

Board of Selectmen
Grange Hall
October 5, 2011
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: Mark Walter; Pete Govert; Emmett Lyman

Also Present: R. Ballek; C. Behilo; E. Blaschik; T. Gelson (joined at 8:00 p.m.); S. Mackinnon; R. Smith; J. Stone; M. Stone; N. Stone; 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: Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimous aye.

3. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of February 15, 2011, Special Meeting of February 16, 2011, and Regular Meeting of September 21, 2011: The minutes of the noted meetings were reviewed. Mr. Govert inquired about the delay in receiving the minutes of the February 15 and February 16 meeting minutes, and Mr. Walter advised that it had been an oversight that had turned up during work on the annual report.

- Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 15, 2011 as written. Unanimous aye.

- Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 16, 2011 as written. Mr. Govert abstained from the vote because he had left the meeting early. Motion passed by a majority of ayes.

- Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 21, 2011 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence: Mr. Walter reported that he had attended the October 4, 2011 meeting of the Midstate Regional Planning Agency where Haddam's plans to revise their zoning regulations and the State approved land-swap deal were discussed. He stated that the Midstate agency will advise the town of Haddam on any of the town's plans that could affect the region. Mr. Govert asked whether or not the Midstate agency "had any teeth" in their capacity as an advisor and Mr. Walter confirmed that the Midstate Regional Planning Agency was a voting body that establishes the priority of certain municipal projects, such as road work, that could influence re-zoning. He informed the Selectmen that he had told the Haddam officials that East Haddam was committed to working closely with them on any issues related to their re-zoning and land-swap plans that could affect East Haddam.

Mr. Walter further stated that there was additional discussion at the meeting regarding the change from a Regional Planning Organization (RPO) to a Council of Governments (COG) and noted that the Midstate Agency's member towns voted to keep the RPO alive within the newly formed COG.

Mr. Walter reiterated that he has received many letters from East Haddam citizens expressing their thanks for the emergency management coordination efforts related to Hurricane Irene. He offered to make copies for the Selectmen; however, they stated they could review the notes at the Town Offices.

5. First Selectman's Report

A. Proposal to Exempt Class I Renewables from Building Permit Fees – Bob Ballek: Mr. Walter introduced Mr. Ballek who advised that he was a representative for a solar installation company and informed the Selectmen that CT had adopted legislation allowing municipalities to exempt Class I renewable energy projects, such as solar installations, from building permit fees. He stated that the average fee for a solar installation was between \$200-\$250 and exempting the fee could encourage more homeowners to invest in solar panels. In response to a question from Mr. Walter, he stated that the Building Inspector typically does one inspection of a solar installation project and the average time spent at the inspection was one-half hour. In response to a question from Mr. Govert, Mr. Ballek advised that he believed hydro-power projects would also be covered under the exemption.

The Selectmen expressed support for the proposal and Mr. Walter stated he would have the Town's attorney review the request before formalizing the exemption.

B. Agriculture Commission Proposal for Harris Property – Scot Mackinnon & Jessica Stone: Mr. Walter introduced Mr. Mackinnon and Ms. Stone who reviewed a map of the Harris Open Space property with the Selectmen and advised that the Agriculture Commissioners propose to designate a portion of the property, Site A, for a community agriculture center. They distributed a copy of their proposal, dated October 4, 2011, and responded to several questions from the Selectmen. Mr. Walter noted that their proposal included a cost estimate of between \$15,675 and \$25,657 to get the project up and running which has not been included in the Town's budget. Mr. Mackinnon advised that one of their purposes in making this proposal was to get the project included in the Town's upcoming budget planning process. He also noted that some of the work might be done by the Public Works Department.

Mr. Govert voiced his enthusiastic support for the proposal and noted that he had also received positive feedback when he spoke about it to members of the public. Mr. Walter recommended the Commission speak with the Ray Board about the project and advised that their next steps should be to get firm quotes for the work to prepare Site A for a community agriculture center. Liability and insurance issues were also discussed. Mr. Walter agreed to coordinate a meeting with Mr. Mackinnon, Ms. Stone and representatives from Public Works to discuss what aspects of the work they can do.

C. Discussion of Vandalism in Town: Mr. Walter advised that there has been an increase in vandalism and graffiti around Town. He noted that some of the graffiti contained racial overtones and hate symbols. He advised that the Police, Board of Education, and Youth & Family Services have been alerted to the issue. He further noted that the latest Park and Rec Newsletter contained a picture and an article about the problem and encouraged citizens to call a tip-line if they had any information regarding the source(s) of the graffiti.

Mr. Walter also reported on the following:

- He had attended the CCM annual meeting along with several other Town representatives. He noted that one of the most useful presentations he attended was one on how implementing a program of shared services could reduce a town's expenses as well as improve communications.
- He was working on an upgrade to the Town's telephone system with Total Communications. He noted that, given the recent town-wide emergency resulting from Hurricane Irene, they were also discussing potential back-up plans for the phone system.

- The Board of Education has proposed a second tri-Board meeting for the Boards of Education, Finance, and Selectmen on November 15th.

6. Citizen's Concerns: Mr. Behilo asked if the Town could pursue any cost reduction from Total Communication by including other towns in the contract. Mr. Walter confirmed that the Town continues to consider cost-savings opportunities through regionalizing services. Mr. Behilo also distributed copies of photos of "touch and go" signs at the Jamestown, RI docks. There was a general discussion about how such rules should be enforced.

7. Unfinished Business

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

B. Goodspeed Opera House Update: There was no additional information on this agenda item.

C. Old Middle School/Middle School Conversion Committee: There was no update on this agenda item.

D. Internet Usage Policy Discussion: The Selectmen agreed to table the discussion of the Internet Usage Policy until after the upcoming election.

8. New Business:

A. 2010 Homeland Security Memorandum of Agreement Resolution: Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Town of East Haddam may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Mark B. Walter as the First Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf 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, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

Unanimous aye.

B. Bid Award – Sand Bid: Mr. Walter presented a recommendation letter from Beth Lunt regarding this year's purchase of Sand for Snow and Ice Control. Mr. Lyman expressed disappointment that more local contractors did not submit a bid. In response to questions raised by Mr. Govert, Mr. Walter clarified the impact the sand analysis had on Ms. Lunt's recommendation.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to award the bid for the purchase of Sand for Snow and Ice Control to Grillo Services LLC in the amount of \$13.90/cubic yard and to further authorize the Public Works Department to order sand from the next low bidder Haynes Material Company in the amount of \$14.75/cubic yard if for any reason Grillo Services LLC was unable to fulfill the bid requirements. Unanimous aye.

C. Committee Resignation (EHVRC): Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to an email from Lisa McNellis submitting her resignation from the East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee due to the fact that she and her husband are moving out of town.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Lisa McNellis from the East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee. Unanimous aye.

D. Tax Refunds: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to three tax refunds.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to award tax refunds in the amounts presented.

- \$ 58.47 to Honda Lease Trust
- \$ 41.99 to Bryan N. Riley
- \$ 44.31 to Alexis Devlin

Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: Mr. Gelston distributed materials related to the Conservation Commission's recommendation to award the bid for timber sale from Open Space property to Peter Marlowe Forest Products. Mr. Walter stated that he had received the materials late the previous evening and had not yet had time to review them. Mr. Gelston confirmed that a two-week delay would not be a hardship and Mr. Walter stated he would have the item added to the agenda for a vote at the October 19th Board of Selectmen's meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Walter, Mr. Gelston confirmed that the concerns of a Trowbridge Road resident had been resolved and that the trees selected for cutting have been pre-marked. There was a general discussion regarding notification of bordering property owners and it was agreed that the Land Use Office should send registered letters to those owners notifying them of the planned timber harvesting. Mr. Gelston stated he would work with the Land Use Office.

10. Selectmen's Discussion: In response to a question raised by Mr. Lyman, Mr. Walter confirmed that he will be following up on the information provided by Mr. Mackinnon at a previous meeting regarding working with one of the power companies to secure a free power generator for the Middle School.

Mr. Walter reported that the Village Revitalization Committee had released its Request for Qualifications from preferred developers for the 2.8 waterfront Town Office site property.

Mr. Govert reported that he had spoken with Mr. Frame, Chief Technical Advisor of the CT Clean Energy Fund, regarding the potential for a hydro-power plant on the Moodus River. He stated that Mr. Frame expressed interest in the project and would like to visit the site with some other representatives from CT Clean Energy.

In response to a question from Mr. Govert, Mr. Walter advised that he would research the expenses of maintaining a dock after he receives additional information about the grant award which will allow him to determine what type of dock that the Town can build. In response to a question from Mr. Gelson, Mr. Govert advised that CT Clean Energy funds might also be available for a private hydro-power plant.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional regular business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Respectfully submitted,

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651A

Emmett Lyman, Secretary