

MINUTES
OPC MEETING
February 17, 2011

First Selectman David Campbell called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. in Room 206 at Town Hall.

Present were First Selectman, David M. Campbell; Selectman, Callie Sullivan; Board of Education Chairman, Kim Westcott; Board of Finance Chairman, Liz Mao; Planning & Zoning Chairman, Fred Conze and RTM Moderator, Karen Armour.

Board of Education

Ms. Westcott stated that the Board of Education has put forth the Superintendent's proposed budget to the Board of Finance with a proposed increase of 6.38%. This increase is largely due to fixed costs, contractual costs and special education expenses. The group discussed issues related to special education costs.

The BoE will seek funding for work on the gym floor at Middlesex Middle School. An evaluation of its specific needs is being sought before the BoE brings the request to the RTM.

Ms Westcott announced that the BoE has hired a new Director of Facilities, Hans Otto. Mr. Otto previously worked with the New Canaan School District.

Finally, Ms. Westcott mentioned that the Board is considering a Student Resource Officer, SRO, for the Darien High School. The Board will be looking for feedback from parents before making its decision.

Board of Finance

Ms. Mao mentioned that the BoF has approved, by a vote of four to three, the installation of solar panels at Town Hall. The expectation is that the panels will generate enough savings within a five year period to cover the Town's cost of installation.

Ms. Mao is scheduled to meet with the Director of the Finance Department, Kate Buch, on March 3rd for a bond sale.

In an effort to help residents understand some of the Town's finances, she and other Finance Board members are considering writing articles for the local paper(s) that will clarify the financial status of the Town and the Board member's duties/responsibilities.

Planning & Zoning

Mr. Conze updated the committee on Planning and Zoning issues with regards to 8-30g applications.

RTM Representative

Ms. Armour relayed that she had attended a recent Parks & Recreation Commission meeting during which the leash law was being considered. The leash law will be on the RTM agenda for its next meeting on March 21st.

Ms. Armour inquired as to whether or not a funding request for the Town fireworks would be going before the RTM. Mr. Campbell informed her that the fireworks would be privately funded and therefore would not be going before the RTM. Ms. Armour also raised the question of the status of the Flood and Erosion Control Board. She stated that the Rules Committee of the RTM was looking for clarification from the BoS on exactly what this Board's function will be. (See attached.)

First Selectman

Mr. Campbell recently testified in Hartford about the affects of 8-30g legislation on Darien and similar communities throughout the state. After he testified he had a conversation with the lead advocate for the Legal Aid Society. Mr. Campbell and the Town's attorney, Wayne Fox, plan to meet with him again to further discuss the ramifications of 8-30g and possible ways to minimize the negative impact on communities while providing more affordable housing units.

Mr. Campbell also went to Hartford on February 16th to hear Governor Malloy present his budget. The committee discussed the budget and how it may affect Darien and the State.

Additionally, Mr. Campbell mentioned that the Building Committee for the Mather Community Center was scheduled to vote on architectural fees February 16th. Some of this cost would be covered by the Infrastructure Reserve Fund.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2011 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 206.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda O'Leary
Recording Secretary

Town of Darien
Representative Town Meeting
Rules Committee
Regular Meeting - Monday, January 3, 2011
Draft

Attendance:

Present: Karen Armour, CH, Marc Thorne, Gary Swenson, Seth Morton, Mary Guimond, MariLu Cleary, Joanne Hennessy, Debra Ritchie, Peter Kelly, John Bishko, Martin Magida, Dennis Maroney, Anita Rycenga

Audience: Sarah Seelye, Bruce Orr, Jan Raymond, Jenny Schwartz

Call to Order: Ms Armour called the meeting to order at 8:10PM

Approval of Minutes- The Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2010 were approved, with Mr. Maroney and Ms Rycenga abstaining.

Assignment – Education Administrators Contract: Mr. Maroney moved that Education be Primary and Finance and Budget be Secondary. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Tax Abatement Allen-O'Neill: Ms Armour proposed that this Item would be on the RTM January 24 Agenda. Ms Hennessy said that the item would be ready from PZ&H Committee.

Pension Language: Ms Seelye Chair of TGS&A reported that this item would not be ready for the January RTM Meeting, but would be ready for the March Meeting.

Agenda for January 24 RTM Meeting: Ms Cleary moved the following order of business for the January 24 RTM Meeting:

1. Board of Education Contract with Administrators
2. Weed Beach Funds Bonding
3. Allen O'Neill Tax Abatement

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously

Flood and Erosion Control Board: Ms Hennessy reported on her research and discussions with Town officials about the Flood and Erosion Control Board. She noted a lack of focus on the topic and ambivalence about pushing it forward. Ms Hennessy noted:

1. That the Board would be advisory
2. That it would have no Budget
3. It would add another layer of Bureaucracy
4. It would seem that the existing Environmental Protection Commission could manage Flood and Erosion Control

Mr. Morton noted that as things stand, action on this topic is in the hands of the RTM, because it was referred to the RTM by the Board of Selectmen. Given a lack of definition from the Board of Selectmen, Mr. Morton offered a Motion that the Moderator speak to the First Selectman, noting that, while the Rules Committee supports the idea of addressing Flooding, it is unclear what creating a separate Flood and Erosion Control Board would do to remedy the situation. The Rules Committee respectfully requests that the Board of Selectmen provide further direction on how to proceed. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Talk about Wild Turkeys in Darien ensued.

Ms Seelye reported on activities before the TGS&A Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Seth W. Morton - Clerk