

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

MEETING DATE: JULY 30, 2019
4:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: TOWN CAMPUS ROOM A

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

4:00 p.m. Special Session

First Selectman Banisch called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 4:01 p.m. Present were First Selectman Banisch, Selectwoman Ferris, Selectman Goldberg, and Selectman Wilson (via teleconference). Selectman Murphy joined the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
First Selectman Banisch led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comment:

Kathryn Hunter of Scotland Avenue stated that the Town is over one year into the process of determining the future of the building. She provided a brief overview of the process to date and of how the process was brought to the Community Center proposal. She stated that she felt the Board of Selectmen should extend the Charge of the current Ad-Hoc Committee to allow them to complete applications for funding to different grant agencies, to include the project in the CIP within the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget; and to bring the item to referendum.

3. Discuss and take action to appoint, upon successful completion of a background investigation, William O'Brien as the Assistant Assessor for the Town of Madison. The position is funded and budgeted. Salary Grade 11, Step 5, \$43.59 per hour, 35.5 hours per week. Anticipated start date is September 1, 2019.

DISCUSSION: First Selectman Banisch thanked Mr. O'Brien for joining the Town. Debra Milardo stated that Mr. O'Brien was an outstanding choice for Madison, and that he comes with years of great experience. She stated that the Town was lucky to have him.

MOVED by Selectman Goldberg and seconded by Selectwoman Ferris to **APPROVE** appointing, upon successful completion of a background investigation, William O'Brien as the Assistant Assessor for the Town of Madison. The position is funded and budgeted. Salary Grade 11, Step 5, \$43.59 per hour, 35.5 hours per week. Anticipated start date is September 1, 2019.

VOTE: the motion was approved unanimously with four votes in favor, Selectman Murphy was not present for the vote.

4. Presentation and update from the Ad-Hoc Academy School Community Center Design Committee.

DISCUSSION: Chairman Bill Stableford introduced the members of the committee and began a PowerPoint presentation overview of the Committee's work through this date including the potential plans, costs, funding sources and revenues for the conversion of the Academy School building into a Community Center. A full copy of the presentation can be found at www.madisonct.org/accd.

Selectman Goldberg asked the Committee what they envisioned the next steps of this process to be, and Mr. Stableford responded that the information needs to be kept alive. He stated that the Committee would like to present the same information to the Board of Finance and Board of Education as well as the Capital Improvement Committee.

First Selectman Banisch thanked the Committee for their work and presentation. Selectman Murphy asked if there should be Public Information Sessions for the public to hear this information again and John-Michael Parker stated that the Public should be involved but that maybe information sessions can be held closer to the May 2020 referendum date.

Selectmen Murphy asked if the tax credits and funding were projections, or if there were projections of how much the Town would be likely to receive if they applied for all potential grants, credits, etc. Mr. Stableford responded that it was difficult to give a set dollar amount for potential funding through grants.

5. Public Comment.

State Senator, Noreen Kokoruda offered help with insight on the different grant applications that the Committee/Town might want to apply for. She stated that information should go out to the public, especially detailing the transparent process prior to the May referendum.

State Senator, Christine Cohen echoed Senator Kokoruda's comments and noted that there grants are not as "easy" and that processes have changed a lot, but that she and Noreen would fight to help the Town.

Gary, asked if the Town was factoring in the possibility that federal tax credits would be changing over the coming years and may be less of an opportunity for the Town for this project depending on when the work began.

Fillmore McPherson of Evarts Lane stated that instead of having big Public Information Sessions, a smaller version of the data could be presented to the private clubs, groups and organizations in Town.

Roz Cama of the ACCD Committee stated that the Committee felt that after January 1, 2020 the group would write a series of articles that would present their work to the public.

The Board reviewed if other towns had presented communication plans when they provided other data to the Committee and Dick Passero stated that different towns did different things to bring information to the public.

Joan Walker of Steppingstone Lane stated that communication was very important and she suggested that the video of this meeting could be edited down to just the presentation portion and that shortened video could be sent out to other organizations in Town.

Peter Thomas stated that the biggest risk was the potential revenue sourcing. He suggested that the Committee should reach out to other towns to gather their expenses and revenues for comparison.

Maureen Lopes stated that in regards to the revenue slides in the presentation she “wasn’t buying it” and felt the revenues seemed too high. She also stated that non-profit groups in Town would not pay full price (\$25/hr) for use of the community center spaces. Dick Passero responded that the Committee felt that the space would be highly utilized. There was then a general comment from the public that the Library would be finished soon and that the spaces available at the Library would impact the saturation of space in Town.

Kirk Barneby of the Board of Education questioned if commercial opportunities were discouraged? Bill Stableford stated that one concept he had thought of was to invite different area restaurants to rent the café space and provide prepared foods to the public. Dick Passero stated that Elmwood Community Center in West Hartford leases a wing of their building to a daycare center; we wouldn’t want to duplicate this example necessarily but, the Town could be creative in commercial usage.

Dennis Crowe stated that validation was also needed on expenditures; the estimates should not be based on just being 3 times that of the Senior Center. Dick Passero stated that Colliers, International had provided estimates for the utilities.

Dwight Lopes questioned if there would be an alternative to having Beach & Recreation oversee the Community Center; he stated that he was concerned about their ability to oversee this space with their current duties, especially given the Beach Pass System roll out. Dick Passero responded that the expenditures included the hiring of new staff, an Event Coordinator and an Assistant Event Coordinator.

Roz Fahey questioned if the revenue for rental spaces would only be for the \$25/hr charge, or if 50% of the program cost would be forwarded onto the Town as well.

Selectman Murphy questioned if Beach & Recreation staff could come back and speak to their ability to oversee a location of this magnitude.

The audience also reviewed that the costs don’t include weekend and neither to the revenue projections.

Kathryn Hunter stated that regarding the statements to the commercial leasing that was presented by Ryan Duques, his suggestion was for a large-scale commercial user to take over the building and that is not the same as the building being used as a Community Center. Mr. Barneby responded that Mr. Duques had made this suggestion, but had also

suggested that commercial offices space might be made available. Mr. Barneby's question was whether the full usage of the space by the Beach & Recreation Department would prohibit any commercial usage.

Fillmore McPherson stated that the capital project question could not be confused with the operational questions surrounding this project. The referendum question would be for the capital project question. After that, the operational questions and oversight would be directed to the Board of Selectmen to determine.

Roz Cama summarized the public comments that the Committee had received regarding the needs and potential usage of the building. The bottom line is that it's about creating the vision of creating wellbeing within the community. If the Town sells the vision, the programming will follow and money will follow that.

Joan Walker echoed that projections need to include the weekends. If the Community Center is not open on the weekend, then the community might question what use the building is to them.

A resident thanked the Committee for their work with the project. She questioned the custodian staffing and the clean-up services or fees for rentals.

Noreen Kokoruda stated that the Youth & Family Services Department is in need of space to accommodate their entire staff and it would be beneficial to move them into this space. Also, she questioned if the building size was analyzed; perhaps the building is too big?

The Committee reviewed that the Architect stated that the building is big, but the usable classroom/rental space is roughly 20,000 square feet.

Selectman Goldberg stated that he was impressed that the Committee had helped with the understanding of how this project is important to the community. The information provided is a lot to digest. The Board will need to continue to make sure that this process moves forward to referendum. He added that the Committee should continue to be a source of information on the value and costs associated with this project.

6. Adjournment.

There being no objections, Selectman Goldberg adjourned the meeting at 5:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Rhines
Executive Assistant