

Board of Selectmen Meeting
Grange Hall
November 18, 2015
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: M. Walter; S. Link; E. Malavasi

Also Present: E. Blaschik; L. Branscombe; R. Casner; B. Cross; D. Dill; E. Dill; J. Dill; R. Dill; J. Moreau; P. Simmons; T. Murphy; S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski

1. First Selectman Walter called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:00 p.m and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of Agenda: Mr. Walter stated that he would like to amend the agenda as follows:
 - Move agenda item 8.B. up before item 5.A. in consideration of Mr. Simmons' time.
 - Include resignations from CIP and the Radio Committees to agenda item 8.D.

Mr. Malavasi stated that he would like to add Updates on the Building Projects under New Business. The Selectman agreed to keep this topic as an on-going item on the agenda.

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

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of November 4, 2015.

Motion made by Mr. Walter seconded by Mr. Malavasi to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 4, 2015 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence: There was no correspondence discussed at the meeting.
5. First Selectmen's Report: Mr. Walter advised that a buried fuel tank has been discovered on the Lyons – Boot Rock open space property. He stated they are researching how to deal with the problem. Mr. Malavasi noted that he believes that removing buried fuel tanks is the responsibility of the owner who installed the tank. Mr. Walter stated that it may depend on how the purchase agreement for the property was structured.

Mr. Walter reported that he had spoken with the owner of the property on Trowbridge Road who has agreed to pay his portion of the appraisal for the properties being exchanged. Mr. Walter thanked Mr. Dill for his suggestion.

8. New Business

B. Tax and Business Incentive Program Application (385 Town Street LLC, Dutch Lower Mill Properties)

Mr. Walter recognized Mr. Simmons who stated that he is seeking approvals for two Tax and Business Incentive Program applications. He advised that the first application is from 385 Town Street (New England Propeller) for a \$1.3M project. He noted that the Economic Development Commission has approved the application.

Mr. Walter advised that the Board of Selectmen had already accepted the application and EDC's recommendation and authorized the Town's attorney to prepare a written agreement. He noted that the agreement is acceptable to 385 Town Street LLC and the following steps need to be completed:

- The Selectmen must approve the written agreement and forward to the Board of Finance and Town Meeting for approval,
- The Board of Finance must approve the written agreement, and
- The agreement must be approved at a Town Meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Ms. Link, to approve the written agreement with 385 Town Street LLC for abatement of property taxes under the Town of East Haddam ordinance entitled "Tax and Business Incentive Program" adopted June 30, 2010 and amended June 30, 2015, and forward it to the Board of Finance and Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Simmons stated that the second application is from Dutch Lower Mill Properties for a \$975,000.00 project. There was a general discussion regarding the project and Mr. Simmons responded to several questions from the Selectmen.

Mr. Walter advised that the Economic Development Commission completed their review of the application and submitted their recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. He stated that the application will follow the same process as previously discussed and, if it is accepted by the Board of Selectmen, he will ask the Town's attorney to prepare written agreement.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to accept the application of Dutch Lower Mill Properties LLC for abatement of property taxes under Town of East Haddam ordinance entitled "Tax and Business Incentive Program" adopted June 30, 2010 and amended June 30, 2015, subject to: (i) the applicant entering into a written agreement with East Haddam on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance and with the affirmative vote of the Town Meeting; and (ii) the applicant complying with all general and specific requirements of an applicant under said ordinance; and, further move to authorize the Town's attorney to prepare such written agreement between Dutch Lower Mill Properties LLC and the Town of East Haddam. Unanimous aye.

5. First Selectman's Report (continued)

- A. Liaison Appointments: The Selectmen discussed and agreed upon the liaison appointments.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to adopt the list of liaison assignments as amended. Unanimous aye.

- B. Shared Services Report: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to the November Shared Services Report in their meeting packets and reviewed the contents of the report.

6. Citizen's Concerns:

The following citizen's concerns were expressed:

- Ms. J. Dill reported that the outdoor light for the Grange's parking lot is out. She also inquired whether or not any analysis has been done, concerning the tax abatement applications, comparing income from property taxes pre- and post-improvements to the sites. Mr. Walter stated he would provide her with that information.
- Ms. J. Dill asked about the status of the Town retaining Expense Consulting and requested a copy of the letter of engagement. She expressed concern that the minutes of the September 14, 2015 meeting of the Board of Finance, when the vote was taken to retain Expense Consulting, have not been posted on the Town's website. She also noted that Ms. Link is listed as an advisory on Expense Consulting's website and expressed concern about the appearance of a conflict of interest. Ms. Link advised that she had recused herself from the vote on hiring Expense Consultant at the Board of Finance meeting.

Ms. Dill stated that she feels it is "ridiculous" to spend money on a consulting firm when the Town has a good deal of expertise, including a Board of Finance and Finance Director, at its disposal who can find ways to save money. Mr. Walter stated that the Town has already reduced expenses in a number of ways and he feels that the consultants might be able to recommend new cost savings measures. He noted that the Town will not pay anything to the consultants unless they find ways to reduce expenses.

- Mr. Murphy stated that citizens often say they wished municipalities acted more like private businesses and he feels retaining Expense Consultants is an example of the Town doing that.
- Ms. Branscombe requested that the liaison appointments be posted on the Town's website.

7. Unfinished Business:

- A. Blight Ordinance Discussion: The Selectmen agreed to schedule a Special Meeting to discuss this agenda item.

- B. Emergency Communications Center Contract for Municipal Services Discussion: There

was no update to this agenda item at the meeting.

- C. 2013 STEAP Grant Post Referendum Discussion: Mr. Walter reported that he is beginning to receive information from department heads regarding how much they can cut their budget to help offset the cost of the work done at the Harris Property and the cost of the referendum on rescinding the STEAP grant for the Ag project.

Mr. Malavasi suggested that the current year's savings from refinancing the Town's bonds along with the salaries of the Zoning Enforcement Officer and Economic Development Coordinator, who recently resigned, should cover most of the expense. He noted he would prefer not to cut departmental budgets, if possible, since their budgets are already thin. He stated that there would only be a shortfall of \$13,307.00 since the total of the savings would be \$48,825.00 of the \$62,132.00 needed. Ms. Link stated that she thought the Town had already accounted for the savings from the bond re-issuance. Mr. Walter stated that, given the Town's current building projects and the potential to develop the Goodspeed Landing village, he and EDC are discussing the option of combining the ZEO and EDC Coordinator positions into a Planning position. He stated he would have more information on the budget numbers to discuss at the next Selectmen's meeting.

- D. Replacement of Bridge No. 02506 Route 82 Over Hemlock Valley Brook-Property Acquisition: There was a brief discussion regarding this property acquisition. Planning and Zoning has approved through the 8-24 process. Town Attorney has just been instructed to prepare the appropriate resolutions to move this through to Town Meeting.
- E. Legal Notice Discussion: There was a brief discussion regarding posting legal notices in the East Haddam News and it was noted that we are awaiting approval from all boards and commissions that post notices.

8. New Business:

- A. Homeland Security Memorandum of Agreement Resolution: Mr. Walter stated that Selectmen vote on the Homeland Security Memorandum of Agreement Resolution every year. He explained the process of pooling and accessing funds for Homeland Security related projects and purchases.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Town of East Haddam may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Mark B. Walter as the First Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of East Haddam and to do and perform all acts and things which he

deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

Unanimous aye.

- B. Tax and Business Incentive Program Application: This agenda item was discussed earlier in the meeting and is reported on above in these minutes.
- C. Call for Town Meeting: The Selectmen briefly discussed the call for Town Meeting.

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

All electors and citizens eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut (the "Town") are hereby warned and notified that a Special Town Meeting of the Town is to be held at the Grange Hall located on Town Street in East Haddam, Connecticut on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 at 8:00 p.m., for the following purposes:

Item 1: To consider and act upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance to revise the Fire Department's Capital Improvement Plan to include repurposing the \$350,000 originally budgeted for one tanker to refurbishing the existing tanker at a cost of \$150,000 and adding the purchase of a small tanker at a cost of \$200,000 to be funded through the Fire Department's Capital Reserve.

Unanimous aye.

- D. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (AGC, EDC, CABLE, CIP, RADIO)

Agriculture Commission

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to an email in their meeting packets from Ronald Gross, Chairman of the Agriculture Commission, dated November 3, 2015, recommending reappointments of all members whose terms had expired to their commission.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Ms. Link, to reappoint Carleen Quinn, Peter Dean and Marianne Halpin for three-year terms to expire June 30, 2019 as regular members on the Agriculture Commission. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to reappoint Bonnie Buongiorno and Tanya Bourgoin for two-year terms to expire June 30, 2018 as alternate members on the Agriculture Commission. Unanimous aye.

Economic Development Commission

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a letter from Deb Mathiasen in their meeting packets, dated November 1, 2015, advising of her resignation from the East Haddam Economic Development Commission.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Debra Mathiasen from the Economic Development Commission.
Unanimous aye.

Old Lyme Area Cable Advisory Council

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a letter in their meeting packets from Catherine Frank, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Old Lyme Area Cable Advisory Council, dated July 30, 2015, advising of vacancies on the Council.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Ms. Link, to appoint Ernest Malavasi and Michael Gilroy as East Haddam representatives to the Old Lyme Area Cable Advisory Council. Mr. Malavasi abstained from the vote and the motion passed by a majority of ayes.

East Haddam School Capital Improvement Building Committee

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Mr. Toolan, dated November 17, 2015, advising of his resignation from the School Capital Improvement Building Committee.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to accept, with regret, the resignation of J. Richard Toolan from the East Haddam Schools Capital Improvements Building Committee. Unanimous aye.

Town Wide Radio System Building Committee

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Mr. Toolan, dated November 17, 2015, advising of his resignation from the Radio System Building Committee.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to accept, with regret, the resignation of J. Richard Toolan from the Town Wide Radio System Building Committee. Unanimous aye.

E. Tax Refunds: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to two tax refunds.

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

- \$439.98 to Vault Trust
- \$164.34 to Vault Trust

Unanimous aye.

F. Building Projects Updates: Mr. Blaschik and Mr. Dill from the Municipal Office

Building Committee reported on the following:

- The Committee is discussing drafting an RFP for a construction manager.
- A construction attorney from Halloran & Sage discussed the paperwork involved with the USDA loan with the Committee.
- The mural has been appraised at approximately \$20k; there are no plans to move it off-site but it will be protected during construction.

There was a general discussion about using a construction attorney from Halloran & Sage for the Town's building projects vs. going out to bid. The Selectmen agreed that it would be prudent to retain a construction attorney to review the contracts of all the building projects and Mr. Walter noted that the attorneys at Halloran & Sage handle most of the Town's legal work. He stated, however, that he will get biographical info and quotes from at least two other construction attorneys.

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

- Mr. Blaschik stated that he feels the Town should ensure that the state covers all of the expenses related to the taking of the Valenti Property for staging of equipment during construction on the bridge over Hemlock Valley Brook on Route 82.
- Mr. Blaschik reiterated that he is concerned about using the East Haddam News for Planning & Zoning's legal notices could delay projects. Mr. Walter noted the Town will not use the weekly paper exclusively and will post legal ads in the Hartford Courant when it makes sense. He confirmed that the Town will continue to post trade notices in the Hartford Courant and other pertinent periodicals.
- In response to a question raised by Ms. Branscombe, Mr. Walter stated that he has not yet received information from the Agriculture Commission regarding cutting their budget to help off-set the expense incurred for the Center for Community Agriculture and the related referendum.

10. Selectmen's Discussion:

A. 2016 Board of Selectmen Meetings: The Selectmen reviewed the schedule for the 2016 Board of Selectmen meetings and noted a few conflicts.

Motion made by Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to approve the following dates as the meeting schedule for the Board of Selectmen for the 2016 calendar year: January 6 & 20, February 3 & 17, March 2 & 16, April 6 & 20, May 4 & 18, June 1 & 15, July 6 & 20, August 3 & 17, September 7 & 21, October 5 & 19, November 2 & 16, December 7 & 21, and January 4 & 18, 2017. All meetings will be held at 7:00pm in the Grange Hall. Unanimous aye.

B. Freedom of Information Workshop (November 30, 2015 @ 7:00 pm – Grange Hall): Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a notice in their meeting packets regarding this

Workshop. He stated that Mr. Thomas Hennick, Public Information Officer, conducts the workshops regularly and that the public is welcome to attend.

Mr. Malavasi advised that he will reach out to Comcast regarding equipment/requirements to air the Town's meetings on the public cable channel. Ms. Link agreed to speak with the Superintendent about a high school student from the audio-visual program recording meetings.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Ms. Link, to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Link, Secretary