

Board of Selectmen
July 21, 2020 Meeting
via Zoom

Present: Angevine, Nelson, Papp

Regrets:

Recording: C Frisbie

Meeting called to order at 5:03 pm by Angevine

- 1) **Minutes:** *Motion (Papp/Nelson) to approve the Minutes of the July 7, 2020 Meeting*
All Approved

- 2) **Public Comment:** Angevine opened up the public comment by asking everyone to be respectful of the process and there will be another public comment at the end of the meeting.
 - a. H Tammen – asked which positions listed on the agenda #9 will be discussed
Angevine stated Social Services and Park and Recreation Director Tammen continued his statement regarding the salaries and the study per the May 13th meeting

- 3) **Additions:** *Motion (Angevine/Nelson) to add the creation of a Recovery Committee at the request of the Emergency Management from the State of Connecticut* **All Approved**
Committee is to identify the unmet needs of the community as part of the ongoing response to the COVID virus

- 4) **Addition to agenda – Recovery Committee:** Angevine started collecting names and has some names for the committee Motion (Angevine) to formally create a Recovery committee to identify the unmet needs of the community due to the COVID-19 virus – Nelson second for discussion Q: for our little town what is this committee really going to do? How are we affected outside of those coming to the food bank or working with Missy (Social Services) What are they (committee) expected to do? Angevine: Marty Connor is in charge of the Region 5 recovery committee group and not sure what they are really looking for. Possibly the State is looking for a group in Town that they can turn to for information/ideas about the happenings regarding the virus and how it has affected the community. Even with a committee, we would need one of the volunteers to step up and take charge. Papp: who do you have for names? Angevine: Brad Hoar(NWCTCF), John Favreau (Warren General Store), Frank Krasowski (The Hills Physical Therapy) Nelson suggested possibly finding a volunteer who is a nurse or nurse's aide where they might have a little bit more insight on the medical part **All Approved**

- 5) **Homeland Security Grant Program:** Motion (Nelson/Papp) the Board of Selectmen to pass a new blanket resolution that references Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection **All Approved**
- 6) **Resignation - S Bates:** Angevine read Bates letter of resignation *Motion (Angevine/Papp) to accept the resignation All Approved* Nelson asked what about the person that came in the office for zoning? Angevine said he wasn't interested, but we have set up an Indeed.com account and have a number of applications coming in. Angevine will be reviewing those applications and believes there is someone who is very qualified for it and hopefully in the next week he will be able to confirm that. Will update the Board at the next meeting (8/4)
- 7) **Fire Company -truck:** R Ponton spoke about the truck (bid) process and how they reviewed the bids. They will be going back and double checking the information to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. Would also like to let the Selectmen know that the Fire Company voted at their last meeting to put \$160,000 towards this new vehicle keeping some funds in the equipment fund for future use. Fire Company would like to be on the agenda for the next Selectman's meeting to bring their recommendation forward and to continue the process of purchasing the fire truck. There was some discussion on whether an in-person town meeting could be held or if it would go to a referendum in November. Garvey spoke about the possible process if it goes to a referendum.
- 8) **Registrar/Town clerk: Cyber security regarding election infrastructure:** J Garvey (Registrar) spoke about the State of CT Recommendation and contacting our IT specialists – which is beyond their scope – Discussion followed on what to do next since we have a deadline to meet. Garvey was going to complete the questionnaire with all “no's” and see if we could get some help from the State
- 9) **First Selectman's Report:** see attached
- 10) **Discussion of salary compensation adjustment:** Angevine noted that the Social Services Director could be extending the hours from 8-10 to 13-15 per week. We did the best we could to bring employees up to the median salary per the COG survey, but these two positions didn't fit into the survey. No further discussion regarding personnel.
- 11) **Executive Session: personnel matters:** *Motion (Nelson/Papp) to go into executive session at 5:52pm All Approved *Selectmen, Murphy and Woodward separated out to a closed chat room for discussion returned to open meeting at 6:54pm from executive session Motion (Angevine/Papp) to transfer \$6240 to/out from the special fund allocated by the Board of Finance Committee for salary adjustments out to the salary line for social services including the increase of 15 hours Angevine amended the motion to add “ of \$29.85 per hour” seconded by Papp All Approved* Park and Recreation will be tabled until the next meeting

12) Public Comment:

- a. E Schoenfeld: Comments on Fire Truck – see attached letter
Angevine asked Ponton if he would like to rebut
- b. R Ponton: Rebuttal on Schoenfeld comment – reiterated that the truck committee will be reviewing bids again
- c. H Tammen: thank you to Eric for saving town \$154,000 and sorry Bates resigned
Commented on IWC/PZ regarding commercial area in a residential zone (north)
- d. J Marsh: state the fact that Schoenfeld didn't save the town \$160,000, Fire Company voted to put \$160,000 of their own money toward the truck

Angevine thanked everyone for hanging in there through the executive session.

*Motion (Angevine/Nelson) to adjourn at 7:07pm **All Approved***

Respectfully submitted by
Colleen Frisbie

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First Selectman's Report

July 21, 2020

Back a few months ago the State Emergency Management had suggested that municipalities set up a Community Recovery Committee for the primary reason of addressing any unmet needs in the Town of Warren. At the time I had reached out a number of people in Warren willing to participate on the committee. Now four months into COVID and getting the committee officially acknowledged and approved by the Selectman I hope to put together a meeting for next week.

Road construction is happening on Hardscrabble Road currently, followed by Curtiss Rd. as well as Angevine Rd. Please be cautious in the work zones and considerate to the workers.

The Town of Warren received an Affordable Housing Technical Assistance Grant from the CT Department of Housing for \$11,000. We will be working with the Warren Affordable Housing Corporation and the NW CT Council of Governments to decide how to best utilize this grant with a meeting in early August.

We are reviewing applications for the Land Use Officer and hope to have a candidate within the next two weeks. This has been a challenging time for all and a huge thank you to Marty Connor for offering us his consulting services.

Thank you.

Tim Angevine
First Selectman
Town of Warren
860-868-7881 x102

I have a comment about the fire truck. First, I want to make it absolutely clear that I support the fire company. I think the men and women who volunteer and give selflessly – especially people like Ted Pettit and Joann Marsh – are heroes and should be honored every day. And I want the fire company to have the equipment they need. As a member of the Board of Finance, I have led the charge over the past few years to increase the amount of money the town sets aside to buy new fire trucks. So, again, I strongly support the fire company.

The fire company came before the Board of Finance almost three years ago (Sept. 2017) because they needed to replace a truck. I raised a concern at that time over a clear conflict-of-interest: the fire company member who put together the specification for the new truck was also the guy who was selling us the truck. That's just not right.

We spent the better part of the next couple of years getting the fire company to follow the rules about competitive bidding. I don't know why it took that long, but it did. When the competitive bidding process was finally followed, the fire company rejected the low bid out-of-hand, without ever stating publicly why it was rejected. Apparently, from what I've heard, the low bid – which was \$35-thousand dollars lower than the next bid – didn't include a custom cab. But rather than ask the low bidder how much it would cost to customize the cab, the fire company decided to go with the next bid...which came from the same guy who had – and still has – the original conflict of interest.

How much would it have cost to customize the cab? \$5-thousand? 10 thousand? 15-thousand? 20? 25? That still would have made the low bidder the winning bid. But it seems the fire company wants to steer the business to their own member, who is also the relative of one of the fire company officers. It's my opinion this is an example of collusion, cronyism and conflict of interest...and possibly even criminal bid rigging. At the very least, it's unethical.

If the Selectmen have no problem with that, and if a town meeting votes and says they're okay with what I consider shady dealing...that's fine. The Town Meeting is the highest form of government, and I'm only one voice. But when the low bidder who was rejected decides to sue the town, and the auditor starts looking into the process...well, I'm going to be standing on the right side of the law and the right side of ethics. Thank you. –Eric Schoenfeld