

Board of Selectmen Meeting  
Grange Hall  
October 7, 2015  
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: M. Walter; E. Lyman; E. Malavasi

Also Present: E. Blaschik; K. Barrows; L. Branscombe; T. Dickinson; D. Dill; E. Dill; J. Dill; R. Dill; T. Gelston; E. Gubbins; B. Lunt; C. Mansfield; J. Moreau; J. Shea; E. Smith; L. Treat-Perry, S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski

1. First Selectman Walter called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Approval of Agenda: Mr. Walter noted that "Board of Fire Commissioners" should be added to agenda item 8.E. – Board/Commission/Committee Changes.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the agenda as amended.  
Unanimous aye.

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of September 16, 2015.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 16, 2015. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence:

A. Board of Assessment Appeals – Fall 2015 Fall Report: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to the Board of Assessment Appeals report in their meeting packets. He invited Mr. Blaschik, Chairperson of the Board, to speak about the appeals. Mr. Blaschik reported that 14 automobile appeals had been requested and approved resulting in a reduction of \$25,290.00 to the Town's grand list. Mr. Blaschik advised that the Board is discussing a change to the appeal process which would allow citizens, who have successfully appealed their automobile assessments due to high mileage, to carry over the reduction from year to year. Mr. Walter thanked Mr. Blaschik and the Board of Assessment Appeals for their work.

5. First Selectmen's Report: Mr. Walter reported that the dock has been installed; however, the Town is still waiting for DEEP's final approval of the ramp design before it can be installed and the project can be completed.

6. Citizen's Concerns:

The following citizen's concerns were expressed:

- Ms. Dill stated that she had acquired a copy of the Nathan L. Jacobson & Associates, Inc. preliminary report concerning the sight lines at the Landing Hill Road and Maple Avenue

intersection. She requested the Selectmen delay any decision on installing additional stop signs at that intersection until a complete study, including vehicle counts, average speed of traffic, and a history of accidents at the intersection has been completed.

- Mr. Dill stated that he had researched historical Board of Selectmen documents in his possession related to the planning of the Middle School building project. He advised that he found several documents that indicate the Selectmen at the time understood the Trowbridge Road property, currently being considered for exchange, had been purchased for the project. He provided the Selectmen with copies of the documents he had found.
- Mr. Shea stated that he feels the poor sight lines at the Landing Hill Road and Maple Avenue intersection warrants additional stop signs.

## 7. Unfinished Business:

- A. Blight Ordinance Discussion: There was no update on this agenda item.
- B. Emergency Communications Center Contract for Municipal Services Discussion: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to letter in their meeting packets from Sean Hoskins, dated October 6, 2015, related to the proposed switch from KX to Valley Shore. He noted that, in his letter, Mr. Hoskins reviewed the history of KX and encourages the town officials not to make "*...a snap decision to cut ties with it*".

Mr. Walter advised that he will be meeting with the Executive Director of Valley Shore soon and invited Mr. Mansfield to provide information on the efforts of the Emergency Management Committee and town officials related to contracting with Valley Shore for 911 service. Mr. Mansfield reviewed the history of events leading up to the Town's decision to research alternative 911 providers and the due diligence that was done regarding Valley Shore. He noted that the consensus of the Emergency Management Committee was to move to Valley Shore. Mr. Malavasi stated that he believes the move to Valley Shore is a smart decision based on KX's current financial challenges.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to authorize First Selectman Walter to prepare and send an exit letter to Colchester Emergency Communications, Inc contingent upon receipt of written acknowledgement from Valley Shore that they will share the capital expenses of a successful transition.

Mr. Mansfield responded to several questions raised by Mr. Malavasi and discussed the status of the Mt. Parnassus tower. He advised that the state has informed him that construction on the tower will begin in late fall with an expected completion in the spring of 2016.

A vote was taken on Mr. Walter's motion and it passed unanimously.

- C. Trowbridge Road/Middle School Property Discussion: Mr. Walter stated that the Town is still waiting to receive the appraisals on the properties.

- D. Maple Avenue/Landing Hill Stop Sign Discussion: Public Works Administrator Lunt reviewed the findings of Nathan L. Jacobson & Associates, Inc. regarding the intersection of Maple Avenue and Landing Hill Road and stated that their report indicates the sight line warrants stop signs on the north and south bound legs of Landing Hill Road. She advised that the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, 2009 Edition, states that, while traffic counts, accident history, and sight lines can all be taken into consideration in a decision to install a stop sign, if the location does not meet even one criteria, a stop sign is justified.

Mr. Walter noted that the Town's Resident State Trooper also recommends stop signs be installed at the intersection " *...for public safety reasons and to reduce the risk of accidents at this intersection*".

Mr. Lyman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Walter, to install 3-way stop signs at the Maple Avenue/Landing Hill Road intersection.

Mr. Malavasi stated that he disagrees with the recommendations and feels that the proper process should be followed to get a full report on the intersection. Mr. Walter advised that he does not feel any benefit will be gained from conducting a full engineering report because he is certain that the location will not fail on traffic counts or accident history. He stated that the only criteria that is not met at the intersection is sight lines and, consequently, he does not see any value in incurring the expense of a full report. Ms. Lunt reiterated that the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices states that if a location does not meet even one of the noted criteria, a stop sign is warranted.

The Selectmen voted on Mr. Lyman's motion. Mr. Malavasi abstained stating he does not feel he has adequate information to make a decision. The motion passed by a majority of ayes.

#### 8. New Business:

- A. RFQ Award – Bone Mill Road Bridge Consulting Engineer: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a memo from Public Works Administrator Lunt, dated October 6, 2015, in their meeting packets. He noted that six responses were received to the Bone Mill Road Bridge RFQ and that Public Works Administrator Lunt recommended retaining Wengell, McDonnell & Costello, Inc. as the engineering consultant for the project.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept the recommendation of the Public Works Administrator and authorize her to finalize prices and negotiate with Wengell, McDonnell & Costello, Inc. for the Bone Mill Road Bridge Repair Consulting Engineer. Unanimous aye.

- B. Bid Award – Reconstruction of O'Connell Road Extension: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a memo from Public Works Administrator Lunt, dated

October 6, 2015, in their meeting packets. He noted that six bids were received for the reconstruction of O'Connell Road Extension and that Ms. Lunt recommended the Town award the bid to Curtin Construction LLC. Ms. Lunt stated that Curtin Construction is a local business that has worked on a number of Town roads and has proven to be reputable and does high quality work.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to award the bid for Reconstruction of O'Connell Road Extension to Curtin Construction LLC in the amount of \$471,635.00. Unanimous aye.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Malavasi, Ms. Lunt stated that she expects prep work for the project to begin next week.

- C. 2013 STEAP Grant Post Referendum Discussion: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a letter written by Rep. Melissa Ziobron to Benjamin Barnes, Secretary of the CT Office of Policy and Management, dated October 2, 2015. He noted Rep. Ziobron's effort to re-purpose the STEAP grant for other projects in East Haddam. Mr. Malavasi commended Rep. Ziobron's efforts.

Mr. Walter noted that approximately \$60,000.00 had been expended on the Community Center for Agriculture project that would have been reimbursed by the rescinded STEAP grant. He advised that the Board of Finance will have to decide how to find the funds for those expenses and the Agriculture Commission will have to make recommendations on any further improvements at the Harris property. He stated that he hopes the Friends of the Harris Property will work with the Agriculture Commission to develop those recommendations.

Mr. Walter reported that the application for a grant for improvements to the Transfer Station was not approved. He noted that the Town should develop a 10-year capital plan for upgrades to the facility.

- D. Beer and Wine Service – Grange Hall: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Tiffany Quinn, Recreation Director, for approval for a BYOB Beer and Wine event at the Grange Hall for the "Microlights Cinema File Showing" on November 14, 2015 and December 5, 2015.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to approve a BYOB beer and wine event at the Grange Hall for the "Microlights Cinema File Showing" on November 14, 2015 and December 5, 2015. Unanimous aye.

- E. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (COA, ESRBC, BOFC): The Selectmen considered several Commission and Committee memberships.

### **Commission on Aging**

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to an email from Jo Golec of the Commission on Aging (COA), dated September 24, 2015, noting recommendations made for reappointments to the COA.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to reappoint John Pagnani as a regular member for a three-year term to expire June 30, 2018 and Suzanne Bostelman and Mary Ellen Klinck as alternate members for one-year terms to expire June 30, 2016 on the Commission on Aging. Unanimous aye.

#### **Elementary School Renovation Building Committee**

Mr. Walter advised that there have not been enough applications received to date to appoint a full membership to the Elementary School Renovation Building Committee but the six received can start the process. He noted that the Board will, ultimately, have to appoint 7 regular members and 2 alternate members.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to appoint Bryan Perry, Jason Guernon, Brian Ouellette, Eric Barber, Alyson Karpiej and Gregory Grinsfelder as regular members of the Elementary School Renovation Building Committee until the completion of the project. Unanimous aye.

#### **Board of Fire Commissioners**

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a letter from Mike Cooley advising that he will be moving out of Town and must resign from the Board of Fire Commissioners.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Michael Cooley from the Board of Fire Commissioners. Unanimous aye.

- F. Volunteer of the Month (September): Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a volunteer of the month recommendation email in their meeting packets, dated September 1, 2015, from Patty Stricker. Ms. Stricker nominated Mark Thiede, owner of Two Wasslin Cats, and stated Mr. Thiede "*... embraced his new community with open arms*". She noted numerous community and cultural events hosted at Mr. Thiede's business and a fundraiser he assisted with for a young person who is battling cancer. Ms. Stricker stated, "*I believe that his dedication to our community should be celebrated with the recognition of volunteer of the month.*"

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to name Mark Thiede as volunteer of the month for September 2015. Unanimous aye.

- G. Tax Refunds: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to eleven tax refunds.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to award tax refunds in the amounts as presented.

- \$ 23.81 to Julia Leonardo
- \$ 11.48 to Fernando R. Leonardo

- \$ 60.23 to Patrick Lacy
  - \$ 40.15 to Julia A. Schiavi
  - \$ 16.63 to Margaret Quinn
  - \$ 88.33 to Dan J. Damelio
  - \$142.25 to Kathleen L. Willey
  - \$ 29.54 to Diane B. Rode
  - \$ 86.89 to Dorothy Millen
  - \$ 59.37 to William Brady
  - \$160.24 to Honda Lease Trust
- Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: The following public comments were discussed at the meeting:

- In response to a question raised by Mr. Dill, Mr. Walter advised that the Town planned to make revisions to the Transfer Station ordinance during the ordinance book update project; however, that project was taking longer than anticipated so the Town is moving forward with the changes to the Transfer Station ordinance. He stated he will send a copy of the revised draft to Mr. Dill.
- In response to a concern raised by Ms. Dickinson, Mr. Mansfield advised that 911 communication with the State Police and Valley Shore will be the same as it was with KX. He further noted that the Valley Shore staff is very familiar with East Haddam. He reiterated that the state has informed him that the Mt. Parnassus tower will be built by next spring; he also stated that the Town's system will be functional even without the tower.
- In response to a question raised by Ms. Dill, Ms. Zemienieski confirmed that in August the Board of Finance did vote regarding the Expense Consulting Services contract but the full committee was not present at the meeting and there were not the required number of affirmative votes to pass the action. The item was revalidated at the September meeting. Mr. Walter stated that, because it is a multi-year contract, it would also have to be approved at a Town Meeting.
- In response to a question raised by Ms. Barrows, Public Works Administrator Lunt reported that the state has begun work on repaving a section of Town Street and, if the work is completed in a timely fashion, the DOT will do some spot repairs on Mt. Parnassus Road.
- In response to a question from Mr. Shea, Mr. Walter advised that Mr. Thiede is the proprietor of Two Wrasslin Cats coffee house.

10. Selectmen's Discussion: In response to a question raised by Mr. Malavasi, Mr. Walter reported that one of the two new full time police officers will begin on October 11<sup>th</sup> but he did not have the start date for the second officer. He confirmed that both officers waived the Town's benefits package.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,

Emmett Lyman, Secretary