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**Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday July 8, 2020 via WebEx**

**A recording of this meeting can be viewed at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gm6Ss9V4Sk>**

*First Selectman Beth Heller called the meeting to order virtually at 5:02 p.m.*

*She then read the following statement: In accordance with Governor Ned Lamont's Executive Order 7 B Section 1, which suspends the open meeting requirements of in-person participation, audio and video of this Regular Meeting is being simultaneously televised live on WGATV Channel 79 and youtube@WGATV79, in order to allow the public to view and listen to our meeting.*

*I will now call the roll of the Board of Selectmen and staff attendees – please respond as I call your name:*

Present: First Selectman Beth Heller, Deputy First Selectman Mica Cardozo, Selectmen Joseph Crisco and Sandra Stein.

Excused: Selectmen Joe Dey and Dwight Rowland.

Present for staff: Town Attorney Gerald Weiner, Finance Director and Administrative Officer Tony Genovese, Assistant Administrative Officer Betsy Yagla.

**First Selectman's Report**

***First Selectman Heller provided her report to the Board:***

First, I will give you an update from Town Hall. All staff continue to work at full capacity in the buildings, which do remain closed to the public. Town business is being completed either by email or telephone, or if absolutely necessary, by appointment only for curb side or drop off. Our staff remains healthy, and continue, as they have all during the pandemic, to do a wonderful job taking care of all of our citizens.

The latest update this morning from Police Chief Frank Cappiello which he has from QVHD regarding Woodbridge's numbers is 130 positive COVID-19 cases and 34 COVID-19 associated deaths. Frank reports that the "good news is there have been no new cases reported in over a week."

In mid-March, we went into “triage mode” in response to the pandemic, but as things have become somewhat more stable, I now think it is time to begin to complete several things that have been put aside as we dealt with other most important matters.

After many months of meetings and discussion, I am pleased to announce that the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society and the Town of Woodbridge (at the request of the Historical Society), have agreed to let the original agreement stand, with a revised date extending said agreement to 2030. We will discuss this further on tonight’s agenda.

I have written a charge for the Thomas Darling House Oversight & Advisory Committee, which I will read into the record:

### **CHARGE TO THE THOMAS DARLING HOUSE OVERSIGHT & ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

- 1) The purpose of the Thomas Darling House Oversight and Advisory Committee (aka the Committee) is to advise and assist the Town of Woodbridge in the maintenance, care, preservation, improvement, and usage of the historic outbuildings, their surroundings, and the farming fields of the Thomas Darling National Register Historic Site.
- 2) The Committee is specifically charged with:
  - a) ensuring that the buildings and grounds are well maintained and preserved;
  - b) ensuring that preservation is prioritized so that any proposed uses of the property will be in the public interest and the historical integrity be maintained for future generations;
  - c) developing an overall strategy for stabilization, repairs, development, priorities, timetables and budgets;
  - d) developing specific grounds keeping duties and responsibilities of the caretaker in order to maintain the property surrounding the Darling House.
- 3) The overriding goal is to create an immersive experience, for all visitors to the Darling House, providing an understanding of what it was like to live and farm in 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century Woodbridge.
- 4) The Committee will significantly encourage community volunteerism while enhancing the entire Property for use by all visitors to the Museum.
- 5) The Committee will be made up of five members appointed by the First Selectman. There will be a Board of Selectmen liaison and any advisory member to the Committee, from time to time, as deemed appropriate by the First Selectmen.

- 6) The Committee will appoint their own Chair, and meet as often as they deem necessary to accomplish their charge.
- 7) The Committee will provide a written report to the Board of Selectmen (the Board) updating the Board on their progress and seek input from the Board as appropriate.
- 8) All meetings of the Committee will be in compliance with the State of Connecticut Freedom of Information rules and regulations.

As you may recall, I announced the membership earlier this year – Our Town Clerk and Historic Preservation Keeper of Town Records, Stephanie Ciarleglio, Dick Blackwell, former farmer who is an interested Woodbridge resident, Don Menzies, past president of the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society, former member of the Board of Selectmen and current member of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and farmer Chris Sorensen, and Leland Torrence, who is a current member of the Conservation Commission and historic preservationist. Sandy Stein has agreed to serve as the BOS Liaison to the group, and Richard Weis, a preservation architect has agreed to assist the committee pro bono. I would respectfully suggest that the committee convene a meeting as early as next week via WEBEX (with help from our staff). I would ask that the committee as one of their first items, review and make a recommendation to the Board, on the best security, temperature control alarm, and fire suppression system for the property.

Additionally, we have finalized the membership of the 2030 Task Force, and gotten agreement from those members to serve on this Committee. If you remember in March, I announced that we would be working on creating this group and then of course, our attention shifted to dealing with the pandemic. My goal or idea is to ask this group of town leaders and business owners, to work on ways to grow our Grand List and make sure our Town continues into the future remaining fiscally stable.

There are a lot of good ideas – some are already in the works – that I'd like the committee to take a look at. I think we need a comprehensive, big picture plan for how to move forward. We also need to continue to seek ways to lower taxes and become more attractive to new businesses, help our current businesses grow and succeed, and diversify our housing stock. I envision this committee recommending new policies, possibly making recommendations to our zoning regulations, a marketing campaign, capital infrastructure and other ideas that they might think would help our Town.

This committee will include Chris Dickerson, local business owner and former member of the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance member Susan Jacobs, Rob Klee, Chair of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, Garrett Luciani, who is a vice president at

People's United Bank in Woodbridge, and Chair of the Economic Development Commission Jeremy Rosner.

I am also working to create a Committee to examine Equity and Diversity in Woodbridge. Following last month's Black Lives Matters rally and walk, I was moved to action, to look at ways to make Woodbridge a more welcoming, equitable and diverse town. I hope to announce the membership of that group at our next meeting.

Tony and I recently had a telephone conversation with our Dispatch Consultant Mike Boucher, to have him begin his review of our Town Dispatch system. You might remember prior to the pandemic, the Boards of Selectmen and Finance voted to approve hiring him for this work. As a reminder, he will provide an evaluation of the Town's dispatch center and deliver a comprehensive report that outlines recommendations based on industry standards and best practices as well as how to achieve each of the recommendations. Hiring an outside consultant is something that came out of the Radio Committee, which Selectmen Joe Dey was an integral part of.

I am excited to announce that the ad hoc Community Council will be holding a virtual Community Conversation. They anticipate this will be part of a series dedicated to the topics of diversity, inclusion, and collaboration. The first of the series will feature award-winning journalist Ed Gordon, author of the new book "*Conversations in Black: On Power, Politics, and Leadership.*" The first Community Conversation will be held virtually on Tuesday, July 28 at 7pm. All are welcome to participate. The theme of the conversation will be: *Activism: How to Stand Up and Enact Meaningful Change.*"

I continue to participate in the Governor's weekly calls with municipal leaders regarding COVID 19 and our response. Unfortunately, they are on Wednesday evenings at 5 pm, and obviously I cannot join in tonight.

Our Department Head meetings have gone from weekly calls during the height of the pandemic, back to our regular monthly meetings. As many of you may have noticed, our e-newsletters are now going out every other week, whereas during the height of the pandemic they were a weekly occurrence. We also have not had the need to send out CT Alert notifications for a long time. This has given me a little more breathing room to start focusing on other areas of our work.

Yesterday, Tony, Betsy and I participated in a regional call with the City of New Haven and the State of Connecticut DOT regarding plans for Exit 59 on Route 15. They informed us that the short-term project is nearing completion. The State of Connecticut DOT is next looking to fix safety issues to the Route 15 on and off ramps only and not the previous plans with new signals and "roundabouts" attempting to mitigate congestion. The Exit 59 on and off ramps have some of the highest accident counts in the State and I

hope that once these safety issues are resolved, we will also see an improvement in local traffic flow. I will keep you posted on this, as concepts are finalized and funding sources are identified. Their estimate was that the planning phase of this project would last about three years. We stressed that timing is most important to us in Woodbridge as well.

Tomorrow I plan to present the 2020 First Selectman's Youth Award to Alexander Pocwierz. I have known AJ since he was born. He has contributed countless volunteer hours to the Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Department, through selfless dedication as a Junior Firefighter. He has been a willing participant through major storms in the emergency operations center, and has proven his value as a crucial member of the family of devoted volunteer firefighters. His nomination cited his Eagle Scout project, which took many hours of planning, organization, and community outreach, which involved replacing several wooden foot-bridges throughout Town parks. These bridges offer ongoing assistance and safe walking spaces for hikers and nature seekers. AJ has also made time to dedicate to the medical team for the Special Olympics, ensuring the safety of athletes. He will receive a plaque from the Town of Woodbridge and a check for \$200 provided by Peoples United Bank to acknowledge his many efforts for our Town. AJ is a recent Amity Regional High School graduate, class of 2020, and he plans to attend West Virginia University in the fall.

Lastly, all the data and information (debt service and other items from David Stein) required from the Board regarding the Old Firehouse is not yet completed so I would propose we schedule a special BOS meeting on July 22. We could also take up the appointments to a few Boards and Commissions that are outstanding, at that meeting.

#### Woodbridge Board of Education – Superintendent Robert Gilbert

Superintendent Bob Gilbert spoke on his coming retirement, how summer programs are affected by COVID-19 and he gave a budget update. He also discussed the newly appointed committee regarding the safe opening of Beecher Road School.

#### Liaison Reports

Mr. Cardozo reported that the Recreation Commission's June meeting discussed the reopening of the pool. He reported that the Fitness Center remains closed; outdoor facilities are open and that the Department is running virtual programming and limited in-person sports programming.

Mr. Crisco reported that the July 6 Town Plan and Zoning meeting was dedicated to reading testimony regarding the artificial turf. The meeting has been continued.

Ms. Stein reported that the Library Commission did not meet but that the Library is offering curbside pickup of materials. The Budget Task Force discussed the process and parameters and the schedule for the budget.

Comments from Amity Turf Field Parents Group

Chandra Prasad presented a power point regarding concerns about the proposed artificial turf field at the high school. The power point is attached.

Comments from Amity Superintendent Jennifer Byars and Andrew Dyjak of FieldTurf

Dr. Byars: The Board of Education is committed to providing the students of Amity with an exceptional comprehensive education in Academics, the Arts, and Athletics. This process began because the athletic facilities – particularly the stadium which includes the track and field have not been upgraded or improved for over 30 years. The playing surfaces of both areas are significantly below the standards of other high schools throughout the state of Connecticut. Replacing the track necessitated replacement of the field – no matter what the field is made of.

Student athlete safety was the first and foremost priority when selecting the field. The Board selected a field product that will have the lowest injury prevalence for our athletes. Additionally, the Board approved a field that both lowers the heat on the field and provides an added barrier between athletes and the infill. The increase in gender equity and playing time on the field for our boys' and girls' sports teams, as well as the longevity of this particular field product were added benefits. Lastly the reputation of FieldTurf was considered and I would remind the Selectmen they are a State of Connecticut approved vendor for schools.

Amity athletes regularly play and practice on all-weather fields. This includes competition at other school sites, as well as practice on rented fields. The Board was also comfortable with the decision to install an all-weather field, as the use of crumb rubber for Amity athletic facilities has been in place since 1999 when the existing asphalt/rubber track was first installed.

The Amity Board of Education began the process of planning for the stadium renovations over a year ago, with the first discussions occurring in March 2019. From that time until the December 4, 2019 Referendum there were 13 meetings of the Board, Finance, and Facilities Committees in which the all-weather field was listed as an agenda item for discussion and possible action. There were 22 general meetings of the Board, Finance, and Facilities Committees in which there was opportunity for Public Comment.

From September 9<sup>th</sup>, when the BOE made final approval moving the all-weather field concept forward until October 29<sup>th</sup>, when due to the legal procedures of a referendum vote

we could no longer make presentations, Amity staff made 11 public presentations to parent groups and to the BOW selectmen – including the Selectmen of Woodbridge.

Informational flyers were distributed to all town public libraries; these included the responses to the FAQs about the field which addressed the health safety of the materials in the proposed field.

Our website contained an information section and the frequently asked questions – there were links to the information from both the main page, as well as the athletics page. Additionally, we had display boards at Little League events throughout the months of September and October.

Articles were published in the school newspaper, *The Trident* and the *Woodbridge Town News*. Additionally, I spoke about the field on WICC Sports Talk Radio.

Every residence in the towns of Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge was mailed the mandated explanatory text prior to the December 4<sup>th</sup> referendum. The Board was required to present to the Woodbridge Planning & Zoning Board as part of the referendum process and did so on November 4, 2019, in which the Planning & Zoning unanimously approved in general projects.

To summarize, there has been more than ample opportunities in which people could have received accurate information about the field and made comment about the field prior to the development of the referendum questions and ultimately the referendum vote.

The Board, recognizing the strong opinion on this matter opted for 2 questions during the referendum to allow voters to be very clear on their opinion of the athletic facilities improvements.

Please remember that Amity is a Regional School District – committed to the students of 3 communities and we rely on the cooperation, collaboration, and respect the communities show each other in the decisions made by voters. Like this Board of Selectmen, we are also governed by the voters and act on the decisions made when members of our towns cast their votes.

Ultimately, the athletic facilities question (question 2 on the referendum) was passed by the voters.

At this time, I would like to introduce Andrew Dyjak from FieldTurf to address the specifics of the field that was selected for installation.

Andrew Dyjak: I'm the regional vice president for FieldTurf. FieldTurf has completed over 20,000 installations of these synthetic turf fields. Most tested fields in the history of any type of athletics. During that time many state and independent agencies have look at these

issues. There have been hundreds and hundreds of empirical peer reviewed research over the last 20 years. All have stated there is No causal link between participating on a synthetic turf field and any type of negative health. There has been zero empirical data or anything peer reviewed that show any causal link whatsoever between playing on a turf field and any kind of negative health concerns.

The PFAS issue: Some manufacturers, not FieldTurf, do use PFAS during the extrusion process. A lubricant needs to be used, like was stated during the presentation earlier. That is correct. FieldTurf uses a water-based lubricant without any PFAS whatsoever and we have third party engineer testing data to prove that. There is no PFAS during the extrusion process. The water based lubricant evaporates after its used.

The issue about water quality is a very important issue. The State Department of New York and an engineering firm out of Boston and Milone and MacBroom in Connecticut have looked at this very closely. What they have done is they've looked at water in versus water out and they have found the water coming out of the field is actually cleaner than the water going in. That's because there's mass amounts of sand, packing and up to 8-10 inches of drainage stone underneath the field before the effluent charge. The effluent charge is cleaner than what's going on the field.

The vapor issue is also important. The Connecticut State Department of Public Health along with California, Washington, Massachusetts and Connecticut have all looked into this issue and have not found any adverse impacts with this particular type of field.

A couple more things: The cool play system is not rubber. The system itself has rubber inside of it. But the cool play is a topping thermoplastic and mineral compound. That thermoplastic and mineral compound caps the sand and rubber in the system. There is no rubber on the top of this type of system being proposed.

The last thing is when infill materials get into your mouth and body that is also a very important issue. We've looked at that domestically through ASTM and the European Toy Safety Standard, which is not an outdated standard -- its being used currently. And all of the infill material using this system passes that which means they've done gastric acid testing. We passed all those tests.

Last thing is House Bill 5300. That bill died in the House of May of this year. We track all the bills that have any impact on these types of surfaces. There were 60 people not in support of this bill banning these types of fields.

Happy to take any questions you have.

The water issue, the PFAS issue, the safety issue and the vapor issue and ingestion issue have all been researched and through peer reviewed studies. And all have said there is no causal link between playing on an all-weather field and any adverse health impacts.

First Selectman Heller: I'd like to confirm that House Bill 5300 died in May.

AD: We work with a lobbyist and I contacted the lobbyist last night.

BH: My understanding is it was pending because it was submitted in February and then the legislature stopped meeting as of March so I wasn't aware that it had died.

#### Public Comments

First Selectman Heller shared that the Town had received 30 emails in favor of the turf field for public comment and 245 against it, including names on a petition.

#### Executive Session

First Selectman Heller made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to CGS 1-200(6)(B) regarding discussion of a tax appeal for 4 Research Drive and she invited Attorney Weiner, Mr. Genovese and Ms. Yagla to join. Ms. Stein seconded the motion. All in favor; the motion passed.

The Board entered executive session at 6:02 p.m. and exited at 6:13 p.m. Ms. Heller announced that no motions were made nor actions taken during executive session.

Mr. Cardozo made a motion to accept the stipulation regarding 4 Research Drive and adjust the assessment from \$1,298,850 million to \$1,050,000. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Amity Woodbridge Historical Society Agreement

Mr. Weiner explained that the current agreement with the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society is set to expire in 2017. In order for the society to accept the State Good to Great grant they need a 10-year lease so Mr. Weiner suggested the Board add three years to the agreement.

First Selectman Heller made a motion that we make a second amendment to the agreement between the Town of Woodbridge and Amity Woodbridge Historical Society and we will agree to extend the term of the agreement set forth to June 30, 2030. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Administrative Officer/Director of Finance Report

Mr. Genovese shared his monthly report with the Board.

#### Funding requests:

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve funding request 1920-25 in the amount of

\$45,000 to fund the increase in costs related to processing recyclables. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve funding request 1920-26 in the amount of \$3,400 to fund the Natural Gas account for the Center Building. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve funding request 1920-27 in the amount of \$7,500 to fund the Center Building Roof Repair. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve funding request 1920-28 in the amount of \$10,000 to fund the Library HVAC project. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Line Item Transfer:

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve Line Item Transfer 2021-01 in the amount of \$8,911 for increased cleaning at the Fire House due to COVID-19. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

Bid Waiver Request for Road Mill, Reclaiming and Paving Application and Use of State Contract:

Ms. Stein made a motion to grant the bid waiver and to use the State of Connecticut Bid Award #18PSX0309, services of Garrity Asphalt Reclaiming for road milling and full depth at a cost of \$49,000 and to use State of Connecticut Bid Award #19PSX0261 for pavement purchase and application using Tilcon Connecticut for \$350,000. Mr. Cardozo seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Bid Award – Brush Grinding

First Selectman Heller made a motion to award bid 2020-10 to the low bidder Nature's Harvest Much in the amount of \$21,995 for brush grinding per bid specification.

#### Assistant Administrative Officer Report

Running event:

Ms. Yagla presented an application from Jeff Gee to hold a cross country event on the former Country Club of Woodbridge property on Saturday Aug. 8. The event will follow social distancing rules and require masks to be worn before and after the run.

Ms. Stein noted that the application said runners would be deployed in waves of 25 but an email describing the event said they would be in waves of 50. She requested the lower number be used.

The Board reserved the right to cancel the event if the pandemic worsens.

Mr. Crisco made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Cardozo seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Recreation Request:

Ms. Yagla presented a request from the Recreation Department to post a banner on the Center Field fence from September 12 through October 20 advertising the Road Race on Oct. 3.

The Board reserved the right to cancel the event if the pandemic worsens.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the request. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Contract with CGI Communications:

Ms. Yagla presented the CGI video program which the Town participated in three years ago. The company is offering to make an additional free video about COVID 19 recovery and businesses operating through the pandemic. Ms. Yagla asked for permission to have the First Selectman sign the contract.

Mr. Cardozo commented that the Economic Development Commission should have input into the video.

Mr. Crisco made a motion to approve the First Selectman's signature. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Resignations

First Selectman Heller made a motion for the Board to acknowledge, with regret, the resignations of Susan Dieterlan from the Conservation Commission; Allen Lipson from Town Plan and Zoning Commission and Steven Fleischman from the Woodbridge Board of Education. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Appointments: Town Plan and Zoning Commission to June 30 2023

Ms. Heller made a motion to appoint current T P and Z Alternate member Yonatan Zamir to the vacant position on Town Plan and Zoning through June 30, 2023. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Acknowledge Receipt of the Town Clerk's Reports

First Selectman Heller made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the Town Clerk's Reports. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

#### Minutes – June 10, 2020 and June 23, 2020

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the June 10, 2020 meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the June 23, 2020 meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

Adjournment

First Selectman Heller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the meeting adjourned at 6:57 pm.