

**Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday Sept. 9, 2020 at 5 pm**

**Via teleconference. The meeting was carried live on WGATV Channel 79 and  
Youtube @WGATV79**

**YouTube Video of the meeting can be found here:**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXDRpsNuric&t=8758s>**

First Selectman Heller called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm and 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."*

Ms. Heller confirmed (via roll call) the following in attendance:

*Deputy First Selectman Mica Cardozo Joseph*

*J. Crisco, Jr.*

*Joseph S. Dey III*

*Beth Heller*

*Dwight C. Rowland*

*Sandra T. Stein*

*Administrative Officer/Director of Finance Tony Genovese*

*Assistant Administrative Officer Betsy Yagla*

*Town Counsel Gerald T. Weiner*

First Selectman Heller delivered her report to the Board:

Good evening. Welcome back to everyone. School has started and fall is fast upon us. Tonight, we will hear from members of the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society and the Darling House Advisory Committee who will each give us an update and overview on their efforts, and they will each make recommendations to the Board.

Both the Advisory Committee and the Society are interested in removing the deconstructed pieces of the Lucy Street one-room schoolhouse, known as "Little Lucy" from the yellow cow barn. This must be done in order to provide access, so that the planned grant-funded Survey and Planning Assessment (including structural assessment) may be achieved. The pieces have been stored by the Town since approximately 1991. We all agree that the schoolhouse pieces should be removed from the barn so the

Society might begin inventory of their items. It is my understanding that the Society believes that there may be value of this relic to many local residents. They would like to proceed with efforts to prevent the schoolhouse from just being discarded. They are hoping to find a new use for the old school, and will be approaching individuals and others in Town. They also intend to advertise the availability of the building. I do agree that we should try to ensure that all reasonable efforts are made to prevent the schoolhouse from simply being discarded. The deconstructed building is incomplete and experts have noted that the material is not in good shape. Any resident interested in "Little Lucy" is welcome to contact me or the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society. I am pleased that we are moving forward together.

I know many residents are anxious about the upcoming November elections. You may vote in person. However, the Secretary of the State will be mailing out absentee ballot **applications** to all registered voters in the State this week. These applications, coming in the mail from the State, will have barcodes on them in order for our Town Clerk's office to keep track of them. The Town Clerk's office will be mailing out the ballots. We will again have an official State ballot box at the front of Town Hall so that residents can drop off their absentee ballot applications and ballots.

This is an unprecedented election, due to the pandemic, and the timing of the recent primary, which was just held in August. Our Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerks, and Registrars of Voters are doing an amazing job of trying to make this all work successfully. It is a very difficult and time-consuming process. Please make every effort to return your ballot application quickly, and then once you receive your ballot, return it as soon as possible. You can mail it in, but the best way to return it, is to drop it off in the secure ballot box in front of Town Hall.

Our Human Services department has organized two flu clinics for residents and staff. One will be a drivethrough clinic and the other will be under the canopy by the Library. Details are on the Town website. For both clinics, you must make a reservation. Please call our Human Services Department at 203-3893429 if you have any questions, etc.

Lastly, regarding the pandemic, I have heard from parents that they are still seeing people at Pease Place Playground not wearing masks. Per Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7NNN, anyone over the age of two should wear a mask when not able to maintain a 6-foot distance. There are, of course, exemptions for medical conditions. Those, adult or child, with a medical condition are required to provide documentation from a licensed medical provider or appropriate State agency. I will ask, however, that if you cannot or are not wearing a mask, please keep your distance from others whether at the playground, on Town trails or elsewhere. We all need to respect each other and be kind to one another! Walking at the Fitzgerald Trail requires that as before, you walk in one direction and have a mask available should you come within 6 feet of anyone. I always keep mine down around my neck when I am alone, but have it ready to pull up if I come in contact with anyone.

Please remember that it is up to ALL of us to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and it is also very important to not let our guard down, especially as out-of-state college students are returning to Connecticut and we reopen our schools. Just today I read of the death of a young football player at California University of Pennsylvania. Jamain Stephens, a defensive lineman, died on Tuesday after suffering from complications of COVID 19. No one is immune!

I know wearing a mask and staying six feet apart is not fun – we are all anxious to hug and see each other face to face, but doing this will get us back to that much sooner - Let's do all we can to keep Woodbridge safe!

Thank you.

### **Woodbridge Board of Education Interim Superintendent Christine Syriac**

Ms. Syriac updated the Board on how the beginning of the school year is going and that the Woodbridge Board of Education hired a consultant to help with the superintendent search.

### **Liaison Reports**

Mr. Cardozo reported on the Recreation Commission and Recreation activities

Mr. Crisco reported on two requests heard by Town Plan and Zoning and that the Police Commission hired a new dispatcher.

Mr. Dey had no report.

Mr. Rowland shared that neither Human Services Commission nor Zoning Board of Appeals had met recently.

Ms. Stein said that the Library Commission did not meet in August.

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Yagla read into the record an email received from Dog Park Cooperative President Bonnie Blake in favor of the Eagle Scout project request to install a kiosk outside the dog park.

### **Eagle Scout Project Requests**

James Cadelina of Troop 63 made a request to install a kiosk with a message board, donor wall and bench just outside the dog park.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Cardozo seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

Jack Fortin made a request to install low walkways on a section of Town-owned trail off Sanford Road to allow passage over wet areas.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Rowland seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

### **Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Thomas Darling House Advisory Committee**

Chair Dick Blackwell presented the committee's priorities and recommendations: to remove the old school house from the cow barn in order to inventory the rest of the barn's contents and complete a structural review of the building using a State grant; complete a lead assessment for property grounds and outbuildings via RFP and to remove rotting trees and limbs.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to have Chris Sorensen (he has offered to do this pro bono) remove and dispose of the one-room school house on or around Nov. 1, assuming no one else wants the barn and if Mr. Sorensen is licensed to remove materials with lead paint. Mr. Blackwell agreed to cover all costs related to disposal of the Little Lucy barn, including disposal of any lead paint materials.

Ms. Stein seconded the motion. In favor: Ms. Heller, Ms. Stein, Mr. Crisco and Mr. Rowland. Against: Mr. Dey, Mr. Cardozo. The motion passed 4-2.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve drafting and sending out a Request for Proposals for hazardous material, following a conversation with the Quinipiack Valley Health District to see if it is even necessary, and to encourage several additional companies to respond. Ms. Stein seconded the motion. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Stein made a motion to approve the urgent removal of rotting trees and limbs around the property with the supervision of the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society and the Town and to also address the cleanup of outbuildings and begin the removal of weeds and overgrowth. Mr. Dey seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

#### **Amity Woodbridge Historical Society**

Permission to apply for State grant – Society President Alexia Belperron presented the grant to the Board and First Selectman Heller made the following motion: The Town of Woodbridge, as owner of the real estate known as the Darling House together with all out buildings, acting by its Board of Selectmen, hereby authorizes the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society to apply for a State Grant in order to engage an architect and engineer to assess the extent of work necessary to repair and restore the cow barn and horse barn located at the premises. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

Request Permission to Sign Caretaker's lease – The Board discussed the updates to the Thomas Darling House inspections with Ms. Belperron.

Attorney Weiner said he had a few minor edits he'd like to see in the lease, including the addition of insurance.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the caretaker's lease with Attorney Weiner's modifications. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

#### **Massaro Community Farm Permission to Apply for State Grant and 9-24 Referral**

Farmer Steve Munno presented the farm's plan to apply for a State Department of Agriculture farmland restoration program grant which requires a letter from the Town as landowner.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve Massaro Community Farm's grant application subject to the favorable 8-24 review from Town Plan and Zoning. Mr. Crisco seconded the motion. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to refer the farm's plans to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for an 8-24 review. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

### **Old Firehouse and Shed**

Architect David Stein presented his plans for use and cost estimates of the Old Firehouse and new Fire Department shed.

The Board also discussed the Town's debt service and the possibility of issuing a bond to finance this project and others.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the Old Firehouse for Town use as meeting room space as designed by David Stein and adding the Fire Department shed as a secondary part of the project. Mr. Rowland seconded.

Voting in favor: Ms. Heller, Ms. Stein, Mr. Cardozo, Mr. Rowland and Mr. Crisco; Mr. Dey against. The motion passed 5-1.

### **Administrative Officer/Director of Finance's Report**

Mr. Genovese provided the preliminary year-end report for the end of fiscal year 2020.

Funding Request – First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve line item transfer 2021-04 in the amount of \$5,500 for GATV to fund maintenance contracts for equipment. Mr. Cardozo seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

Tax Refunds – First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve tax refunds in the total amount of \$17,274.92. Ms. Stein seconded. Voting in favor: Ms. Heller, Ms. Stein, Mr. Cardozo, Mr. Rowland and Mr. Dey. Mr. Crisco abstained. The motion passed.

### **Assistant Administrative officer's Report**

Ms. Yagla presented the concept for a State Department of Transportation grant for bike and pedestrian improvements. The grant is due mid October and she will ask for approval at the October Board meeting to submit the application.

Ms. Yagla presented a request to hold two 5k runs at the former Country Club of Woodbridge in late October and November.

Ms. Heller made a motion to approve the request as submitted. Mr. Cardozo seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

### **Town Counsel's Report**

6 Warren Road update -- Attorney Weiner provided the Board an update on the subsidence issue at 6 Warren Road and requested permission to purchase and demolish the home with funds from the state Department of Economic and Community Development.

First Selectman Heller made a motion to purchase and demolish the home with state funds. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

Budget Task Force Update – Attorney Weiner updated the Board that he will give a report to the Board of Finance regarding the Charter-outlined role of the Boards. He will let the Board of Finance know that they are not required to, but may voluntarily agree to follow the Budget Task Force’s guidelines.

### **Resignation**

The Board accepted with regret the resignation of Fire Commission Chair Elia Alexiades.

### **Appointment**

Mr. Dey nominated Ryan Anastasio to fill a vacancy on the Cable Advisory Board through July 2021. Mr. Rowland seconded the nomination. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

### **Town Clerk’s Report**

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

### **Minutes**

First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the Aug. 12, 2020 meeting minutes as written. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

### **Executive Session**

First Selectman Heller made a motion to enter executive session to discuss the Plan and Zoning decision re the turf field at Amity Regional High School pursuant to Section 1-200 (6) (B) of the Connecticut General Statutes and to review the litigation claim of a former employee pursuant to Section 1-200 (6) (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes and to invite in Attorney Weiner and Mr. Genovese.

At 8:07 p.m. executive session ended. First Selectman Heller reported that no motions were made and no votes were taken.

Regarding the appeal of the Town Plan and zoning decision First Selectman Heller noted that there were no motions to make.

Regarding the litigation claim, First Selectman Heller made a motion to approve the settlement as discussed in executive session. Mr. Crisco seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

### **Adjournment**

First Selectman Heller made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Stein seconded. All in favor; the motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.