

Town of Farmington
Board of Selectmen Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 8, 2021

Board Members Present:

Paula Proulx, Chairman
Neil Johnson, Vice Chairman
Dave Connolly
TJ Place
Gerry Vachon

Others Present:

Arthur Capello, Town Administrator
John Drury, Police Chief
Blanche Tanner

1). Call to Order:

Chairman Proulx called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

2). Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). Reinstatement of the Town Administrator:

Chairman Proulx reminded residents that tomorrow is Election Day and Wednesday is Town Meeting for anyone who may have forgotten. She then turned the meeting over to Chief Drury. Chief Drury read the following prepared statement:

“Dear Board of Selectmen,

I have spoken to the area County Attorneys and there is no longer an active or ongoing investigation against Mr. Arthur Capello nor is there reason right now to think that will change in the future. I have firm belief that he can return to duty and am truly sorry he had to endure the last 13+ weeks. I would like to ask you for a motion to reinstate Arthur Capello as the Town of Farmington’s Town Administrator immediately.

Sincerely, John P. Drury, Chief of Police.”

Motion: So moved by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Connolly.

Vote: The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Capello entered the room and took his seat at the table. He thanked the board for their support and standing behind him with this. He said many of the residents in town were there too and some of them were not there and that will be dealt with through legal sources.

He thanked the Board of Selectmen and especially Chairman Proulx for believing in him and sticking with him and standing behind him.

Mr. Johnson then read the following prepared statement:

“It is my hope that the residents of this town take note of those who sought to persecute and condemn Mr. Capello based solely on made up accusations. Not on any facts, not on any proof, not on any conviction, but solely on an accusation. Solely on an attempt to make money by

extortion.

Even before the actual accusation became public, these same individuals tried and convicted him based on nothing except an investigation and being placed on leave. They didn't know what the accusation was so they made up the narrative. They didn't care. They tried and convicted him of whatever he may be eventually accused of. It didn't matter that no one knew what the accusation was...he was guilty.

He deserved to lose his job, his family deserved to be punished, his children deserved to be exposed to this public crucifixion. After all, he HAD to be guilty, not because of any proof, just because he was hated. This was based solely on their overriding hatred and vindictiveness-they saw nothing but a target. A way to ruin someone's life because he disagreed with them or wronged them in some way. These people hoped and wished the accusations were true so they could rise in self-righteous indignation and pronounce that they were right all along and justify their vitriol.

These people, some call them leaders of the community, showed their true colors. You had past and present School and Town board members, legal professionals, religious leaders, directors, administrators and others of authority who contributed to this witch hunt. Whatever happened to innocent until found guilty? What about He who is without sin casting a stone? Not with these individuals. All that mattered was that their hatred was substantiated.

People should search social media platforms and see for themselves who these people are. Find out for yourself. See who you trust your children, your freedom, your soul to. These are the same people who will stand in front and beg that you allow them to run your town, run your schools, supervise your children. Who tell you how to run your life, how to improve yourself, how to raise and educate your children and who will stand in front of you asking for your assistance and money to further their causes.

Are these the type of people you want to pattern your life after? Are these the ones you want to befriend and take advice from? Are these the types you want to teach your children? To have your children grow up and idolize, to mimic or pattern their lives after?

But do your search quickly; the next sound you'll hear will be the sound of the delete key. Some will impose a moratorium on posting, will lay low or proclaim their innocence in the matter. Some may even take the time to reassess their actions and their complicity. They may take a vacation because they don't like the person they've turned into. We all know nothing will change. They will quickly rise up and resume their spitefulness because it consumes them and it is all they know, it is all that they have in their lives.

This town and its residents deserve better than trusting or confiding in these people. These are the people who should be shunned and ridiculed for what they've done, not just accused of. They've actually done it and they boasted about it by publically posting. They made up facts when there weren't any. They made up accusations when they were unable to find any. They've publically demonstrated their lack of integrity, understanding and compassion with

their unrelenting and unsubstantiated attacks. Maybe you'll be the subject of their next attack. I can pretty much predict that I and the members of this board will be their next subject. I can hear the self-proclaimed keyboard warriors typing now. Their self-righteous denials, attempts at defending their actions, placing blame on others, changing what they did to fit their narrative and justify their actions.

Hopefully, Mr. Capello's attorney can show them the light and help them mend their ways as I'm sure he'll be busy over the near future. I doubt anything will change though. Nothing changes with these types, they just move on to a new target."

That's all I've got to say about this entire situation he said.

Chairman Proulx said she couldn't have put it any better and then moved to updating Mr. Capello on the preparations for the elections and Town Meeting.

4). Elections and Town Meeting Preparations:

She said everything seems to be under control at the Town Hall and that the Fire Chief went in to assess the situation and he said they are good to go but she was not sure the setup would be the way everybody would want it.

Mr. Capello said the Selectmen will be placed at a table on the stage.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Vachon said they did not like that part of the set up.

Chairman Proulx said people would not be able to access the board on the stage and asked the board to discuss the matter tomorrow at the Town Hall and see if they can come up with a better seating arrangement for the board.

Mr. Capello noted they wouldn't be seen either as a row of voting booths would be set up in front of the stage and the board would be seated behind those booths.

Mr. Johnson said the voting booths would be gone by Wednesday's Town Meeting.

Chairman Proulx said that set up is for the elections and the board also has to be present then.

Mr. Capello said he planned to have the room set up for Town Meeting as the board approved last Monday with the Selectmen on the main floor to the left of the stage, dept. heads on the stage and the Budget Committee seated to right side of the stage.

Chairman Proulx said Cable TV Coordinator Robert Hall will be at the Town Hall at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday morning to do a run through of the equipment and she planned to be there to make sure everything is operational.

Mr. Capello said the chairs and tables would be set up in the gym in accordance with social distancing after the voting booths are taken down on Wed. and chairs, a TV and a microphone will be set up in the old Town Clerk's Office so there will be plenty of room.

Chairman Proulx said there are air purifiers that kill the virus in the gym and in the lobby.

Mr. Capello said the units have been running for approx. a week to make sure everything got a good circulation.

Chairman Proulx said people can still wear masks and social distance when possible and we will be pretty safe.

5). Public Participation:

Resident Blanche Tanner asked to speak to the board.

Consensus of the board was to allow public participation.

Ms. Tanner asked if the board planned to discuss what is going to happen with the wastewater treatment fund after the elections/Town Meeting are over.

Chairman Proulx said she assumes the topic would be at the top of the list for agenda items.

Ms. Tanner said she wanted to bring it up because has several questions she would like to ask as a rate payer.

She asked if she can get a copy of the UNH Rec. Dept. study.

Chairman Proulx said their report has been put out in public but the board has not discussed it yet and that this topic is also on the list of items for discussion.

Mr. Capello said he is looking to have the UNH reps come in to meet with the board at the March 22 board meeting.

Ms. Tanner asked if there is a Master Plan update.

Mr. Vachon said that it was mentioned at the last Planning Board meeting that Planner Kyle Pimental is still working on it but there was no update at this time.

Ms. Tanner asked if she should direct that question to the Planning Board instead of the Selectmen.

Chairman Proulx said yes because the Planning Board takes care of the Master Plan.

Ms. Tanner said at last week's meeting during the discussion on the solar farms it was mentioned that the former Cardinal landfill site and the "sandpit" site (Cocheco Road & Main St.) have nothing to do with the Town and asked if the owners of those properties have to negotiate with the company to get the solar projects on their property.

Mr. Capello said that is correct and they negotiated with them and they have **Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT)** agreements with the company but he did not know the status of their agreements. The Town doesn't have any control over that he said.

Ms. Tanner said someone told her they went to the Town website looking for a sample voting ballot and they couldn't find it.

Mr. Johnson said it is posted in the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's section of the Town website.

Ms. Tanner said it was also mentioned recently that residential trash was being dumped on the road sides and to check through it to find out who dumped it there. She said the local private vendors have trucks where the back of the truck is wide open and that maybe a bag of trash could have dropped out of the truck and was not intentionally put there by that resident.

She then added that she was glad to see that Mr. Capello is back and the statement that Mr. Johnson read is one of the reasons she does not have access to the internet and she doesn't care about Facebook . There is enough negativity in the world and I don't want to hear any of that stuff and after hearing his words I'm just as happy to not have any part of that she said.

Ms. Tanner then thanked Chairman Proulx for taking on the responsibilities of the Town Administrator over the last 3 months and for all she has done during that time.

6). Adjournment:

Motion: (Johnson, second Vachon) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 6:17 p.m.

Respectively submitted
Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary

Paula Proulx, Chairman

Neil Johnson, Vice Chairman

Dave Connolly

TJ Place

Gerry Vachon