

RTM MEETING
July 6, 2021

The call

1. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Fire Chief, to approve an appropriation in the amount 69,748.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace and upfit for public safety use the existing Car 3 Command Unit.

2. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Fire Chief, to approve an appropriation in the amount \$66,262.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace and upfit for public safety use the existing Command Staff SUV Unit.

3. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Fire Chief, to approve an appropriation in the amount of \$95,990.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace, upfit for public safety use and mounting of equipment for a Dive Rescue Unit.

4. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen, in accordance with the Policy for Naming Town Property, to approve the naming of the Town owned property known as the Staples High School Football Field, located at 70 North Ave, "Coach Paul Lane Field", in honor of Paul Lane.

The meeting

Moderator Velma Heller:

Good evening. This meeting of Westport's Representative Town Meeting is now called to order and we welcome those who are joining us the evening. My name is Velma Heller and I'm the RTM Moderator. Pursuant to Sections 163-167 of Senate Bill 1202, there will not be a physical location for this meeting. This meeting will be held electronically and live streamed on westportct.gov and shown on Optimum Government Access Channel 79 and Frontier Channel 6020. Meeting materials will be available at westportct.gov along with the meeting notice posted on the Meeting List & Calendar page. People have had instructions to attend the zoom meeting. The zoom meeting is open to the public on a video basis either through video or phone number which was on the agenda, as well. As to public comments, members of the electorate attending the meeting by phone or video, may comment on any item by raising your hand and you will be recognized. Comments are limited to three minutes. Emails may be sent before the meeting to RTMmailinglist@westportct.gov, which goes to all RTM members. These emails that are received before the meeting will not be read aloud during the meeting.

This evening's invocation will be delivered by Christy Colasurdo. Christy Colasurdo is Co-Chair emeritus and Events Director of Wakeman Town Farm. She also co-authored the Connecticut Farm-To-Table Cookbook which pays homage to local farmers and the chefs who support them. We will be delighted to hear from you Christy. Please go ahead.

Christy Colasurdo, Wakeman Town Farm:

I was honored to be asked by Jeff Weiser to address the RTM with a few words about Wakeman Town Farm. I really don't know what I'm doing so I thought it would be nice to say a few words about what we're doing at the farm, to give you an update. First, I want to say, we are so, so thrilled that we, as a town, managed to get COVID 19 under control. To us at the Farm, that meant being able to re-open the Wakeman Town Farm to the community. We spent the better part of a year trying to do farming things online. Since the spring, the Farm has been back open and in full swing, and we were overjoyed to see all the smiling faces of young and old strolling the gardens and grounds. We have been back hosting our in-person classes. That has been a wonderful thing for us. We have two nutritionists/teachers on our team and they not only hosted a full slate of culinary programs for our kids, but one of our teachers has been working with the folks at STAR agency and it's been a tremendous thing at the Farm when you see these young adults who otherwise don't have something that is engaging for them during the week. They are coming back to the Farm and learning about cooking and learning to be self-confident and independent. What do we want you to know about Wakeman Town Farm? To me, it's the little Farm that could. Five or six years ago, when we first lobbied the Town to allow us to create a new facility to house our classes and programs, some were skeptical. Would we be able to fill it? Would our programs bring in revenues and good publicity for the Town? Would we be able to create something lasting and sustainable? Would we be able to be self-sustaining? I can say with the utmost certainty and I have the facts to back it up that we have achieved that and more. We are at the point where our programs sell out quickly. Something that is interesting post-COVID is that we have a lot of new families with little kids so our Mommy and Me and children's programs have been a huge hit. All our summer camp programs for the littles, as we call them, are sold out. Another program that people should be really proud of, last year Liz Milwe and some of the folks on our team had the idea of putting out something that was more service-oriented so we created a summer service program. Our instructors work with the kids to talk about the whys behind some of that things that we do. That means we talk about food rescue, composting, why we want to eat and not throw away ugly vegetables. More than anything, we teach these kids that there is a lot of need in our town. Sometimes people call Westport a bubble but during this program, kids meet people from some social service agencies. People come in from Food Rescue USA. Just today, one of our culinary instructors worked with the kids to bring in stuff from the gardens. They cooked a full meal for the folks at Gillespie Center. We brought it over. So, they see what's happening. They make the connections. We are proud that the kids are getting these kind of feel-good programs. They feel good about themselves at this young age. Then they go on and become our team interns. We have Staples kids that come to the Farm and they do us proud. I just want to give a shout out to our team. We have a very multi-faceted group. On the one hand, we have people who are PR and marketing gurus and they are also master gardeners. We've got culinary instructors who worked for Martha Stewart. Recently, we brought on a husband and wife to be our farm stewards. They juggle many balls. They interface with the public. They make everyone feel welcome. We also have a farmer and assistant farmer. This year, if you have a chance, every Saturday from 9 to 1, you have to stop over at our farm stand. We're not only showcasing some of our best products and produce, but we're also showcasing some of the products from small local vendors. That's

another big part of our mission. Not only do we work with synergistic local organizations but we also give a leg up and give a boost to small local businesses like Needsdown in Saugatuck or Pam's Jams. These are people who are doing the right things and are really interested in the slow food movement. They care a lot about quality. They care about organic. They care about being healthy. If you get a chance on a Saturday. It really shows the team spirit and the collaboration on the Farm. I'm really proud of something we did this past week. I mentioned Liz Milwe before. She was integral in making this happen a second year. We are really proud to bring our friends at Horizons Camp, which is a day camp for kids from Bridgeport. For many of them, it is their first opportunity to experience what farm life is like. We introduce them to Green Space, Farm Life, and they do everything from feed our alpacas to hunt for warm eggs in our nesting boxes to learning the seed-to-plant cycle. It's just a magical experience for them. Part of our mission is to bring in folks who are underserved and who are our neighbors. We hope to broaden our opportunities for this. Horizons is just a gateway for us. We work closely with organizations like National Charity League and SLOBS. These good folks come out to the farm and give us their time and their energy. We recently planted a pollinator pathway garden in a fallow field. We had to go through almost every agency in the town to make this possible. With the collaboration of a variety of different people helping us push it through and the hard work of the moms and the daughters at NCL and the kids at SLOBS and even volunteers from local businesses like Priceline who come out and donate time to us, we couldn't do what we do if it wasn't for them. A shout out to all of those folks. In terms of revenue building and keeping ourselves self-sustaining, I work to make sure that we have a really good mix of events from non-profit to private events. To give you an example, we recently hosted the Staples HS Lacrosse banquet, numerous private birthday parties and bridal showers, an adult tea party with the folks over at Rule Britannia, an Earth Day networking gathering of small local environmental businesses, Last weekend, we did a sold-out fundraiser concert for CLASP Homes. We had a Grateful Dead Band. The Farm is a perfect place for things like that. We hosted a couple of different pizza nights, some for kids some for adults. In general, we're happy that we're making inroads of people figuring out who we are, where we are. I just wanted to let everyone know that Harvest Fest is back in person. Last year, we did a modified version. We're going to have our bands. We're going to have our auction. We're going to have our cocktail hour with refreshments from our local vendors. It's our expression of who we are--eating and drinking and being happy and showing off our Farm. I hope you are one of the lucky ones to snag a ticket. So that is what is going on at the Farm. If you want to get involved in any capacity or if a business wants to volunteer or if you know someone that is interested in sponsoring a program or if you want to learn something new, whether it be composting or canning or preserving or if you want to come to a Farm dinner and have a glass of wine, all of those things are here and much more.

Dr. Heller:

Thank you Christy. You certainly have given us a picture of the breadth of your program and, clearly, the energy that you bring to it. Next we have our montage of the Pledge of Allegiance from RTM members.

There were 29 members present. Ms. Purcell, Mr. Tait, Ms. Klein, Ms. Banks, Ms. Newman and Ms. Soloff notified the Moderator that they would be absent. Ms. Rea was also absent. Ms. Briggs notified the Moderator that she would be late.

Announcements

Dr. Heller:

The minutes of the June meetings were posted on the town website. There were no corrections to the minutes. The minutes are accepted as submitted. Anyone with corrections, please contact Jackie Fuchs, Dr. Heller or Town Clerk Jeff Dunkerton.

I want to wish a very happy birthday to Jeff Wieser, Chris Tait, Wendy Batteau and Kristin Purcell. Congratulations to all of our July babies.

I want to acknowledge the passing of Randolph Wally Meyer, the beloved Westporter, former RTM member and Second Selectman, former Rotary President and long-time Justice of the Peace. He died on Saturday. He was 91. I'm not sure if any of our current members were in the RTM with Wally. Jack, were you?

Jeff Wieser, district 4:

I knew him well. Wonderful man but I was not on the RTM with him.

Dr. Heller:

I came in in 2001 and I think Jack was there with him, as well. Wally used the GI Bill to attend Union College. After graduating in 1957, he joined IBM. He spent 20 years there. He left to establish Westport Marketing, a computer leasing company. Wally served 12 terms on the RTM, four as Second Selectman under Democratic First Selectman, Marty Hahuth. Wally was a founder of Project Return, the North Compo Road home for teenage girls and young women, and was its treasurer for 12 years. Wally was a warm, caring person. He was committed to whatever he tackled during his time in Westport. I was pleased to know Wally. Can we have a moment of silence for Wally.

RTM Announcements

Matthew Mandell, district 1:

I'm glad that you mentioned Wally. Wally was a wonderful human being. He took a shine to me and I took a shine to him when I started in the RTM in 2005. He would always talk to me about what I was doing, what I could be doing. I'd get an email: "Nice going. Keep it up." And of course, he'd send emails: "Why don't you do it this way instead..." You'd walk around the Mill Pond and he'd be there with a smile on his face. He'd pull me over and we'd have a long chat. He'll be a person missed by the town of Westport. Thank you for taking the time to mention him.

I don't have any Chamber of Commerce announcements but I do have a social concept or discussion. The COVID virus is a nasty virus and it seems to want to stick around. The Delta variant of it is even more tenacious. If you are following the news and see what's going on, the areas that got vaccinated don't seem to be affected that much. Those places that haven't been vaccinated are in trouble: Missouri, Arkansas, parts of Colorado, parts

of Nevada. It's pretty clear that the virus does not like the vaccine. A lot of Americans don't like it either but they should so, if you haven't been vaccinated, please get vaccinated. If you have friends who haven't been vaccinated, sit them down and talk to them. Talk to your relatives in other parts of the country. It's better for all of us if we all do get vaccinated and we can wipe out this thing. Otherwise, it's going to stick around and keep modifying itself until it finds a way to defeat the vaccine. That's all.

Jimmy Izzo, district 3:

Thank you Matt. That was very well said. I'm vaccinated, J & J. What I'd like to say is tomorrow night, we have a Public Protection meeting. It will be at 7 o'clock. We will be discussing proposed changes to the CRB Ordinance. If anyone is interested, I'll send you the zoom link.

Sal Liccione, district 9:

I just wanted to say a quick word about Wally. I used to work for the Parks and Rec. maintenance division. He really did great things for this town. We will miss his service to this town.

Dr. Heller:

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the RTM would be August 3, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. Since there are no items currently scheduled for the August agenda, we will let you know well in advance if that meeting is to be cancelled. If something comes up, we will have to meet but, if not, I will let you know well in advance if the meeting is cancelled.

The secretary read item #1 of the agenda -To approve an appropriation in the amount 69,748.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace and upfit for public safety use the existing Car 3 Command Unit.

Presentation

Fire Chief Robert Yost: Deputy Chief Kronick will be presenting the three items.

Deputy Chief Mike Kronick:

Good evening. I will be presenting for the Fire Department on all three items like the Chief said. What I'm looking for is \$69,748 to replace the shift commander vehicle. What it's actually replacing is the 2009 reserve unit. When replaced, the current unit will be moved to reserve status and the new one would be used as our primary vehicle. The cost includes not only the cost of the vehicle but also the cost of all of the work and materials that it will take to upfit it to make it a vehicle that can be used by the Fire Department.

Dr. Heller:

I'm wondering if you can mention all three items at this point because the committee report mentions all three. We will, of course, vote on them separately but I think it makes sense.

Deputy Chief Kronick:

That will make it a little easier. The second vehicle we are looking to replace is one of the staff SUV's. That is the vehicle that the Chief, myself and the Fire Marshal use. I'm looking for \$66,262. That will be the cost of the vehicle and the cost of upfitting the vehicle. That vehicle will be replacing a 2007 vehicle that was actually disposed of in 2019. So, there will be no vehicle leaving as part of that purchase. That will allow us to have two spare vehicles in my motor pool when we need them. The third vehicle I'm looking to replace is the combined Fire/Police Dive Rescue Team vehicle. It's a used ambulance that we've had since 1996. It originally served the town as a primary ambulance. I'm looking to replace it. That is for \$95,999. That would be buying a commercial contractor's vehicle that would fit our needs and also fit into the Saugatuck Fire House. We used to be able to get used ambulances but the price of ambulances has come up so much over the years that the EMS organization has rechassied the existing ambulances so we haven't had that stream of used vehicles to use for that purpose. So, I'm going to be looking to replace that vehicle.

Committees report

Finance and Public Protection Committees, Mr. Izzo:

On June 22, 2021, we had a joint meeting between Public Protection and Finance Committee. A presentation was made by Chief Kronick on all three vehicles. We went over costs. We went over pricing in terms of did we get any deals? We did. We were able to lock in some State aid, I believe, or State price fixed at 2019 levels or something of that nature. Both committees voted 7-0 to approve all three appropriations. In attendance from Finance were Jeff Wieser, Chair, Seth Braunstein, Nicole Klein, Jessica Bram, Richard Jaffe, Stephen Shackelford, and Lauren Soloff. For Public Protection: Jimmy Izzo, Chair, Richard Jaffe, Seth Braunstein, Andrew Colabella, Kristan Hamlin and Candace Banks. Fire Chief Yost and Deputy Chief Kronick were also in attendance. Again, it was unanimous on all three requests.

Dr. Heller:

I do want to say that we will take each of these items separately because that is the way the resolutions are presented. These are all three items for the Fire Department. To the public: Members of the electorate who raise their hands to speak during the public comment period will be called upon. There is a time limit of three minutes. Seth Braunstein, I am hoping you will continue to do our timing for us.

Members of the Westport electorate – no comments

Mr. Wieser read the resolution and it was seconded:

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the of the Board of Finance and a request by the Fire Chief, the sum of 69,748.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace and upfit for public safety use the existing Car 3 Command Unit is hereby appropriated.

Dr. Heller:

Thank you Mr. Klinge. It has been moved and seconded to approve the resolution just read.

Members of the RTM

Mr. Liccione:

Mr. Kronick, Can you give us an update on when the replacement vehicles are going to happen?

Deputy Chief Kronick:

In generic terms, I have a fleet of about 12 small vehicles and my goal has been to get them into a cycle where I'm not running them into the ground and they are failing me. So, what I'm looking at going forward from this is that about every two to three years looking for two to three vehicles. What that does is it keeps my fleet fairly low mileage and younger age and it also keeps my operating costs down. As far as the big vehicles, we do have a couple coming up in the next few years. Without getting into anything specific, I believe year '22 and '23, I'll be looking for two engines for replacement of the rescue truck and year '25/'26, I'll be looking to replace my ladder truck. It gets very expensive the larger vehicles and also the small vehicles. The longer I keep them the more expensive it gets to keep them on the road. If we can keep them on a fairly regular replacement schedule, it actually saves me money on my operating budget, both on fuel and maintenance costs.

Mr. Liccione: Thank you, Mike.

Peter Gold, district 5:

Velma, I have the same question for all three resolutions. Should I ask it once now or ask it three times?

Dr. Heller: Ask it once and let's see where we go.

Mr. Gold:

Okay. For the actual vehicle, what percentage is for the vehicle and what percentage is for the upfit?

Deputy Chief Kronick:

For the first vehicle, the cost of the vehicle is \$33,600. The rest of it is for the upfit. That vehicle is a little bit more technically involved. It is the shift commander vehicle and will require some custom cabinetry work in the back of the vehicle to house all the equipment we carry and it's also going to be installing quite a bit of radio equipment. That's the vehicle that the Assistant Chief who runs the shift uses and he commands his fires from. The staff SUV, the contract price from the State is about \$48,000 which will give me about \$18,000 to put all the warning lights, install the radios and buy all the equipment that goes into that. It's not nearly as much as the shift commander car but all that equipment is expensive. In the dive vehicle, the price range, we've been told, is between \$55,000 and \$60,000, depending on options of the body we would be purchasing to go on the chassis. The best way to explain that vehicle is that it will look like a plumber's truck with compartments on the side and there'll be a little walk-in area in the back to put equipment in. That vehicle is going to be a little bit more expensive to upfit, about \$20,000 to \$25,000 for all the warning lights and the rest of it would be the money we would use to actually mount all the equipment in it. That's going to be the dive-rescue equipment and that

equipment is expensive and can't just be tossed into a compartment. So, we'll be buying fixtures and mounts so the equipment fits in there properly. That's going to be expensive but \$99,500 would cover that.

Dr. Heller:

So, Mr. Gold, from this point on, could you limit the discussion to this item.

Mr. Gold:

But it's the same question for all of them. It's fine. Is there a salvage value for the command car?

Deputy Chief Kronick:

Probably less than \$800. The vehicles we have been selling, we literally run them into the ground. The vehicle that is being replaced now has about 104,000 miles on it. By the time we go to replace it, it will probably have another 10,000 to 12,000 miles. I'm hoping I can get another year out of it. We sell all vehicles through GovDeals, Rich Kotchko in the Finance Department helps us with that. It gets posted. It's basically an online auction site. Whoever wants to buy it can buy it.

Mr. Gold: Jimmy referred to some kind of State aid or State financing.

Deputy Chief Kronick:

What it is is State contract pricing so the Department of Administrative Services for the State of Connecticut goes out and negotiates large contracts for all sorts of things. One of the things they do is fleet vehicles. They do it with Ford, Chevrolet and Dodge and I believe Toyota is also in that. They ask them to bid their best price on a range of vehicles. It is advantageous to do that because all the negotiation has already been done and what's going on now, if anyone has tried to buy a vehicle, one, there is a shortage of microprocessor chips for everything in computing and, specifically, the motor vehicle industry has been hit hard. They can't build vehicles because they don't have chips. If you search the internet, I think Ford has about 300,000 pickup trucks sitting idle waiting for microchips so they can finish them up and send them out to be sold. The point being, there is going to be a small window for the Ford products in October to place fleet orders where they are guaranteeing they will give you the vehicle you are looking for in a specific timeframe. The benefit of that is the price has already been negotiated and the price was negotiated in 2019 so we will be paying 2019 prices for vehicles. The current market for vehicles is about 12 to 20 percent above MSRP. If I bid it, I would be paying more than the sticker price on most vehicles.

Harris Falk, district 2:

It sounds as though you already picked out the vehicles because of the contracts. I was wondering if there were hybrids? They are obviously not going to be electrical because there is not going to be enough power for that but, as a town, we're going for net zero and we seem to be doing things that are not going to get us to net zero.

Deputy Chief Kronick:

I do apologize for that. We did look into that. Part of the problem is there are not a lot of hybrid platforms that are suitable for my use. Ford does offer a hybrid F150 pickup truck that is four-wheel drive and would meet our specifications but the sticker price on that particular vehicle is about \$70,000. That's not on the State contract price when they bid it in 2019. That being said, I would be paying \$70,000 for a high end pickup truck and then doing some modifications. Could we do it? I'd say yes. I don't think the juice is worth the squeeze. We did look at the Ford Lightning F150 pickup truck as a viable option for us. The problem is they are only building 100,000 of them for a first run of them. On May 26, they opened up and for \$100 you could reserve a vehicle. It did not guarantee you were going to get one. There were only 100,000. Within three days, they had reservations for all of those. That was also not on the State contract price. If the public was buying it, you were getting a better deal but because I'm government, I'm not getting all the tax breaks on it so it would actually cost me more to buy the electric vehicle. The good thing is, on the horizon, both Chevrolet, Ford and Dodge have a lot of electric platforms they are planning on releasing around the year '25 and that's good for us because we'll be doing some fleet replacement probably a little before or a little after so we may have an opportunity to go into that. The big concern, really, with the EV vehicles is the operational endurance. Yes, it can drive 300 miles. We don't drive 300 miles in a typical day but the vehicle may run 12 to 15 hours because we could go out in the morning and not come back until late at night. The question becomes how do I recharge it? I'm having a lengthy discussion with Chief Koskinas of the Police Department, specifically, the Tesla, that works very well for him. His fleet is large enough that he can take some vehicles offline even on an incredibly busy day and have it recharged. My fleet does not have that kind of depth and there's actually a few days a year where all of our vehicles are pressed into service so I really can't have a vehicle that needs to be recharged and out of the game. If my fleet was a little bit bigger, we might be able to do it but I don't know if we could do that yet.

Mr. Falk:

That's why I asked about hybrid because we haven't figured out how to run an apparatus with a AA battery yet.

Deputy Chief Kronick:

There are a lot of products that have been coming to market recently. There are two fully electric fire trucks being built. One is being delivered to the Berlin Fire Department in Germany and the other to the Los Angeles Fire Department. Those are real test cases for that. Others, there is a hybrid fire truck that is being made. We'll see how that goes. That company does not have a good reputation for launching new or experimental products. I would say that in coming years some of the vehicles we will be able to buy hybrid but I imagine that diesel will be the mainstay for the fire service for quite a while. The operational endurance is the big issue.

Mr. Falk:

My only other question you may have already answered. What trucks are there going to be? The 150's?

Deputy Chief Kronick:

The first vehicle I asked for is a 150. We had traditionally bought a Chevy Suburban to use as a shift commander car. The problem is that it is about twice the cost of a half-ton pickup truck chassis. And, essentially, that is what it is. It's a half-ton pickup truck. From an operations standpoint it will work better for us and it's cheaper. We wanted to do it the last go-round but we were too late. The Chief had already ordered the previous vehicle. This is something the Assistant Chiefs have been interested in doing for a while and it's also going to save a little bit of money on the project. The other two vehicles, the half-ton truck, I'm leaning towards the Ford but we're also going to be looking at the Chevy to see if we can get a little bit better pricing. The dive vehicle would be a one-ton pickup truck type chassis, crew cab with a contractor's body installed by the dealership. The last vehicle will be a full-size SUV with four-wheel drive either Chevrolet or Ford. It will depend on who can get us the best vehicle at the best price.

Mr. Izzo:

How many structural fires did we have last year? Do we have in a year?

Deputy Chief Kronick:

I don't know off the top of my head. We average, we'll call it, about 100 fire-type incidents in buildings a year. That may range from a food on the stove that has extended to the cabinets to a full-on structure fire and everything in between. We have about 100 of those type of incidents a year. Last year, we were just above or below about 4,000 incidents and our trend line is we're increasing by about 10 to 20 incidents per year.

Mr. Izzo: We'll talk about that another time. It's not on the agenda. I'm sorry.

Mr. Mandell:

I just wanted to complement the Deputy Chief on his wealth of knowledge. He fielded a lot of questions that were sort of off and he had them really down. It was a good job. I also have to say thanks for keeping those vehicles running. You're talking some years old keeping them running. Listening to where you're going in the future in terms of the cars and how much you're going to expend, keep as much stuff on the road as you can without buying new stuff to keep our taxes down. You're doing a good job.

Deputy Chief Kronick:

Truth be told, that's not me. That's my fleet mechanic who works quite a bit of magic. He keeps our vehicles on the road. I was just talking with one of my inspectors. We came on the job about the same time. We were talking about how much work he has done to the point that we actually do do preventative maintenance now in a timely manner. Preventative maintenance, when I came on the job, was when the truck broke down and they fixed something, maybe they would change the oil. We have a very rigorous schedule and we do our best to keep the vehicles running in tiptop shape.

Dr. Heller:

Seeing no further hands raised, we will proceed to having a rollcall vote.

Point of order, Mr. Mandell: Who requested that we do a rollcall vote?

Dr. Heller:

These are the new procedures given to us based on the ruling by the Senate that we are having electronic meetings. This came from the Town Attorney's Office that this was how it was to be done. It was to insure that the public is involved. I'm simply following those procedures.

By rollcall vote, the motion passed unanimously, 29-0.

The secretary read item #2 of the call - To approve an appropriation in the amount \$66,262.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace and upfit for public safety use the existing Command Staff SUV Unit.

Members of the Westport electorate – no comments

Mr. Wieser read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Fire Chief, the sum of \$66,262.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace and upfit for public safety use the existing Command Staff SUV Unit is hereby appropriated.

Dr. Heller: It has been moved and seconded.

Members of the RTM – no comments

By rollcall vote, the motion passes unanimously, 29-0.

The secretary read item #3 of the call - to approve an appropriation in the amount of \$95,990.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace, upfit for public safety use and mounting of equipment for a Dive Rescue Unit.

Members of the Westport electorate – no comments

Mr. Wieser read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Fire Chief, the sum of \$95,990.00 to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund account to replace, upfit for public safety use and mounting of equipment for a Dive Rescue Unit is hereby appropriated.

Members of the RTM

Mr. Falk:

I know that you said the EMS has been retrofitting their vehicles but I think they're looking for a new one. I'm going to vote for this. You need a vehicle. This one is old enough to be a State Senator but if you can just ask them again before just to see if they're going to be

selling their vehicle because, if they can take this money to buy a brand new ambulance and you can save some money on adding the lights and sirens, that would be a fantastic thing for the town and for everyone.

Deputy Chief Kronick:

I can do that but I believe ambulances are well north of \$275,000 so I will look into it. I will talk with the police and the EMS people but generally, too, ambulances are pretty well beat up when they're gone. But I'll look into it.

Mr. Falk:

I don't believe they're getting rid of it because it's done. I think they did a brilliant thing of buying two of them around the same time which means they'll go at the same time so I think they're trying to get ahead of it.

Deputy Chief Kronick: I will look into it.

Chief Yost:

The other issue is that not all of their ambulances will fit into our Saugatuck Fire House. We just happen to be lucky that the current dive van converted from an ambulance fit. Ambulances tend to get larger and it might not fit.

By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously, 29-0.

Dr. Heller:

Thank you very much to the Fire Department, Deputy Chief Kronick and Chief Yost for being with us.

The secretary read item #4 of the call - To approve the naming of the Town owned property known as the Staples High School Football Field, located at 70 North Ave, "Coach Paul Lane Field", in honor of Paul Lane.

Presentation

First Selectman Jim Marpe:

Before I begin on the item on the agenda, I would like to take a moment to thank the RTM for taking time to honor Wally Meyer, the Second Selectman. This morning, I issued a press release covering the same items Dr. Heller covered but I was recalling one of my first interactions with Wally. During the wintertime when dogs are allowed on Compo Beach, Wally frequently stationed himself near the pavilion on East Beach. If dogs off-leash stepped across a line that was there, he was there to enforce the ruling and to remind you that dogs were not allowed off-leash on one side of the line. I remember him admonishing me. This was long before I was in the role I am in now. I never forgot that lesson. He did it in a good way. He was not nasty. It was just a reminder. I also took time to look at a picture that hangs outside my office of Second Selectmen dating back to the Doug Wood period but, also, Marty Hahuth and even to Jackie Hennage. I am pleased to say, of the Second Selectpersons in the picture, Wally is the first to be gone. It's a good

thing that he lived as long as he did and made the contributions to Westport. Thank you again for taking that moment of silence and recognizing his contributions to our community.

I'm here this evening to introduce to the RTM the opportunity to approve the naming of the Staples Wreckers' stadium to honor Coach Paul Lane, the Coach Paul Lane Field. In 2019 and 2020, thanks in large part to the support and appropriations from the RTM, the Parks and Recreation Department under the leadership of Jen Fava, Westport's four artificial turf fields along with the Staples track, two of these fields, Peter J. Romano Field at Saugatuck Elementary and Ginny Parker Field Hockey Field are obviously named after former coaches and mentors. Recently, the track at Staples High School was named for legendary coach Laddie Lawrence. At the same time, I was approached by the Gridiron club and friends of Paul Lane to name the Staples stadium which now includes, besides football, lacrosse and rugby after Westport coaching legend, Coach Paul Lane. The process of naming a town facility is a well-defined process. If it's a school property, it begins with a recommendation by the Board of Education. Since the Parks and Recreation Commission maintains the fields themselves, they also have the opportunity to weigh in and both organizations, as you see in your packet to recommend that we name the field after Coach Paul Lane as well as the Board of Selectmen. In the end, the final decision is the responsibility of the RTM. So, now I would like to introduce Jim Adrian who is former Chair of the Gridiron Club and the leader of the petition effort to do this naming. He'll present the rationale in support of this naming of this important decision.

Jim Adrian, Chairman, Gridiron Club:

Thank you, Jim. I'm the spokesperson for the friends of Coach Paul Lane. I don't know that I'm the former Chairman. I think I'm still Chairman. There may be some things that I don't know about. I currently have the privilege of serving as the Staples Wreckers Gridiron Chairman. We are off season but, hopefully, when the season starts, I'll still have that position. I would like to thank the RTM for considering this tonight. Jim has given a good background. We have presented this in front of the Board of Education, Parks & Rec. and the Board of Selectmen. The RTM needs to make the final decision. The three other bodies that I've just mentioned have endorsed it wholeheartedly. The history of this is that someone had mentioned it to me in passing. A lot of people were asking, 'How hasn't this happened already?' I see that Laddie is here and I think Laddie being honored finally kick-started Paul's efforts. Paul is such a humble guy. People thought something had been done and it hadn't so on May 14, I sent a letter to Jim. Jim was kind enough to send me the exact protocol that needed to be done. Unfortunately, a month to the day from when I had written my letter, Paul passed away. Skip Lane, his son, who sits on the Board of Directors with me of the Gridiron Club, advised him, was very encouraged about it, was very happy about it. But, again, being as humble as he is, he wasn't gushing, at least outside. Hopefully, internally, he was. I looked at the criteria and it's an extremely high standard...You look at Nistico Field House, Romano Field and many other places that either have a plaque or a naming and you really have to meet a very high criteria. The number one criteria of the process is that it has to be in the best interests of the town of Westport. Given the town of Westport's very high standards, that's a very big hurdle. Paul coached for 30 years, gave his blood, sweat and tears to football, the track team, to

the girl's golf. He won State Championships in all three of those sports. I did research because as Gridiron Chairman I had an obligation to insure positions that we were taking on behalf of the Gridiron Club to Jim originally were well founded and well researched. Doing the research, every single article was glowing. The accolades were endless: Korean War Veteran, he served in Germany; Notre Dame graduate, he was very high in his class; he coached in Europe. One of the big things was also, I didn't know Coach Lane as a coach but I certainly did know him afterwards, there are different ways to coach individuals. All three of my children went through Westport Schools, graduated Staples High School. My wife's a teacher in New Canaan. I understand firsthand how teachers influence children, how coaches influence players. Thirty years, three sports, thousands of kids have been influenced by this individual. I have not heard one negative comment so far. He coached with a soft hand, wouldn't berate, wouldn't talk down, wouldn't try to motivate through intimidation but caught the bees with honey as opposed to a fly swatter. That was kind of a testament. I live off Greens Farms Road on Signal Lane, like to play golf and go to the beach. I go by his house a lot. There was always somebody parked out there introducing themselves because they certainly didn't look the way they did at 16 or 18 when the coach had them under his wing. That's a testament as to who the individual was as his legacy will show. If you go on I call it "Woog's World", you can pull up 30 articles on Coach Lane and they're all extremely positive. The proof is in the testament there. The criteria is very high and I think you take an individual who will dedicate 30 years of his life and do so in a manner that is unblemished probably should be the next criteria. Add that to the list. It's getting late. I just want to thank the RTM for its consideration. Thank you.

Committee report

Education Committee, Lauren Karpf:

The Education Committee met last night with Jim Marpe via Zoom. The entire committee was present. Jim Marpe spoke of Coach Lane's impact on countless students at Staples High School over so many years, not only of his legendary coaching, but also his unique ability to connect with and motivate students to exceed their potential. He was an icon of the football program as we've just heard, and led championship track and women's golf teams. But his accomplishments extend far beyond sports – he was an extraordinary mentor to so many youth, an icon of Compo Beach, and a respected and beloved member of the Westport community. After a motion by Jack Klinge and seconded by Kristin Purcell, the RTM Education Committee also voted unanimously in favor of this request. The Education Committee is proud and honored to support the naming of Coach Paul Lane Field in honor of a deserving coach, mentor, and legend who so positively impacted the Staples and Westport communities.

Members of the Westport electorate

Dr. Heller: Laddie Lawrence, did you want to speak?

Laddie Lawrence:

I did but, after listening to everybody else, I was getting all teary. Let me just say this. I sent an email out to all of you which I'm sure you all had a chance to read. You know what this man meant to me. I'm all choked up But one of the things you don't know is you

have Ginny Parker Field and you have Loeffler Field. Paul and Ginny and Albie all worked together at Staples. They were the backbone of really establishing Staples as the athletic school that it is today. They were all founding coaches within the FCIAC. I think it's very appropriate that we name the field after Paul. I would be delighted to have his name next to mine.

Dr. Heller:

Thank you Laddie. I think it is so important we've heard so much about Paul Lane as an individual but I think you've given us the big picture of not only who he was but also how he worked with so many other wonderful professionals to make the school what it is.

Mr. Wieser read the resolution and it was seconded.

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen, in accordance with the Policy for Naming Town Property, the naming of the Town owned property known as the Staples High School Football Field, located at 70 North Ave, "Coach Paul Lane Field", in honor of Paul Lane is hereby approved.

Dr. Heller: The motion has been made and seconded.

Members of the RTM

Arline Gertzoff, district 3:

I feel very happy to follow my fellow classmate Laddie Lawrence. I just realized that I am truly blessed that I know or went to school or interacted with every single one of the people that we've named and Paul Lane completes the circle. I have two left feet but they were always kind. Ginny Parker, okay, I couldn't tumble very well and I know the whole Nistico clan well and Albie Loeffler did so much to make soccer a very important thing. I watched a lot of Paul Lane's games and also good family friend, P. J. Romano. I just think it's great that we've come full circle and that we can name the football field. For those of you who didn't know these individuals, you've missed some really great people but I hope that you've heard about all of them. Thank you.

Mr. Mandell:

I was never coached by Coach and my kids were never coached by Coach but he was my constituent. Many times I was walking by the beach and there he was. I had great conversations with him talking about sports and different things. What a wonderful fellow he was. And beyond all his coaching and all he did for the schools, he was just a great individual. He was always willing to talk to anybody. Chris Tait is not here tonight and I know he knew him well. I know he would have wanted to say something about Coach so I at least want it on the record that he would have said something positive about Coach Lane if he was here. So, I'm glad we're doing this. It's a great thing we're doing for our town.

Mr. Izzo:

Coach is a very wonderful human being. Like Arline, our family goes back a long way. Coach Lawrence was my third or fourth grade teacher over at Kings Highway. I learned a lot from Laddie. Coach Lane coached my dad, coached me, coached my mother in track. The family is just super people and Westport, I know a lot of

people know Coach not as Coach, seeing that guy in the front yard watering his flowers. I know he is watering flowers right now coaching somebody how to water flowers. Just amazing. The family is going to be so happy about this. It is a wonderful thing that the community has come together to do for him. I think it's awesome.

Andrew Colabella, district 4:

I will be brief, I promise, but there are things if I don't say, put them in the record, show people who is really was, I know I'll regret it. Paul Lane was born in Bethel Connecticut and later immigrated to Westport with the rest of his family in the Batlin house. He even told me that the original staircase in the house was the only original thing that is still left in that house today. When you look at his time of life from Jan. 20, 1928 to June 15, 2021, there's that little dash between those dates and that little dash explains all the unknowns. There's so much that is done between those two dates, it makes you really think about it. Paul went to the University of Notre Dame and played football. From there, he went into the U.S. Army. He was a veteran, serving during the Korean War in Germany. He not only played football but coached football and worked with other members of the United States Army during that time. When he had left the Army, he was married to Patricia. I called her Patty. They were married for 51 years and resided at the house on Soundview Drive that everyone drove by every day. You can't miss it. He was either outside gardening, walking the streets or sitting on the stone wall. If you were lucky enough, you would be able to sit down and hear a story. He coached for 30 years. As he got out of the Army, he coached with Frank Dornfeld for eight years. That was unpaid. That was how much he loved the job. He did it because he not only loved it but because he had a gift. He had this ability where he could get people to see their true potential. Think about 30 years of students, thousands and thousands of people who went through that school. For those who are unaware, he not only coached football, he coached track and he also coached golf. He is also known for two seasons that stick out in the history books to this day. In 1975, he had an 11 win season and it was the last single State champion. In 1967, it was one of his best seasons where he wiped out Stamford Catholic's 30-win streak. He also had four FCIAC champions and was a State champ in 1975 and two FCIAC crowns. He ended his career with 122 victories. The trophies he won was one thing but what he produced was even greater than that. He wasn't just a father to four children, he was a father to kids on the field and on the track. One of them is with us right now and that's Laddie Lawrence. (I had no idea his first name was John until a couple of months ago. I had no idea.) In 2019, when I was doing the Laddie Lawrence track field naming, we discussed, along with Marty Lisevic, is the football field named after anyone? We couldn't figure it out. Then COVID hit. Life got put on hold. I had no idea if we were going to see each other again in meetings. When we were doing the track dedication, Laddie Lawrence really opened up about his life. Laddie has over 50 years of coaching, but that 50 years of coaching and the thousands of students that he has touched was discovered with Paul Lane. Laddie's father passed away when he was eight years old. It was Paul Lane who helped Laddie come from a dark place to light. There are many people both in and

out of Staples who have had Paul Lane's impact on their lives. He has given them a chance to play, to be something, to find something. That's what Paul Lane did. He also did it for me. I went to the beach and saw Paul Lane every day from 13 on my bike to 18 when I was driving. I talked to him every day and I will never forget the last conversation I ever had with him. There were two of them. One: We were doing the track dedication and Paul Lane showed up. We walked him out to the field; we sat him down. He was happy. He was just taking it all in. I can't even imagine the flood of memories that he had being on that field, coaching for three decades. As I was leaving the field, speaking to his daughter Janet and his granddaughter. How would you feel about having the field named after him? They were ecstatic. The Gridiron Club, I want to thank them, had already jumped on it. For fun, I did a petition. Within less than a month, I gathered 1,056 signatures across five continents and I'm still getting signatures to this day. I just want to reiterate that Paul Lane was a father to people on and off the field. Like his garden out front, which continues to flourish and come back every year, growing in numbers, so does his family: his four children, his 10 grandchildren and his seven great-grandchildren. He not only created a garden in his home, he created a garden that will flourish through humans, his family and through his legacy. I'm honored to speak tonight for people who loved him and family and members of the electorate in Westport. I won't be surprised that this is going to pass unanimously. Thank you.

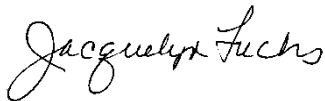
By roll call vote, the motion passes unanimously 29-0.

Dr. Heller:

Ladies and gentlemen, we have completed the business of the agenda. I will be in touch with you concerning the August meeting. It was a pleasure doing business with you this evening. I hope you have a wonderful rest of July. I know there will be some committee meetings going on. Enjoy your summer. It was a pleasure to see you here, Laddie, and so many other people who came this evening.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey M. Dunkerton
Town Clerk



by Jacquelyn Fuchs

ATTENDANCE: July 6, 2021

DIST.	NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	NOTIFIED MODERATOR	LATE/ LEFT EARLY
1	Richard Jaffe	X			
	Matthew Mandell	X			
	Kristin M. Purcell		X	X	
	Chris Tait		X	X	
2	Harris Falk	X			
	Jay Keenan	X			
	Louis M. Mall	X			
	Christine Meiers Schatz	X			
3	Mark Friedman	X			
	Arline Gertzoff	X			
	Jimmy Izzo	X			
	Amy Kaplan	X			
4	Andrew J. Colabella	X			
	Kristan Hamlin	X			
	Noah Hammond	X			
	Jeff Wieser	X			
5	Peter Gold	X			
	Dick Lowenstein	X			
	Nicole Klein		X	X	
	Karen Kramer	X			
6	Candace Banks		X	X	
	Jessica Bram	X			
	Seth Braunstein	X			
	Cathy Talmadge	X			
7	Brandi Briggs	X		X	Arr. 8:15 pm
	Lauren Karpf	X			
	Jack Klinge	X			
	Ellen Lautenberg	X			
8	Wendy Batteau	X			
	Lisa Newman		X	X	
	Carla Rea		X		
	Stephen Shackelford	X			
9	Velma Heller	X			
	Sal Liccione	X			
	Kristin Schneeman	X			
	Lauren Soloff		X	X	
Total		29	7		