

Board of Selectmen
SPECIAL MEETING
June 5, 2018
APPROVED MINUTES

The Westport Board of Selectmen held a Special Meeting on Tuesday, June 5, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. in Room 201 of the Westport Town Hall. In attendance were Jim Marpe, Jennifer Tooker, Melissa Kane, Peter Ratkiewich, Engineer Jim Kousidis, Eileen Flug, and Eileen Francis, recording secretary. An audio recording of the meeting is available. The item was continued from May 23, 2018.

To take such action as the meeting may determine, to accept the petition from 9 homeowners of properties fronting Hillspoint Road, seeking to bury overhead utilities within the public Right-of-Way; and further, to authorize the Director of Public Works to seek approval from the Board of Finance and the Representative Town Meeting for appropriation and bond authorization of the proposed project.

Director of Public Works Peter Ratkiewich made the presentation. Mr. Ratkiewich summarized the project, including the engineering aspects, and how the Town will benefit assessing the homeowners. He explained that because the project requests public funding, the town will administer and oversee all work. Kousidis Engineering will conduct the day-to-day construction inspection and supervision, and report back to the town.

Mr. Ratkiewich indicated that the original petition was amended to include 9 properties (down from 10); that only those properties that directly benefitted from the utility burial were represented; that 100 percent involvement was required; and that each property would be assessed equitably. Further, he stated that the presented petition included the signatures of the listed homeowners. The Assistant Town Attorney noted that the petition did not include the signature of a trustee and that she had not verified that the signatures were by the appropriate authorized persons. She also noted that the property owners would also be required to execute a separate document of consent to be signed by the appropriate authorized persons and filed with the Town Clerk and running with the land. Ms. Flug explained that her office, in cooperation with bond counsel and the Public Works Department, will be drafting a policy, similar in content to the water and sewer extension policies currently in place, that applies to this type of public-private municipal improvement project. Ms. Flug explained that each property must be assessed equitably and the homeowners shall have the opportunity for due process, including sufficient public hearings and notification. The Board of Selectmen will review and approve that policy at an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Ratkiewich explained the next steps in the process, which includes receiving the appropriation approval and bond authorization from the Board of Finance and Representative Town Meeting. He also presented a timeline for the actual project including, but not limited to, preliminary design and bidding; scheduling a preliminary benefit assessment hearing for the petitioners (at which time their consent will be required); construction commencement; road paving; and final work from the utility companies. Mr. Ratkiewich is confident that, should the Board of Finance and Representative Town Meeting approve the appropriation and bond authorization, the timeline will proceed so that the project can be bid and completed in 2018.

Upon motion by Melissa Kane, seconded by Jennifer Tooker and passing by a vote of 3-0, it was:

RESOLVED, that the petition from 9 homeowners of properties fronting Hillspoint Road, seeking to bury overhead utilities within the public Right-of-Way is hereby ACCEPTED; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Director of Public Works is hereby AUTHORIZED to seek approval from the Board of Finance and the Representative Town Meeting for appropriation and bond authorization of the proposed project.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Melissa Kane, seconded by Jennifer Tooker and passing by a vote of 3-0, the meeting adjourned at 11:35 am.

Eileen Francis
Recording Secretary