

Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1/2
December 9, 2019
Special Meeting Minutes
Tri-Board Meeting

In attendance:

Board of Selectmen Members: Robert Smith, First Selectman; Theresa Govert; Carleen Quinn

Board of Finance Members: William DiCristofaro, Chairman; Bruce Dutch, Secretary; Joseph Corbett; Todd Gelston; Tracey Gionta; Harvey Thomas

Board of Education Members: Marc Piscioti, Chairman; Karin Blaschik, Secretary; Erik Anderson; Tracy Delventhal; Nicole Hendry; Bryan Perry; Patricia Stricker; Laurel White

Also Present: Brian Reas, Superintendent of Schools; Cindy Varricchio, Finance Director; Leslie Zoll, BlumShapiro; Several citizens and staff in attendance.

1. Call to Order:

Mr. Smith called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Mr. DiCristofaro called the Board of Finance meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Mr. Piscioti called the Board of Education meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and recording devices started.

2. Tri-Board Meeting, 2020-2021 Proposed Budget-Boards of Finance, Education and Selectmen

Mr. DiCristofaro welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Mr. DiCristofaro stated the purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for citizen input. He indicated that the town leaders would like to hear from citizens what is acceptable and unacceptable.

He stated that the format of the meeting would be to receive questions and then post the questions and answers on the Town's website so that everyone can see them. Mr. DiCristofaro noted that immediate answers to inquiries were not intended, but that we would endeavor to provide timely answers. He indicated that people would be allowed to speak and asked that when they did they provide their name, address and limit their comments to three minutes.

Each Board Chairman introduced the members of their respective Boards.

A. Review and Discussion:

A brief PowerPoint presentation was provided that discussed the key points of the upcoming budget process, current state of East Haddam finances and the key factors that each Board reviews when determining a new fiscal year budget. A copy of the presentation is available on the Town's website for review.

B. Guest and Audience Comments:

Many residents, students and school staff spoke in favor of the benefits of a track at the high school. Comments included the benefits to the students, staff and citizens, that track is the sport with the largest student participation, student safety and that East Haddam is the only high school with a track program that does not have a track. Those speaking in favor were:

Eric Sikorski
Aiden Behilo
Joe Lauria
Rebecca Wonneberger
Dave Holly
Meg Dedman
Chris Ottergren
Sean Boardman
Amanda Culmone
Sally Riley

Tim Carr expressed his concern about the stability of the tax base and East Haddam's ability to meet future debt obligations. Mr. DiCristofaro responded that when we take on new debt it has to fall within the parameters of the Debt Management Policy.

Marilyn Gleeson inquired if the Board of Finance policies were on the website. It was noted that the policies need to be updated on the website and that some are "working copies" being tested with the 2020-2021 budget process.

Chris Read encouraged candid and open discussion at Board meetings rather than Boards responding to questions at their next meeting. Mr. Read addressed his concerns with regard to the State of Connecticut budget and how it will impact East Haddam. Mr. Read thanked all of the Board members for their service. Mr. DiCristofaro responded that when there are detailed questions, the process is to research the questions to respond with complete information and to also provide the opportunity for others to see the question(s) and answer(s). Mr. Read asked those in attendance at the meeting to not do the "gotcha" to Board members on any misstatements that they might make whether they are right or wrong.

3. Adjournment:

Motion was made by Mr. Smith to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting at 8:00 pm. Ms. Govert seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Piscioti to adjourn the Board of Education meeting at 8:00 pm. Mrs. Stricker seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Mr. DiCristofaro for the Board of Finance meeting to recess at 8:00 pm. Mr. Gelston seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Govert, Secretary