

BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING
Monday, February 6, 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: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDf6zwPT5rM>.

FINAL MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: First Selectwoman Brenda L. Kupchick, Selectman Thomas Flynn, Selectwoman Nancy Lefkowitz

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeanine Pocoski, Sally Connolly, Engineering Manager Bill Hurley, Parks and Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese, Fairfield Public Schools' Executive Director of Operations Angelus Papageorge, Assistant Director DPW John Cottell, Fire Chief Denis McCarthy, Superintendent of Schools Mike Testani, Deputy Police Chief Keith Broderick, CFO Jared Schmitt, Attorney John Stafstrom, FairTV, WPCA Vice-Chair Joe D'Avanzo, and members of the public

1) **CALL TO ORDER**

First Selectwoman Kupchick called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

2) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

First Selectwoman Kupchick led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) **MINUTES**

To consider and act upon the minutes of January 30, 2023

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to approve the minutes of 1/30/23 as written.

Selectman Flynn seconded the motion which carried 2-0-1 (Selectman Flynn abstained).

4) **APPOINTMENTS**

Town Plan and Zoning Commission Alternate

Jeanine Pocoski (D) 79 Lewis Drive, term 11/21-11/25

(to fill a vacancy left by Sarah Keitt (D) who was elected to St. Representative)

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to approve the appointment of Jeanine Pocoski to the Town Plan and Zoning commission as an alternate. Selectman Flynn seconded the motion.

Ms. Pocoski spoke briefly about her experiences and how being a Fairfield resident will help her service in a positive way. All Selectpersons thanked her for her service.

The motion carried unanimously.

5) **REAPPOINTMENT**

Board of Health (Postponed from 1/30/23 BOS meeting)

Sally E. Connolly (R) 682 Tunxis Hill Road, term 11/22-11/26

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to reappoint Sally Connolly to the Board of Health. Selectman Flynn seconded the motion.

This item was continued from the last BOS meeting on 1/30/23. At that time, there was a discussion regarding Ms. Connolly's reappointment as Selectwoman Lefkowitz was not in favor of the reappointment, but agreed to continue the discussion. Selectwoman Lefkowitz said her position had not changed. Selectman Flynn said he was not able to attend the last meeting and asked Selectwoman Lefkowitz to go over her reasons why she did not support this reappointment. The discussion between the Selectpersons and Ms. Connolly continued. There was also Public Comment by resident Jim Kuczo who supported Ms. Connolly's reappointment.

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

- 6) **NON-RECURRING CAPITAL – 20 YEARS (*requires Board of Finance and RTM approval*)**
To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution entitled, "A resolution appropriating \$7,687,622 for the costs of certain non-recurring capital projects and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation".
See Full Resolution in Backup.

Engineering:

- Guiderail Repairs Phase 2-\$210,000
- KHW Greens Farm Bridge Construction-\$432,600
- Design of Stratfield Road-\$325,000 (Urban Grant-no details yet)
- Design of Post Road and Jug Handle-\$175,000
- Round Hill and Reef Road sidewalks-\$611,298
- Lower Wharf/Fishing Pier, Southport-\$800,000

Engineering Manager Bill Hurley presented his list of items. He said the Greens Farm Bridge construction is still in the design phase so it will need to be transferred to next year. He said this project is shared with the Town of Westport. There was a discussion about taking this off the capital plan list and how it will affect bonding. The item will be left on for now and discussed after the presentations.

Fire Department:

- Pumper LSN 14-\$980,000

Fire Chief Denis McCarthy said this truck was ordered a year ago and estimated lead time is 24 months. He said the life of the vehicle is 25 years of service. He said the Fire Department is still able to use the retired vehicles in hazardous situations like weather events. He said the current vehicle is out of compliance as far as upgrades and safety equipment.

Parks and Recreation:

- HSR Driving Range Upgrades - \$275,000
- Post Tension Tennis Courts-Fairfield Woods - \$522,000
- Tunxis Hill Park Pickleball Courts (4 replaced, 2 new) - \$575,000

Parks and Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese went through his projects. Selectwoman Lefkowitz asked Mr. Calabrese how a project is determined to be operational or non-recurring capital. Mr. Calabrese said if an individual project is under \$100,000, it will be operational and if it is over that amount it goes to non-recurring.

Board of Education:

- N. Stratfield Elementary-Vestibule project-\$652,500
- Osborn Hill Elementary-Vestibule project-\$597,500
- FWMS-Vestibule project-\$769,500
- FWHS-Boiler Burner Replacement-\$343,862
- FWHS-Knapps Highway Tennis/Basketball Courts-\$418,362

Executive Director of Operations for Fairfield Public Schools Angelus Papageorge said some vestibules need to be remodeled. He said the funding is for design only and pricing is changing all the time. He is asking for funding now to try and lock in costs, but if the costs go over, he will need to come back to the Boards.

Selectman Flynn made an amendment to remove item 2.1, Exhibit A, from the resolution (\$432,600.00) and amend the resolution amount to \$7,255,022.00. Selectwoman Lefkowitz seconded the amendment which carried unanimously.

The item was opened for Public Comment:

- Jim O'Brien, 250 Sherwood Drive, Southport – He said reserving Pickleball courts is a challenge. Trumbull built 12 new courts and residents are going there.
- Betsy Hulme, 37 Pratt Street – She thanked Mr. Calabrese for his due diligence and keeping up with all the emails. She said Fairfield was one of the first towns to have Pickleball courts and now we need to keep up with other towns.
- Doug Goodman, 11 Aberdeen Way - He said he has a list of hundreds of residents who play this sport and the courts are embarrassing. He would like to feel confident that this will be approved.

First Selectwoman Kupchick thanked the public for attending and speaking. She also explained the process of approving the funds for these projects.

The main motion, as amended, carried unanimously.

7) **CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER (*requires Board of Finance and RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and adopt a resolution appropriating \$760,000 for the costs related to uses of Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund and the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund. *See Full Resolution in Backup.*

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to approve Item 7. Selectman Flynn seconded the motion.

These are items that were taken off the non-recurring list and instead come from ARPA funding. There was a discussion about ARPA projects that had been canceled. There was a discussion about the use of unallocated ARPA funds.

Projects include:

- Police Department Headquarters Rehabilitation - \$350,000: The Police Department was built in 1976 and in the last 50 years the needs of the building have grown. This is a proposed three-year renovation plan for some of the heaviest impacted areas in the police department. This FY 23-24 request is for Phase 1 - the lobby renovation-addition of the Shift Commander's office, new carpeting throughout the building, and upgrading technology in the multipurpose classroom used for training, press conferences, and commissioner/town meetings. Deputy Chief Keith Broderick spoke about the former ECC space in the basement being turned into a gym for the officers.
- Fire Department Command Vehicle - \$150,000: In accordance with the apparatus replacement program, the department is requesting a replacement of Car 3, the Shift Commander's response vehicle. The current vehicle was purchased in 2019. Fire Chief McCarthy said the current vehicle will go into front line reserve and will serve for storm events and maintenance on primary vehicle. There was a discussion about the replacement policy to have vehicles last longer before replacing them.
- Fire Station Rehabilitation-\$50,000
- Fire Department Vehicle Replacement-\$60,000
- Sgt Murphy Playground Replacement-\$150,000

The motion carried unanimously.

8) ENGINEERING MANAGER (*requires Board of Finance and RTM approval*)

To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution entitled, "A resolution appropriating \$6,250,000 for the costs associated with the inspection and construction phase of the East Trunk Wetlands Crossing Project, Authorizing a grant to reimburse \$750,000 of such appropriation and authorizing the issuance of bonds in an amount not to exceed \$5,500,000 to fund the balance of such appropriation."

See Full Resolution in Backup.

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to approve Item 8. Selectman Flynn seconded the motion.

CFO Jared Schmitt said this item went through the BOS in November. He said it is the same project and cost, but the proposed financing is different. He said the WPCA fund balance was going to be used to reduce the amount of borrowing of the Town, but now the \$5.5 million will be bonded and the WPCA will pay the debt service. Mr. Schmitt said this project was rejected by the BOF when last presented, but it will be presented again. He said the WPCA is an independent authority, but works in partnership with the Town. He said there are many studies being performed now, but the East Trunk Sewer project is crucial and needs to be done. Selectwoman Lefkowitz and Mr. Schmitt had a discussion about financing for this project and the BOF. Selectman Flynn said it is frustrating because many of the WPCA projects end up costing much more than the original estimates. He said he will approve this project because the need is valid, but he would like to know why the cost increased so dramatically. Engineering Manager Bill Hurley explained:

- The original estimate of \$2.4 million in December 2022 was prior to soil testing.
- A technical memo from the consulting engineer explained the increase.
- Support of excavation had to go deeper than originally thought.

- Added cradle and support beams due to soil conditions (\$217,000).
- Site access changed and the engineers are now recommending Ash Creek Blvd for access.
- Dewatering was going to take eight months, but now is estimated at 13-16 months due to specific environmental concerns and an environmental cap. (\$80,000).
- Wetland restoration - looking to continue operations. Will install temporary bypass line next to current line. (\$1 million).

Due to these items and more, Mr. Hurley said the cost increased by \$2.9 million. He said there will also need to be a full-time daily inspector and a project manager from the WPCA. The discussion continued. The full discussion can be accessed here: [BOS 2.6.23](#).

First Selectwoman Kupchick asked for Public Comment. WPCA Vice-Chairman Joe D'Avanzo, 1446 Jennings Road, said when the former DPW director and interim DPW director were removed, WPCA lost these advocates. First Selectwoman Kupchick said those individuals were arrested for allegedly participating in a public scandal. She agreed changes need to be made based on people who know WPCA well. Selectwoman Lefkowitz said the BOS liaison and the advocate would take ownership of the projects. First Selectwoman Kupchick said she will look into the reorganization of the WPCA department and will also look into an operational audit.

The motion carried unanimously.

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to waive the reading of Item 9. Selectman Flynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

9) **ENGINEERING MANAGER (*requires Board of Finance and RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and adopt a supplemental resolution:

WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfield (the "Town") has adopted at the request of the Water Pollution Control Authority ("WPCA") a Resolution entitled "A resolution appropriating \$6,250,000 for costs associated with the inspection and construction phase of the East Trunk Wetlands Crossing Project, authorizing a grant to reimburse \$750,000 of such appropriation and authorizing the issuance of bonds in an amount not to exceed \$5,500,000 to fund the balance of such appropriation" (the "Resolution"); and

WHEREAS, the Resolution appropriates \$6,250,000 (the "Appropriation") for costs associated with the inspection and construction phases of the East Trunk Wetlands Crossing Project (the "Project"); and

WHEREAS, the Appropriation shall be funded by several sources including: 1) \$750,000 in grant funds from the State of Connecticut's Urban Act Grant Program (the "Grant"); and 2) \$5,500,000 in bonds issued by the Town (the "Bonds"); and

WHEREAS, the Resolution authorizes the Appropriation, the negotiation and acceptance of the terms of the Grant and authorizes the Bonds in an amount not to exceed \$5,500,000; and

WHEREAS, while the Town is liable for the debt service on the Bonds, for internal accounting purposes, it is appropriate that all costs of the Project including debt service on the Bonds be allocated to, and reimbursed to the Town by, the WPCA; and

WHEREAS, the WPCA has agreed to pay for the costs of the Project and the debt service on the Bonds authorized by the Resolution; and

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:

RESOLVED,

- 1) That the debt service on the Bonds as such debt service becomes due shall be paid by the WPCA from its own funds and the obligation of the WPCA shall be set forth in a memorandum of understanding (the "MOU") with the Town satisfactory to the First Selectwoman; and
- 2) That the First Selectwoman is hereby authorized to execute the MOU on behalf of the Town.

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to approve Item 9. Selectman Flynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

10) TAX COLLECTOR

To consider and act upon tax refunds as recommended by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$8,088.68

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to approve Item 10. Selectman Flynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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

First Selectwoman Kupchick said February kicked off Black History Month and hopes people will take the opportunity to go to the library to research and learn more. She also spoke of apps for children among other new things to promote knowledge.

First Selectwoman Kupchick also said there are two food drives being held this Saturday and Sunday – one is the yearly Souper Bowl Food Drive at Assumption Church with donations going to Operation Hope. She said there is another food drive being held at Sherman Green by current and former students of Fairfield Public Schools who are members of the Fairfield Equity Coalition. Donations will go to families in need in the Fairfield Public Schools. She said these are two great ways to do something good for our community.

Selectman Flynn noted Jackie Robinson, who his dad had worked for and regarded as a great humanitarian, lived in Stamford and did a lot of good for that community including helping kids with drug addictions among other things.

Selectwoman Lefkowitz wanted to let the public know that each Sunday, the Islamic Community Center feeds over 250 families in the area including Fairfield residents. She commended FWHS Head Principal Paul Cavanna for acting swiftly after an incident at the high school. She also wanted to thank the students who informed Mr. Cavanna of the incident and noted how their coming forward shows what our community could do.

12) Adjourn

Selectwoman Lefkowitz made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 pm. Selectman Flynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary