

MINUTES
OPC MEETING
February 21, 2012

First Selectman Jayme Stevenson called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. in Room 206 at Town Hall.

Present were First Selectman, Jayme Stevenson; Selectman, Jerry Nielsen; Planning & Zoning Chairman, Fred Conze; Board of Finance Chairman, Liz Mao; Board of Education Chairman, Betsy Hagerty-Ross; RTM Moderator, Karen Armour and Town Administrator, Karl Kilduff.

Planning & Zoning

Mr. Conze discussed his reservations about Council of Governments (COGs) being proposed in Connecticut. A main concern of Mr. Conze's is that this regional type of government would remove the autonomy of individual towns. Ms. Stevenson mentioned that in an effort to completely understand all the ramifications of COGs she has met with individuals who support the COGs and those who do not. It is her feeling that the needs of communities vary greatly and that affects the value of COGs in different regions of the State.

Judge Cohen has decided to sustain the appeal on the Leroy Ave. and West Ave. housing project. This allows the developer to build the originally proposed 16 units of housing. The Town will need to decide if it will petition for an appeal of Judge Cohen's decision. The ongoing cases at Pheasant Run and Hoyt Street were mentioned.

RTM Moderator

The RTM meets on Monday, March 19, 2012. Items for consideration when the RTM meets are: Public Works contract, Redistricting, Charter Changes, the elimination of redundancy in the RTM ordinance, and standardizing the rules for commissions.

A sub-committee of the Rules Committee will develop an orientation packet for new RTM members which will convey appropriate procedures for making an objection during a meeting and basic Roberts Rules of Order.

Finally, Ms. Armour mentioned that she is in talks with the Town Attorney about dividing the approval of the Town Budget into sections, as has been done in the past, thus enabling the RTM members to vote on the individual budget components as they deem appropriate.

Board of Education

Ms. Hagerty-Ross stated that the Board of Education's budget denotes a 5.62% budget increase. Some of the budget factors were recently discussed at the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (C.A.B.E.) breakfast. Among the noteworthy information is that the ESC will remain the same next year at \$1.6 million and that the Burden of Proof is not scheduled to be addressed this year.

Board of Finance

Ms. Mao confirmed that the Board of Finance approved transfers for extra tree maintenance and for facility repairs. With an expectation for limited additional snow this year some funds were taken from the snow budget for these transfers.

The Board has approved the structure of Bonds to be sold. The Bond issuance is scheduled for March 15th and will allow the Town to take advantage of a 60 year low interest rate.

Ms. Mao mentioned that there has been a Board of Finance member on other building projects and she wondered if it would be appropriate to have a BOF member on the BOE Central Offices/Mather Community Center Building Committee. Ms. Stevenson said the Committee presently consists of members with building backgrounds but that she is open to the idea of having a member of the BOF on the committee.

Mr. Conze commented that while our Town is in good financial shape it may be prudent in the near future to invest in computerizing the Topographical studies that have already been completed. Doing this would help the Town to quantify issues related to drainage.

First Selectman

Ms. Stevenson commented that the Town's operating budget is up 2.9%. Additionally, she mentioned that the public is looking for more services, especially in these down economic times.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 15, 2012 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 206.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda O'Leary
Recording Secretary