

Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
February 27, 2014
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: Mark Walter; Emmett Lyman; Ernie Malavasi

Also Present: B. Christopher; J. Lombardo; D. Denette; P. Hoover; E. Lowney; C. Mansfield; T. Quinn; J. Rhoades; R. Smith; P. Stricker; C. Varricchio; P. Veselak; S. Wheeler and L. Zemienieski

1. First Selectman Walter called the meeting to order at 5:00 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. Call for Town Meeting: The Selectmen briefly discussed the call for Town Meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to approve the following call for Town Meeting:

The Electors and citizens of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut qualified to vote in Town Meeting are hereby warned and notified that a Special Town Meeting will be held in the Grange Hall on Town Street in the said Town of East Haddam at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2014 for the following purposes, to wit:

Item 1: To consider and act upon the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Selectmen to accept the following certain conveyance, to wit:

The conveyance from Robert Casner to the Town of East Haddam the right to enter upon the hereinafter described real property for the purposes of maintaining a drainage right of way situated on the northerly side of Ridge Road and shown on a map entitled, "Resubdivision Plan – Lot 37 – 'Kensington Woods' Section V – Ridge Road – East Haddam, Connecticut – Date 09-16-2013; Revised 10-02-2013 and 10-11-2013 – Scale 1" = 40' " prepared by Richard F. Mihok, P.E., 18 Laurel Lane, Marlborough, Connecticut 06447, said map #2731 being on file with the Town Clerk of the Town of East Haddam.

Item 2: To consider and act upon the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance to accept a gift in the amount of \$25,000 in support of the Harris Property/East Haddam Center for Community Agriculture.

Item 3: To consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen:

RESOLVED: That the Purchasing Ordinance adopted by Town Meeting, September 11, 1996, is hereby amended to follows:

All contracts for, and single purchases of supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services (except utilities, gravel and materials necessary on an as needed basis) shall be based, when possible, on competitive bids if such purchase price exceeds **[DELETE: seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500.00)] [ADD: fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)]**. If the purchase can reasonably be anticipated to fall between **[DELETE: five thousand (\$5,000) and seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500)] [ADD: seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) and fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)]** the purchase order shall be accompanied by documentation for 2 price quotes. This documentation shall be maintained in Town records for one (1) year. If such purchase price exceeds **[DELETE: seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500.00)] [ADD: fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)]**, the Selectmen, when possible, shall invoke an advertised\sealed bid process.

The First Selectman, acting on behalf of the appropriate agency, shall solicit sealed bids by the sending of notice to perspective suppliers and by advertising in a newspaper having a general circulation in said Town of East Haddam. The First Selectman may place advertisements in other periodicals, trade magazines, etc., but may not exempt above said newspaper. Each sealed bid shall be publicly opened at the time stated in the notice soliciting such bid. Bids selected by this process shall be publicly awarded at a Board of Selectmen's meeting.

All purchases or contracts above **[DELETE: seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500.00)] [ADD: fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)]** shall be based on at least two (2) competitive bids. When at least two (2) such bids shall not have been received, the Board of Selectmen may, at the request of the town agency represented, void the bid and direct said agency to identify and negotiate with at least two (2) suppliers (one of whom shall be the sole bidder of the voided bid if there was only one (1) such bidder) for the best price and product for the Town of East Haddam. Such negotiated purchase or contract must be approved by the Board of Selectmen before placed into effect.

If the low bidder is not a local business (as defined hereinafter), then the next low bidder, provided it is within ten percent of the next low bidder, may at its option, if it is a local business, match the bid of the low bidder. The Board of Selectmen retains the sole judgment, within its discretion, to determine what constitutes low bidder and next low bidder, after due consideration to base bid, allowances and alternates to a bid, as they may apply. For the purpose of this provision only, "local business" is defined as a business or individual which is assessed real, personal, or motor vehicle taxes in East Haddam on the previous October 1 to the date of the bid opening.

Also, in lieu of the standard competitive bid process, any agency of the Town of East Haddam may:

1. With prior approval of the Board of Selectmen use one (1) or more of the following options:
 - a) A Request for Proposal (RFP) - Vendors of goods or services will be asked to submit

- a proposed solution or solutions (including costs) to a problem or issue described in writing by the town. Prices are finalized by negotiation.
- b) A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) - Vendors of professional services will be asked to present their qualifications for resolving the problem or issue at hand. Price will be negotiated with the vendor deemed best qualified.
 - c) Simple negotiations with appropriate legitimate suppliers.
 - d) An Agent of Record - the Town retains an agent to seek out and evaluate proposals and to bring forward a recommended course of action.

All such purchases or contracts shall be approved by the Board of Selectmen before awarded or placed into effect.

- 2. The town agency, at its discretion, may award such purchase or contract to the legal State low bidder, a supplier which has been selected by the State of Connecticut's purchasing procedure following a competitive bid.

If after the awarding of any bid or its appropriate alternative as described herein, changes in the scope of work or specifications become necessary, they shall be done only through a work change order system as developed by the First Selectman. All payments for such changes shall be made with the appropriate distinctions as such.

The Board of Selectmen reserve the right to accept or reject any and all, or any and all parts of any bids and may waive any informalities in the bidding.
Copies of said ordinance are on file in the Town Clerk's Office during regular business hours.

Item 4: To consider and act upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance to approve a transfer in the amount of \$204,258.00 from the General Fund (781-579790) to the Board of Education Capital Reserve Fund (25-115160-25790).

Item 5: To consider and act upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance to approve a transfer of an amount not to exceed \$261,363.00 from the Board of Education Capital Reserves (25-115160-25790) to the Capital Projects Fund for Board of Education for the purpose of matching grant funds for the School Security Grant (account 25-578888).

3. General Budget Review Workshop:

- A. Recreation Commission: Mr. Walter recognized Recreation Director Quinn. Ms. Quinn provided the Selectmen with a packet of materials and noted that she had included a document stating the Recreation Commission's accomplishments for 2013-14 and goals for 2014-15. She advised that the on-line registration process has been successful in collecting program fees and there was a brief discussion regarding the increase in fees to cover the cost of payments by credit cards.

Ms. Quinn advised that she has been in discussions with SCSU to secure a graduate student intern to assist her with developing and conducting a Needs Assessment survey

for the Recreation Department. She discussed the potential benefits of conducting such a survey and informed the Selectmen that she had requested \$2,000.00 in the Recreation Department's budget to pay for the project. She responded to several questions from the Selectmen and advised that hiring a professional to develop/conduct the survey would cost approximately \$4,000.00 and stated she feels she can accomplish the same results for a lower cost utilizing an intern from SCSU. She stated that she believes that conducting a Needs Assessment for the Town will help focus her efforts to achieve the Town's goal for the Recreation programs to offset the majority of her budget.

Ms. Quinn advised that she had included funding for a 20 hour seasonal employee to assist with the Recreation Department's summer maintenance projects and programs and called the Selectmen's attention to a draft job description in the packets she had provided. She noted the position will be managed by the Public Works Superintendent and provided a brief history of how the work was done by a seasonal Public Works staff member in the past. Ms. Varricchio noted that the funding for this position was included in the Assistant Director budget line and she would create a line in the Recreation Department's budget for a grounds person.

Ms. Quinn advised that she had also included funding for a 10-hour per week, year round, administrative assistant. She called the Selectmen's attention to a draft job description for this position that she had included in the packets she had provided.

Ms. Quinn called the Selectmen's attention to a map of the Old Middle School's fields in their meeting packets. She noted that there are no soccer fields in Town and advised that soccer is played on the baseball outfields. She stated that she would like to develop a large grass field at the Old Middle School site and had requested \$200,000.00 in her budget for engineering survey work. There was a general discussion about the level of use of the Town's ball fields and Ms. Quinn confirmed that field time was maximized. She responded to several questions from the Selectmen and advised that Land Use Administrator Ventres had provided her with the \$200,000.00 estimate for the engineering surveys.

Mr. Walter thanked Ms. Quinn for the information she had provided.

- B. Emergency Management: Mr. Walter recognized Craig Mansfield who informed the Selectmen that the Emergency Management's 2014-15 budget request had not increased from the previous year's budget with the exception of the Colchester Emergency Communications (KX) contract. He stated that the contract was being negotiated.

Mr. Mansfield stated that the Emergency Management had been awarded a \$2,000.00 grant for CERT jackets. There was a brief discussion regarding grants and FEMA reimbursements. He confirmed that the Town's Capital budget still carried \$10,000.00 for a radio system upgrade.

- C. Police: Mr. Walter recognized East Haddam Officers Rhoades and Mansfield and Resident State Trooper Lowney. Officer Rhoades stated that the primary increase in the

Police Department's budget was a request for \$60,000.00 for an additional full time officer. He advised that the Police have doubled their daytime patrols but need an additional officer to increase coverage on the evening shift. He noted that burglaries, larcenies and criminal mischief cases have been significantly reduced since the increase in daytime patrols.

There was a general discussion about the large area to cover in East Haddam, the number of patrol vehicles and the difficulty in predicting overtime; Mr. Walter noted that unpredictable catastrophic events can have a significant impact on overtime. In response to a question from Mr. Walter, Officer Rhoades confirmed that marine patrols have decreased.

Mr. Mansfield provided additional detail concerning several Capital budget requests, including replacing one police cruiser and \$7,000.00 to replace radio equipment which will become obsolete next year when the State implements a new system.

Mr. Walter thanked Officers Rhoades, Mansfield and Lowney for their input.

- D. Shared Services: Mr. Walter recognized Cindy Varricchio and Mr. Mansfield. Ms. Varricchio advised that salaries and benefits for 5 positions are paid under the Shared Services budget: the Finance Director, the Facilities Director, and three IT positions. She noted the Shared Services budget also includes funding for the maintenance of all Town and Board of Education (BOE) buildings, Town and BOE IT services, as well as mileage, conferences and office supplies.

She noted that there is a \$134,000.00 increase in the salary line to absorb the three IT positions with a 1% increase over their 2013-14 salaries.

Ms. Varricchio advised that the additional increase in the Shared Services budget is primarily due to IT related expenses and she provided details on those expenses.

Ms. Varricchio provided information about the following items in the Shared Services Capital budget:

- \$9,000.00 increase for GIS for the Land Use Office;
- \$15,000.00 for mobile automation items for the Building Inspector;
- \$36,500.00 for the Town libraries to participate in LION (she noted the Libraries budget has been reduced by this amount);
- \$300,000.00 for BOE technology.

Ms. Varricchio advised that she and the BOE are researching some potential cost-effective options for its \$300,000.00 technology request such as grants, leasing, etc. At Mr. Walter's request, Ms. Varricchio agreed to provide him with a detailed analysis about this item and noted that Mr. Malavasi has been providing valuable input based on his IT knowledge and experience.

Ms. Varricchio provided information on the new Munis software and stated that the Town would roll out a staggered implementation once the new chart-of-accounts is created.

Mr. Mansfield stated that some of the increase to the Shared Services budget was due to increased State mandated school safety and security requirements and Emergency Management exercises.

In response to a concern raised by Mr. Malavasi, Ms. Varricchio stated that she feels the budgeted amount for software maintenance is realistic given all the upgrades that were done in 2010-11. Mr. Malavasi stated that he feels the proposed budget for maintenance of the Town's website might be low.

- E. Special Revenue Funds: At Ms. Varricchio's recommendation, the Selectmen agreed to defer their discussion of Special Revenue Funds until their March 1st Special Meeting.
- F. Capital Projects and Reserves: Mr. Mansfield stated that funding for replacement of the River House roof needs to be added to this budget line. He advised that all of the Town's building roofs had been assessed and, at this time, other than the River House, only minor repairs are required. He stated that he plans to prepare a schedule of Town building work for next budget year.

Mr. Mansfield provided additional information regarding Capital project work, including ADA improvements at the libraries and tennis court maintenance.

- G. Revenues: At Ms. Varricchio's recommendation, the Selectmen agreed to defer their discussion of Revenues until their March 1st Special Meeting.
- H. Conservation Commission: Mr. Walter recognized Mr. Smith who advised that increases to the Conservation Commission's budget were a result of:
- A need to reprint the trail guides due to increased demand,
 - Increased maintenance of existing trails and plans to cut new trails,
 - Maintenance of existing parking areas and fencing,
 - A need for additional signage, and
 - An increase in the number of meetings resulting in an increased secretarial expense.

Mr. Smith stated that Capital projects include a request for \$10,000.00 to develop additional parking areas, and a \$30,000.00 request to rebuild a footbridge. There was a general discussion regarding the challenge of getting funding for the footbridge project approved and Mr. Smith stated that the \$30,000.00 is for materials only and volunteers will perform the labor. He advised that the Conservation Commissioners would like to take advantage of any grants or opportunities to raise funds for part of the cost of the materials and Ms. Varricchio agreed to research how the Commission might be able to do that and get back to Mr. Smith with her findings.

Mr. Walter thanked Mr. Smith for his input.

I. Other Budgets: The following Other Budgets were discussed:

- a. Tax Collection: Mr. Walter recognized Ms. Dill who advised that her postage budget line increased due to the additional mailings which are required because property owners are making installment payments. She also stated that she expects a decrease in interest and penalties under revenues due to a planned tax sale.

It was noted that the increases under contracted services and postage/envelopes and a corresponding reduction of \$4,409 under Shared Services Technology for the Tax Collector's office. Ms. Dill noted that Quality Data was \$2,553.00 less than last year.

Ms. Varricchio complimented Ms. Dill on a 98.87% collection rate. Mr. Walter thanked Ms. Dill for her input.

- b. Assessor: Ms. Varricchio noted that there was no change in this budget item.

- c. Building Maintenance and Operations: Ms. Zemienieski reported the following:

- Due to putting the antique stove at the Old Town Hall out of service, she had eliminated the Coal/Wood budget line and added those funds to the Propane budget line.
- Due to the installation of VOIP the telephone expense budget line in the Grange Hall budget was removed as this cost is now carried in the Central Services/Town Office budget.
- Heating fuel expense is currently estimated at \$3.49/gallon. The fuel oil bids are due in on March 12.
- The budget includes more regular cleaning and minor repairs to the Millington School House. The budget shows a reduction as last year it carried an amount for roof repairs that were completed.

- d. Central Services: Ms. Varricchio explained the reduction in supplemental wages and noted that a wage increase contingency was included in the fringe benefits budget as a placeholder for anticipated wage increases for non-union staff and the collective bargaining agreements currently being negotiated.

Ms. Zemienieski explained that the maintenance services and lease contracts lines were increase due to the addition of copiers at both libraries and company #1 and the telephone line was increased to reflect a \$1,500 charge per month due to VOIP. Mr. Walter asked for an analysis he could share with the Board of Finance documenting that there were corresponding reductions in telephone lines in other budgets to justify the \$3,000 increase.

Ms. Zemienieski further explained that last year the building maintenance budget carried funding for the project to replace some of the signage throughout town. She explained that this funding has been removed. Mr. Walter explained that he was exploring other funding avenues for this project.

- e. Finance Office: The Assistant's scheduled hours were increased by a negotiated 5 hours per week resulting in a \$7,736.00 increase to this budget line.
- f. Land Use Office: The budget for this department was reduced by \$4,500.00.
- g. Old Middle School: The budget for this building was reduced by \$2,040.00.
- h. Regional Probate Court: The Probate Court's expenses are allocated to each of the four member towns based upon the residential Grand List.
- i. Selectmen: Eventually there will be wage increase associated with this budget. Currently the Fringe Benefits budget is carrying the wage increase contingency. The balance of this budget remains unchanged.

Mr. Malavasi inquired if the legal ad line was used for all ads town-wide. Ms. Zemienieski noted that it is for all general legal ads that are prepared by the Selectman's Office such as bids, town meetings and public hearings. Other departments and boards and commissions have legal ad lines that are specific to their areas.

- j. Town Clerk: The three increases in this budget have corresponding revenue lines to offset them. The board has a brief discussion regarding the new MERS budget line.
- k. Treasurer: This line remains unchanged.
- l. Fringe Benefits: Ms. Varricchio reported on the following:
 - Health Insurance was put in at an estimated 10% increase and that this line was also affected by the addition of the libraries. Mr. Malavasi inquired about the criteria to obtain town health insurance. It was explained that generally insurance is only offered to 30+ hour employees. Mr. Malavasi questioned if the Registrars were eligible for town health insurance. Ms. Varricchio responded that they were not eligible.
 - The Board of Finance would be discussing whether to increase the insurance stipend offered to employees who did not take the town health benefits as an incentive option. Mr. Malavasi asked what insurance plans were available. It was noted that there was a PPO and an HSA through Connecticare. The board discussed the wellness plan. Mr. Malavasi asked if the town provided matching funds for the HSA. Mr. Walter noted that the town provided an approximate 50% match. Mr. Malavasi asked about dental insurance. It was noted that the town offers dental insurance through Anthem.

- The firefighter pension and firefighter life insurance was reviewed.
 - The tuition reimbursement policy was discussed.
 - It was noted that a \$60,000 placeholder was requested for all anticipated wage increases currently being negotiated.
 - The cost of the MERF contributions was discussed.
- m. Insurance: It was noted that there was a slight increase in the insurance line. Mr. Malavasi inquired about the Tax Collector bond and asked if she was the only official bonded. Ms. Zemienieski noted that the Treasurer also carried a surety bond. Ms. Varricchio noted that she would change the description on that budget to include both bonds.
- n. Legal Services: The board reviewed the ongoing lawsuits and union contracts coming up for negotiation.
- o. Youth & Family Services: Mr. Walter reported on a meeting he attended earlier that day with the newly formed Community Safety Committee.

Toni McCabe and Mike Sassi reviewed the Y&FS budget. Mr. Sassi discussed their unrestricted fund. He noted at year end they were at \$8,000 and he hoped to fundraise \$10,000. He commented that he would feel comfortable contributing \$12,000 from this fund into the revenue budget. He reviewed the other revenue sources of the State contribution of \$18,888, East Haddam Board of Education contribution of \$3,000 and a request for funding of \$168,306 from the Town of East Haddam.

The board reviewed their budget for expenditures. It was noted that there were decreases in salaries due to a decrease in clerical support and a decrease in utilities. The board inquired about the staffing at Y&FS. Ms. McCabe responded that there were two full-time positions - director and activities coordinator, a part-time counselor, part-time administrative assistant and a prevention coordinator which is grant funded. She explained that they contract out for bookkeeping and drug and alcohol counseling.

The board asked Ms. McCabe if she could add a position to her staffing in what area would she like to see that added. She responded that there is a real need for a part-time social services coordinator. Currently she handles those duties but felt that this position could bring so much more to the individuals in need of social service benefits.

Ms. McCabe also added that the United Way Asset Development Funding was dwindling. When Y&FS started with the program they were receiving \$15,000, they now receive \$8,000.

The board thanked Ms. McCabe and Mr. Sassi for their report.

The board decided to conclude for the night and hold the next budget meeting at 1:00pm on 3/1/14 following Edward Rocznia's services.

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 8:45 p.m.

Tape: None

Respectfully submitted,

Emmett Lyman, Secretary