



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

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, September 23, 2014
6:30 p.m.
CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room “A”

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

First Selectman Knickerbocker called the Special Meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Consideration of Resolution – Economic Development and Community Development Grant

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to adopt the following:

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 588L of the Connecticut Department of Economic Development is authorized to extend financial assistance for economic development projects; and WHEREAS, it is desirable and in the public interest that the Town of Bethel, Connecticut make an application to the State for \$100,000 in order to undertake the Design Phase – Environmental planning, engineering and design for the expansion of the existing Francis J. Clarke Industrial Park and to execute an Assistance Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Board of Selectmen,

- 1.) That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the state financial assistance imposed by Chapter 588L of the Connecticut General Statutes, The Economic Development and Manufacturing Assistance Act of 1990, §32-220 et seq.

- 2.) That the filing of an application for State finance assistance by the Town of Bethel, Connecticut in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 is hereby approved and that Matthew S. Knickerbocker, First Selectman is directed to execute and file such application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decisions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of the Town of Bethel, Connecticut.
- 3.) That it adopts or has adopted as its policy to support the following nondiscrimination agreements and warranties provided in subsection (a)(1) of Connecticut General Statutes sections 4a-60 and 4a-60a, respectively, as amended by Public Acts 07-142 and 07-245, and for which purposes the “contractor” is the Town of Bethel, Connecticut and “contract” is said Assistance Agreement:

The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut. The contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation, or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved.

The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contractor such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation.

Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Consideration of appraisal – 68A Maple Avenue (Executive Session anticipated)

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to go into Executive Session at 6:45 p.m. for the purpose of discussion of the appraisal for 68A Maple Avenue. Invited into Executive Session were Town Counsel Martin Lawlor and Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Executive Session ended at 6:50 p.m.

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to recommend and refer to the Board of Finance, the purchase of vacant land consisting of 11.274 acres known and located at 68A Maple Avenue, Bethel, CT and 1.596 acres being a portion of the premises known and located at 32 Hickok Avenue, Bethel, CT for total of 12.87 contiguous acres for a sum not to exceed Six Hundred Seventy Five Thousand (\$675,000) Dollars from MH Development, LLC and Ellis A. Tarlton, III for use as open space. Said funding shall be reduced by any grants that the Town may have or may receive in the future for this purchase of open space land. The funding for the purchase of the aforementioned land shall come from bonding, bond anticipatory notes, temporary borrowing and/or other appropriation as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved. This item will require a Special Town Meeting upon concurrence of the Board of Finance.

Consideration of Bond Resolution for Eureka Lake Water Tank

First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to recommend to the Board of Finance, pursuant to recommendations from the Bethel Public Utilities Commission, to appropriate a sum not to exceed Two Million Four Hundred Thousand (\$2,400,000.00) Dollars, which sum includes a One Hundred Thousand (\$100,000.00) Dollars contingency, for funding the construction of the "Eureka Lake Water Storage Tank" to be located at 37 Long Ridge Road, Danbury, CT. Said funding shall be reduced by any grants that the Town and/or the Bethel Public Utilities Commission may have or may receive in the future for this construction project.

The funding for the construction of the water storage tank shall come from bonding, bond anticipatory notes, temporary borrowing and/or other appropriation as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance with payments to be made by the water account users of the Bethel Public Utilities Commission.

Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved. This item will require a Special Town Meeting and referendum upon the concurrence of the Board of Finance.

First Selectman Knickerbocker recessed the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

First Selectman Knickerbocker called the meeting back into session at 7:03 p.m. with Board of Finance members present.

Joint Session with the Board of Finance to discuss town finances and explore opportunities to reduce expenditures and/or generate savings for the Town of Bethel.

First Selectman Knickerbocker and Comptroller Robert Kozlowski presented information on a variety of cost saving measures that have already taken place. This includes items such as the conversion from fuel oil to gas at municipal and school buildings; they noted a significant savings to the IT department with the hiring of a full time employee versus consultant services. Rates have been increased for water / sewer users which have enabled the debt owed to the town by the utility department to be reduced – currently the sewer debt is paid and the water debt has been reduced as well. Noted that the refunding of debt realized savings of approximately \$625,000 and that significant savings are expected with the upcoming Ameresco (energy) contract. He noted that both liability/worker's compensation insurance and health benefits continues to be a challenge for all...collective bargaining negotiations are ongoing to see about switching to a HSA accounts.

A general roundtable type discussion took place. Many different ideas and suggestions were discussed, some include, for example, Selectman Szatkowski questioned the need for departments to have town vehicles, suggesting instead that they use their own vehicles and receive a mileage reimbursement. The concern has always been that the town insurance does not cover use of a personal vehicle for town business. Timothy Draper suggested the option of using older police vehicles instead of leases in lieu of the relatively low trade in value.

Union negotiations have moved towards new employees being in a defined contribution retirement savings plan versus the standard defined benefit plan. It was noted that this is a savings that would be seen in the future, not necessarily now. Also discussed was the elimination of longevity for new employees.

William Kingston questioned the Board of Education about several savings ideas, which when discussed, were either not possible or already considered.

Question was raised as to whether there is a benefit to having an on staff Fleet Maintenance Department versus contracting this service out. First Selectman Knickerbocker used an example, that during a recent snow storm, one of the plow trucks, during a middle of the night snow plowing, had a problem with the transmission and one of the mechanics was able to get out and address the problem immediately; we might not have that kind of service with a repair shop.

It was suggested that perhaps savings could be found by combining purchases for the fire departments for equipment. Engine purchases tend to be more specific in their specifications than generic so it is generally better to purchase separately but they will look at it.

A new software program being considered will essentially link the land use agencies, building, health, etc. departments; it is estimated that this will save time for residents seeking those types of services. Consideration should be given to fees associated with these types of service should be looked at so that the “user” pays the full cost rather than increasing department costs.

A review of fees associated with programs, like Parks & Recreation should be reviewed and it was suggested that perhaps, these programs, instead of being self sustaining, can be profit making to offset other costs associated with the particular department.

It was agreed by all that this was a good first meeting discussion.

As there was no further business on tonight’s agenda, First Selectman Knickerbocker made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary