



# BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street  
Bethel, Connecticut 06801 Telephone: (203) 794-8501

*Matthew S. Knickerbocker, First Selectman*  
*Richard C. Straiton, Selectman*  
*Paul R. Szatkowski, Selectman*

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TOWN OF BETHEL  
TOWN CLERK

## MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, March 5, 2013  
7:30 p.m.  
CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room “A”

**PRESENT:** First Selectman Knickerbocker, Selectman Straiton and Selectman Szatkowski. Also in attendance was Town Counsel Martin Lawlor.

**Call to order/ Pledge of Allegiance:** First Selectman Knickerbocker called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Public Comments:** Larry Craybas (Board of Education capital plan items), David Glahn (blight ordinance) and Frank Islip (construction projects).

**Correspondence:** None that was not already on tonight’s agenda.

**Minutes of February 5, 2013 Regular Meeting:** Selectman Szatkowski made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Straiton, to approve the minutes as presented. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**Minutes of February 15, 2013 Special Meeting:** Selectman Straiton made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to approve the minutes as presented. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**Minutes of February 19, 2013 Special Meeting:** Selectman Szatkowski made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Straiton, to approve the minutes as presented. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**Minutes of February 21, 2013 Special Meeting:** Selectman Straiton made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to approve the minutes as presented. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**First Selectman Report**

First Selectman Knickerbocker explained that due to the fact that the new insurance rates won't be in yet, the Board of Selectmen has cancelled their budget deliberation for tomorrow evening. He advised that the Blight Ordinance had been reduced in scope based on the comments at the Public Hearing and therefore, did not require us to spend an additional \$5,000 (legal ad) to republish the notice and hold another public hearing. He also explained that the bridge at Walnut is not complete, additional work to install the guard rails is pending. He did note that when weather permits, the parking lot at Library Place will be staked out, drainage installed and paved; the construction inside the Library is on schedule.

**New Business**

**1) Consideration of RFP – Paramedic Contract**

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Straiton, to forward the RFP for Paramedic Services to the Finance Department for advertising. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**2) Consideration of Adoption of Emergency Plan for Registrar of Voters**

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to adopt the Emergency Plan for the Registrar of Voters. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**3) Consideration of request – Bicycle Racing – Clarke Business Park**

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Straiton, to approve the request of Stage 1 Cycling, to hold their bicycle training series on Tuesday evenings, beginning May 7<sup>th</sup> through August 13<sup>th</sup>, in the Clarke Business Park, subject to receipt of the appropriate insurance and notification to park occupants and police department. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**4) Consideration of Ratification – Dispatcher Union Contract**

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Straiton, to ratify the United Public Service Employees Union, Local 424/Unit 45 – Bethel Police Department Dispatchers/Clerical Contract through June 30, 2014. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

**5) Consideration of Capital Plan**

The Board of Selectmen reviewed but took no official action on the recommendation of the items to fund in the Capital Plan.

**6) Consideration of Appointment – Youth Commission**

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Straiton, to appoint Robert Delitis (D) to the vacancy on the Youth Commission. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved. This fills the vacancy created by the resignation of Nicole Struth (D).

**7) Consideration of Fund Balance Policy**

Town Counsel Martin had revised the Board of Finance proposed Fund Balance Policy to correct language issues and to make the policy more concise.

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Straiton, to adopt the amended Fund Balance Policy as revised. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved. The Fund Balance is as follows:

**Town of Bethel - Fund Balance Policy**  
**Adopted by the Board of Finance January 7, 2013**  
**Amended by the Board of Selectmen March 5, 2013**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

A fund balance serves four functions:

1. Eliminates the need for short term borrowing to handle cash flow between the start of the fiscal year and receipt of revenue from current fiscal year taxes.
2. Periodically can stabilize major fluctuations in the property tax rates.
3. Serves as a contingency fund that enables the Town to respond to unanticipated emergencies or opportunities.
4. Demonstrates stability to bond agencies and credit rating companies to help, ensure and maintain that the Town is able to obtain the best interest rates and ratings available.

Credit rating agencies determine the adequacy of the fund balance using a complex series of financial evaluations. The size of the fund balance is an important consideration in the Town's rating but not the only consideration. Other considerations are the reliability of the Town's revenue sources, economic conditions, community wealth factors, cash position, debt ratios, management performance, and fiscal decisions made by the Town's legislative body.

This policy is intended to provide for a fund balance which satisfies the cash flow and contingency needs of the Town at the same time avoid over taxing the Town's citizens through the maintenance of an excessive fund balance.

## Board of Selectmen – Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2013

### The appropriate level of a fund balance is to be maintained in the Town's general fund.

It is the policy of the Town to maintain a fund balance of ten (10%) percent of the operating general fund expenditures. In practice, no less than fifty (50%) percent of the fund balance should be available in liquid assets, subject to reduction when necessary for short term funding for cash flow needs and asset acquisition.

### The policy for replenishing deficiencies.

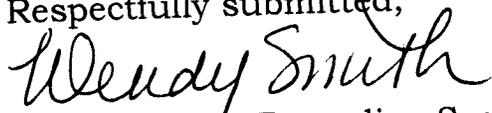
If at the end of a fiscal year, the fund balance falls below ten (10%) of the operating general fund expenditures, the Board of Finance shall consider and if warranted, prepare and submit a plan for expenditure reductions and/or raising revenue to increase the fund balance. The Board of Finance shall consider and take action to restore the fund balance to acceptable levels as soon as reasonably possible without overburdening the taxpayers of the Town.

### The circumstances in which the fund balance is to be utilized.

1. Expenditures for operating emergencies.
2. Unanticipated budgetary shortfalls.
3. In the event the fund balance exceeds eleven (11%) percent at the end of any fiscal year, the excess surplus may be used in one or more following combinations:
  - a. Transfer excess surplus to the Debt Service Fund for future debt payments.
  - b. Transfer excess surplus to the Capital or Nonrecurring Fund for future capital projects.
  - c. Use excess surplus to reduce the tax rate in the subsequent fiscal year provided the use will not result in major fluctuations in the tax rate in succeeding fiscal years.

As there was no further business on tonight's agenda, Selectman Szatkowski made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Straiton, to adjourn tonight's meeting at 8:45 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary