. Meadow, seconded by K. Generous to table until the Selectmen coordinate with the Board of Finance a policy for the Town's account and a policy for the Commission accounts. Unanimously voted.

6. Discuss and possibly act on policy for tax reconciliation procedures

Motion made by K. Generous, seconded by E. Meadows to discuss tax reconciliation procedures. Tax Collector, Mary Chartier reviewed procedures. Changes are: (1) Monthly delinquent procedures; tax notices will be sent out every other month and not monthly (2) The Town does not have an assistant Tax Collector, (3) Contact person with questions; Name, Telephone Number, Address other than the Tax Collector (4) GRBBR totals will not balance with Assessor - a monthly report is done to balance with Assessor's monthly COC reports, (5) to include not only Treasurer but Assessor as well.

- Motion made by K. Generous, seconded by E. Meadows to table for further review. Unanimously voted.

7. Discuss preliminary structural condition assessment by CLA Engineers – Baltic Fire Department retaining wall

C. Osten and B. Tardif met with CLA Engineers. Previously wall collapsed due to poor construction; the corner section has been blocked off for safety reasons. C. Osten recommends furthering the assessment financially due to the Fire Dept's request to expand. Establish a committee to look at future locations. Unless the Fire House location changes, the town will need to investigate possible cost of repair

- Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by K. Generous to do a initial assessment to see what the Town's decision is with the building. Unanimously voted.

8. Discuss motor vehicle tax abatement – 'green cars' to residents whose hybrid cars have a federal rating of at least 40 mpg in city driving.

C. Osten asked CCM to provide her with copies of similar ordinances re: tax abatement and other information as to what other towns are considering environmental issues. K. Generous states tax payers should not have to subsidize; individuals should purchase these vehicles in their own interest. C. Osten states it could be something other than a tax abatement.

- Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by K. Generous to table until further information is provided. Unanimously voted.

9. Act on appointment to the Sprague Recreation Committee

K. Generous stated that a 13-year old had been appointed to this committee as a voting member, meaning that she was voting on use of public money without having been a register voter or taxpayer. While he had no objection to involving children on Park & Recreation, it should be in a role where they do not vote on use of public funds, since they neither pay taxes nor can vote on budgets. C. Osten stated that children should be involved, but perhaps should not be voting members on matters concerning spending of public funds.

- Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by K. Generous to appoint Sarah Richardson to the Sprague Recreation Committee. Unanimously voted.

10. Act on resolution: municipal transportation funds for elderly and disabled

- Motion made by K. Generous, seconded by E. Meadows to act on the resolution for municipal transportation funds for elderly and disabled. Unanimously voted.

RESOLUTION

Resolution authorizing the First Selectman, Catherine A. Osten, to negotiate and execute all necessary Agreement/Contract documents on behalf of the Town of Sprague with the Department of Transportation of the State of Connecticut for the Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation Expanded Program, and to affix the corporate seal.

11. Discuss a recording system for the Town of Sprague

K. Generous submitted a draft policy to the Board: States some people can't make meetings and should not be charged for copies to access information on government decisions, such as Selectmen or finance meetings, because they cannot attend. As an example, he cited the annual budget document, copies of which are provided to the public for free.

DRAFT

The Town of Sprague will require all municipal boards and commissions that accept public funds for its activities to maintain electronic records (digital recordings) of its public meetings, including statutory and standing boards and committees established by the Town of Sprague. These records shall be made available to members of the public upon request no more than one day following each meeting. A space shall be provided in town hall for members of the public who wish to review these records. Copies of the recordings will be made available to town residents at no charge at their request. Non-residents may obtain a copy at nominal cost not to exceed the cost of materials and staff time.

C. Osten stated her concerns and suggests changes:

1. A specific space available at the Town Hall.
2. Charge for copying data because the town charges for other request maps, faxes, permits. The Town would need 4 units costing approx 3,000 for each system with microphones.

C. Osten will send to Town Attorney for review.

- Motion made by K. Generous, seconded by E. Meadows to table until further reviewed by Attorney. Unanimously voted.

12. Discuss and possibly act on rates for Lovett Cemetery and local revenues

Currently rates for Lovett Cemetery are \$125 - \$200 for residents and \$150 - \$250 for non-residents. Rates have not been increased since 1975. C. Osten suggested an increase of \$350 for residents and \$400 for non-residents.

- Motion made by C. Osten, seconded by E. Meadows to raise the rates for Lovett Cemetery to \$350 for residents and \$400 for non-residents. Unanimously voted.

C. Osten sent letters to P&Z, ZBA and Inland Wetlands asking to review fee schedules. The Cost for a driveway permit is \$10.00. C. Osten suggesting to increase the permit to \$25 which covers administration cost. K. Generous is uncomfortable increasing; stating people are tapped out, he opposes all fees across the board.

- Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by C. Osten. Motion passed, K. Generous opposed.

13. Review list of street lights to be removed from poles

Copies of street light removal were reviewed by the Board. At the next Board of Selectmen's meeting a CD copy will be handed out to the Board reviewing Route 97, 138 and 207 to compare lights in other towns. C. Osten has received only a few complaints. K. Generous states the public was not involved or invited to comment on the original decision, or even afterward prior to the time the lights were removed, as they should have been.

14. Selectman's report

--Grant funding report- reviewed. \$1,000,000 bond in April just approved not received.

--Report on Assessor, Senior Coordinator and State Trooper - reviewed

--Shetucket River Trails – advice and opinions

--Charter Commission – Chairman, Thomas McAvoy is moving out of town in the next 3 months; he is willing to stay, owns property in town. R. Cody indicated the town does not have to remove him from the Commission. C. Osten stated the decision should be made by the Board of Selectmen. T. McAvoy is willing to work with the Commission if change is made. If membership is changed, the town will be required to start with a new time line, 16 month process. Next board meeting decision will be made whether he stays on and or allow him to act in an advisory capacity.

--Mukluk property – renaming – In the June 2007 Our Town a contest was held to rename the property. K. Generous questioned who gave the Conservation Commission authority to change the name. Feels the property should be renamed only by town residents since the property is owned by the townspeople and all town residents should be involved in a decision that implies future use. He also questioned whether the First Selectman or Board of Selectmen have the authority to authorize a name change. To research previous Board of Selectman minutes for the authorization.

--Registrars letter

--Liability coverage for insurance for CIRMA

--Recordings of town meetings – P&Z, ZBA, competent stenographer by state statutes.

--Executive summary report by CERC – houses 1.2 percent decrease

--Letter from Troop 39 thanking the town for use of the Mukluk property to camp

--May 1st SCCRA tour of Preston facility; contract expires 2015; at this time it may be a public or private ownership. K. Generous --- states we were well under quota. C. Osten states the town receives a subsidy at the end of year which covers the difference. Amgraph is sending trash to Preston; this will increase our numbers.

--Provided copies of the 2008/2009 budget – Hearing on Monday 21st at 7:00PM. Special Board of Selectmen’s meeting on April 23, 2008 at 8:15AM. Annual Budget Meeting on May 6th budget going to referendum on May 13th.

--CRRA – Ash landfill in Franklin – old mushroom factory. Some impact on town re: traffic coming from Lisbon and Preston incinerator, also possibility contamination of aquifer and contamination of the river.

--Met with Mohegan Tribe - Country Club to remain in Sprague; interested in community partners. \$15,000,000 building and land. Great for tax purposes. New furniture business on Bushnell Hollow Rd. and Amgraph addition 33,000 sq.ft.

--Sent letter out to Jim Frazer re: locking gates at Baltic Mill property now owned by town, access only on business hours and escorted by Public Works. Replace fence at Baltic mill area.

Met with DPH, DEP re: water issue Well (2a) contains algae. Wells (4 & 5) will be blended with other wells in system for safe drinking water. Well (1) down to 15 minutes a gallon from 75 minutes a gallon. Letter from 2004 stating town is under order to fix dam; needs repair. C. Osten will respond to letter re: town’s plan; keeping the DEP, DPH and Water & Sewer all on the same plan. K. Generous requesting copy of letter.

15. Public comment

K. Generous requested job descriptions for IT and Grant Writer. C. Osten to send K. Generous copies when the reviews of all town position are completed.

K. Generous requested the Economic Development be notified for futures meetings with Mohegan Tribe.

G. Meadows – asking who is responsible for the fence along Riverside Drive. C. Osten to look into it.

R. Douville – Charter Commission Chairman moving out of town; would like Chairman to remain as member; all members feel the same. Charter Commission will submit letter.

Tying in with Norwich would not alleviate fixing the dam; reestablish the dam.

16. Adjournment

- Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by K. Generous to adjourn meeting at 9:00PM. Unanimously voted

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine A. Osten
First Selectman