

Board of Selectmen
Grange Hall
November 1, 2017
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: E. Lyman; S. Link; E. Malavasi

Also Present: F. Anderson; S. Armstrong; A. Blaschik; K. Blaschik; C. Brownell; W. Cross; D. Denette; C. Dickinson; T. Dickinson; D. Dill; E. Dill; R. Dill; C. Fortune; C. Gelston; T. Gelston; G. Guidi; R. Guidi; I. Haines; S. MacLelland; M. Malavasi; C. Mansfield; K. Nickerson; K. O'Boyle; B. Parker; C. Riling; R. Rose; J. Rocznik; R. Smith; C. Varricchio; J. Ventres; M. Walter; S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski, and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Lyman 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: Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Ms. Link, to approve the Agenda as written. Unanimous aye.
3. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of October 18, 2017 and Regular Meeting of October 18, 2017.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of October 18, 2017, as written. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Ms. Link, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 18, 2017, as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence: Mr. Lyman noted that the only correspondence received was about the Horizontal Curve Safety Program signs and will be discussed later in the meeting under Unfinished Business.
5. First Selectmen's Report
 - A. Board of Selectmen Proclamation: In honor of Selectman Malavasi's retirement, Mr. Lyman read a Proclamation from the Board of Selectmen in his honor. The public in attendance applauded Mr. Malavasi who thanked them for putting their trust in him and electing him to two terms on the Board of Selectmen. He also stated that it was an honor to serve with the Town's other Selectmen.

Mr. Lyman also reported on the following:

- Electrical Outages – Eversource had advised him that 99% of the Town's electrical service will be back up as of noon on Thursday (11/2). He noted that 10% of the Town's residents are currently without power and three roads are still blocked by fallings trees, poles and/or power lines.
- Eversource Rate Increase – He was notified that Eversource will be submitting a rate increase request to the CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). He noted that the expected increase will be approximately 6%.

- Abduction Incident – He reviewed a timeline of the events and notifications surrounding the recent abduction incident in East Haddam. He reported that the CT State Police’s Major Crimes Unit handled the incident and his contact there admitted that there was “a breakdown in communications” with the Town. He further noted that he had followed the State Police’s instructions regarding what information he could release to the public in his notifications. Mr. Lyman advised that he has asked the school superintendent to contact the State Police and instruct them to notify him immediately, in the future, whenever there is an incident at or involving one of the Town’s schools.
- B. Municipal Office Building Committee Update – Craig Mansfield: Mr. Lyman recognized Mr. Mansfield who provided an update on the renovation work in the new Municipal Office Building. He noted that the project is on schedule and on-budget. He advised that the expected substantial completion date is projected to be on or about January 19th with a move-in date planned for mid-February. He noted that the committee is very pleased with the work Downes Construction is doing on the building.
- C. Town Wide Radio System Committee Update – Craig Mansfield: Mr. Mansfield reported that the state is working with the contractor of the Mount Parnassus Tower to resolve a leak issue and the Town cannot hook-up to the tower until that issue is resolved. He further advised that the Board of Education and Planning & Zoning Commission have approved a location on the back side of the new Middle School for a secondary radio tower site. He noted the committee has been working with the Goodspeed to allow the Town to place a few small antenna on the roof of the Opera House which will be the Town’s third site, covering the CT River area. He stated that the antenna currently located at the Town Annex will be relocated to the top of the Goodspeed Opera House roof when the municipal offices move to the Moodus location.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Link, Mr. Mansfield advised that very little of the budget for this project has been spent to date.

6. Citizen’s Concerns

The following citizen’s concerns were discussed at the meeting:

- In response to a question raised by Ms. O’Boyle, Mr. Mansfield advised that the Goodspeed will not charge the Town to locate the antennas on the Opera House roof.
- In response to a question raised by Mr. Cross, Ms. Varricchio advised that any Town employee who is issued a Town credit card, must agree to and sign a form outlining the policy for the proper use of the card.
- Regarding the recent abduction incident in Town:
 - In response to a question raised by Ms. Riling, Mr. Lyman confirmed that he did speak with the State’s Attorney regarding the incident and that several of the facts he provided in his notification(s) were clarified.
 - Ms. Dickinson expressed her concern that Channel 3 News reported more details about the incident than was provided in Mr. Lyman’s notifications and Mr. Lyman reiterated that he had followed the State Police’s instructions regarding the information he could provide to the public.

- Mr. Bergeron also expressed concern about what he perceived as a lack of information in Mr. Lyman's notifications and noted that he has two small daughters he needs to keep safe.
- In response to Ms. Riling's suggestion that the Emergency Management Director should have coordinated communication with the State Police and the public, Mr. Mansfield advised that, as Emergency Management Director, he is charged with managing the Town's response to large scale emergency situations. He stated that he was unaware of the incident at the time it was occurring and that his name was not used in any of the notifications. Mr. Mansfield further noted that, had he been involved, he would also have followed proper protocol and only released information to the public as authorized by the State Police.

7. Unfinished Business

- A. Shagbark Solar Project Discussion: There was no new update on this agenda item.
- B. Solid Waste Facility Ordinance Amendment/Transfer Station Discussion: Mr. Lyman reported that there are currently six volunteers for the Transfer Station Committee. He noted that the committee will have five regular members and two alternate members. He expects the Board of Selectmen will appoint seven members to the committee at their next regular meeting.
- C. Ordinance Codification Discussion: Mr. Lyman reported that the draft ordinance book has been uploaded to the Town's website for citizens to review.
- D. Senior Center Usage Discussion: There was no discussion regarding this agenda item. Mr. Malavasi stated that he hoped as many Town organizations as possible can use the Senior Center.
- E. Plan of Conservation and Development: Mr. Lyman called the Selectmen's attention to an updated draft of the Board's section of the Plan of Conservation and Development. He noted that the changes they discussed at their October 18th Special Meeting were incorporated into the draft and he asked the Selectmen to review the changes.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to recess the meeting in lieu of the scheduled Town Meeting. Unanimous aye.

The meeting was recessed at 7:53 p.m. and reconvened at 8:26 p.m.

- F. Horizontal Curve Safety Project Update: Mr. Lyman reviewed the history of the project and stated that other towns have also expressed concern about the type and number of signs being installed. He advised that any individuals that remove the signs will be charged with larceny by the state and any towns that remove signs prior to them being turned over to the municipality will be charged for the cost of the signs by the state. He noted that the state has already imposed significant bills on two towns for their removal of some horizontal curve signs.

Mr. Lyman reiterated his plan to hire a traffic engineer to appraise the placement and number of signs after the project is turned over to the Town. He noted that the UConn Safety Circuit Rider may also do the appraisal for no charge.

Mr. Lyman asked Mr. Walter, who was First Selectmen when the Town applied for the project, to provide some additional background. Mr. Walter stated that the State's Horizontal Curve Safety

Project came to the Town's attention around the same time he and Public Works Director Lunt were reviewing several potentially dangerous roads in Town following traffic deaths on Eli Chapman Road and Route 149. He stated that they both felt it would be a good idea to participate in the grant; however, he feels that the reality does not fit with what he believed was the proposed intention of the project. He noted that he and Director Lunt worked with the state's Safety Circuit Rider prior to their decision to participate in the state's grant and recommended the Town use the same resource to re-evaluate the signs once the project is turned over to the municipality.

8. New Business

- A. Beer & Wine Approval Request – Grange Hall: Mr. Lyman called the Selectmen's attention to an email in the meeting packets from Recreation Director Quinn, dated October 13, 2017, requesting permission for a BYOB Beer and Wine event at the Grange Hall for a "Cinema Film Showing" on January 13, 2018.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to approve a BYOB beer and wine event at the Grange Hall for a "Cinema Film Showing" on January 13, 2018. Unanimous aye.

- B. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (EDC): Mr. Lyman advised that he had spoken with Ms. Rubenbauer who informed him that, while she would like to continue to serve on the Economic Development Commission, health issues prevented her from doing so. He noted that she had agreed to send him written confirmation of her intention to resign from the Commission; however, he has not yet received that communication and he feels that she has larger issues to deal with at this time.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to accept, with regret, the verbal resignation of Pamela Rubenbauer from the Economic Development Commission. Unanimous aye.

- C. Tax Refunds: Mr. Lyman called the Selectmen's attention to one tax refund.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Ms. Link, to award a tax refund in the amount as presented:

- \$ 78.36 to JP Morgan Chase Bank.
- Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: The following public comment was discussed at the meeting:

In response to a question from Ms. Armstrong, Mr. Lyman stated that hiring a traffic engineer to advise the Town on whether or not to remove horizontal curve signs, and which ones, would provide the Town with a defense in court if there is an accident at a site where signs were eliminated. He emphasized, however, that it would not guarantee the Town would win if a law suit were filed against it.

The following concerns regarding the state's Horizontal Curve Safety Project were raised at the meeting:

- In response to a concern raised by Mr. Gelston, Mr. Lyman advised that the state did not provide him with a projected completion date for their Horizontal Curve Safety Project. Mr. Gelston

stated that it was his opinion that the night-time glare from the new signs cause a greater hazard than if there were no cautionary signs posted.

- Mr. Rose expressed concern that visitors to his home could be at an increased risk if an accident occurs upon their leaving his driveway because the signs limit the liability of the state.
- Ms. Guidi submitted a petition to remove the signs and advised that she would continue to collect signatures. Mr. Lyman stated he would send the petition(s) on to the CT Department of Transportation Commissioner.
- Mr. Dill expressed concern that if the safety signs are removed, in any lawsuit against the Town, the state's engineers' opinion would override the opinion of any traffic engineer hired by the Town.
- Ms. Dickinson suggested checking to see if the state's guidelines for posting traffic safety signs have changed because there seems to be many more horizontal curve signs being installed than what the public has been used to seeing.
- Several other members of the public restated their concerns about the number of horizontal curve signs being posted and the resulting night-time glare from the signs.

Several members of the public voiced differing opinions regarding the use of Facebook for accurate information on public safety issues. Mr. Lyman and Mr. Mansfield provided information about the Town's Everbridge notification process and encouraged citizens to sign-up for the emergency notifications.

Ms. Blaschik thanked the Selectmen for providing the citizens with locations for showers, to pick-up potable water, and for charging electronic equipment after the weekend's storm and consequent widespread power outages.

10. Selectmen's Discussion: Mr. Malavasi once again thanked the citizens and Selectmen for allowing him to serve on the Board of Selectmen for two terms. He also thanked Ms. Zemienieski and Ms. Varricchio for their assistance during his term.
11. Adjournment: There being no additional regular business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Link, Secretary