

May 21, 2015

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a special meeting on this date at the Stonington Town Hall at 1:00 p.m. Present were First Selectman George Crouse and Selectman Rob Simmons. Selectman Michael Spellman was present by telephone. Also present were members of the public.

(1) Call to Order

Mr. Crouse called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

(2) Comments from the Public

None

New Business

Letter in Support of Horses Healing Humans, Inc.

Ms. Jessica Morrissey spoke with regard to the Horses Healing Humans program. She stated they are a 501(c)3 equine therapeutic facility located at 340 New London Turnpike, Stonington. She stated that they are currently in the process of purchasing the entire property which is 37 acres. Ms. Morrissey stated that they are in the process of obtaining a \$900,000.00, 40- year, 3.5 percent fixed loan from the USDA. She stated that the USDA is extremely happy to work with them and they just need to get all of their ducks in a row and community support is one of the pages that they are here for today. Ms. Morrissey further stated that the sooner they can obtain absolute ownership of the property the sooner they get the program going. She stated that the program is going right now in the stable but because of the people that they take care of like veterans with PTSD, autistic children, young adults in transition it is a very labor intensive and sensory sensitive type of work. Ms. Morrissey stated that it cannot be at a regular stable. She stated that they have to have some privacy for mental health to handle their patients while other with patients have physical challenges. She stated that they can't mix the two. A motion was made by Mr. Simmons and seconded by Mr. Crouse that the Board of Selectmen send a letter as requested to the Department of Agriculture supporting the loan application. Discussion: Mr. Simmons stated that he has been to High Hopes down in Old Lyme and over the years he has also been to the facility that is called Horses Healing Humans and has been briefed on their program and has walked the property. Mr. Simmons stated that as the uncle of a young man with learning disabilities he know that it is very useful for kids. He stated that it is great that the Town of Stonington has an activity like this. He said it speaks to our compassion and it speaks to the fact that we are at the cutting edge of dealing with human issues in a therapeutic way. Mr. Crouse stated that the program has his support. The vote was unanimously in favor of sending a letter of support.

Solar Project Proposal Update

Mr. Tom Gilligan, Water Pollution Control Authority Director updated the Selectmen with regard to the proposed solar project at the Stonington Landfill. Mr. Gilligan explained that the potential benefits to the Town are: 1) Turn landfill site into an asset and 2) Long term lower energy costs. Mr. Gilligan also explained that the potential risks to the Town are: 1) Inability to monetize energy costs, 2) Energy costs do not escalate as projected by Proposers (less "savings" to Town), 3) Net Metering Credits funds not available and 4) High Point of Interconnection (POI) Cost. Mr. Gilligan recommended that the town decline to participate at this time based on the risks. A motion was made by Mr. Simmons and seconded by Mr. Spellman to cease participating in the solar project at the landfill at this time. Discussion:

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Mr. Simmons thanked the staff of the town all for doing a lot of work in a short period of time and presently us with a factual response and not just a warm and fuzzy political response. Mr. Crouse stated that Mr. Gilligan, Mr. Phetteplace and Mr. Deledda have had meetings and kept him informed and they are top shelf. Mr. Spellman stated that he concurred with the motion and the second. He also stated that the Town Hall staff did a great job and they made it clear that the plan was cost prohibitive. Mr. Spellman also stated that he supports the horse initiative. The vote was 3-0 in favor of ceasing to participate in the solar project at the landfill.

(3) Comments from the Public

None

(4) Comments from the Selectmen

None

(5) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Bell
Recording Secretary