

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Board of Selectmen
Monday, February 27, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.
Town Campus, Room A and Remote via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

7:00 p.m. Regular Session

First Selectwoman Lyons called the Regular Session of the Board of Selectmen of Monday, February 27, 2023 to order. Selectman Goldberg, Selectman Murphy, Selectwoman Gordon, and Selectman Wilson also present.

Others present: Chief Jack Drumm, Lisa Nee, Stacy Nobitz (Finance Director), Austin Hall (Beach and Rec Director), Ed Brunt (Police Dispatch Services), Larry Brundrett

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
First Selectwoman Lyons led with the pledge of allegiance.
2. First Selectwoman's Updates.
Noted that due to pending snow storm MPS are cancelled for Tuesday, 3/28/23. The registration deadline for the Food waste diversion program is this Friday and the program itself will begin in March or April.
3. Liaison Reports/Selectmen Comments.
Selectwoman Gordon attended the 2/16 Planning and Zoning meeting where two zoning boundary changes were approved: 1) New Road to construct multiple dwelling units, and 2) on Route 1 (old Winter Club property) and Barberry Farms to make a new development district. Barberry Farms is only a concept at this juncture unlike New Road where the town has drawings/plans.
4. Citizen comments.
Chuck Emerson current president of MLL addresses ARPA funding of Nelson light project. MLL has financial commitment of \$100,000. Lots of email support sent to MLL and BOS. This project has been on the CIP list for many years. Largest youth sports program in Madison and growing. Lighting allows town to host tournaments/ extended field use hours, make play safer, and ease juggling of field use.

Elliott Kaiman – 11 Genesee Lane – is Commissioner of the Small Diamond Madison Travel Baseball Program and supports the Nelson field lighting project. His organization will be working with MLL to come up with the financial contribution. Touches on safety points and expanded access of having fields that are lit.

Brandon Romanchok – 455 Horsepond Road, current treasurer of MLL. the sooner this project can be completed, the less it will cost due to current environment of cost projections. Expanded hours allow town and athletes to be more competitive.

5. Consent Agenda:
MOTION by Selectwoman Lyons to amend the consent agenda to include a list of appointments submitted to the board via email adding items ii through vi under item e seconded by Selectman Wilson.

VOTE: this motion was passed unanimously.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to approve the amended consent agenda

- a. Minutes of February 14, 2023.
- b. Tax Abatements/Refunds.
- c. Renew Madison's resolution with South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority for participation in a regional household waste collection center for a term of three years spanning July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026. The current resolution expires on June 30, 2023.
- d. Approve Town Clerk 2024 Grant Application from the CT State Library for \$6,000 for the digital conversion of microfiche land records.
- e. Appointments.
 - i. John Lind, Historic Commission, Term Expiring 1/1/28
 - ii. Bob Donahue, Senior Commission, Term Expiring 1/1/26
 - iii. Randy Howe, Beach and Rec Commission, Term Expiring 1/1/25
 - iv. Lindsay Johnson, Economic Development Commission, Term Expiring 1/1/25
 - v. Bob Donohue, Town Meeting Moderator, Term Expiring 2/27/2025
 - vi. Joe MacDougald, Town Meeting Moderator, Term Expiring 2/27/2025
- f. Proclamation honoring Eagle Scout Zachary Cheslog

seconded by Selectman Wilson

VOTE: this motion was passed unanimously.

6. Presentation from Lisa Nee on Inclusivity of Individuals.

Power point presentation on accessibility of people with disabilities. Overview of ADA and its goals of full participation, equal opportunity, independent living and self-sufficiency for all people; terms that are antiquated - use "person with a disability" instead of "handicapped". Review of parking and access signage, and power assists into buildings around town. Recommends training and an ADA survey of the Town.

First Selectwoman Lyons thanks Ms. Nee for the presentation. Town will work on community messaging, schools have replaced parking signage and Town is in process of replacing them. Will be considered as Madison strategic planning process unfolds.

7. Discussion on possible formation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Other towns have this type of board. Madison had an informal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion board that recommended establishing a formal DEI Committee last year. Board will look at the research and go forward from there.

8. Discuss current fund balance and potential budget-related appropriations.

The Board of Finance has a regulation that requires Town to keep 10% of its budget in "rainy day fund" which is \$8.8 million. Town has \$21 million. Some towns also hold the cost of 1.5 or 2 months of operating expenses in their rainy day fund, which in Madison would be 13% and 17% of budget, respectively. Even if Madison elected to include operating costs, it would still have an historical excess in the undesignated fund balance. First Selectwoman explains how town's fiscal practice has grown fund balance. Town uses fund balance throughout the year for special appropriations. BOF needs to determine what the excess "reserve" should be beyond the BOF regulation of 10%.

The Board discussed different options to transfer some of the undesignated fund balance into either or both of the Firemen's Pension Fund and the Capital Improvement Program as an investment that offsets future tax collection needs. Selectman Wilson spoke favorably of using the reserve in this way in order to help future budgets.

Town will be going out to bond over the next couple of years and the reserve plays into bond rating. Town has AAA rating, allowing town to pay less when borrowing money. Maintaining this rating in the future will help future budgets.

9. Discuss and take action to approve a special appropriation into the Firemen’s Pension Benefit Fund, pending Board of Finance and Town Meeting approval.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to approve a special appropriation into the Firemen’s Pension Benefit Fund seconded by Selectman Murphy

BOF took this issue up at its last meeting and tabled it – whether to transfer a range of \$500K - \$1.5 million into the pension fund. Making an infusion into the pension fund by 6/30/23 will help future budgets. Another option is setting up a pension reserve account through a special appropriation which could fund the additional annual contributions made by the town over time. This would benefit the 2023-2024 budget. The undesignated fund balance can absorb both of these options. First Selectwoman Lyons notes that changes were made to the Firemen’s Pension Fund last year in order to improve the benefits paid to Town’s volunteers – these changes were long overdue and hadn’t been updated since the 1990s.

Director of Finance Stacy Nobitz provided a handout of actuarial data presenting three scenarios with infusions of \$500k, \$750k, and \$1.5million that would go directly into the pension fund. These infusions will not help offset the new 23/34 budget. However, an appropriation of \$135,000 into a pension reserve fund would provide money to cover additional funding needs.

First Selectwoman Lyons suggest recommending a base contribution of \$135,000 for FY 23-24, which aligns with the BOS Recommended Budget, then allowing the BOF to determine what percentage of the town budget should be held in reserve; and how much should be transferred to the pension fund. The BOS can revisit at end of March. Selectwoman Gordon concurs. Board agrees to wait for BOF to set reserve percentage before moving forward.

TABLED until end of March.

10. Discuss and take action to approve a special appropriation to assign fund balance for the Firemen’s Pension Reserve Account, pending Board of Finance approval.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to amend item number 10. to discuss and take action to approve a special appropriation of \$135,000 to assign fund balance for the Firemen’s Pension Reserve Account, pending Board of Finance approval, moved by Selectman Wilson and seconded by Selectman Murphy.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

11. Discuss and take action to approve the following special appropriations; pending Board of Finance and Town Meeting approval:

- a. (6) Radar Speed Signs - \$34,547
- b. (4) Stalker Radar Sets Vehicle Mounted Dual Antenna - \$13,023
- c. Capital Improvement Program – Technology - \$100,000
- d. Capital Improvement Program – CNRE - \$3,500,000
- e. Capital Improvement Program – CRF - \$100,000

MOTION by **First Selectwoman Lyons** to approve moved by Selectman Murphy and seconded by Selectwoman Gordon.

Selectman Wilson requests “item d” pulled out of this vote until the BOF lands on a reserve number.

MOTION by Selectman Wilson to amend the list of special appropriations presented to exclude item d. Capital Improvement Program – CNRE - \$3,500,000, seconded by Selectwoman Gordon.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to vote on approving item 11 as amended (a, b, c, and e), seconded by Selectman Goldberg.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

First Selectwoman Lyons asks for a motion to open the agenda to reinsert item 11 d, **MOTION by** Selectman Wilson, seconded by Selectman Murphy

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to approve a special appropriation into the Capital Improvement Program's CNRE fund of \$3.5 million, pending Board of Finance and Town Meeting approval, seconded by Selectman Wilson.

First Selectwoman Lyons wants to support the CIP Committee's recommendation and this line item is part of a plan the town has been working on since the Fall. Selectman Wilson agrees it is a great use of the money, however, it is a big number to put in – brilliant of BOF to put money from undesignated fund now to prevent increasing taxes down the road, but same logic needs to be applied to the \$1.5 million discussed earlier for the Firemen's Pension fund.

Vote: this item passes 4-1 (Wilson).

12. Discuss ARPA balance and potential Town projects.

The ARPA balance is \$740,541. First Selectwoman Lyons notes that Beach and Rec has a pending town tennis court project that could impact how the items before them are determined.

Beach and Rec. Director Austin Hall addresses condition of town courts and presents three options ranging from crack repair and paint touch through to complete reconstruction.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to open the agenda to add item 12a seconded by Selectwoman Gordon.

Vote: this motion is unanimous.

First Selectwoman Lyons requests a motion to approve an amount of up to \$65,000 of ARPA funds for the Town Campus tennis court repair project; pending Board of Finance approval.

MOTION by Selectman Murphy, seconded by Selectwoman Gordon.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

13. Discuss and take action to approve DHHS Stage Lighting Project funding source from the undesignated fund balance to ARPA Round 14 fund totaling \$120,000.

MOTION by Selectman Murphy, seconded by Selectman Wilson to approve item 13 Board of Selectman had previously approved this project using undesignated fund balance. Board of Finance wants it under ARPA.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

14. Discuss and take possible action to approve additional ARPA Round 14 funding requests totaling \$603,491 subject to Board of Finance approval:

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to discuss and take action to approve additional Round 14 ARPA funding request for the MLL Nelson Fields Lighting/CIP Approved request of \$220,000, moved by Selectman Murphy seconded by Selectwoman Gordon

This project has been vetted by CIP, MLL is contributing \$100K to fund the project. It has been on the docket for years.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to discuss and take action to approve additional Round 14 ARPA funding request for the Scranton Library – Creative Loft Tools request of \$10,000, moved by Selectman Wilson, second by Selectman Murphy

Fits with community outreach and spirit of ARPA.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to discuss and take action to approve additional Round 14 ARPA funding request for the MYS/MYF Portable LED Lighting request of \$179,991, seconded by Selectman Wilson.

Board recognizes that something needs to be done about the lighting situation on these fields. Currently using diesel powered lights that are loud and smell. Need to bring in power conduits for portable and/or permanent lights. MYS would also contribute money towards this project. More information is needed from Planning and Zoning and site work costs. Board is committed to this project and would consider using undesignated fund balance to complete it should there be no ARPA funds available.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to withdraw her previous motion and table this request pending further information, seconded by Selectman Wilson.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

First Selectwoman Lyons recommends tabling discussion on Bauer Farming Project Restoration request of \$18,500 until they hear from the Bauer commission on the proposal.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to discuss and take action to approve additional Round 14 ARPA funding request from the VFW Refurbish Post Hall Building request of \$150,000, moved by Selectman Wilson, seconded by Selectwoman Gordon.

Larry Brundrett presents on behalf of the VFW and provides renovation plan. The Board inquires what, if any, State grants have been pursued, and suggests reaching out to State Representative and Senator for assistance. The board requests project be split into phases and more concrete project numbers be provided.

First Selectwoman Lyons withdraws the previous motion and tables the proposal until the next Board of Selectmen meeting so contractor can supply cost estimates for phases.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to discuss and take action to approve additional Round 14 ARPA funding request from the First Congregational Church – Kitchen remodel for \$25,000, moved by Selectman Wilson, seconded by Selectwoman Gordon

Discussion around ARPA funding requests from religious organizations and what the precedence is. Board would like to hear from applicant on how the kitchen will be used.

First Selectwoman Lyons withdraws the motion and tables the proposal until a future meeting.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to discuss and take action to approve a special appropriation of \$13,148 for replacement and repairs of remote Radio Site HVAC refurbishment subject to Board of Finance approval, moved by Selectman Wilson, seconded by Selectman Murphy.

Ed Brunt spoke to the board about state of the various sites and units, their maintenance to date and some having been damaged by lightning strikes.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

15. Discuss and take action to amend the Charge for the Ad-Hoc Affordable Housing Committee.

MOTION by Selectman Murphy, seconded by Selectman Wilson to discuss and take action to amend the Charge for the Ad-Hoc Affordable Housing Committee

The Charge has a stricter party affiliation requirement than the State requires. There was a lack of applicants for the Ad-Hoc Affordable Housing Committee. Selectman Wilson reports that one applicant could not serve because they were already a member of an elected board. The New Charter will require an ordinance for this board so looking to make minor amendment now and let

committee go forward as currently appointed, then address board composition when doing the ordinance per the Charter.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

MOTION by First Selectwoman Lyons to change the order of the agenda to address citizen comments before the Executive Session, seconded by Selectman Wilson.

Vote: this vote is unanimous.

16. Citizen comments.

None.

17. Executive Session.

No action items will be taken after the Executive Session.

Motion by First Selectwoman Lyons to go into Executive Session, inviting in Sam DeBurra, Chief Drumm, and Stacy Nobitz, second by Selectman Murphy.

- a) Negotiations regarding Old Route 79 communication tower.

18. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned after the board concluded the Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Stevens