

Board of Selectmen  
Senior Center  
July 11, 2016  
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: S. Link; E. Malavasi

Also Present: L. Zemienieski; T. Gelston; C. Gelston; S. Jezek; E. Lyman; D. Lyman; R. Smith; L. Branscombe; P. Tripputi; E. Blaschik; T. Dickinson; C. Dickinson; S. Dickinson; I. Haines; K. Nickerson; L. Treat-Perry; C. Riling; W. Cross; K. O'Boyle; B. Parker; M. Gilroy; P. Carlson; M. Elgart; C. Reed; J. Maynard and K. Maynard

1. Selectman Link called the special Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 5:49 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Explanation of the Process: Ms. Link reviewed the process of the replacement of the First Selectman. She noted that the first choice to fill the position of First Selectman would be provided to the current Selectmen and she and Mr. Malavasi have both chosen not to take the position. Based on Connecticut General Statute 9-222 the board would then be charged with selecting the best qualified candidate to fill the vacancy.

Ms. Link noted that the board will be conducting the actual interviews in executive session and would hold deliberation in an open forum, offer public comment and then the board hoped to appointment a First Selectman. She explained that the board chose to hold these interviews in executive session so that no candidate would have an upper hand in hearing questions and responses offered by previous candidates. They believed this was the fairest way to conduct the process. She added they will be taking the candidates for interview in alphabetical order. She commented that the first candidate for interview would be Todd Gelston and a motion to enter executive session would be in order.

Mr. Gelston called a point of order from the floor. Mr. Gelston referenced his cover letter included with his application and resume. His letter noted that in order to inspire voter confidence and fulfill transparency, he requests that the entire interview process be accomplished in a public setting without any executive sessions. He added that he makes that request again this afternoon.

Ms. Link noted that the board had received advice from the town attorney on this process and would be conducting the interviews in executive session and again this is to promote fairness to all candidates. She repeated that she felt executive session was the fairest way to conduct the interviews and noted that they would talk in open deliberation about their decisions and why and what they felt were the best answers to the questions asked of the candidates. She called for a motion to enter into executive session.

Mr. Gelston began to comment and noted to the board that he was not finished speaking yet. He commented that he is concerned that the people of East Haddam deserve to hear all the answers and as far as privacy is concerned the candidates could all be put in a separate room

so they would be unable to hear the others questions and responses. He noted that he understood the advice from counsel but added that what is most important is that there is more to life than legal counsel when it comes to government. Ms. Link noted that the board appreciated his comment and Mr. Gelston noted that he was not done speaking yet. The voters of East Haddam deserve to hear the applicant's answers to the interview questions and it sounded to him as if the board would not be complying with his request. Ms. Link repeated that they will be holding the interviews in executive session and will be discussing the applicant's answers in open deliberation but will not have all the applicants in the same room when presenting the questions. Mr. Gelston stated that it would be his decision that if the board can not comply with his request he would need to respectfully decline to be interviewed in executive session. Ms. Link accepted his decision.

3. Executive Session – Personnel – First Selectman Interviews: Motion made by Ms. Link, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to enter into executive session for reason of personnel matters in order to interview candidates for the position of First Selectman and to invite Scott Jezek, Emmett Lyman & Robert Smith into this session individually at 4:34 pm. Mr. Jezek added that he would have no objection if the board chose to remove the candidates from the room and call them in one by one to be interviewed. The board voted to continue with the executive session.

Selectmen returned to regular session at 7:25 pm. No motions or decisions were made.

4. Deliberation of Candidates: Ms. Link noted that due to the length of the interviews the board would like to review their notes and postpone the deliberation of the candidates until the board's next meeting scheduled for July 20, 2016.
5. Public Comment: Ms. Link opened the floor for public comment at this time. No members of the public offered comment at this time.
6. Appointment of First Selectman: There was no appointment of First Selectman made at this time.
7. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Link, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 p.m. Unanimous aye

Respectfully submitted,

Susan C. Link, Secretary

Recorded