

Board of Selectmen  
Municipal Office Complex  
Meeting Rooms 1/2  
December 18, 2019  
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: R. Smith; T. Govert; C. Quinn

Also Present: D. Berndtson; A. Blaschik; E. Blaschik; K. Blaschik; C. Brownell; L. D'Aquila; R. Dill; R. Distefano; V. Elliott; M. Gleeson; A. Govang; R. Gross; TFC P. Hawes; C. McDermott; J. Moreau; W. Quinn; J. Spencer; R. Turner; C. Varricchio; S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Smith called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Smith presented Sharon Wheeler with a 15-year service pin.
2. Approval of Agenda: Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to approve the Agenda as written. Unanimous aye.
3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of December 4, 2019 and Special Meeting of December 9, 2019

The Board reviewed the minutes of the of the Board of Selectmen's meetings of December 4 and December 9, 2019.

Motion made by Ms. Quinn seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 4, 2019, as written. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Ms. Quinn seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of December 9, 2019, as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence: There was no correspondence discussed at the meeting.
5. First Selectmen's Report

Mr. Smith reviewed the Board's policy of liaison appointments to the Town's other Boards, Commissions and Committees. He stated that at future Board of Selectmen's meetings, he will ask the Board members to provide a report on the meetings they attend as liaisons.

Mr. Smith asked Ms. D'Aquila to provide an update on the status of the Ambulance Association. Ms. D'Aquila reviewed the Association's June 30<sup>th</sup> Fiscal Year Annual Report. She noted that their response time is under four minutes and that they have been maintaining mutual aid calls below the 10% level and sometimes below 5%. Ms. D'Aquila reported that the organization currently has 23 members, supports an on-going recruitment effort and recently posted open technician positions. She stated that it is their goal to reduce their dependence on outside staffing.

- A. Responses to Previous Meeting Questions: Mr. Smith advised that there were no open questions to be discussed at the meeting.

- B. Fire Rescue Boat Discussion and Update - Fire Department Representative: Mr. Smith asked Fire Commissioner Spencer to provide a report on the new fire rescue boat and pump. Ms. Spencer reported that the new fire rescue boat is operational; however, it has been determined that the boat cannot support the pump that was purchased for it. She stated that the department is hopeful that it can repurpose the pump.

Mr. Smith opened the meeting for public questions and in response to comments from Mr. Gross, Mr. Smith confirmed that, going forward, requests for equipment purchases will be more closely vetted before being approved.

- C. Missing Child Police Protocol Discussion: Mr. Smith asked Trooper Hawes to provide the attendees with an overview of the protocol that is followed after a child is reported missing.

Trooper Hawes introduced himself and provided an overview of the State Police's missing person search protocol. He stated that he could not provide any specifics regarding exact methods used since that could jeopardize future searches, nor could he provide any details on the recent missing child case. He encouraged direct communication with the State Police if citizens have any information on the missing person or want to offer their assistance in the search effort rather than using social media. He emphasized that the State Police should lead the effort to organize and manage any search teams.

Trooper Hawes recommended that households maintain, and post in a visible location at home, a list of prescription drugs taken by each individual as well as the names of their doctors and dentist.

Trooper Hawes responded to several questions raised by Ms. Distefano and discussed some of the distinctions between the state's missing person alert levels and the Town's Everbridge notification system. There was a general discussion regarding the initiation of the Everbridge notifications in the recent missing child situation. Fire Commissioner Spencer advised that the Fire Department was involved in the early stages of the search because the State Police asked for their assistance through the use of their thermal imaging capability.

6. Citizen's Concerns: The following citizens' concerns were raised at the meeting:

- Mr. R. Gross supported the State Police's action's in the recent missing child case and noted that it is the Town's responsibility to rely on the State Police's guidance.
- In response to a question raised by Ms. K. Blaschik, First Selectman Smith confirmed that he is the Town's point contact for the State Police and that he would notify the other Board members and department heads, as necessary.
- Mr. J. Moreau welcomed the new Board members. He reviewed the earlier discussion of the purchase of a new fire rescue boat and pump and noted his previously stated concerns about the capital equipment purchase requests. Mr. Moreau reiterated that he does not feel the current fire rescue boat is the best option for the Town. Mr. Smith assured him that the requests for capital equipment purchases will be more closely scrutinized in the future.

7. Unfinished Business

- A. East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee Update: Mr. Smith advised that there was no new update on this subject and discussion of this agenda item was postponed.
- B. Transfer Station Committee Final Report Discussion & Solid Waste Facility Ordinance: Mr. Smith stated that he is evaluating the recommendations of the Transfer Station Committee and will schedule a meeting with the local haulers before the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.
- C. Citation Hearing Procedure Ordinance Discussion: Mr. Smith reviewed the need for a Citation Hearing Procedure Ordinance. He stated that the next step is to bring this subject to a Public Hearing for discussion.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to add the Citation Hearing Procedure Ordinance to the list of discussion topics for the Town's next scheduled Public Hearing. Unanimous aye.

- D. Control of Animals Ordinance: Mr. Smith reviewed the background on the Control of Animals Ordinance and stated that the next step is to bring the draft ordinance to a second Public Hearing for discussion.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to add the Control of Animals Ordinance to the list of discussion topics for the Town's next scheduled Public Hearing. Unanimous aye.

- E. Cemetery Committee Discussion: Mr. Smith noted that a public meeting of the Cemetery Committee is scheduled for December 19<sup>th</sup> and he would like to postpone the Board's discussion of this agenda item until their next regularly scheduled meeting after they have had an opportunity to review the minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting.

## 8. New Business

- A. Building Department Refund Policy Discussion: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets regarding this agenda item and reviewed the draft policy proposed by the Building Official.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Smith, to approve the proposed refund policy for Building Department permits, to become effective immediately. Unanimous aye.

- B. Bid Waiver – Payroll Services: Mr. Smith asked Ms. Varricchio to summarize her request to waive the bid for contracting with a payroll services vendor. Ms. Varricchio reviewed her research and evaluation of a payroll vendors for the Town and responded to several questions from the Board. In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn, Ms. Varricchio stated that a system that does not utilize bio-metrics would not be significantly less expensive than the system that she recommends. In response to a question from Mr. Smith, she advised that she will use the funds allocated for the of purchase of new timeclocks, which will not be needed, to pay the implementation fee and pro-rated annual expense for this fiscal year.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to waive the bid process for Payroll Services and authorize the Finance Director, Cindy Varricchio, to negotiate with ADP per their quote of \$57,216.00 estimated annual cost and \$4,800.00 implementation fee for this project. Unanimous aye.

- C. RFP Award – Financial Audit Services: Mr. Smith called the Board’s attention to a memo in their meeting packets from Cindy Varricchio, dated December 13, 2019, advising that the Board of Finance had voted unanimously to recommend Blum Shapiro be approved as the Town’s auditor for a 3-year contract with the option to negotiate an additional two-year extension. At Mr. Smith’s request, Ms. Varricchio reviewed the responses to the Town’s RFP for Financial Audit Services. Mr. Smith noted that the multi-year contract would have to be approved at a Town Meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to award the contract for Financial Audit Services to Blum Shapiro and Company P.C. for a 3-year contract for FY 2020 - \$45,000, FY 2021 - \$45,800, FY 2022 - \$46,600 with the option to negotiate for an additional two years and send said multi-year contract to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

- D. Cooperative Purchasing Agreement Approval: Mr. Smith called the Board’s attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Fire Department Lt. Eric Kolasinski, dated November 1, 2019, expressing the department’s interest in joining the HGACBuy cooperative purchasing agreement. Mr. Smith stated that, by ordinance, the purchasing procedure option requires prior approval by the Board of Selectmen. He further noted that the HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing Agreement also requires governing body approval.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Govert, Mr. Smith confirmed that the agreement primarily covers capital equipment purchases rather than operational expenses.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to authorize First Selectman Smith to enter into an agreement to use HGACBuy as a cooperative purchasing program to solicit for participating equipment purchases. Unanimous aye.

- E. Grant Acceptance – FY 2020 Comprehensive DUI Enforcement Program: Mr. Smith called the Board’s attention to materials in their meeting packets from the CT Department of Transportation, dated November 26, 2019, advising of a grant approval confirmation for the Comprehensive DUI Enforcement project.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of \$14,422.51 from the State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation, entitled “FY 2020 Comprehensive DUI Enforcement Program for Resident Trooper Towns”, and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn, Mr. Smith confirmed that the private duty hourly rate listed in the contract as \$63.00 was incorrect and will be changed to \$51.00 and change. He noted that the \$63.00 rate had been incorrect in the previous contract and was corrected by a Memorandum of Understanding; however, the higher rate was inadvertently carried forward in the current contract. Ms. Quinn noted, that if the proper rate had been listed in the contracts, the total covered reimbursement hours may have been increased.

Unanimous aye.

- F. Call for Town Meeting: Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Smith, to approve the following call for Town Meeting:

The Electors and citizens of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut qualified to vote in Town Meeting are hereby warned and notified that the Annual Town Meeting will be held in the

Municipal Office Complex, Meeting Room 1 & 2 on Plains Road, Moodus in the said Town of East Haddam, at 8:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 8, 2020 for the following purposes, to wit:

**Item 1:** To consider and act upon the recommendation that the Board of Selectmen be authorized to enter into all necessary agreements with the Transportation Commissioner of the State of Connecticut for the receipt of State Aid for town highways in accordance with the General Statutes of Connecticut.

**Item 2:** To consider and accept the Annual Town Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019.

**Item 3:** To consider and act upon the recommendations of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance to enter into a three-year agreement with Blum Shapiro & Company P.C. for Financial Audit Services; with the option to negotiate for an additional two years.

**Item 4:** To consider and act upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance to approve a transfer in the amount of \$4,025.03 from the General Fund (10549010-58928) to the Board of Education Capital Reserve Fund (3320-10506-25790).

**Item 5:** To consider and act upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance to approve a transfer in the amount of \$14,564.00 from the Police Special Revenue Fund (41150000-59790) to the Police Capital Reserve Fund (3320-10506-25550).  
Unanimous aye.

- G. 2019 Emergency Management Performance Grant Resolution: Mr. Smith advised that the Town submits for the Emergency Management Performance Grant each year which requires an authorizing resolution from the Board of Selectmen for the chief executive officer to sign the application. He stated that if the CEO doesn't change from year-to-year the same resolution can be recertified and submitted; however, the recent elections resulted in a change of the CEO so the Town must submit a new certified resolution.

Motion made by Ms. Quinn, seconded by Ms. Govert, to recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

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

**FURTHER RESOLVED,** that Robert R. Smith, as First Selectman of the Town of East Haddam is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Board of Selectmen 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.  
Unanimous aye.

- H. Long Range Capital Improvement Committee Discussion: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets regarding this agenda item.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

**RESOLVED:** That a Long-Range Capital Improvement Committee (formerly Financial Needs Roundtable Committee) of seven (7) members be appointed for the purpose of identifying, researching, analyzing and evaluating the Town's long and short-term capital needs. Capital by definition includes major maintenance, repairs and replacements, as well as refurbishments of major equipment, acquisitions and improvements of buildings, land, roads and equipment. The Committee shall carry out its duties in accordance with the Board of Finance Capital Improvement Program Policy.

The Committee shall be composed of the First Selectman; the Chairman of the Board of Finance (or designee) and one other member of the Board of Finance not of the same political party; the Chairman of the Board of Education (or designee) and two other members of the Board of Education each from a different political party and the Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission (or designee). This shall be a standing committee, and members shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen every two years coinciding with the Municipal election cycle. Members shall serve with no compensation. The First Selectman (or designee) shall Chair the Committee. The Committee shall meet quarterly or as needed and their meetings shall be open to the public.

The Committee shall invite advisory participants to their meetings as needed to include the Land Use Administrator, Director of Operations, Finance Director, Public Works Director, Economic Development Administrator, the Superintendent of Schools and any others as needed.  
Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to appoint Robert Smith, Tracey Gionta, Harvey Thomas, Erik Anderson, Patricia Stricker, Nicole Hendry and Crary Brownell to the Long-Range Capital Improvements Committee with terms to expire with the 2021 municipal election. Unanimous aye.

- I. Board/Commission/Committee Changes: There were no Board, Commission or Committee changes considered at the meeting.
- J. Tax Refunds – There was one tax refund considered at the meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to award a tax refund in the amount presented:

- \$272.59 to Honda Trust Lease

Unanimous aye.

## 9. Public Comment

- Mr. R. Dill reminded the Board that an updated Transfer Station ordinance should be reviewed when evaluating the Transfer Station Committee recommendations.
- In response to a question raised by Mr. R. Gross, Mr. Smith advised that, due to concerns raised at a Public Hearing, the proposed Control of Animals ordinance had been updated after the Agriculture Commission had submitted their comments. He noted the most recent draft of the ordinance can be found the Town's website.

- Mr. R. Gross expressed his concerns regarding poor oversight on the approval to purchase an inappropriate pump for the fire rescue boat and the incorrect listing of the private duty hourly rate on the FY 2019 and FY 2020 Comprehensive DUI Enforcement Program contracts. He noted that both errors resulted in potential lost revenue for the Town. Mr. Smith assured Mr. Gross that, going forward, he plans on applying a higher level of scrutiny to the Town's fiscal policies.
- In response to a concern raised by Mr. V. Elliott, Mr. Smith advised that the state's plan to replace the Shady Brook culvert on Plains Road has been designated an Accelerated Bridge Construction project with an anticipated road closure of only two weeks. He noted that there will also be a period of 1-lane traffic; however, he feels the impact of this project will not be as significant as the state's recent Route 82 bridge replacements.

10. Selectmen's Discussion: There was no additional Selectmen's discussion at the meeting.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,  
Theresa Govert, Secretary