

Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
June 15, 2011
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: Mark Walter, Pete Govert, Emmett Lyman

Also Present: E. Blaschik, W. Gerrish, S. Mackinnon (arrived 7:30 p.m.), B. Staub, L. Staub, S. Wheeler

1. First Selectman Walter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda: The Selectmen agreed to amend the agenda to move Item 8.C. - Stone Wall Removal Request Discussion, and 8.B. – RFP – East Haddam Village Revitalization Discussion up as the next discussion items. Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the agenda as amended. Unanimous aye.

8.C. Stone Wall Removal Request Discussion: Mr. Walter distributed pictures of the Staub's property both before and after a stone wall out front was removed. He provided some background on how the issue came about and invited Mr. and Mrs. Staub to provide additional details.

Mr. Staub thanked the Selectmen for the opportunity to discuss the issue. He advised that, for several reasons, he and his wife felt the stone wall did not contribute to a safe play area for their child and had decided to have it removed and replaced with a fence. He noted that they were unaware that the fence was owned in common with the Town or that a permit was required to remove it.

Mr. Staub further stated that he learned after the fact that the contractor they hired was not highly regarded by Town officials and he, himself, was very dissatisfied with how the contractor operated. Mr. Staub stated that he and his wife were requesting retroactive approval for the removal of the stone wall.

Mr. Lyman noted the historic value of stone walls to the Town and advised that it would be his preference to have the wall re-built. Mr. Staub advised that the contractor had removed much of the stone and that he did not feel it could be reclaimed. There was a general discussion regarding rebuilding a part of the wall and finishing either end off with sections of a split-rail fence. The Staubs agreed that they would develop a plan and attend one of the July Selectmen's meetings to discuss their proposal.

8.B. RFP – East Haddam Village Revitalization Discussion: Mr. Walter advised that he had reviewed the draft RFQ with Ms. Ziobron and Mr. Odell of the Economic Development Commission and he asked Mr. Gerrish to provide some background on the subject. Mr. Gerrish introduced himself and provided a brief summary of the work done by the Village Revitalization Committee to date. He advised that the next step was to issue the RFQ to solicit interest in the project from developers. In response to a question from Mr. Govert, Mr. Gerrish confirmed that developers will not be held to the precise renderings developed by Mr. Fellner.

The Selectmen made several suggestions for minor revisions to the RFQ and Mr. Walter advised that the document would have to be reviewed by the Town attorney. Mr. Gerrish stated that he would have the revisions made and return the updated draft to Mr. Walter after the June 23rd Village Revitalization Committee meeting.

There was a brief discussion regarding whether or not any of the Goodspeed properties would be included in the East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee RFQ.

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of May 18, 2011: Mr. Govert advised that the penultimate sentence of the first paragraph under agenda item 4A (Correspondence – Board of Assessment Appeals Spring 2011 Final Report) should be changed to read as follows: *“Mr. Blaschik stated the Board inspected 13 properties and awarded assessment adjustments that resulted in a reduction in the value of the Grand List of \$847,850.00.”*

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 18, 2011 as amended. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of May 23, 2011 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence:

A. Letter from DOT Regarding Safety Project 170-3055 – Highway Warning Sign: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen’s attention to copy of a letter in their meeting packets from the CT Department of Transportation, dated June 1, 2011, advising that the State was preparing to *“install and/or revise horizontal alignment warning signs...”* on Routes 149 and 151. Mr. Walter stated that he would clarify what type of work was going to be done by the DOT.

Mr. Walter reported that the Town had, on several occasions, instructed Mr. Nedovich, of the Grandview Campground, to erect erosion control barriers around his construction site. He advised that Mr. Nedovich had not installed the barriers and that a section of the property had been washed out over the road. Mr. Walter stated that a bill has been sent to Mr. Nedovich for the Town’s work in the clean-up of the washout.

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen’s attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets to Gov. Malloy from FEMA, dated June 14, 2011, advising that the State’s appeal of the denial of funding to reimburse the State for snow removal in Middlesex County had not been approved.

5. First Selectman’s Report: Mr. Walter reported the following:

- He had received a log of bridge openings over several months and will use that information in his request to the Coast Guard to reduce the number of openings.
- He had a Neighbor-To-Neighbor energy challenge audit done at his house that resulted in a cost savings.
- He participated in a webinar conference regarding applying for funding for rural incubators.

6. Citizen’s Concerns: There were no citizens concerns expressed at the meeting.

7. Unfinished Business

A. 4-8 Middle School: There was no update on this agenda item.

B. Goodspeed Opera House Update: Mr. Blaschik reported that three of the Actors' Houses were occupied and they were continuing to make progress on the other houses. In response to a question, he advised that the Goodspeed maintained approximately 100 rooms in Town for actor and crew housing. He confirmed that Comcast was doing a video of the Actors' Housing project.

C. Old Middle School/Middle School Conversion Committee: Mr. Walter reviewed the options laid out by the Middle School Conversion Committee (MSCC) and submitted a draft letter disbanding the Committee for discussion. The Selectmen discussed potential members for a Municipal Space Needs Committee and there was a discussion regarding a transition member from MSCC participating on the new Committee as well as how the Municipal Space Needs Committee could leverage the knowledge of the MSCC members. Mr. Govert stated that he would prefer not to disband the MSCC at this time.

Mr. Blaschik expressed his deep frustration at Mr. Walter's proposal to disband the MSCC. He noted that the Town has already invested a good deal of money into the project and that the many hours of volunteer work have gone into it but the citizens of the Town have not been given the opportunity to vote on it. Mr. Walter stated that he understood Mr. Blaschik's frustration; however, he did not feel that he or the Board of Finance could put a project to a vote that they did not feel the Town could afford.

Mr. Govert stated that, before making a decision on whether or not to disband the MSCC, he would like to (1) get a report from the Financial Needs Committee regarding what they felt the Town could afford for the project, and (2) see how the unions respond to Gov. Malloy's budget proposal. He noted that he felt a decision could be made in the next 6-8 months.

Mr. Lyman agreed that he wanted to move forward with a plan for the old Middle School, but was concerned about the debt load on the Town. The Selectmen agreed to defer disbanding the Middle School Conversion Committee at this time.

D. Rotary Club Donation of Edgar D. Williams Park: Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to adopt the following resolution to be referred to Town Meeting for approval:

RESOLVED, that the Town Meeting authorize the acceptance by Quitclaim deed from the Rotary Club of East Haddam, Inc. a certain parcel of land known as Edgar D. Williams Memorial Park containing approximately three and one-half (3 ½) acres as shown on the Town of East Haddam Assessor's Map 17-L079 and more particularly described in said Quitclaim deed subject to the condition that the property remain named in recognition of Edgar D. Williams, Sr. A copy of the executed Quitclaim deed shall be attached to this resolution and be made a part thereof. Unanimous aye.

The Selectmen discussed how the maintenance of the park would be handled going forward.

E. Internet Usage Policy Discussion: The Selectmen agreed to table the discussion of the Internet Usage Policy for this meeting.

8. New Business:

A. Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Discussion: Mr. Walter advised that he had received information from the CT DEP regarding funding available for the construction of docks to promote water access in the State. He noted that responses to the RFP need to be submitted by August 15th and that he had walked the riverfront with a representative from the DOCKO Company and identified a

suitable site for a floating dock. Mr. Walter noted a municipal dock could be beneficial to economic development in the Town. There was a general discussion about the project and Mr. Walter agreed to keep the Selectmen informed about its progress.

B. RFP – East Haddam Village Revitalization Discussion: This item was discussed earlier in the meeting and is reported on above in these minutes.

C. Stone Wall Removal Request Discussion: This item was discussed earlier in the meeting and is reported on above in these minutes.

D. 2011 Neighborhood Assistance Act Approvals: Mr. Walter reported that a public hearing was held on the NAA proposals on June 8, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. and that Mr. Lyman had acted as the Selectmen's liaison at the meeting. He stated that the Town now needs to send the proposals to the State for final approval.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve and forward to the State for their approval three projects requesting funding by the Neighborhood Assistance Act for 2011. Unanimous aye.

E. Grant Acceptance – 2011 Federal Highway Safety Program (DUI): Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of \$26,625.00 from the State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation, entitled "FY 2011 Comprehensive DUI Enforcement Program", and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

F. Gift Acceptance – Consumers Union: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a letter from Consumer Reports' Auto Test Division advising of three donations to the Town. Mr. Walter explained that the Consumers Union has made a monetary gift totaling \$25,000.00 on behalf of the Board of Education, the Town of East Haddam, and Youth & Family Services to be used as follows:

- \$10,000 to baseball and softball field dugout roofs
- \$10,000 to lighting project in front of Town Hall and Grange Hall
- \$ 5,000 for additional money to the skate board park

The Selectmen had a brief discussion regarding the plans for new lighting at the Town Hall and the Grange.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept a gift from Consumers Union of United States, Inc. on behalf of the Board of Education in the amount of \$10,000 for baseball and softball field dugout roofs at the 4 – 8 middle school. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept a gift from Consumers Union of United States, Inc. for the Town of East Haddam in the amount of \$10,000 for the lighting project in front of the Town Hall and Grange Hall properties and send acceptance of said donation to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept a gift from Consumers Union of United States, Inc. on behalf of East Haddam Youth and Family Services in the amount of \$5,000 for additional money towards the skate board park. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Walter advised that he expected the individual groups would send a letter of thanks to the Consumers Union and he would also send a thank you note for the gifts on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.

G. Bid Award – Senior Center Shelter Generator: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a letter dated June 14, 2011 in their meeting packets from Craig Mansfield, Emergency Management Director, recommending Guzallis Electric be awarded the bid for the Senior Center Shelter Generator.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to award the bid for the Senior Center Shelter Generator Project to Guzallis Electric LLC in the amount of \$36,450.00. Unanimous aye.

H. Commission Resignations, Status Changes & Reappointments (P&Z, CONS, COA): Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to several letters included in their packets concerning the reappointment, resignation, and status change of a number of commission members.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Elizabeth Lunt as an alternate on the Planning & Zoning Commission. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Walter advised that a letter will be sent to Ms. Lunt thanking her for her time on the commission.

Conservation Commission

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of an e-mail from Paul Stuhlman noting his desire to step down from the commission at the end of his term on June 30, 2011 and not be reappointed.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Paul Stuhlman, effective June 30, 2011, from the Conservation Commission. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Walter advised that a letter will be sent to Mr. Stuhlman thanking him for his time on the commission.

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a letter from Cynthia Matthew, dated June 10, 2011, advising that the Conservation Commission unanimously recommended some position changes and reappointments.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to change the status of Todd Gelston and Scot Mackinnon from alternate members to regular members and Peggy Carlson from regular member to alternate member on the Conservation Commission for two-year terms to expire June 30, 2013.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to reappoint Susan Merrow as a regular member and Claire Maeder as an alternate member on the Conservation Commission for two-year terms to expire June 30, 2013. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Walter noted that Charlotte Gelston has also expressed her interest in serving on the Conservation Commission and noted that she would be the 4th member of the Gelston family serving on that Commission. The Selectmen discussed the recommendation of the Conservation Commission to appoint Charlotte Gelston as an alternate member of the commission and Mr. Walter agreed to talk with Ms. Matthew about the recommendation.

Commission on Aging

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Harriet Cummings, effective June 30, 2011, as a member on the Commission on Aging. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Walter advised that a letter will be sent to Ms. Cummings thanking her for her time on the commission.

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a letter in their meeting packets from Jovita Cozean, Secretary of the Commission on Aging, dated June 12, 2011, recommending several reappointments.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to reappoint Alice Sabo and Jovita Cozean for three-year terms to expire June 30, 2014 as regular members and Rosalie Hoffman and Mary Ellen Klinck for one-year terms to expire June 30, 2012 as alternate members on the Commission on Aging. Unanimous aye.

I. Tax Refunds: There were no tax refunds for consideration.

9. Public Comment: Mr. Blaschik stated that he had attended a recent Planning & Zoning Commission meeting where the proposal to construct a skateboard park on the site of the old Middle School was discussed. He commented that he felt the Middle School Conversion Committee should have been informed of the plans prior to the P&Z meeting. Mr. Walter agreed that that was an oversight and that the Committee should have been informed earlier.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

Mr. Govert noted that he had e-mailed the members of the Agriculture Commission information about a book about Hardwick, VT's agriculture community. Mr. Mackinnon advised that he was familiar with the book. In response to a request from Mr. Walter, Mr. Mackinnon said he would ask Mr. Thomas to provide EDC with the Ag Commission's current list of local farms.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Walter, Mr. Blaschik provided the background on why the Board of Assessment Appeals had denied the Grandview Campground appeal.

Mr. Govert advised that the CT legislature had passed a comprehensive energy bill that could provide benefits to municipalities.

Mr. Walter advised that he was looking into the possibility of installing a micro hydro-power generator down-stream from the Moodus Reservoir Dam. Mr. Walter stated he would inform the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission of that information.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional regular business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Respectfully submitted,

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645B
646A

Emmett Lyman, Secretary