

Town of Goshen
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

February 20, 2024

REGULAR MEETING

This meeting held in-person and recorded via Zoom.us and is available as a recording

PRESENT: Todd M. Carusillo, Scott Olson, Dexter S. Kinsella (zoom)

OTHERS: Dawn Wilkes; Patrick Lucas; Marissa Wright; Henrietta Horvay; Audrey Blondin; Michael Leonard; Seth Breakell; Marianne Stilson; Michael Kelly; Johanna Kimball; Annette Lott; Joyce Mowrey; Marissa Wright; Eric Warner, *Goshen News*; Pat Reilly; Kathleen Kennedy; Don Wilkes; Krista Rizzo; Judi Armstrong; Bernie Harrington; Cinza Lavin; Cindy Barrett.

1. **Call to order:** Todd M. Carusillo called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
2. **Approval of the minutes of the meeting of February 13, 2024:** The motion to approve the minutes as amended of the Special Meeting of the BOS February 2, 2024 was made by Dexter S. Kinsella, seconded by Scott Olson. The name of Donna Malon needed to be spelled correctly (Malone is not correct). Audrey Blondin "Pay as you Throw" was dropped from the town of *Litchfield* (not Woodbury). The State of CT has put out a bid for a new recycling process (not the Lt. Governor). Scott Olson stated that he did not say "leadership" when referring to Ms. Wright's comments on the Sharon Turnpike property. Todd Carusillo felt this land can be kept for the future; Scott did not say he agreed with his statement.
3. **Matters arising out of the 2/13/24:** None
4. **Approval of the Payroll and Warrant – February 22, 2024:**
In a **motion** made by Scott Olson, seconded by Dexter S. Kinsella, it was **voted** to approve the total warrant and payroll of February 22, 2024 in the amount of \$56,422.35. Included in this warrant were the payroll in the amount of \$28,839.82 and the warrant in the amount of \$27,582.53. Voted unanimous. Also included in this warrant: King & King Associates (accountants) - \$3,373.75; Truck Parts & Sales - \$11,023.31. USA Waste: \$9,541.00.
5. **First Selectman's Report:** None
Garret Harlow, Supervisor of Public Works, reported that bids for Rock Crushing and Materials Processing Bids were not accepted. He will issue a new/revised bid specification for the future.

Todd heard from the Recreation Director; to table the BOS list of concerns about her request to move her office over to Camp Cochipianne to February 27, 2024.

6. Public Comment:

Joyce Mowrey sent a written letter to the Board of Selectmen reporting her displeasure of banning the book titled *Gender Queer*, by Maia Kobabe. She enclosed the list of steps to be taken under the *Request for Reconsideration form* to be used when a patron has negative feelings regarding a book to be offered to its patrons.

Pat Reilly, past President of the Goshen Library Board, expressed his displeasure with banning of the book *Gender Queer* from the Goshen Library; he finds that action very scary. *Mein Kampf* authored by Adolph Hitler was never banned from Libraries, he stated.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

February 20, 2024

Page 2

Audrey Blondin expressed that the book banning was very scary. She finds book banning abhorrent.

Marrisa Wright sent a letter to the Selectmen regarding the *Plan of Conservation and Development* and requested the letter be attached to these minutes. Her letter suggested to find an attorney to revise the Plan; garner valuable input from interested parties in town; a land facilitator lead the process. In addition, she is against book banning.

Dexter Kinsella stated that he is not in favor of banning books from the library; if the book is offensive, just don't read it. Just follow the book banning policy.

Renay Jakowski stated the book that may have been banned should be a parental decision; should be moved during the summer. Were other books removed? Todd stated that "we are not banning books, it's in the hands of the Library Board.

7. Correspondence:

Todd received information for those interested on how to become a **Foster Parent**. He will place the information on e-mail to be distributed through the Goshen Website.

Todd received correspondence from Garret Harlow, Supervisor of Public Works, stating that Mr. Harlow is planning to make application to the Planning & Zoning Board (on Sharon Trnpke property) - only to get approval.

Scott Olson received an e-mail from Janet Hooper regarding book displacement. The issue is in the hands of the Library Board.

8. Old Business:

8a. Appointments: None

8a. Budgets:

The following budget was brought forth for discussion: **Elections:** This second submission for the Elections budget reported on estimations for the cost for staffing for "early voting" process (new).

In a **motion** made by Dexter S. Kinsella, seconded by Scott Olson, it was **voted** to receive the Elections budget for 2024-2025 and forward to the BOF for their review and consideration. Voted unanimous.

9. New Business:

9a. Lake Weed Budget:

The Lake Weed annual budget for \$45,000. was set up to fund support for conservation efforts, i.e., weed control projects, clean water, and other recreational activities. Having these essential elements in place enhances the value of the properties on these recreational lakes, hence keeps Goshen's grand list up. Dexter Kinsella stated budget amount adopted was for the Plan of Conservation, natural resources, increase property values. Scott Olson was in agreement with those goals. He also spoke with Mark Harris who agreed with Dexter Kinsella and stated the property values emphasizing the water ways were to be kept to the highest levels of clean conditions.

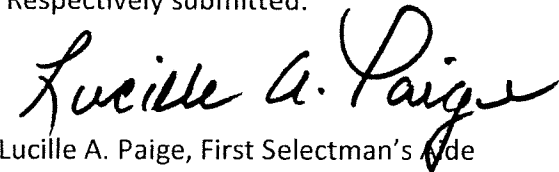
10. Other Business:

Scott Olson stated that the Town's *Housing Plan* needs to be updated, tied in with the POCD which is due to be updated by 2027. He stated that both of these "plans" should be reviewed/updated at the same time. He feels this action is the will of the people of Goshen -this is a watershed town. A new "committee" should be formed. Scott Olson called for a motion to form this committee. Dexter Kinsella called for this "committee" formation to be tabled until next week. Lucille Paige called for "Point of Order" at this point. This "item" to be placed on next week's agenda has already carried too much conversation at this particular meeting, without placement of the subject matter on this 2/20/24 public agenda. Scott Olson then put forth a motion to place this subject matter on the current agenda, 2/20/24; it was seconded by Todd Carusillo. Motion carried. Scott Olson stated that a major portion of Goshen's residents are in favor a committee of this kind.

Todd reported that he attended a meeting last week wherein our legislators – Sen. Steve Harding and Rep. Maria Horn were in attendance. He urged both of them to do what they can for their Goshen constituents in reducing the current 10% Housing Mandates from the State, because of the water shed areas throughout town. Perhaps they can reduce that number to 4% or 5%.

11. Adjournment: In a motion made by Dexter S. Kinsella, seconded by Scott Olson, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 p.m. Voted unanimous.

Respectively submitted:



Lucille A. Paige, First Selectman's Aide

Received Feb. 22, 2024 @ 1:08 P.M.
Attest Bartlett B. Blevins
Goshen Town Clerk

February 20, 2024

Board of Selectmen
Goshen, CT 06756

Dear Mr. Carusillo, Mr. Olson, and Mr. Kinsella,

I am a Friends of the Library Board member. I was a children's bookstore owner for 8 years in my long ago past and I retired in 2019 after over 20 years as a high school administrator. I have experience with books, the dangers of banning them, and extensive experience with teenagers.

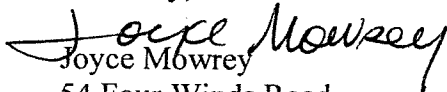
Recently I learned about the attempt to ban the book *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe from our town library. This memoir has been in the young adult section of our public library for 2 years. It has won awards and been recognized as a literary accomplishment and I think it belongs in our public library.

I also know some other things I would like to put on record here:

1. The **Board of Selectmen have nothing to do with library inventory** selection nor removal and for your own sanity I would advise you to keep it that way.
2. The **Goshen Public Library has policies** in place for how to add books to the collection and how to address complaints.
3. A **Request for Reconsideration form** must be completed by a complainant who verifies that they have read the entire book and they must identify themselves. There are no anonymous complaints. The form then goes to the Library Director to complete the process of review.
4. **No Connecticut Town Library has banned a book in the history of the state.** It would look very bad if Goshen became the first.
5. Two years ago the **Goshen Library Board adopted a resolution to never ban a book.**
6. Every member of the Library Board **took an oath** to uphold the policies of the library.
7. **Petitions do not initiate nor are they a part of a book removal process.**
8. Book Banning has been going on for a long time. Over and over again the courts have upheld the First Amendment right of residents of Connecticut to have access to books and resources at their Public Library. We, as US citizens, **Parent Our Own.** You don't want your child to read a book, that is your choice, but you don't get to decide what other children read. Not your job. Not your right.
9. And the last thing I will say is from my experience as a book store owner in the late 80's/early 90's when a local religious organization pushed their will on local schools and libraries. Any book on their banned book list became a best seller for me. Identify a book as something you don't want kids to read, they will figure out a way to read it. And now, with the internet, it is not hard.

My hope is that you, our town leaders, will honor our country's Constitution and prevent others from infringing on our First Amendment rights. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,


Joyce Mowrey
54 Four Winds Road

13 FEB 2024

Dear Selectmen of the Town of Goshen,

I would like to provide input on the comments made by the Selectmen regarding the revision of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Comments that the town will need to find an attorney to revise the plan itself, and not just review a completed plan, were made at the last meeting.

It is imperative that the public, various non-profit stakeholders, commissions, commission members, and other interested parties within the town, have an opportunity to provide valuable input and an opportunity to be actively involved in the creation of the revised document.

This collaboration process can only take place if input from the various stakeholders is encouraged in an open and transparent manner, encompassing diverse public involvement.

It is essential that a land use facilitator lead this process. This person may also be a land use attorney, but the fundamental element in revision of the plan is and should be, an open and transparent process, where collaboration can occur with a wide range of stakeholders. A land use attorney can then review any finished product.

Please enter this letter into the meeting minutes, along with previous correspondence.

Sincerely,

Marissa L Wright

226 Sharon Turnpike

Goshen, CT