

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF WESTBROOK, CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, March 8, 2022  
Multi-Media Room and via ZOOM  
Mulvey Municipal Center

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Hall called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. In attendance included First Selectman Hall, Selectman Campbell, Selectman Bialicki, Donna Castracane, Director of Finance, Jill Brainerd, Facilities, John Riggio, Director Public Works, Rich Annino, Director of Park & Rec., Ken Butterworth, IT, Joan Angelini, Town Clerk, Terri Gavigan, Safe Harbor Board Member, Lester Scott, Safe Harbor Board Member, Bonnie Hall, ZBA Chairman, Heidi Wallace, IW Officer, Peter Gillespie, Planner, Marilyn Ozols, Planning Chairman, Chief Cusson, Marie Palma, COB, Pat Marcarelli, COB President, John Palermo, Asst. Emergency Management Director, Clinton Bonner, Little League President and several Little League parents and children.

First Selectman Hall led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The acceptance of the resignation submitted by Dawn Tarbetsky was added to the agenda.

STATUS OF ROOF RFP

A copy of the draft RFP for the Mulvey and Library roofs was included in the BOS packet. The RFP requests one bid for the Mulvey roof, one bid for the Library roof and a combined bid for both roofs. The document was developed by the architect and has been reviewed by the Town Attorney.

Mr. Bialicki made a motion to publish the RFP for roofs as presented. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

REQUEST FROM LITTLE LEAGUE – Ted Lane Field

Clinton Bonner, President of Little League, re-introduced Little League's proposal to transform Ted Lane Field into a dual-use field to include play for both softball and baseball for the Spring 2022 season. Note that this proposal was not approved by the BOS when originally presented to them in October 2021. The suggestion made at the October 2021 BOS meeting to convert Palmeri Field for softball was unacceptable to Little League.

The proposal would address safety concerns; i.e. the condition of the in-field grass. A dual-use field would also provide the girls the same experience playing ball (grandstands, concession, bathroom facilities, live streaming and a PA system). The project to convert the field to dual-use includes:

- Ripping up and removal of all grass in the current in field.
- Flattening of the current baseball mound.
- Leveling the entire field including the placement of a new clay soil layer.
- Purchase of a portable pitching mound.

The proposed project would be entirely funded by Little League (\$10,000). No Town funds would be requested to facilitate this project.

The proposed project has the unanimous support of the Westbrook Park & Rec. Board (12/7/21 meeting).

In addition, the Lane family will re-dedicate the field to Ted Lane on Opening Day (4/30) and fully supports this proposal. If approved by the BOS, the goal is to have the "new" field available for play by 4/25/22. Weather permitting, it is anticipated that the project would take 2 to 3 days to complete.

Many audience members, including parents, coaches and players, expressed overwhelming support of the proposed project that would allow the girls to have the "same experience" as boys when playing ball. The BOS stressed they must think "long term" with regard to the field and that Ted Lane is a Town field, not just a Little League field. Mr. Bonner assured members of the Fire Department that this project would have no adverse impact or limitations of use for the Annual Fire Department Carnival and the Muster. He continued that any "damage" done to the field as a result of the Carnival or Muster could be easily repaired.

Mr. Riggio, Director of Public Works, reported that the Town's experience is that past Little League parents have "altered, updated, improved" the field and as their children "aged out" of Little League, those initiatives were not maintained. Mr. Bonner responded that the Little League Board has expanded to up to 10 members, some of which have younger children in the program. The Little League Board's goal is long term success of the programs.

The possibility of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town and Little League and a Bond (in the event that the Little League's initiative was not successful and the Town had to restore the field to grass) was briefly discussed.

After a robust discussion, the following motion was made:

Mr. Hall made a motion to accept the proposal developed by Little League as presented to convert the Ted Lane field into a clay in-field. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Campbell offered to meet with the softball coach to discuss the potential availability of softball fields at the Middle School and High School.

The BOS thanked audience members for their participation in this evening's meeting.

#### REQUEST FROM RESIDENT – Dog Park

First Selectman Hall reported that he received an email from a resident requesting that Ted Lane Field be utilized as a dog park. Note that Mr. Faiella, Director of Health, reported that a ball field is not an appropriate location for a dog park as potentially children could come in contact with feces, and unsanitary conditions.

The BOS did not support the use of Ted Lane Field as a dog park but will pursue alternate locations; i.e. the entrance to the athletic fields off of McVeagh Road. Mr. Riggio, Director of Public Works, has developed a rough estimate (\$20,000) for the installation of a fence and parking area.

The Town's interest in establishing a dog park will be publicized to solicit additional input from residents. This item will be discussed further at a future BOS meeting. The BOS discussed the possibility of establishing a Committee to pursue a dog park.

#### TOBY HILL RESOLUTION – Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition

Ms. Wallace, IW Officer, reported that due to the change in leadership in the Town of Westbrook, the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Resolution must be updated to facilitate the Toby Hill VIII Land Acquisition. The original Resolution was signed by Mr. Bishop. A copy of the Resolution was included in the Board packet.

Mr. Campbell made a motion authorizing First Selectman Hall to sign the Toby Hill VIII Property Acquisition Resolution. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### APPOINT GRANT WRITER – Small Cities Grant Application

The Town received 3 responses to the RFP for a Small Cities Grant Writer to facilitate a grant application on behalf of Safe Harbor. Mr. Hall and Ms. Angelini opened the bids last week.

Safe Harbor Board members reviewed the bids and recommend that the BOS award the contract to Housing Development Team, LLC. As previously discussed, the \$3,000 fee for writing the grant will be shared by the Town and Safe Harbor. The bid document from Housing Development Team, LLC notes that if the Town is not awarded the Grant, the fee will be "forgiven".

Mr. Bialicki made a motion to award the Small Cities Grant Writer contract to Housing Development Team, LLC as recommended. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### ACCEPT SIDEWALK GRANT

Mr. Gillespie, Planner provided an update on the Community Connectivity Grant for the YMCA Pedestrian Accessibility Sidewalk Project (Essex Rd. and Spencer Plains Rd., 1250 linear feet, mostly on Essex Road). The amount of the Grant is \$197,578.00 and the Town will provide already budgeted funds for design, engineering and state permitting.

Mr. Campbell made a motion to accept the Community Connectivity Grant in the amount of \$197,578.00 and further moved to forward the request to the BOF and Town Meeting for further action. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### BUDGET VOTE – Referendum or Town Meeting

Ms. Castracane reported that several years ago, the Town moved to vote on the Budget via a Town Meeting. Due to the Pandemic, in 2020, the BOF was the only entity to vote on the Budget and in 2021, the Town voted on the Budget via a Referendum. Note that turn-out is similar at a Referendum and Town Meeting (approximately 100 voters). If the BOS determines that a Referendum is an appropriate format to vote on this year's Budget, the Citizen's Guide to the Budget, which many residents find beneficial, cannot be published. If the Budget is voted on via a Town Meeting, the Guide may be published.

Mr. Bialicki made a motion to vote on the 2022/23 Budget via a Town Meeting. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

First Reading – Meri Wick – EDC

First Reading – John Giannini – Westbrook Housing Authority

Mr. Campbell made a motion to appoint Sam Lyman to the Town Center Revitalization Committee. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Campbell made a motion to accept the resignation from John Rie, Conservation Commission. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bialicki made a motion to accept the resignation from Lee McNamar, WPCA. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bialicki made a motion to accept the resignation from Carrie Campi, Emergency Management Director. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Campbell made a motion to accept the resignation from Dawn Tarbetsky, Asst. Town Clerk. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Campbell made a motion to approve the BOS meeting minutes, as presented, from the 2/1/22, 2/2/22, 2/3/22, 2/7/22, 2/8/22, 2/14/22, 2/15/22, 2/16/22 meetings. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Note that Ms. Bratz, Tax Collector was in attendance at the 2/8/22 BOS meeting.

#### FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Hall reported that the Land Use Tech. has submitted her letter of resignation.

The Assistant Town Clerk position has been advertised.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel Matters

Mr. Campbell made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:16 p.m. to interview the AP Clerk candidate and the IT Specialist candidate. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. Invited into the Executive Session: Donna Castracane, Suzanne Helchowski. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Lucille Houde entered the Executive Session at 7:17 p.m. and exited at 7:25 p.m.

Mr. Chris Morgan and Mr. Ken Butterworth entered the Executive Session at 7:26 p.m.

Regular Session resumed at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Campbell made a motion to appoint Lucille Houde as the Town of Westbrook Accounts Payable Clerk. Employment will commence on Monday, March 28, 2022 and the salary will be \$18.10 per hour, 15 hours per week. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bialicki made a motion to appoint Christopher Morgan as the IT Specialist. Employment will commence on March 14, 2022 and the will be \$19.00 per hour/19 hours per week. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Campbell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Mr. Bialicki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Attest,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Executive Assistant

John Hall, III  
First Selectman