The November 9, 2022, Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen was convened at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Central Meeting Room by First Selectman Beth Heller.

Present: First Selectman Beth Heller, Deputy First Selectman Sheila McCreven, Joseph Crisco, Paul Kuriakose, Dr. David Lober, and David Vogel.

Present for Staff: Administrative Officer/Director of Finance Anthony Genovese, Town Counsel Gerald Weiner (at 6:00 p.m.), Media Specialist Pua Ford, and Geraldine Shaw, Clerk.

Meeting may be viewed on YouTube: https://youtu.be/6i9fczC_Iqk

**AMITY ROBOTIC TEAM PRESENTATION**

Mr. Stillman Jordan introduced the FLL Club, (“Amity Robotic Team”) comprised mostly of 6th grade Beecher Road School students. The club projects include robotics, scientific, and renewal energy. The group presented a skit showcasing the prototype of a speed table that generates electricity to illuminate speed limit signs. The speed table generates 560w/day and the group recommended the Town consider installing a full scale model on Johnson Road.

**WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION – Interim Superintendent Christine Syriac**

Ms. Syriac reported that:

- Enrollment stands at 850
- The school is experiencing unanticipated special education costs
- The staff is working on the 2023/2024 budget
- The District Board is finalizing its selection and a new superintendent should be on board toward the end of December
- A school-wide program is planned for Veterans Day

**FIRST SELECTMAN’S REMARKS**

Good evening, and welcome to the November 9th Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Once again, thank you all for wearing masks tonight, as we endeavor to continue to respect each other, and try to keep one another healthy, especially those who are immunocompromised or recovering from an illness. We have air filters running and ventilation from a few open windows around us as well.

Last month, I gave you all an update on our many on-going Town projects. The Community and Cultural Center project (which includes improvements to the surrounding outdoor grounds at the library, the center, the grove and the old firehouse) is moving forward, as are the Senior Center upgrades and renovations. I invite Board members to attend a meeting of the Community and Cultural Center Committee on Wednesday, November 16th at 4 pm at Town Hall, where committee members will receive input from department heads on suggested uses of both indoor and outdoor spaces. As a reminder, this new Center will be in the old Firehouse.

As I mentioned last month, Woodbridge Like Me Day was a huge, largely-attended, successful event last month. This event, and others, are sponsored by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. I will be speaking further about the history of this committee before they give us a presentation in a few minutes. Due to the popularity of this ad hoc group, I am appointing another member, Javier Aviles, who will be a welcome addition.

Our annual Veteran’s Day ceremony will be held this year (after a two-year COVID hiatus) at 11 am on Friday, November 11th in the Center Gym. Masks will be required, and in the interests of safety, the
boards will be open, so we are asking folks to dress warmly. Everyone is invited to join this beautiful and moving ceremony. US Army Captain and Vietnam War Veteran Dr. Barry Josephs will once again be the master of ceremonies. Everyone is invited to join us.

As I mentioned at our meeting last month, there may be a Regional Water Authority grant available for up to $5000 to add a water line for use by the Community Gardens folks. Tony and I met with Thera and Andy Stack, Community Gardens volunteer coordinators, and representatives from the Regional Water Authority last week at the Gardens, to explore this further. There are several ways to accomplish this, and if it happens, it will also follow the same procedures we used for water at the Dog park, where the Community Garden members pay the water bills directly and are responsible for the water spigot etc. These folks are exploring ways this might be done, and as I find out more, I will let you know.

You have in your packets several letters from residents, expressing their support for getting the Beecher Road School pool up and running as soon as possible, beginning with the first step of replacing filters and piping, which could keep the pool functioning for a few years. The pool was built in 1972. We will discuss how the Board wants to address this later in our agenda this evening.

Once again, I am pleased to announce that we have been notified that our annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year which ended on June 30th 2022 has once again qualified for the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. I know this is awarded every year to Woodbridge, because we do this so well, but let us take a moment to thank (with a round of applause) our esteemed Finance Director Tony Genovese, our Finance Department members, and our Board of Finance. This is truly a significant accomplishment, and we are so proud of all of you!

Our police officers and dispatchers will be participating in the annual “No Shave CT” fundraiser, in which they are permitted to grow beards during the month of November to support cancer prevention, research, and education. Again, this year, it is being conducted in conjunction with the CT Cancer Foundation, with all proceeds to benefit Connecticut cancer patients. On December 3rd, the Woodbridge Police Department will be conducting its annual “Stuff A Cruiser” holiday toy drive in the D’Andrea’s Plaza parking lot from 9am-3pm to benefit the CT Special Olympics and the Toys for Tots programs. The event will be held in conjunction with Starbucks, Katz’s Deli, and the Micro-Creamery, and donations of new, unwrapped toys will be accepted.

The Woodbridge Police Department has joined agencies from across the state in displaying memorial decals on their patrol vehicles, in memory and honor of the service and sacrifice of their law fallen law enforcement brothers, Lt. Dustin DeMonte and Sgt. Alex Hamzy of the Bristol Police Dept.

At this time of Thanksgiving, I want to express my appreciation for all of you. Working with all the Town employees, and meeting with so many residents over the past year, has been a wonderful opportunity for me. I am truly grateful, thankful, and so blessed to be your First Selectman. Wishing you and your friends and family a safe happy Thanksgiving holiday.

PRESENTATION – DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION - Ellen Scalettar, Tahera Parvez
Remarks - First Selectman Heller introduced the presentation with the following remarks:
If you recall, I created our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee in 2020, in response to the horrific events surrounding the tragic murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police. Many of us watched in anguish of the systemic racism, particularly the pattern of needles and senseless acts of violence that also took the lives of so many people. I looked back at my remarks prior to the day in Woodbridge when we held a Black Lives Matter Rally. That day in 2020 I said, I think we have reason to hope that things will change. There is a new burst of energy, a protest movement across this country and beyond our shores, in cities and towns in all 50 states, a movement that crosses racial, ethnic, political and generational differences, a movement that binds us together by our common humanity, a movement poised to inspire new policies and new legislation. Martin Luther King said, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” I think Dr. King believed that the arc doesn’t bend toward justice on its own. That’s our responsibility, and that is why we are here today.”

I am proud that of DEI Committee continues this movement toward justice. I thank each member of this most important group for their efforts on behalf of diversity, equity and inclusion. I will now introduce Chair Ellen Scalettar and Vice-chair Tahera Parvez and ask them to introduce the members that are here, as well as those who could not attend this evening. Thank you.

Presentation - Ms. Scalettar and Ms. Parvez explained that the main objective of the Committee is to expose the community to the different, and wide range of cultures living in Woodbridge. The second “Woodbridge Like Me Day”, was well attended and there have been many positive remarks regarding the programs. Ms. Scalettar complimented the staff that made the day successful: Toni Belenski, Mark Dutka, and Carlos Torres. Ms. Parvez spoke of upcoming programs such as the book group – Woodbridge Mosaic – where the Committee will join with the Library to promote an evening of readings with the Connecticut Poet Laureate.

The Committee sponsored a survey on the website “Experiencing Woodbridge Survey”. The goal of the survey was to ensure that Woodbridge is an inviting and affirming community for all current and future residents. Steven Lawrence presented an executive summary of the results. A copy of the summary is attached and becomes part of the permanent record of the meeting.

FIRE DEPARTMENT 2023 OPERATIONS BUDGET UPDATE – Chief Sean Rowland

Air Packs - Chief Rowland said that the current Air Pack equipment is over 15 years old, no longer supported and beyond the safety shelf life.

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Crisco) to authorize the purchase of 10 SCBA Air packs and 2 RIT packs (Scott Safety SCBA breathing air systems) in the amount of $98,255.74 from the Co-Op Sourcewell contract #84326.

Radios – Chief Rowland explained that radios are critical for communication and all aspects of fire service and safety. The current radios used are obsolete, cannot be repaired and are no longer supported. The Department requests $499,900 funding through the Capital Budget to purchase the radios over a five-year period via State of Connecticut state bid #18978.

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Crisco) to authorize the purchase of replacement portable, mobile, and console radio via the State of CT contract bid #18978.
Truck Repairs – Chief Rowland advised the Board to expect a funding request for unanticipated truck repairs.

Other – Chief Rowland reported that Truck/Treat was very successful, over 1,000 fire prevention kits were distributed; the Association is hosting Santa & Mrs. Claus on December 17th; and the Department is collecting new, unwrapped toys for the Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital toy closet.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
John Adamovich, Recreation Director and Andrea Weinstein, Recreation Commission Chair spoke to the Board about the important role of the Beecher Road Pool in the community. Mr. Adamovich urged the Board to support replacing the filters and piping so the pool can be used while a decision is made about the results of the evaluation study. He noted that the Recreation Department has identified $15,000 that can be put toward the purchase/installation of the filters.

DARLING HOUSE BARN RESTORATION – update – AWHS President Alexia Belperron
Ms. Belperron reported that due to inflation the bid received for the restoration of the Cow Barn is twice the original estimate. However, the State Historic Preservation Office has offered to increase the grant for the restoration of the cow barn to $146,323. The Town budgeted contribution is $55,000. Unfortunately, the projected costs are $300,846 creating a shortfall of $99,523.

Ms. Belperron said that the Society’s fund-raising efforts were hampered by the economy and the fact that the Town owned the buildings – people often asked why the Town wasn’t paying for the work.

Discussion ensued about the fact that there were no additional funds in the Town’s 2022/2023 budget for the restoration work; the Society will be seeking an extension of the Grant and if there were possible ramifications for future grants; and the Town budgeting additional funding in the 2023/2024 budget.

STATE REQUIRED RESOLUTION FOR TOWN BUILDING COMMITTEE FOR BEECHER CAPITAL PROJECTS
The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (McCreven – Crisco) to waive the reading of the required resolution. However, the resolution is included here in its entirety.

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (Heller – Crisco) to adopt the revised and updated resolution:

ESTABLISHMENT OF AND CHARGE TO THE TOWN BUILDING COMMITTEE FOR BEECHER SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECTS

RESOLVED, that the Town Building Committee for Beecher Road School Capital Projects is hereby established as the building committee with regard to the identified capital projects at the Beecher Road School as identified in item 4 of this charge.

Committee Name: Town Building Committee for Beecher School Capital Projects

1. Membership: Jeffrey Hughes, Woodbridge Board of Education Facilities Committee Chair
   Sheila McCreven, Board of Selectmen Deputy First Selectman
   Donavon Lofters, Board of Finance Member

2. Term: Effective upon Board of Selectmen approval and continue in existence until terminated by the Board of Selectmen;
3. Authority: The Committee shall be advisory to the Board of Selectmen and shall consider and investigate whether any of the work is eligible for State reimbursement;

4. Responsibilities: The Committee shall be responsible for the budget, design, and construction regarding repair and maintenance of leaking roofs, asphalt walkways throughout the Beecher Road School campus, North School parking lot, overgrown trees in the various areas of the campus, The Kucinskas Loop, areas of water incursions into the building, and necessary pool and security upgrades;

5. The Building Committee’s responsibilities shall also include:
   a. Advertise through a Request for Qualifications process (QBS Methodology) for architectural/engineering services;
   b. Recommend to the Board of Selectmen the retention of an architectural/engineering firm to assist the Committee in the design of the proposed project;
   c. Prepare a construction/design plan with the assistance of the architectural/engineering firm retained by the Board of Selectmen, after taking into account the budget, construction challenges, including hazardous materials abatement, and timing of construction during the school-year;
   d. Apply best practices for sustainable design including the use of sustainable and energy efficient products and materials, LEED Certification (if applicable) and the possible use of “green” energy and other techniques and seek grant opportunities to fund or offset the additional potential cost of these initiatives;
   e. Upon approval of the Woodbridge Board of Education and Woodbridge Board of Selectmen of the construction/design plan, seek bids, with the possible assistance of a construction manager, on all aspects of the construction, in accordance with the Town of Woodbridge Purchasing Policy and State requirements for potential reimbursement;
   f. Recommend to the Woodbridge Board of Education and the Board of Selectmen the selection of one or more firms to perform the construction, after receipt and review of the bids;
   g. Oversee construction of the proposed project, with the possible assistance of a professional Owner’s representative;
   h. Seek reimbursement from the State Department of Education for all eligible costs of the proposed construction project.

6. Funding: All expenditures from the Town capital project budget concerning this project shall be incurred in accordance with the policies of the Town of Woodbridge, the Town Charter, and this charge.

Adopted by unanimous vote of the Board of Selectmen November 9, 2022

DISCUSSION OF BEECHER ROAD SCHOOL POOL REPORT

Mr. Genovese said that the Pool Evaluation Report estimated the cost on the current requirement of 63" filter tanks. Beecher pool filter tanks are 55". Brad Parsons confirmed with the State that the 55" filter tanks are grandfathered in – dropping the price from approximately $80,000 to approximately $50,000. Mr. Parsons said that only work done after 1980 must be brought up to code and require additional funds.
Ms. Heller noted that the study of the pool is now incorporated in the Charge to the Building Committee for Beecher School Capital Projects. Ms. McCreven, Chair of the Building Committee said that the Committee has begun to lay out a scope of study of the use and cost of the pool, both from the Town side and the Board of Education side and possible cooperation with the Jewish Community Center re its pool use by residents. It was agreed to take no action until the Building Committee has gathered more information.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/DIRECTOR OF FINANCE’S REPORT**

**Monthly Report** – Mr. Genovese reported that as of October 31, 2022, he is projecting a year-end budget surplus of $284,046. Because the current Town budget includes an allocation from fund balance of $400,000, decrease to fund balance at year end is projected to be $115,954 resulting in a fund balance of $7.5M or 13.90% of annual expenses.

**FUNDING REQUESTS**
The Board of Selectmen **VOTED** to recommend the following funding request to the Board of Finance:

- **#2223-12 – Intradepartmental Transfer**  
  - Amount: $17,096  
  - To: CNR-Parks Equipment Purchase (302-5200/757410/PKHVE)  
  - From: Parks Part Time Seasonal (1520-00/50320)  
  - For: Additional funds to purchase snow machine  
  (Heller – Crisco) Aye: Heller, Crisco, McCreven, Kuriakose, Vogel  
  Nay: Lober

**BID WAIVER REQUESTS**

**Road Salt** – The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to approve the request for a bid waiver to purchase 800 tons of Blizzard Wizard in the initial amount of $74,776.00 from Morton Salt as a sole source vendor.

**Sidewalk Snow Machine** – The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to approve the request to purchase the sidewalk snow machine of a Sourcewell contract for $63,220.

**CONSENT AGENDA**
The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to approve the items listed under the “Consent Agenda”

- **Tax Refunds** – to refund taxes in the amount of $4,072.59 pursuant to Section 12-124 to 129 of the Connecticut General Statutes and the recommendation of the Tax Collector.

- **Town Clerk’s Reports** – to acknowledge the Town Clerk’s reports for the month ending October 31, 2022 and cumulative from July 1, 2022 through October 31, 2022.

- **Minutes** – to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2022, Regular Meeting

- **Resignation** – to acknowledge receipt of the resignation of Susan Cassidy as an Alternate on the Town Plan & Zoning Commission.

**APPOINTMENTS**

- **Inland Wetlands Agency** – Alternate to 2025
Ms. McCreven nominated, Mr. Crisco seconded, Enrene van Tonder to fill a vacancy as alternate on the Inland Wetlands Agency for a term ending in 2025.
Mr. Vogel nominated, Dr. Lober seconded, Nicholas T. Zito to serve as an alternate on the Inland Wetlands Agency for a term ending in 2025.

**VOTE:** Ms. Heller put forth the nomination of Enrene van Tonder for a vote:
- Aye: Heller, Crisco, McCreven, and Kuriakose
- Nay: Lober, Vogel

As Ms. van Tonder received the majority of votes, the nomination of Mr. Zito was not acted on.

**TOWN COUNSEL’S REPORT**

a. Discussion of term of appointed members of Boards and Commissions – Mr. Weiner clarified that appointed officials, and appointed Boards and Commissions would follow the same terms of office as elected officials.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 7:30 p.m. the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to move into executive session and to invite Mr. Genovese and Mr. Weiner to attend to discuss the following:

a. Pursuant to CGS Section 1-200(6), 1-210(b)(9) Agreement between Woodbridge Board of Education & Woodbridge Teachers’ Association
b. Pursuant to CGS Section 1-200(6)(B)(D) 60 Woodfield Road
c. Pursuant to CGS Section 1-200(6)(B) Siting Council – Cell Tower 118 Newton Road – Discuss Court Decision
d. Pursuant to CGS Section 1-200(6)(B) 18 Deer Run Road – Discussion of Court Decision
e. Pursuant to CGS Section 1-200(6)(B) – Discussion of pending litigation, Open Communities Trust, LLC et. al Vs Town Plan and Zoning Commission of the Town of Woodbridge et. al.
f. Pursuant to CGS Section 1-200(6)(C) – Security Devices related to Dispatch – Selectman Paul Kuriakose.

At 8:40 p.m. the Board moved out of executive session and returned to Executive Session. Ms. Heller noted that no motions were made or votes taken in executive session.

**ACTION TAKEN ON MATTER HEARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Pursuant to CGS Section 1-200(6)(B)(D) 60 Woodfield Road – The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (McCreven – Crisco) to authorize the Town Attorney to receive the property as detailed on the map presented this evening as 60 Woodfield Road, for no consideration, receiving approximately 8,000 square feet of a property adjacent to the Country Club of Woodbridge and adjacent to 60 Woodfield Road.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a non-debatable motion by Ms. McCreven, seconded by Mr. Crisco, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,