

Special Town Meeting
September 21, 2015
Nathan Hale Ray High School Auditorium

Town Clerk, Debra H. Denette called the Special Town Meeting to order at 8:00 pm at the Nathan Hale Ray High School auditorium, School Drive. Over 100 people were in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited along with a moment of care and concern for the safe return of two missing teens.

A motion was made by Mr. Brad Parker, seconded by Ms. Kathy Klinck nominating Mrs. Denette to serve as Moderator. Additional nominations were solicited none were offered. Mr. Parker motioned to close nominations, Mr. Peter Dean seconded the motion. The motion closing nominations carried unanimously via voice vote. The motion appointing Deb Denette to serve as moderator carried unanimously.

Mrs. Denette read the call in its entirety. She advised that since the call was issued item number 1 was removed from action at this meeting to referendum via a petition containing well over the required 200 qualified signatures. The Moderator advised that discussion on item 1 shall occur, however, a vote on the question shall be deferred until October 1, 2015 between the hours of noon and 8 pursuant to CGS 7-9b.

Mr. Will Brady motioned to accept the call. Mrs. Linda Stuhlman seconded the motion and to amend the hours of voting to 6 a.m. The Moderator requested that a motion on the timing of referendum be held after discussion of item #1. There being no further discussion on acceptance of the call, the Moderator called for a vote, which carried unanimously via voice vote by the legislative body herein assembled.

Item #1 to consider and discuss (but not vote on) the following resolution received by Petition from the required number of registered voters of the Town of East Haddam.

“Shall the Town of East Haddam rescind the action taken at the special town meeting of June 19, 2013 authorizing the town to accept a STEAP grant in the amount of \$431,200.00 to undertake the Center for Community Agriculture Project and to enter into an Assistance Agreement associated therewith?”

The Moderator called on First Selectman Mark Walter. Mr. Walter reviewed documentation that was made available to the public stating what the revised grant does not include and what it does include. He further reviewed the costs associated with a rescission of the grant and highlighted that if the referendum failed, the Town would do the following. Appoint a building committee NOT comprised of any Town employees to oversee and carryout the grant. Advisory groups to the building committee would include the Agriculture Commissions and the Friends of the Harris property; the appointed building committee would hold public hearings for continued input into the project.

Mr. Gross, Chairman of the Agriculture Commission read a letter of its concerns with the project and items it concurred could be better addressed.

Mrs. Varricchio, Finance Director, reviewed the expenses to date.

Prior to opening the floor to public comment, the Moderator encouraged all speakers to remain courteous, to direct their comments through the moderator, to state their name and address and to limit their comments to three minutes. She noted the presence of a flag that would be raised at 2 and a half minutes to signal the speaker to wrap up their comments.

The following speakers provided comments:

Joy McNeil	Linda Stuhlman
Dick Everett	Susan Weaver
Mardie Smith	Susan Costomaris
Ron Gross	Dean Palletti
Bill Cross	Will Brady
Mardie Smith	Doug Chesnarf read a letter written by Paul Stuhlman who was away
Terry Dickerson	Kim Barrows
Tanya Bourgoïn	Candy Karle
Lynn Branscombe	John Russell
Barbara Guadio	

Mr. Walter and Mrs. Varricchio, Mr. James Ventres, and Mr. Gross answered questions relative to financing, the depth and number of wells, the number of plots rented, the need for the well to be installed to increase the number of lessee's.

Many comments raised concern with the maintenance of structures and improvements on the property, however, there was a general consensus that a community garden was a good idea. A frequent comment was that this issue has divided the town and generated much negativity.

Mrs. Denette ended discussion on this item as it will be voted upon at referendum after about an hour and 15 minutes. She noted that the statutory time to conduct a referendum is noon to 8:00 pm and that the legislative body has the authority to open the polls at 6 am. She stated that now would be an appropriate time for Mrs. Stuhlman to make the motion she offered earlier.

Mrs. Stuhlman motioned that the polls be open at 6:00 am on Thursday, October 1, 2015 to conduct the referendum. Mr. Thomas Tarbox seconded the motion. Mrs. Denette advised that the ballots have been ordered in anticipation of a machine vote, she stated, however, that due to the Republican primary held on September 16 the voting tabulators will be held in mandatory lockdown until

September 30th. (14 days following their use). Mrs. Denette stated that with an earlier opening it will not be feasible to program and test the machines by the opening of polls. Mrs. Denette stated that this will not in any way hinder voting, she stated that a hand count may be necessary if loaner machines are not found.

Mrs. Laurie Alt advocated for the noon opening, she stated that Absentee ballots would be available for those unable to get to the polls in the noon to eight timeframe. In addition to the expense, she cited that the morning session is typically not very busy. Mrs. Stuhlman noted the eight vote difference in the recent primary emphasized that every vote counts.

The Moderator stated that she had a motion and a second that the legislative body herein open the polls at 6:00 a.m. to conduct the referendum on October 1, 2015. Mrs. Denette requested a show of hands for the count. Forty-four yes votes to forty no votes were recorded. The Moderator declared the motion passed, opening the polls at 6:00 a.m. on Thursday, October 1, 2015.

Item #2 Mr. Will Brady motioned, Mr. Brad Parker provided the second that legislative body herein assembled consider and act upon the recommendation of the board of selectmen and the board of finance to adopt the following resolution:

Resolved: that a grant in the amount of \$800,000 is hereby accepted under the Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block grant program administered by the State of Connecticut Department of Housing pursuant to public law 93 3 83 as amended for the East Haddam renovations at Oak Grove Senior Housing phase II project.

In furtherance of this resolution, Mark B. Walter, the First Selectmen is duly authorized to execute an assistance agreement with the State of Connecticut for state financial assistance on behalf of the Town of East Haddam. Mark B. Walter currently holds the office of First Selectman and has held that office since November 7, 2007 the first Selectman is further authorized to provide such additional information and execute such other documents as may be required by the local state or federal government in connection with the said contract and to execute any amendments, rescissions and revisions thereto.

Mr. Parker reviewed what improvements were done pursuant to phase I and the scope of the project planned for phase II. He advised that there are no matching funds required from the Town and that a most vulnerable population benefits. Representative Ziobron inquired what the town's fee for administering the grant was. Mrs. Varricchio reported that there is not a fee.

Hearing no further discussion, the Moderator called for a voice vote that the legislative body herein assembled unanimously adopted the following resolution:

Resolved: that a grant in the amount of \$800,000 is hereby accepted under the Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block grant program administered by the State of Connecticut Department of Housing pursuant to public law 93 3 83 as amended for the East Haddam renovations at Oak Grove Senior Housing phase II project.

In furtherance of this resolution, Mark B. Walter, the first selectmen is duly authorized to execute an assistance agreement with the state of Connecticut for state financial assistance on behalf of the Town of East Haddam. Mark B. Walter currently holds the office of First Selectman and has held that office since November 7, 2007 the first Selectman is further authorized to provide such additional information and execute such other documents as may be required by the local state or federal government in connection with the said contract and to execute any amendments, recessions and revisions thereto.

The motion carried unanimously via voice vote.

Item 3. Kathleen Klinck motioned, Roger Stube seconded that the legislative body herein assembled adopt the following resolution:

Resolved: that a grant in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 is hereby accepted from the State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management, Intergovernmental Policy Division for reimbursement of the costs associated with a financial accounting system upgrade and conversion from a local chart of account to the state developed uniform chart of accounts UCA) revenue account 33250-43000-c0035 and expense account 33250013 67925-c30035 in furtherance of this resolution the board of selectmen has authorized Mark B. Walter first selectman of the Town of East Haddam to execute a notice of grant award and perform the necessary administrative actions to enter into a binding agreement with the Office of Policy and Management according to the terms of the UCOA grant program.

Mrs. Varricchio explained that East Haddam was one of the first municipalities to complete this State initiative and is being rewarded with this grant. She added that there are no matching funds required.

There being no further discussion, the Moderator called for a vote authorizing the acceptance of a \$30,000 grant from the State of Connecticut Office of policy and management. The motion carried unanimously via voice vote.

Item #4. Dave Denette motioned, Will Brady seconded that the legislative body herein assembled accept a grant in the amount of \$3,000 from the State of Connecticut State Library for the purpose of historic document preservation and appropriated to Fund 2600 Historic Document preservation and that Mark B. Walter first selectman is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality a contract with the Connecticut state library for an historic document preservation grant.

Mrs. Denette stated that this grant will enable the purchase of a map filing cabinet. She added that there are no matching funds required.

There being no further discussion, the Moderator called for a vote. The motion authorizing the acceptance of a \$3,000 grant from the State of Connecticut State Library for the purpose of historic document preservation carried unanimously via voice vote.

Item 5. Kathy Klinck motioned, Mary Ellen Klinck provided the second that the legislative body herein assembled act the following resolution:

Be it hereby resolved that the ordinance entitled Town Beach regulations approved by East Haddam special town meeting on June 30, 1966 and amended by East Haddam special town meeting on December 30 1998 be amended and restated in its entirety to adhere to current beach practices and regulations. Said amended and restated text is on file at the Town Clerk's office during normal business hours.

Tiffany Quinn, Recreation Director reiterated that no changes had been incorporated in almost 20 years and that the changes requested are to reflect current practices.

Roxanne Berryhill had several questions for Mrs. Quinn and brief dialog ensued. As these questions were not relevant to the ordinance, Mrs. Denette requested that Ms. Berry Hill speak to Mrs. Quinn outside of the meeting.

There being no further discussion regarding the ordinance, the Moderator called for a vote. The motion accepting the revised ordinance carried unanimously via voice vote.

Item 6. Mr. Brady motioned, Mr. Stube provided the second that the legislative body herein assembled act upon the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen to amend the committee membership portion of the charge of the Municipal Office Building Committee as follows:

Section 1. The committee shall consist of 7 members and 3 alternates to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The term of office of said members shall continue until the project is complete and accepted by the town and the committee is discharged, except that any member may resign or be removed by the Board of Selectmen for just cause. Any vacancy on the committee shall be filled by the Board of selectmen. The committee shall select its own chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer. This committee shall answer to the board of selectmen and make quarterly progress reports to the board of selectmen.

Copies of the complete charge are on file in the town clerk's office during normal business hours.

Mr. Walter advised that he was fortunate to have ten very qualified individuals willing to serve on the committee. He stated that one is no longer able to participate. He stated, however, that the recommended change is to increase the alternates and as this will be a very busy committee.

Patricia Stricker, Mr. Tarbox and Mr. Brady, Mr. Parker and Ms. Barrows each offered comments. Both pro and con comments were noted.

The moderator called for a voice vote, the outcome of which was not discernable. The Moderator requested a hand count. The results of which were declared as 27 in favor 26 opposed. The motion carried resulting in an amended charge as indicated above.

There being no further business to conduct the meeting adjourned to referendum to be held at 6 am on Thursday, October 1 at 9:45 p.m.