

**Selectmen Meeting
Minutes
January 6, 2016**

Selectman Connolly, Selectman Iacobucci, Selectman Dziokonski, Selectman Sargent and Chairman LeBlanc were in attendance. Chairman LeBlanc opened the meeting at 7:00PM. Attendee was Town Administrator Ward.

Review of Minutes

There were no minutes for review.

Public Comment

There was none.

Community & Development Block Grant Public Hearing – Director Phil Duffy

Director of Community & Economic Development Phil Duffy and Michael Pinkpang a consultant from Communities Opportunities Group were before the board to discuss the procedure for the FY16 Block Grant application. Mr. Duffy reviewed this is the consultant the board approved to be hired to complete the application. A public hearing is required to discuss strategy to identify the FY16 priorities for the application. At this time he submitted a map he prepared for the boards review and acceptance of the proposed target area for the housing improvement program. He asked for the board to accept the map as presented. Chairman LeBlanc opened the hearing for Public Comment, in favor there was none, in opposition, there was none. Selectman Iacobucci asked if the Nelson Street Reconstruction costs were going to be the same numbers as last year's application. Mr. Duffy reviewed he isn't sure yet he is still waiting on final numbers from engineers. Selectman Sargent made a motion to endorse the map as presented. Selectman Connolly seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Pinkpang reviewed the programs and goals for the FY 16 application. He reviewed the funding is granted by the Federal Government and awarded throughout the state. The amount of applications is down the amount received last year were only about 20, typically there are over 30 applications submitted. There is a boiler plate for the 4 components to be met for each community. The four are need, impact, feasibility and support. The maximum amount awarded is \$800,000 per community unless there are multiple target areas then the maximum is \$900,000 per community and a regional application can be awarded 1 million. This year Clinton is eligible for \$900,000 for the multiple use of funding. The proposed projects include Nelson Street Reconstruction, the street will be repaved new sidewalks curbing and street lighting and streetscape,

housing rehabilitation. Where the budget comes in for Nelson Street will determine the amount to be used for housing rehab, the state will want to see this funding spent, there has been a reapplication process started. He explained 20% of this funding can be used for emergency cases, like failed heating, roofing and handicapped access. He estimated the amount for the programming to be between \$250,000 and \$300,000 which would allow for approximately 10 to 12 units if there is a larger demand this can be reevaluated. He explained the third component to the application is the social services which would be about \$30,000 of funding used to provide transportation to the WHEAT Community Café providing coverage for the dispatch and drivers. Selectman Dziokonski asked for more information on the housing rehabilitation deferred payment plan. Mr. Duffy explained he wanted to discuss a change in the program at this time. It is a tiered grant program, he deferred is a 0% interest loan not paid back unless the property is sold. Selectman Dziokonski asked for confirmation on the deferred payment loan, it is used to complete needed repairs and the loan is never paid. Mr. Duffy explained correct unless there is an event to trigger payment and retire the mortgage, within a fifteen year time period. It is to serve the intended beneficiary and the recapture note stipulates the terms. There is a sliding scale of the note if the sale is within 15 years, there are different components, one being moderate or low income, where the property owners fails within the guide lines. He proposed a change to the board regarding owner/investor properties. He is trying to attract this participation into the program. At this time there is low participation. He would like to attract more projects to the 0% loans with deferred payments. Chairman LeBlanc asked for clarification on the term owner/investor. Mr. Duffy explained an owner not living at the property. Discussion continued board members expressed concerns with the proposed change reviewing owners are less inclined to do repairs unless they are occupying homes. Chairman LeBlanc noted he would rather see a change to the programming to offer assistance to first time home buyers rather than a landlord. Mr. Duffy stated that is a good idea and something worth exploring in the future. Selectman Connolly reviewed he is open to the original request for beneficiaries, they are less of a risk to take advantage of the programs. There is value to the discussion for the low income families living there. Chairman LeBlanc explained he wouldn't like to see an increase to the rent if there were home improvements made. Mr. Duffy explained the rental agreement would have to be monitored. Discussion continued and the board agreed they would foresee more benefits to a first time home buyers assistance program. The discussion concluded with Mr. Duffy reviewing the senior vans would provide rides to the WHEAT Community Café, a decrease has been noted over the last for years since this rides were eliminated. He thanked the board for their time and support. He explained pre applications are available on line at the town web site or in his office, the Town Clerk's Office and the Library, letters of interest are being accepted as well.

Rail Trail Update- Frannie Hodge, Clinton Greenway Trust

Ms. Frannie Hodge of the Clinton Greenway Trust was before the board with an update on efforts to have the public rail trail run through Clinton. She began by distributing information to the board on the projects and programming the Greenway Trust offers along with some background on the trust. Ms. Hodge reviewed the trust has been working with the railroad to purchase a portion of the trail property. The land would connect the trail to Berlin. They have been negotiating with the railroad a purchase price, they have secured grant funding and received a portion of the funding from a generous donor. When the funds were raised they approach the railroad who then responded by saying the value was \$20,000 per acre not the original \$3,000 as discussed. This is an amount the land trust did not plan for and could not afford, explaining the purchase price agreed to in prior discussions was about \$30,000. Discussion continued regarding the property and the price the rail road has requested. Ms. Hodge explained the property has been abandoned for years, no taxes have been paid. Chairman LeBlanc reviewed the Solicitor can review when the railroad abandoned the rail line. Ms. Hodge reviewed the plan is to have the property appraised and make some comparisons to property recently sold. Selectman Connolly asked about proposing an eminent domain where the property has been abandoned and unused. Selectman LeBlanc explained a comparison cannot be made to the land purchased by the town of Clinton; it wouldn't be the same type of use. Selectman Dziokonski made a motion to proceed along the lines previously discussed, review the taxation of the land and the process of eminent domain, along with contacting the state Representatives and Congressman to make them aware of the difficulties with railroad and ask for assistance. Selectman Connolly seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Selectman Connolly stated engaging the State Representatives and Federal Officials the town will find they cannot be alone in developing the rail trail, other communities must be pursuing the same thing. Administrator Ward reviewed the state may help in negotiating, if they have statewide influence on rail road, this project will provide public good. Ms. Hodge agreed explaining the development of the trail is a priority for the DCR, she was unsure of the process of acquisition of property by the state. Chairman LeBlanc stated the town should include the DCR as part of the discussions, they may provide help. Ms. Hodge agreed she explained they are open to the development of the trail. Selectman Iacobucci explained she commends Ms. Hodge and the Greenway Trust on all of the hard work and efforts dedicated to this cause, it would be great for the town and would bring more people to and through Clinton. Ms. Hodge thanked the board and explained there is always room for expansion if anyone is interested she explained how to find out more about membership.

Review of the Special Town Meeting Draft Warrant

Chairman LeBlanc referred to Administrator Ward for review. Administrator Ward reviewed the board had completed a preliminary review at the last meeting, since the Town Solicitor has also completed a preliminary review and made some changes. The warrant needs to be finalized for Special Town Meeting on Saturday, January 30, 2016 at 10:00AM. He reviewed there are 10 proposed warrant articles. He began review Article 1 is the approval of funding for the collective bargaining agreement with the DPW, Article 2 is the approval of an amendment to the amount budgeted to cover the expense of the recycle containers and the conversion of the trucks. Article 3 is the approval of amended the funding in the FY16 Rubbish Enterprise Budget, Administrator Ward reviewed Superintendent McGown has been working with the new program for 6 months now and has a better understanding of the funding needs. Article 4 is approval to raise or appropriate \$21,000.00 from the Insurance Restitution Account to purchase a trash/recycle collection vehicle. Article 5 is to establish a separate revenue account known as the PEG access and Cable Related Fund. Article 6 has been submitted by the Board of Health, this article to establish a clean and lien program, it may be removed it is still under review by the Solicitor. Article 7 has been submitted by the Fire Chief regarding truss construction. Article 8 submitted by the Parks & Recreation Department for \$1500.00 funding for the set up of a generator to be used by CEMA for emergency shelter location. Article 9 has been submitted by the School Department to transfer balance of \$18,000.00 from the Athletic Complex Track Project, to the Middle School Doors Project, Article 10 has been submitted by the Police Chief for unpaid bills, the amount is being worked on by labor council, it is pertaining to an injured on duty case, he estimated at approximately \$15,000.00. Selectman Sargent made a motion to approve the warrant as submitted subject to final review by Town Solicitor Gibbons. Selectman Connolly seconded the motion. Under Discussion: Selectman Dziokonski asked about the DPW rubbish enterprise increased appropriations, if the increases were going to be from the enterprise fund. Administrator Ward explained yes, the only additional funding articles are the unpaid medical bills and the generator. The vote was unanimous.

Administrative Business

Public Works Monthly Report

Superintendent of Public Works submitted a monthly report relative to the operations of his department for the months of October 2015 & November 2015 for the Selectmen's review and approval. Selectman Iacobucci made a motion to accept the report as presented. Selectman Dziokonski seconded the motion. Under Discussion: Selectman Connolly complimented the D.P.W. for a good response to the difficult storm, it was a complex storm to manage and they department did a great job. The board agreed. The vote was unanimous.

Goals & Objectives

Duffy Park Vegetation Clearing

Selectman Sargent explained the Park & Recreation Department has cleared what they can. Selectman Connolly agreed but explained there is a bigger problem there, an invasive weed has gotten worse. He would like to research if there are any grants available perhaps even one that the town could match to try to eradicate the issue.

Oxford Court Improvements

Selectman Connolly explained he is aware this is an ongoing discussion; he knows the Community & Economic Development Director was monitoring the progress. He is aware the storm has interrupted the work progress. The town issues not going away are the dumpster overflowing with trash which seems to be getting worse not improving and the parking issues. Tenants are parking overnight and the lot is unable to be cleared. There should be a parking plan implemented and enforced. The board agreed to invite the representatives in for the next meeting in February.

Committee Reports

Memorial Day Parade Committee

Selectman Iacobucci explained he will be working with the Veterans Agent and send out notices to current members to start meeting. Selectman Connolly explained he encourages the committee development and would suggest a rededication of the memorial in front of the town hall on the Memorial Day program if appropriate. Selectman Iacobucci agreed and explained he will bring this request the committee.

Chairman LeBlanc reviewed the board will enter into Executive Session under Article 3 Union Negotiations discussion at 8:25PM. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Sargent "aye", Selectman Dziokonski "aye", Selectman Iacobucci "aye", Selectman Connolly "aye" and Chairman LeBlanc "aye". The board will not return to open meeting.

Executive Session Article 3 Police Union Negotiations 8:15PM-8:40PM

Selectman Sargent made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50PM. Selectman Dziokonski seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Meeting Adjourned,

Joyce A. Corbosiero
Administrative Assistant
Clinton Board of Selectmen