

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Monday, December 4, 2023, 4:00 pm
Via Webex & In-Person in the
First Floor Conference Room, Independence Hall
725 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT 06824

A recording of this meeting can be found here: [BOS Regular Meeting 12/4/2023 4:00 pm.](#)

MEMBERS PRESENT: First Selectman William A. Gerber, Selectman Christine Vitale, Selectwoman Brenda L. Kupchick

OTHERS PRESENT: May Bayer, George O. Harris, Dave J. Henry, Christopher V. Smith, Michael D. Baisley, William Burke, Jeffrey Warren, Building Official Pat Mahoney, Purchasing Director Adam Tulin, Human and Social Services Director Julie DeMarco, Engineering Manager Bill Hurley, Deputy Fire Chief Kyran Dunn, Police Chief Robert Kalamaras, Deputy Chief Edward Wiehe, Assistant Director for Community Health Dr. Santina Jaronko, Health Director Sands Cleary, Community and Economic Development Director Mark Barnhart, Town Attorney Phil Pires, CFO Jared Schmitt, FairTV, members of the public

FINAL MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Bill Gerber called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Police Chief Bob Kalamaras led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) MINUTES

To consider and act upon the minutes of October 2, 2023, October 16, 2023, October 19, 2023

Selectwoman Vitale made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/2/23, 10/16/23 and 10/19/23 as written. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion which carried 1-0-2 (Gerber, Vitale abstained as the minutes were prior to them being on the BOS).

4) RESIGNATION (*for information only*)

HVAC Indoor Air Quality Building Committee

Jason Li (R) 245 Sunnyridge Avenue, term May 2023-completion
(resigned 12/01/23 due to election to BOE on November 7, 2023)

The BOS thanked Mr. Li for his service on the Building Committee.

5) APPOINTMENTS

To hear, consider and act upon the following appointments:

a. Board of Library Trustees

May S. Bayer (D) 354 Towne House Road, term 07/01/2023 - 06/30/2029

(to fill a vacancy for seat held by Christina S. McGowan (D) whose term ended 07/01/23)

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve the appointment of Ms. Bayer to the Board of Library Trustees. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion.

Selectwoman Kupchick discussed her concerns with the process for this appointment. Ms. Bayer spoke about her appointment.

The motion carried 2-0-1 (Kupchick abstained).

b. Harbor Management Commission – Full Member

- i. George O. Harris (R) 95 Orchard Hill Lane, term 11/23-11/27
(moving from Alternate to Full Member to replace Jacob M. Herschler (D) whose term has ended)
- ii. Dave J. Henry (D) 47 Edgewood Road, term 11/23-11/27
(moving from Alternate to Full Member to replace Kim Taylor (D) whose two terms are up)
- iii. Christopher V. Smith (R) 470 Redding Road, term 11/23-11/27
(to replace Eric G. Sundman (R) whose term has ended)

c. Harbor Management Commission – Alternate Member

- i. Michael D. Baisley (IT) 460 Old Oaks Road, term 11/23-11/25
(replacing George O. Harris (R) who is moving to full member)
- ii. Belinda J. Shepard (D) 289 Sasco Hill Road, term 11/23-11/25
(replacing Dave J. Henry (D) who is moving to full member)

Selectwoman Kupchick made a motion to approve Items 5 bi, bii, biii & ci, cii together. Selectman Vitale seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Harris, Mr. Henry, Mr. Smith and Mr. Baisley all spoke about their appointments.

First Selectman Gerber thanked Kim Taylor and Eric Sundman for their service to the Town.

6) REAPPOINTMENTS

To hear, consider and act upon the following reappointments:

a. Fire Commission

William M. Burke (D) 245 Unquowa Road, term 11/23-11/28

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve the reappointment of William Burke to the Fire Commission. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion.

Selectwoman Kupchick voiced concerns with this reappointment.

The motion carried 2-1-0 (Kupchick opposed).

b. Harbor Management Commission

Jeffrey S. Warren (U) 330 Parkwood Road, term 11/23-11/27

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve the reappointment of Jeffrey Warren to the Harbor Management Commission. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Both Mr. Burke and Mr. Warren spoke about their reappointments.

7) **FIRST SELECTMAN APPOINTMENT (*for information only*)**

Building Official - Patrick Mahoney, term 11/23-11/27

This Item was for informational purposes only. Mr. Mahoney spoke about his role.

8) **PURCHASING AUTHORITY**

To hear, consider and act on authorizing the Purchasing Authority to enter into the proposed contract with WMC Consulting Engineers to provide all engineering services necessary to perform Design Services for the replacement of the Brookside Drive and Congress Street bridges, as outlined in RFP #2024-14, in an amount not to exceed \$327,200. Funding for this contract is available in account 228-09010-57000-020T2 for Brookside Drive bridge, and 22809010-57000-020T3 and 228-09010-57000-022T8 for Congress Street bridge.

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve Item 8. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion.

Purchasing Director Adam Tulin explained the process by which WMC Consulting Engineers was awarded the RFP# 2024-14. Engineering Manager Bill Hurley said the firm is familiar with the engineering of the bridge from start to finish. Mr. Hurley said the Town will pay for the design, but 100% of eligible construction costs and contingency is paid to the Town by the Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP).

The motion carried unanimously.

9) **POLICE CHIEF (*requires BOF and RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Fairfield Police Chief:

“RESOLVED, that, to achieve the purposes of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Port Security Grant (PSG) to maintain or reestablish maritime security, funds be, and hereby are, expended in the amount of \$50,000 to offset the maintenance costs of the Police Department’s marine vessels, 75% (\$37,500) of said maintenance costs be funded by PSG grant and 25% (\$12,500) of said funding to be matched by the Fairfield Police Department over a three-year budget cycle (\$4166.66 FY1, \$4166.66 FY2, \$4166.66 FY3) as administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and FURTHER RESOLVED, that, First Selectman William A. Gerber, is authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, any and all contracts or amendments thereof to secure said grant.”

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve Item 9. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion.

Selectman Vitale made an amendment to strike the language after “Resolved” and before “Further Resolved” and replace it with:

“RESOLVED, that, to achieve the purposes of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Port Security Grant (PSG) to maintain or reestablish maritime security, funds be, and hereby are, expended in the amount of \$43,015 to offset the maintenance costs of the Police Department’s marine vessels, 75% (\$34,412) of said maintenance costs be funded by the PSG grant and 25% (\$8,603) of said grant to be matched by the Fairfield Police Department over a three-year budget cycle (\$2,868 FY1, \$2,868 FY2, \$2,868 FY3) as administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and”

Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the amendment which carried unanimously.

Deputy Police Chief Ed Weihe reviewed the 14-point document in the backup. He said the Fairfield Police Department has been involved with the FEMA program since 2010.

The main motion as amended carried unanimously.

10) **POLICE CHIEF (*requires BOF and RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Fairfield Police Chief:

“RESOLVED, that, as part of the Fairfield Police Department’s behavioral health services, funds be, and hereby are, expended in the amount of \$190,000 over a two-year period to expand Police Crisis in Teams (CIT) Behavioral Health Programs for proper resources, staffing, training, and equipment to meet the ever-increasing demands for behavioral health services, and to navigate cultural, financial, and communicative barriers that under-served communities face when attempting to access behavioral health services, 100% of said purchase to be funded by the COPS grant program as administered by the Department of Justice. FURTHER RESOLVED, that, First Selectman William A. Gerber, is authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, any and all contracts or amendments thereof to secure said grant.”

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve Item 10. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion.

This grant was awarded by the DOJ and will be used to purchase two unmarked cars for the Social Worker and Crisis officers enabling them to arrive in unmarked cars instead of police vehicles. There has been a dramatic increase in demands for Crisis Intervention services. Selectwoman Kupchick spoke about the development of this program and how the calls have increased by staggering numbers.

The motion carried unanimously.

11) **HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR (*requires BOF and RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Fairfield Human and Social Services Director:

“RESOLVED, to achieve the purposes of the State Department of Aging and Disability Services ARPA grant for additional services that could include nutrition, wellness, educational, social, and recreational activities, funds be, and hereby are, expended in the amount up to \$131,000 to build an ADA compliant, outdoor fitness facility that will include a variety of accessible strength, agility, and conditioning equipment that will serve seniors with disabilities or physical limitations; and
FURTHER RESOLVED, that, First Selectman William Gerber, is authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, any and all contracts or amendments thereof to secure said grant.”

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve Item 11. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion.

Human and Social Services Director Julie DeMarco said this is going to be an outdoor fitness center for working out. She said it will be located on the grounds of the Bigelow Center and the life expectancy of the equipment is 20 years.

The motion carried unanimously.

12) HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR (*requires BOF and RTM approval*)

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Fairfield Human and Social Services Director:

“RESOLVED, to achieve the State Department of Economic and Community Development’s purposes of expanded programming, a portion of \$350,000 in funds be, and hereby are, expended in the amount up to \$140,000 to build an ADA-compliant, outdoor fitness facility that will include a variety of accessible strength, agility, and conditioning equipment that will serve seniors with disabilities or physical limitations; and
FURTHER RESOLVED, that, First Selectman William Gerber, is authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, any and all contracts or amendments thereof to secure said grant.”

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve Item 12. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

13) HEALTH DIRECTOR (*requires BOF and RTM approval*)

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Fairfield Health Director:

“RESOLVED, that, as part of the Fairfield Health Department’s immunization activities and media campaigns to promote the importance of vaccinations, funds be, and hereby are, expended in the amount of \$143,667 to support the supplemental staffing to increase vaccination activities for influenza, COVID-19, and routine vaccinations, 100% of said purchase to be funded by Immunizations and Vaccines for Children COVID-19 Supplements and Media Funding with a project period of September 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025, as administered by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH); and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that, First Selectman William A. Gerber, is authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, any and all contracts or amendments thereof to secure said grant.”

Selectman Vitale made a motion to approve Item 13. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion.

Assistant Director for Community Health Dr. Santina Jaronko said the grant funds two part-time staff to assist with giving immunizations for COVID-19 and flu clinics. There was a discussion about the grant and the immunizations the Town offers.

The motion carried unanimously.

14) **HEALTH DIRECTOR (*requires BOF and RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Fairfield Health Director:

“RESOLVED, that, as part of the Fairfield Health Department’s continued efforts to further workforce development by retaining staff, funds be, and hereby are, expended in the amount of \$152,729 for the cost of Fairfield's continued efforts to further Fairfield Health Department’s workforce development by retaining staff. 100% of said purchase to be funded by the Public Health Workforce Development and Infrastructure Grant as administered by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH).

FURTHER RESOLVED, that, First Selectman William A. Gerber, is authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, any and all contracts or amendments thereof to secure said grant.”

Selectwoman Kupchick made a motion to approve Item 14. Selectman Vitale seconded the motion.

Dr. Jaronko said this grant funds current full-time staff.

The motion carried unanimously.

15) **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR (*requires RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider, and act upon a request from the Affordable Housing Committee and the Director of Community and Economic Development to approve the purchase of 376 Quincy Street within the Parkview Commons development and to authorize the use of the Housing Trust Fund to pay all costs to finance said purchase.

Selectwoman Kupchick made a motion to approve Item 15. Selectman Vitale seconded the motion.

Community and Economic Development Director Mark Barnhart explained that after Superstorm Sandy, the beach area had experienced flooding and although Parkview Commons was not directly affected, the homes in that area are required to be elevated which has put financial strains on some of the owners in that area.

Mr. Barnhart said in the last few years, the Town has purchased two other properties on Quincy Street. He said this property was in foreclosure and the Town had the successful bid at \$273,000. He said Community and Economic Development would like to partner with Habitat for Humanity to build duplexes as affordable housing for the Town. There was a discussion about uses for the property. This project will take approximately two-three years to complete.

The motion carried unanimously.

16) TOWN ATTORNEY

To hear, consider and act upon a retainer agreement between the Town of Fairfield (the "Client") and Cohen and Wolf, P.C. (the "Firm"), concerning the Client's retention of the Firm as legal counsel in connection with the matters described in this Retainer Agreement. The Firm agrees to provide legal services to the Client, and the Client agrees to pay the Firm's fees and expenses, as provided in this Retainer Agreement.

Selectwoman Kupchick made a motion to approve Item 16. Selectman Vitale seconded the motion.

Town Attorney Phil Pires said the Charter calls for the BOS to approve the Retainer Agreement once the Town Attorney has been appointed by the First Selectman. All Selectpersons commented positively on Attorney Pires' appointment and thanked former Town Attorney James Baldwin for his service to the Town.

The motion carried unanimously.

17) TAX COLLECTOR

To consider and act upon tax refunds as recommended by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$83,713.75

Selectwoman Kupchick made a motion to approve Item 17. Selectman Vitale seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

18) To hear, consider and act upon any other business which shall properly come before this meeting

- Selectwoman Kupchick asked about the ruling from the Ethics Commission regarding the questioned conflict of the Internal Auditor also being the President of the PETA union. First Selectman Gerber said the Ethics Commission found this to be a conflict. He said the Town Internal Auditor has resigned from her position in PETA.
- Selectman Vitale wanted the public to know that if anyone in attendance would like to make a public comment, they will be heard. She said Public Comment is restricted to meeting agenda items only.
- The BOS would like the meetings moved back to Wednesday afternoons. First Selectman Gerber said he will put dates on the next regular agenda for a vote.
- First Selectman Gerber said an item requested by the HVAC Indoor Air Quality Building Committee was not ready to be discussed by the BOS today and will be put on a Special Meeting agenda for December 11, 2023.

- Selectman Vitale thanked all the Town departments for their help and participation in the Town tree lighting. She and First Selectman Gerber said it was a wonderful event.

19) Adjourn

Selectman Vitale made a motion to adjourn. Selectwoman Kupchick seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary