

**TOWN OF EAST HADDAM**  
**BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**Special Meeting**  
September 20, 2012  
11:00 am  
Town Office Annex

**Call to Order**

The special meeting of the East Haddam Board of Finance was called to order by Chairwoman Susan Link on Thursday, September 20, 2012 at 11:00 am at the Town Office Annex.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

In attendance:

Board of Finance Members:

Susan Link, Chairwoman  
Daniel Alexander  
Bruce Dutch  
Harvey Thomas  
Ray Willis

Others:

Mark B. Walter, First Selectman  
Deb Denette, Town Clerk and BOF recording secretary  
Cindy Varricchio, Finance Director  
Jim Ventres, Land Use Administrator

**Court Ordered Tax Refund—Goodspeed Airport**

Mr. Walter summarized the history of the tax appeal of the Goodspeed Airport that has been on-going since the 2003 grand list. The issue resulted in the Goodspeed's assertion that other than the buildings, the property should be taxed at an open space rate whereas the Assessor valued the property at a commercial rate as the airport is a business.

The court has ordered a tax refund. Pursuant to State Statutes, the airport is entitled, to a refund or credit against future taxes; the airport has chosen a refund.

Mrs. Varricchio reported that the Selectmen are authorized to direct the Treasurer to make payment however, she stated that from an accounting standpoint, guidance is needed as to where and how the funds are accounted. She stated that action from the Board of Finance would be for a supplemental appropriation amending the Town budget in keeping with past practice.

Mr. Dutch questioned why funds were not escrowed or set aside in anticipation of a settlement. This case was noted to be an anomaly. It was further explained that reserving funds would not have strengthened the Town's position in a pending case.

Mrs. Link stated that she would prefer to take action on the item at the next regular meeting rather than at this time.

## **Main Street Investment Fund Grant Application**

Mr. Ventres reported that the Town would like to apply for a \$500,000 Main Street Investment Fund grant. He stated that a 2004 proposal is ready to go that would include sidewalks and lighting from the post office to Great Hillwood Road, from the Library to Wigwam Road and would improve the Moodus Green, including elimination of the abandoned road.

Mr. Ventres stated that the Town's portion would be a 21% match, or \$136,250 for a total project cost of \$636,000. Much discussion centered around the clean-up of the Moodus Green. It was questioned whether the green clean-up project could go forward separate from the grant with the Town grinding up the road and replacing it with sod, creating a larger green. It was noted that it could, however, as beautification was part of the grant criteria accomplishing it through the grant process strengthened the application.

Mr. Ventres stated that he hoped that the next phase could be to connect sidewalks and lighting to the high school. Mr. Ventres credited much of the ground work for the green expansion/road removal portion to the Economic Development Commission.

Mr. Alexander questioned the need for the special meeting, particularly when the Board met just ten days ago. Mr. Ventres noted that the deadline to apply is September 30<sup>th</sup> and this item did not make the Board's agenda for that regular meeting.

Mrs. Link canvassed the Board as to their opinions on the project.

Mr. Thomas stated that he felt fixing the green was long overdue and added that it also mitigates a safety issue.

Mr. Willis stated that he was in favor of a project that improved the Town of East Haddam

Mr. Alexander stated that he too supported the project. He also agreed that sidewalks to the high school should be pursued. He also noted concern with sidewalks that end on Great Hillwood rather than all the way up to the Senior Center. Discussions regarding future plans for Heritage Park were held, including the plans for a walking track around the former Tyrseck property.

Mr. Dutch stated that he was in favor of the project however he raised concern with funding the matching portion of the grant while also having an unanticipated \$189,000 bill to pay. Mrs. Varricchio stated that the financial piece of this grant could be included in the 2013-2014 budget.

**Motion was made by Mr. Alexander, to authorize the First Selectman to apply for a \$500,000 Main Street Investment Fund grant for Moodus Center Sidewalk and Lighting Improvements – Phase II. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**Motion was made by Mr. Dutch to adjourn at 11:45 am. Mrs. Link seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Denette