

MINUTES  
OPC MEETING  
NOVEMBER 20, 2014

First Selectman Jayme Stevenson called the meeting to order in Room 206 at Town Hall at 8:36 a.m.

Present were First Selectman, Jayme Stevenson; Board of Education Chairman, Betsy Hagerty-Ross; Planning & Zoning Chairman, Susan Cameron; Board of Finance Chairman, Liz Mao; RTM Moderator, Sarah Seeyle and State Representative, Terrie Wood. Also in attendance were Board of Education member, Michael Harman and Karl Kilduff, Town Administrator.

**Board of Education**

Mrs. Hagerty-Ross was re-elected Chairman of the Board of Education and Michael Harman was elected Vice-Chairman. Over the course of the next year Mrs. Hagerty-Ross will mentor Board members on how the BoE runs in relation to other Town Boards.

The capacity study prepared by Milone & MacBroom will be considered in budget planning.

The Board continues its search for a new Superintendent of Schools and hopes to have a new superintendent early next year.

**Planning & Zoning Commission**

The Planning & Zoning Commission has been asked to consider allowing another 16 units to be built at Kensett, in addition to the present 62 units. The Kensett development is off of Hoyt Street and there are some concerns about school bus routines because parents wait in cars for children to access their bus at Hoyt Street.

Planimetrics is working with Planning & Zoning to develop the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. To gather input from residents, Planimetrics has begun an outreach program. Some of their outreach has consisted of visiting the Sugar Bowl, the Library and posting an on-line survey on Patch.com.

The State is reviewing the Moratorium application submitted by Darien. It will have 90 days to make a finding.

**Board of Finance**

Liz Mao was re-elected Chairman of the Board of Finance and Jon Zagrodzky was elected Vice-Chairman. Mrs. Mao commented that Mr. Zagrodzky did an excellent job presenting the Special Education Audit. She also noted that it's likely the ESC Grant will be adjusted to balance payments due to the State.

At the request of Town Counsel, the Board re-voted to approve the purchase of 32 Hoyt Street as amended by the RTM. It also approved the purchase of cameras at Darien rail stations. This funding will come from a special capital budget and not from the general fund. Finally, there was a discussion of preparations for the upcoming budget season and the Five-Year Capital Plan.

## **RTM**

The 2015 RTM meeting schedule has been set and distributed. Mrs. Seelye was re-elected Moderator of the RTM. She is preparing for the State of the Town meeting on December 8, 2014.

## **State Representative**

January 7<sup>th</sup> begins the new session in Hartford with one third of the members in the House being newly elected. The State deficit is a major concern with a present deficit of 89 million dollars. Among other factors, general revenue and revenue from casinos is down, social services needs are up and retirees' health benefit costs continue to rise.

Mrs. Wood mentioned the deadline for STEAP Grant applications is nearing. Mr. Kilduff said that the Town would be filing one grant application before the deadline. Lastly, Mrs. Wood mentioned that an issue drawing a lot of attention this year is the consideration of physician assisted suicide.

## **First Selectman**

Mrs. Stevenson announced that she will attend the second Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCTCOG) later today. Election of officers will take place at today's meeting in Wilton, CT.

In relation to the Town budget, Mrs. Stevenson noted that a mock budget exercise has been reviewed by the Board of Selectmen. The Board recognizes that residents are concerned about tax increases and is doing everything in its power to assure fiscal responsibility while addressing the needs of residents. Mrs. Stevenson mentioned that renovation of the Town Garage is needed and the costs of initial planning would likely be in the 2015 budget. Actual construction costs would be two to three years out.

A discussion ensued regarding the property owned by Palmer's and Federal Realty in Noroton Heights. The DOT has been asked to consider upgrades at the rail station in preparation of the largest redevelopment project in Darien. Yankee Gas is also being encouraged to bring gas lines to the area. Aside from the retail components the project may include 200 units of housing.

The Director of Health, David Knauf, and Mrs. Stevenson are actively following CDC information and guidelines for Ebola. They recently attended a quarantine workshop.

First Selectman Stevenson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the OPC special meeting held on September 16, 2014 and the OPC regular meeting of October 16, 2014. Mrs. Seelye moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Mrs. Wood. The minutes were approved.

Mrs. Hagerty-Ross motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Cameron. By unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Linda O'Leary  
Recording Secretary