

The April 25, 2018, Special Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen was convened at 5:00 p.m. in The Center Cafeteria by First Selectman Beth Heller.

Present: First Selectman Beth Heller; Joseph J. Crisco; Joseph S. Dey III; Dr. David A. Lober; and Ms. Teri L. Schatz. Deputy First Selectman Mica Cardozo joined the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Present for Staff: Mr. Genovese, Administrative Officer/Director of Finance; Ms. McCreven, Communication Director and Grant Writer; Mr. Weiner, Town Counsel; Ms. Yagla, Assistant Administrative Officer; and Mrs. Shaw, Clerk.

HISTORIC DOCUMENT PRESERVATION GRANT – ADOPT RESOLUTION

Ms. Heller explained that the Town Clerk applies for the Historic Documents Preservation Grant each year. The Grant pays for the preservation of records in her office.

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That Stephanie Ciarleglio, Woodbridge Town Clerk, is hereby authorized to submit an application for the **“Targeted Grant FY2019 – Historic Documents Preservation Program”** to the State of Connecticut Library, Public Records Administrator for the Grant Contract Period July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019 in the amount of \$4,500.

PERMISSION TO PLACE SIGNS ANNOUNCING ONE BIG DOG FUND-RAISER FOR THE ANIMAL SHELTER RENOVATION PROJECT

Ms. Heller explained that One Big Dog is holding a fund-raiser on June 3rd at the Birches at Oak Lane Country Club to benefit the Woodbridge Animal Shelter Building Project.

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to approve placement of signs for the One Big Dog Fund-Raiser as follows:

Three (3) Sandwich Boards, 24” x 36”. Location: Route 63 and Route 114; Route 114 and Rimmon Road; Old Fire House Triangle or Route 69 and Bradley Road. The Board approved the time frame from May 1 – May 26, 2018. The Board requested that in placing the signs the group be respectful of traffic sightlines; other signs that may already be in place; and if possible delay until May 9th until after the Amity Budget Referendum.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN SIGN THE CALL OF THE MAY 21, 2018, ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Ms. Heller read the call of the May 21, 2018 Annual Town Meeting.

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to sign the call of the May 21, 2018 Call of the Woodbridge Annual Town Meeting as read by the First Selectman. The Clerk distributed the Call for signature. A copy of the signed call is attached to these minutes as a part of the permanent record.

FIRST SELECTMAN BETH HELLER – INTRODUCE AMITY STATISTICAL ANALYSIS TEAM

Ms. Heller said that this evening's meeting was to recap the presentation of the Public Opinion Survey results that the Board received on April 11th. Present again this evening is Amity teacher Rick Bourdeau along with his team of students: Jeremy Gustafson, Amity Senior from Orange; Mariana Tahiri, Amity Senior from Woodbridge; Helen Lenski, Amity Senior from Woodbridge; and Evan Kindseth, Amity Sophomore from Woodbridge. Ms. Heller thanked the team for their work.

Ms. Heller then presented each student and Mr. Bourdeau with a Certificate of Appreciation. The students and Mr. Bourdeau came forward as she read each name. A photo of the Team with the Board of Selectmen was taken following the presentation of certificates.

Presentation – Mr. Bourdeau gave a brief history of the timeline for the survey. He stated that 3,234 surveys were mailed – one to each household and 851 (26.3%) were returned by the extended deadline, February 22, 2018. Also returned were 127 duplicate surveys (read but not counted), and 60 received after the deadline that were also read but not counted in the statistical analysis.

Amity Statistical Analysis Team. Each student was responsible for presenting a given number of the slides. The 13 page summary is attached as a matter of permanent record.

DISCUSSION AND QUESTION/ANSWER – BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Ms. Heller's remarks – *“As I have said, I believe it is very important that we receive the public's input, and this survey gives us a lot of information to consider. Again, I am very appreciative of the time and energy people have expended to participate in the Public Opinion Survey.*

I am very impressed with our Amity Team; the students and their teachers have done just an outstanding job. Thank you again.

Now, let's have some discussion among the Board members – and please ask the Amity Team any questions you may have about the data they have analyzed. I am eager to hear your thoughts.”

Board Comments – The Selectmen discussed the results of the survey. They agreed that there is no clear conclusion for the use of the property, except that the majority of responders want to keep some part as open space. It was noted that 62% want the Town to save money, however 75% want open space and recreational facilities – which cost money.

Ms. Heller reminded those in attendance and the video audience that they are invited to view the actual comments on the surveys at Town Hall.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Heller said that she once again thanks the Amity Team for participating in this evening's meeting to answer questions and provide additional information. She invited the team to stay for public comment – or leave if necessary.

She said that the Board is eager to hear from members of the public and asked that speakers try to keep their comments to five (5) minutes or less so all may have an opportunity to speak.

Ms. Heller announced to the video audience that if someone had a comment and was not able to attend the meeting – they may e-mail comments to the Town Hall or give public comments at a future meeting.

Dr. Philip Noto, 12 Penrhyn Road – the property cost seven (7) million dollars to purchase. The Town has put 10 to 11 million dollars into the property. Who decides what will be done with the property – what is the time line for a decision?

Ms. Heller said that the Board of Selectmen will decide what proposal to take to the voters and voters will decide by referendum to accept or reject the proposal.

Mr. Dey reminded those in attendance that a referendum considers only one proposal – it does not decide between several.

Dr. Noto said that the residents are diametrically opposed to solutions for the use of the property. He asked that the Board "*not have of Paralysis of Analysis*".

Selectman Cardozo said that due to the size of the property there is the opportunity for more than one use.

Martha German, 1147 Johnson Road – the survey should have made clear that a zone change was required for housing other than single family/one and one-half acre lots. Zone change could ruin the rural character of the Town. Ms. German said that she has spoken to five attorneys who are also residents and they all agree that a change of zoning on the property would result in a precedent for other parcels.

Maria Kayne, 1891 Litchfield Turnpike – first said that she is very proud of the work of the Amity Students and their teacher. She gave a time-line of the Town's purchase of the property and plans for use. She said that the survey did not indicate the zoning issue in developing the property. She noted that residents rejected the first development proposal due to the question of a zoning precedent. She said that the Town retained a Zoning Attorney in 2014 and 2016 to render an opinion on the possibility of a zoning precedent. She said that when one of the attorneys was pressed at a meeting to guarantee that a change in use would not result in a

precedent for development of other large parcels of land, he said that there is no guarantee. Ms. Kayne made a statement that in 2016 the Board of Selectmen voted to not consider a new Toll Brothers proposal due to the question of a zoning precedent. This was an incorrect statement and she was corrected. Ms. Heller said that following a presentation by Toll Brothers at a public meeting, Toll Brothers withdrew the proposal due to what they called “lack of support by the residents”. Ms. Kayne said that she accepts the correction – but that she is still right. She also mentioned that she shared with Ms. Heller a New York Times article entitled “Golf is Back”.

Javier Aviles, 45 Ansonia Road – asked for clarification of the responses to the “what” category of the Survey.

Bob Hill, 68 Acorn Hill Road – recommended that the Selectmen hold another meeting (with a later start time) for more people to attend. He said that the question – would responder consider using the pool for the 2018 season – does not reflect the many non-residents that purchase pool memberships or use the pool. Mr. Hill said that non-residents are what keep the pool viable.

Selectman Lober said that the opinion survey is just that – it is not a referendum nor is it binding. He said that the results held no surprises; the Board is sensitive to the zoning issue, but still need to make decisions on the future of the property.

Joyce Simpson, 5 Oak Hill Lane – the opinion of two lawyers would not guarantee the zoning effect on other parcels. The possibility of high density housing on other parcels must be taken into account.

Selectman Cardozo asked how a zoning change for Country Club Property is different from zoning changes in other areas of Town.

Ms. Heller asked that Ms. German send the legal opinions she referred to to her office. Ms. German said that she would.

Town Counsel, Gerald Weiner, said that in other Town’s zoning changes made for a property “unique to a specific site” did not set precedents for other sites. Many factors are taken into account: size of property, location, adjacent utilities, roads, etc.

Walden Dilloway, 1196 Johnson Road – referred to slide 23 in full survey, slide 4 in summary. He said that “golf” should not have been included in the question re over 55 housing and should have been included in the open space question.

Selectman Joseph Crisco remarked that many responded that the tax rate was too high, but noted that the average tax rate in Connecticut was in the high 30 mills.

Allison Jensen, 46 Newton Road – asked why the supplemental surveys (second survey for a household member to respond) were not included in the analysis.

Mr. Bourdeau said that the premise is to gather opinion from a household, not separate opinions of individuals within the household. He said, and Ms. Heller agreed, that all surveys, counted, supplemental, and those received past the deadline would be read. He also noted that in reviewing the supplemental surveys – he determined that the results would not have changed.

Ms. Jensen asked that if there was such a demand for over 55 housing in Woodbridge, why has nothing been built on the property that was permitted for such use.

Bob Hill, 68 Acorn Hill Road - explained that the property on Bradley Road is still vacant because the developers wanted to phase in the project. The permit required that the entire project of apartments on one piece and apartments, retail, and a park on the second piece – be completed in a single phase. He said that the Town did not want what has happened in other towns, where the first phase is completed, and then the park and retail phase is not.

FIRST SELECTMAN BETH HELLER’S CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Heller made the following closing statement: *“Since my term as First Selectman began last July, I have received many inquiries about the former CCW property. Now that we have received the important public input provided by this survey, I am in the process of following up by going back to all who have expressed interest. I will ask for proposals so we can look at details – I would like to put this on the Agenda for our Regular May Board of Selectmen meeting, Wednesday, May 9th. At that point, the board can decide what we want to do as our next steps. Together, we will figure this out, and decide if we want to bring any proposals to the voters. The voters, ultimately, will decide. I want to move forward as decisively as we can.”*

Ms. Heller asked if there were any further comments. Hearing none, she thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

On a non-debatable motion by Mr. Crisco, seconded by Mr. Dey, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Geraldine S. Shaw, Clerk