

Board of Selectmen  
Municipal Office Complex  
Meeting Rooms 1/2  
March 24, 2018  
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: E. Lyman; S. Link; R. Smith

Also Present: M. Callahan; V. Ceceri; D. Denette; W. DiCristofaro; R. Dill; T. Gelston; T. Gionta; J. Moreau; I. Morsch; R. Morsch; C. Woodward; L. Woodward; L. Zemienieski

1. First Selectman Lyman called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of Agenda: Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Smith, to approve the Agenda. Unanimous aye.
3. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of February 27, 2018 and Regular Meeting of March 7, 2018

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Ms. Link, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 27, 2018 as written. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Ms. Link, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 7, 2018. There was a brief discussion regarding Agenda Item 5C and it was agreed to replace "withdrawn" to "on hold". There was a unanimous aye vote to approve the minutes as amended.

4. Correspondence: No correspondence was discussed at the meeting.
5. First Selectmen's Report: In response to questions asked at a previous Selectmen's meeting, Mr. Lyman reported that Fuss & O'Neil will test the Municipal Office Complex for mold and mildew after all the painting and sanding has been completed. He noted that the testing is currently scheduled for possibly mid-April.

Mr. Lyman also confirmed that the Town will schedule public hearings to discuss any potential development of the old Town Office Site property.

- A. Transfer Station Committee Report – Robert Morsch, Chairman: Mr. Morsch called the Selectmen's attention to a report in their meeting packets from the Transfer Station Committee, dated March 21, 2018. He read the report to the attendees; a copy of which is attached to and made a part of these minutes.

The Selectmen and Mr. Morsch discussed the Committee's report/recommendations and Mr. Morsch responded to several questions raised by the Selectmen.

- B. Shared Services Report – March: Mr. Lyman called the Selectmen's attention to the March Shared Services Report in their meeting packets. He reviewed several items in the report.

Mr. Lyman reported that the Probate Court is in receipt of a petition to transfer the East Haddam Free Library over to the Town's ownership and it is anticipated that the Court will respond positively. He stated that, after the Court makes its decision, a Town Meeting and/or referendum will be held to determine if the Town should take over the library.

6. Citizen's Concerns: Mr. Moreau distributed materials related to two public safety issues. He discussed the career staff's response to 911 calls and the Ambulance Association/Fire Department's new directive; he noted that the career staff punches a time clock to track their hours. Mr. Moreau discussed the proposal to eliminate part-timers in lieu of two full-time staff people. He expressed concern that, if adopted, the proposal will do away with five experienced staff members. Mr. Moreau requested more than one of the Selectmen attend the career staff's scheduled meeting with the Fire Commissioners, the Fire Chief and the Ambulance Chief. There was a general discussion regarding the planned meeting.

Mr. Dill expressed concerns about several of the recommendations in the Transfer Station Committee report. He also noted that more public education is needed regarding what constitutes recyclables.

Mr. Morsch commented that the State of Connecticut plans to increase the cost of MSW and stated that it is his opinion that the Town cannot afford to adhere to the status quo.

In response to a question from Ms. Woodward, Mr. Lyman advised that the planned fire department staff meeting is not open to the public; however, a representative from the Ambulance Association would be welcome.

7. Unfinished Business
  - A. Ordinance Codification Discussion: Mr. Lyman noted that a Town Meeting is scheduled for March 28<sup>th</sup> to vote on the Ordinance Codification issue.
  - B. Horizontal Curve Safety Project Update: There was no new update on this agenda item.
8. New Business
  - A. Board/Commission/Committee Changes: There were no Board/Commission/Committee changes discussed at the meeting.
  - B. Tax Refunds: There were no tax refunds discussed at the meeting.
9. Public Comment: There was no additional public comment at the meeting.
10. Selectmen's Discussion: Mr. Smith requested a more comprehensive update on the Horizontal Safety Project be provided at the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.
11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Smith, to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 a.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Link, Secretary

To: Board of Selectmen East Haddam, CT  
Emmett Lyman –First Selectman

From: Transfer Station Committee  
Robert C. Morsch - Chairman

March 21, 2018

Selectmen,

Per the terms of the Resolution dated August 16, 2017, the purpose of this document is to report back to you the findings of the committee after meeting over the past 60 days.

You selected five regular members, and two alternate members. Shortly after our first meeting on January 18, 2018, one of the regular members resigned from the committee. You assigned one of the alternates to take his place as a regular member. We have been meeting twice per month at town facilities. There have also been visits to the Haddam, Essex, Portland, and East Haddam transfer stations.

A study was conducted of all transfer stations within Middlesex County. A table was created that compared all town transfer stations by population, whether carters were permitted, whether there was mandatory garbage pick-up, permit fees, bag fees, and other fees. A copy of the same is included and is part of this document. Also attached are copies of the budget versus actual expenditures for transfer stations in East Haddam, Essex, and Portland. They also are part of this document.

These documents, along with the DEEP announced goal of achieving 60% recycling by 2024, played a significant role during our deliberations, conclusions, and recommendations. (See Public Act 14-94.) We currently recycle less than 25% of our total waste, well below what is possible. It is my belief that eventually this DEEP goal will become a requirement. (Please review Projected Impact of SMART on East Haddam, CT – DEEP January 2018, for the reasons this is likely.)

Recently, the First Selectman informed me that the finance committee expected to receive revenue from the operation of the transfer station. While this is a reasonable request, and is standard throughout most of Connecticut, raising revenue through a fee-based sticker system does nothing to increase recycling or move towards the public policy goal of 60% recycling by 2024.

The fundamental focus of the committee thus has been to meet the new revenue requirement in a way that motivates residents to increase recycling, while at the same time reducing the total tax burden our residents pay for the use of the transfer station.

To do so will require the town to create a new policy that funds the transfer station in a different way. Residents who use the transfer station will no longer exclusively pay for the transfer station through an ever increasing mill rate. They will now be empowered to limit and reduce their cost by increasing their recycling. They pay when they create non-recyclables and save by paying nothing when they recycle. This has been done in Portland and the savings have been quite dramatic for their residents.

Using Portland's budget for 2017/18, residents will pay \$164,835 to operate their transfer station through their taxes; \$60,500 for town required garbage bags, and \$27,000 for use permits. This total is \$252,335. Dividing the total paid by residents by their 9,500 population equals a cost per resident of \$26.56 per person to operate the Portland Transfer Station.

East Haddam's proposed budget for 2018/19 looks to be \$615,673. Public Works budgeted \$40,000 in revenue from all transfer station related sources leaving \$575,673 to be paid for by the taxpaying public. With 9,100 residents, the cost per taxpayer is \$63.26. Why we pay \$63.26 per person for our transfer station and Portland pays \$26.56 per person should be alarming to all East Haddam taxpayers.

The reasons for the \$363,338 cost differential are numerous. Under a town-based bag program, the carters will no longer use the transfer station. This will reduce the total amount of all types of trash and eliminate the practice of accepting commercial trash. (Commercial trash was not accepted by any of the transfer stations surveyed.)

(Jansky has indicated they are supportive of the bag plan as they agree this program will result in an increase in their customer base. More than 50% of Portland residents use carters while our numbers are approximately 25 %.)

To provide the town with a comparison of a transfer station without a bag program, the committee visited the Essex Transfer Station. This station does not allow commercial haulers and uses a combination sticker/punch card based system to use the facilities. (Yearly stickers cost \$125/yr. or an optional punch card may be purchased for \$25 covering 10 resident supplied bags for non-recyclables. There are discounts for seniors.)

Essex's actual yearly budget (2016/2017) was \$252,225. Direct revenues associated with the operation of the transfer station were \$122,070. The net cost to operate the transfer station was thus \$130,155. Dividing this cost by the number of residents in Essex (6,700) yields a cost per resident of \$19.26/yr.

This cost was the lowest cost of the three transfer stations measured, however, it was also noted that it was the smallest in size and town population. During the visit and through conversations with the managing committee member, it appeared to the writer of this document that the facility is very tightly managed. I have no information on what percentage of the residents use commercial haulers, but I suspect it will be quite high. The manager believes further cost reduction is possible by hauling their own trash as is mentioned below.

As part of East Haddam's recommended cost reduction program, we suggest that the town purchases a truck and an appropriate number of containers. Portland hauls their own trash. Should we do the same, our savings should be approximately \$100,000 per year considering lower MSW and recycling volumes and the reduction/ elimination of transportation expense. This investment has a payback period of two years. This should be an easy business decision.

It will also be necessary to change the way residents access the upper level of the transfer station. We recommend a gate or other structure, guiding all vehicles over the scale. In short, no one goes to the upper level without speaking with a transfer station employee. This will ensure that the town is being paid per the fee schedule when bulk waste is being deposited.

We are also recommending the use a mandatory no-cost sticker system. The town clerk has the software that we may be able to use. In any case, the system must include proof of residency as well as include the license plate of the car the resident is using. NO sticker /NO Access. We suggest you provide a lengthy grace period, but eventually it must be enforced.

Safety - During our last meeting we approved a motion to recommend the back of the MSW Compactor be closed to the public. It is dangerous for people to stand on the back of a pickup truck 25 feet above a compactor. I recently learned there was an accident years ago resulting in a broken back and the town settling the eventual litigation. In spite of a recommended change and subsequent implementation of a plan to limit access to this area, the policy was reversed due to complaints from those wanting to maintain the status quo. I believe that continuous improvement is a far better philosophy, and in this case safer, than maintaining the status quo.

I reviewed the Connecticut Municipal Leaders Manual, which clearly states the Board of Selectmen “makes policy decisions” (Part 5-2, Section C). Should you wish to implement this recommendation, it is your exclusive right under the General Statutes to do so.

We also approved a motion to recommend an ordinance that created a review board such that East Haddam is able to collect fines that would otherwise go to the State government. This is best handled by a town attorney.

As is clear, we have tackled most of the items laid out in your August 16<sup>th</sup> Charging Document. Remaining is the creation of a capital plan to upgrade the facility. One of our members has offered to take on the task. I am hopeful we will have something in about 30 days. The design will include some improvements that will address safety concerns.

In the last ten years, past Selectmen have formed two other committees to make recommendations concerning the East Haddam Transfer Station. None of the recommendations were implemented.

The current Committee is also making recommendations that, if accepted, will have a far-reaching impact in terms of cost reduction and efficiency. Perhaps, most importantly, we will take a leadership position with East Haddam’s focus on recycling.

We have taken an all-inclusive approach during our deliberations. As a result, we believe that our recommendations can be viewed as a win –win opportunity for those with different mindsets. The challenge going forward is that we share with the public the concept that there are times when change can benefit us all in many different s ways.

On behalf of the Transfer Station Committee, I hope you implement the recommendations contained in this document. These changes will dramatically reduce and control the costs of the transfer station going forward. Taxpayer contribution to the cost of the facility will decrease; our policies will be consistent with our neighboring towns and East Haddam will become an environmental leader in solid waste management.

From all of us, we thank the Board of Selectmen for the opportunity to serve you and the public.

Robert Bennett  
Vincent Ceceri  
James Jansky, Jr.

Mike Birner  
Gregory Egnaczyk  
Bob Morsch, Chairman