

September 16, 2015

The meeting of the Sterling Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Selectmen present-Russell Gray, Lincoln Cooper, and John Firlik.

Staff present-Joyce Gustavson, Kyle Collins, Kara Fishman (6:03 p.m.), and Demian Sorrentino (6:05 p.m.).

Also present-Sue Starkey and Jody Aubin.

Pledge of Allegiance: Everyone stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Audience of Citizens: None.

Approval of Minutes: L. Cooper made a motion, seconded by J. Firlik to approve the 9/9/2015 special meeting minutes (2) and the regular meeting minutes as presented. All voted in favor of the motion.

Unfinished Business:

a. Commission Vacancies (Economic Development Commission, Sterling Recreation Authority, & Zoning Board of Appeals): No new information. L. Cooper made a motion, seconded by J. Firlik to table this item to the next meeting. All voted in favor of the motion.

b. Insulation for Sterling Municipal Building, 1183 Plainfield Pike, Oneco, CT: R. Gray reported that the Energy Committee did not have a meeting on Thursday, 9/10/2015 due to the lack of a quorum. He shall contact Frank Bood, Chairman of the Energy Committee to inquire about an energy audit for the Sterling Municipal Building located at 1183 Plainfield Pike, Oneco, CT and if the Committee does not move forward on the energy audit, then the Board of Selectmen will have to take the necessary steps for the installation of insulation to prevent ice dams. L. Cooper made a motion, seconded by J. Firlik to table this item to the next meeting. All voted in favor of the motion.

c. Consider & Act on Proposal to Lease 54.36 Acres of Town Owned Property Located at 0 Industrial Park Road North and 8.31 Acres of Town Owned Property Located at 5 Exeter Drive by Renewable Ventures, LLC to Build a Solar Farm: R. Gray reported that he spoke to Kari Olsen, Town Attorney, regarding the proposal by Renewable Ventures, LLC to lease Town owned property; this would require a public hearing, a Town meeting is not required. Renewable Ventures, LLC is working to close a deal with Re-Energy. A tentative public hearing for the Town of Sterling to lease 54.36 acres for property located at 0 Industrial Park Road North and 8.31 acres on 5 Exeter Drive is tentatively scheduled for 10/7/2015 at 6:00 p.m. in Room #15 at the Sterling Town Hall, 1183 Plainfield Pike, Oneco, CT pending when the Town receives plans outlining the solar farm project from Renewable Ventures, LLC.

New Business:

a. Sue Starkey, Northeast District Department of Health – Sterling Trailer Housing Issues:

The Board of Selectmen asked S. Starkey of the Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH) to come to the meeting to discuss people living in trailers in Sterling. The following introductions were made: J. Aubin, Environmental Health Specialist, NDDH; D. Sorrentino, Zoning Enforcement Officer; J. Gustavson, Administrative Assistant; L. Cooper, Selectman; R. Gray, First Selectman; J. Firlik, Selectman; K. Fishman, Assessor; K. Collins, Building Official; and S. Starkey, Director of Health, NDDH. S. Starkey stated that NDDH does not have anything to do with trailers and issues related to mobile home parks are handled by the State Department of Consumer Protection as they are manufactured homes. NDDH checks out complaints involving health and safety issues. D. Sorrentino stated that there are several issues regarding residential occupancy of non-permitted structures: 1) the Town has existing seasonal campgrounds in which trailers are occupied year-round, contrary to a Town Ordinance; on the advice of legal counsel those campers need to be removed, 2) people living in campers on other properties owned by Sterling taxpayers start out by visiting and do not leave, and 3) in Deerfield Shores and other places, you have people living in garden sheds and other structures with no plumbing and disposing of waste in buckets to the Moosup River or elsewhere. One possible approach is to have a cooperative group effort and work with Jennifer Cooper, Special Deputy Assistant State's Attorney, Judicial District of Windham (a Housing Court prosecutor). J. Cooper could help

enforce the orders, write arrest warrants and prosecute if needed at no expense to the Town. The Town is responsible for relocation costs of any displaced individual. NDDH can write orders concerning health and safety issues, but cannot enforce them. The main goal is to have all paperwork submitted at one time and go before the Housing Court as a collective group; zoning enforcement officer, building official, fire marshal, department of public health, etc. Moving forward, the Town could tighten the Mobile Parks and Trailer Ordinance with help from the Housing Court prosecutor to ensure that sanitary conditions are maintained. It is ultimately the Housing Court that enforces the Town Ordinance.

b. Request for Refund of Excess Tax Payments: J. Firlik made a motion, seconded by L. Cooper to approve the request for refund to: JP Morgan Chase Bank, PO Box 961227, Fort Worth, TX 76161 for \$1,675.96. All voted in favor of the motion.

c. Resignation of Assessor: Kara Fishman, Assessor submitted a letter dated 9/14/2015 serving as a three (3) week notice of resignation effective 10/5/2015, stating "I have enjoyed working here immensely and continue to learn almost every day. My colleagues in the town hall and I are always focused on resolving issues, answering questions and educating residents, taxpayers and each other." J. Firlik made a motion, seconded by L. Cooper to accept K. Fishman's resignation letter with regrets. All voted in favor of the motion.

d. Consider and Act on Economic Development Coordinator's Position: Patricia Ball, 15 Sawmill Hill Road, Sterling, CT 06377 was hired as the Economic Development Coordinator replacing Sharon Chviek who retired in May 2015. J. Firlik made a motion, seconded by L. Cooper to hire Patricia Ball, effective 9/14/2015 as the Economic Development Coordinator for twelve hours (12) per week at a rate of pay of \$18.00 per hour. All voted in favor of the motion.

Any Other Business: 1) K. Fishman, Assessor updated the Selectmen on the Personal Property Audit Update. Westmark Corporation with a revised net assessment that should produce approximately \$12,004 in additional back tax dollars for the last three (3) years and Detotec North American, Inc. with a revised net assessment that should produce approximately \$115,082 in additional back tax dollars for the last three (3) years. Weatogue Powder Company, Inc. is also scheduled to be audited. 2) J. Gustavson asked if D. Boisselle, part-time, General Office Assistant (29 hours per week) could be eligible to receive pay for holiday and municipal closings for the hours she is scheduled to work on that day. The handbook states all regular hourly employees shall receive paid holidays. L. Cooper made a motion, seconded by J. Firlik to pay D. Boisselle for holiday and municipal closings for the hours she is scheduled to work on that day. All voted in favor of the motion. 3) Discussion was held regarding the upcoming vacancy in the Assessor's Office. R. Gray shall contact the Town's attorney to see if a municipality is legally required to advertise the position or if they can offer the position to a candidate of their choosing. Adjournment: L. Cooper made a motion, seconded by J. Firlik, to adjourn 8:02 p.m. All voted in favor of the motion.

Attest: _____
Joyce A. Gustavson, Recording Secretary