

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
SELECTBOARD AND SCHOOL DIRECTORS
March 31, 2022
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Carol A. Fachini, Michael G. Denault, Brandon Field and Pamela Tworig,
School Directors: Erika Bailey, Helen Fields, Gary Bellows, Betsy Parrington and Kelly Holland.
Visitors: Carolyn Brooks, Kurt Gamari, Randy Lichtenwalner, School Principal, Luke McKay, Beth Phelps, and Daniel Potvin.
William Levine, Emergency Management Director.
Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. She welcomed everyone and asked that discussion be limited to matters on the agenda. Erika Bailey would like to see discussion only tonight, without any motions. It was ultimately decided that the Hearing of Visitors would be allowed since it was on the agenda.

HEARING OF VISITORS

Dan Potvin presented a handout to those present. He stated that we are headed toward a food crisis that will affect the entire globe. The President of Russia is no longer willing to accept the U.S. dollar which will exacerbate economic problems. Forty percent of our fertilizer comes from Russia and Ukraine which will impact farming industries. The handout teaches residents how to organize small teams in their neighborhoods to get through the times ahead. He is not doing this under the Selectboard or Emergency Management, just as an individual.

MEETING STRUCTURE

The Selectboard invited the Schoolboard to tonight's meeting and will chair the meeting and take minutes. The boards will take turns with the next meeting being initiated by the Schoolboard.

REVIEW PAST MEETING DISCUSSIONS

Mike Denault suggested they begin by defining the school areas. Pam Tworig felt the town and school used to be intertwined and the community spirit has been replaced with animosity and defensiveness. It was agreed that many issues have passed now that the potential merger is over. The COVID—19 guidelines that the School Directors had to follow made relations difficult as well.

SCHEDULING OF EVENTS

Nancy Bushika felt we could all agree that the building and grounds belong to all of us. She felt it was important to discuss which entity should be in charge of scheduling. Gary Bellows felt the starting place should be to review the deeds to the property. Kelly Holland said the town owns the land and the building. However, according to the law, as long as the building is operated as a school, the Schoolboard has 100% complete jurisdiction all year, including the summer. Mike Denault felt in a situation with only a school building, that might be true, but he disagreed since our building is not solely operated as school; it is also a town office. When this structure was built, it was built as a multi-purpose center. Therefore, it can't be just viewed as a school with 100% authority at all times and through the summer. Mike Denault noted that the Seed Savers have their garden and people are allowed to wander down and work in the gardens on evenings or weekends, anytime when there is no school in session. It was acknowledged that both the town and school's lawyers provided differing opinions and both boards

preferred not use more lawyers. Erika Bailey said scheduling should be easy, as long as the desired room wasn't already reserved. She said it's not a matter of approving the request, but confirming that the space is available. Luke McKay and Lori Shepard recently held a dog clinic but did not fill out the school use form. It was acknowledged that it wasn't necessary since the parking lot and town office was used. Discussion moved to town or school insurance coverage and which insurance would be used if someone was bitten by a dog at the event. Kelly Holland suggested the two boards could create a joint shared agreement for use of the space. Mike Denault said he would like to hold a hunters safety course in the gym and it was acknowledged that hunters safety classes were held in the school in the past. People also questioned what insurance would cover an injury during the craft fair. Randy Lichtenwalner felt when you allow something that puts the school's educational needs at risk, you divert money that could be used for educational purposes into lawyers and a settlement. He also noted that some uses, such as the kitchen, often leave a footprint requiring additional custodial time. This is also money that is not buying books for your kids or paying a para to teach your kids. Randy Lichtenwalner suggested setting a fee for events that might leave a footprint. Dan Potvin disagreed, saying these footprints are townspeople exercising their right to use the community building. Mike Denault asked who allows what type of events. McCann hosts wine tasting events as fundraisers and there must be insurance riders available for such things. Helen Fields felt townspeople should have the right to use the space as long as school is not in session. It was agreed that the insurance policies and coverage should be reviewed in preparation for the next discussion. In the meantime, the school use form will continue to be used to reserve space.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Nancy Bushika acknowledged that whether it is town or school money, it is all taxpayer money. Gary Bellows mentioned that bills could be divided by square footage. Nancy Bushika asked the School Directors to let the Selectboard know about their building maintenance plans because the town may want to make updates to the town office at the same time.

The next joint meeting between the Selectboard and School Directors will be Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

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