

Board of Selectmen  
Town Office Annex  
February 25, 2014  
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: Mark Walter; Emmett Lyman; Ernie Malavasi

Also Present: L. Alt; D. Angersola; S. Daigle; D. Denette; D. Dill; M. Gillis; M. Gilroy; B. Lunt; R. Miller; L. Prichard; I Schwartz; F. Tencza; C. Varricchio; S. Wheeler and L. Zemienieski

1. First Selectman Walter called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the Agenda as written. Unanimous aye.

2. Preliminary Budget Discussion: Ms. Varricchio distributed budget binders and advised that the salary lines reflect all union negotiated salary increases but do not reflect non-union or in-negotiation salary increases. She noted that an amount has been included in the contingency budget line for salary increases for non-union personnel and union personnel who salaries are still in negotiation.

3. General Budget Review Workshop: Ms. Varricchio directed the Selectmen's attention to the General Fund Expense section of their binders.

A. Lakes Association: Mr. Walter recognized Mr. Miller and Ms. Tencza from the East Haddam Lakes Association. Mr. Miller provided the Selectmen with documentation of the analysis done on the East Haddam lakes and justification for their budgetary request. In response to a question from Mr. Walter, Mr. Miller confirmed that he and Ms. Tencza were representing all of the East Haddam lake organizations and explained how the Association had determined funding allocations for the three lakes.

Mr. Miller stated that the Lakes Association hope to partner with the Town on the cost to maintain the lakes and for treatments to control invasive plants; he noted that the projected cost is only a small percentage of the incremental assessed value of waterfront property.

There was a general discussion regarding historical expenditures and services received from the CT Agriculture Extension Service. In response to a question from Mr. Walter concerning treatment of lilly pads at Moodus Reservoir, Ms. Tencza stated that the Associations have not discussed or collaborated on lilly pad treatments. In response to a question from Mr. Malavasi, Ms. Tencza advised that there is virtually no federal or state funding available for their purposes.

Mr. Walter thanked Mr. Miller and Ms. Tencza for the information they provided.

- B. Public Works: Mr. Walter recognized Public Works Administrator Lunt and Ms. Varricchio directed the Selectmen's attention to the appropriate section in their binders. Ms. Lunt noted that the main changes in the Public Works budget are: an increase in her hours from 30 to 35 hours; an increase in the projected cost for gas/oil, and an allocation to replace the bucket on the front-loader. In response to questions from the Selectmen, Ms. Lunt advised that road repairs are included in the Capital Budget and that she bases her snow-removal budget on a rolling 5 year average.

There was a general discussion regarding Transfer Station staffing, contracted cleaning, and the increase in the cost of snow plowing. Ms. Lunt reviewed her requests for funding for replacement of a 10-year old plow truck, scheduled re-paving of several roads, and building and security upgrades at the Transfer Station.

Mr. Walter thanked Ms. Lunt for providing information on the Public Works 2014-15 budget request.

- C. Libraries: Mr. Walter recognized Library Director Gilroy and several members of the Library Board. Mr. Gilroy advised that the main change to the Libraries' budget is related to technology. He noted that a cost/benefit analysis has not yet been drafted, however, it appears that the Board will recommend joining Libraries Online, Inc. (LION), a consortium of 30+ Connecticut libraries. Ms. Varricchio noted that the projected cost for this item is approximately \$36,500.00 in 2014-15 and which includes a one-time start-up cost of \$11,000.00.

Regarding Capital budget items, Mr. Gilroy advised that he has requested funds to replace the book-drop box at the East Haddam Free Public Library and \$36,000.00 for 50% of the cost for HVAC system upgrades. He noted that they are pursuing a grant for the balance of the cost of the HVAC upgrades.

In response to a question by Mr. Malavasi, Mr. Gilroy advised that it would cost \$5,000.00 to \$10,000.00 to extend Saturday library hours.

- D. Fire Department/Fire Marshal: Mr. Walter recognized Fire Chief Daigle who reported that there was only a small (3%) increase in the Fire Department's proposed budget. He advised that the increase was primarily due to higher heating fuel/propane costs, an aging fleet, and increased vehicle maintenance. Chief Daigle also noted that the Fire Prevention line had been moved under the Fire Marshal's budget.

Chief Daigle advised that he included a \$350,000 Capital request to replace the tanker truck; however, he is also exploring the option of refurbishing the existing equipment. In response to a question from Mr. Walter, Ms. Varricchio confirmed that the Town has been reserving for this expenditure but advised that not enough has been put aside.

In response to a question from Mr. Walter, Chief Daigle stated that the large fire boat is 20+ years old and that the pontoons are no longer being made.

Mr. Walter recognized Fire Marshal Angersola who reviewed several increases in his budget request, including increased hours for the Deputy Fire Marshal. He noted that much of the requested increase is related to the fact that his department is doing more inspections and becoming more involved with other Towns and organizations. He noted that he had also included a one-time request for gear for the members of the department.

In response to a question from Ms. Varricchio, Fire Marshal Angersola advised that State Statutes allow municipalities to charge for inspections; however, East Haddam does not impose a fee.

Mr. Walter thanked Chief Daigle and Fire Marshal Angersola for the information they provided.

- E. Elections/Registrars: Mr. Walter recognized the Registrar of Voters, Laurie Alt. Ms. Alt reviewed her budget and noted that the overall increase was due to several things: same day voter registrations requires having additional deputies at voting events, the State is no longer doing the maintenance on tabulators, and it now requires moderators to be certified every 2 years.

Mr. Walter thanked Ms. Alt for her input.

- F. Other Budgets: Ms. Varricchio reviewed additional budget detail and reported that the Board of Education had voted for a \$700,000.00, 3.7%, increase to its budget. She noted that the proposed increase is mainly related to salary and benefit expenses.

Ms. Varricchio stated that she would provide the Selectmen with additional analysis and a revised revenue sheet for their next meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Malavasi, there was a brief discussion regarding PILOT revenues.

4. Adjournment: There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Tape: None

Respectfully submitted,

Emmett Lyman, Secretary