

Board of Selectmen
Grange Hall
February 6, 2013
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: Mark Walter; Emmett Lyman; John Blaschik

Selectmen Absent: none

Also Present: C. Behilo; E. Blaschik; J. Ventres; S. Wheeler

1. First Selectman Walter called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of Agenda: Mr. Walter recommended amending the agenda to move item 8F – Open Space Discussion – Pages & Zeiller Properties, up for discussion following Agenda item 3. Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the agenda as amended. Unanimous aye.
3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of January 16, 2013, Special Meeting of January 22, 2013

Regarding the minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 16, 2013, Mr. Blaschik requested that the first paragraph related to Agenda Item 8A, New Business – Bid Waiver – Fire Marshal Vehicle be amended to include the statement that, “*Mr. Blaschik recused himself from the discussion of this agenda item*”.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 16, 2013 as amended. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 22, 2013 as written. Mr. Blaschik abstained and the motion passed by a majority of ayes.

8F. New Business - Open Space Discussion – Pages & Zeiller Properties:

Mr. Ventres distributed updated information regarding the Pages & Zeiller properties. He reviewed the contents of the handouts and noted that the State of Connecticut has approved grants for approximately 50% of the purchase price of the properties.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to support the purchase of the Pages & Zeiller properties for Open Space and move the recommendation to the Board of Finance for approval. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence:

A. Letter Regarding Compliment on Professionalism: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen’s attention to a copy of a Letter to the Editor of the Reminder News written by Mr. Jeff Naples of Colchester. Mr. Naples’ complimented the Town’s Land Use and Building Department staff for their professionalism and “can do” attitude when assisting him with a building project in East Haddam.

B. Letter Regarding Community Redevelopment and Conservation Act Proposal: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen’s attention to materials in their meeting packets related to a proposed Community Redevelopment and Conservation Act. He noted that the Act would allow, but not require, municipalities

to impose a conveyance tax of up to 1% on buyers of real estate with a sale amount in excess of \$150,000.00. He stated that no action is required at this time and the material was provided for the Selectmen's information.

5. First Selectmen's Report: Mr. Walter distributed information regarding the Town of East Haddam's \$1,445,000.00 General Obligation BANs. He noted the current rate on the BANs is .384%.

Mr. Walter reviewed several aspects of Gov. Malloy's budget speech and expressed concern for the Governor's proposal to exempt the first \$20,000.00 of a vehicle's value from property tax.

6. Citizen's Concerns: There were no citizen's concerns voiced at the meeting.

7. Unfinished Business:

A. Proposal to Exempt Class I Renewables from Building Permit Fees: There was no update on this agenda item.

B. Three Bridges Road Bridge Discussion: There was no update on this agenda item.

8. New Business

A. RFQ Award – Health Benefits Consultant: Mr. Walter advised that the Town's healthcare costs increased by 26% this year and reviewed the responsibilities of a health benefits consultant which include assisting in the bid process. He reported that an informal committee with representatives from the Board of Finance, the Board of Education, and the Town met with vendors and reviewed proposals from the three Health Benefit Consultant firms that ranked the highest in the RFQ process. He stated that the outcome of that process is that the committee recommended retaining the firm of Lindberg & Ripple as the Town's health benefits consultant. He noted that their fee for the first year is \$30,000.00 and the proposal gives the Town the option to continue with the company for up to four years. He stated the Town will determine their requirements for this service on a year-to-year basis.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to award the contract for a Health Benefits Consultant to Lindberg & Ripple, Inc. in the amount of \$30,000.00 for the current year. Unanimous aye.

B. RFP Award – Hosted VOIP: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to materials in their meeting packets regarding a hosted Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phone system and provided some additional background information. He reported that a Request for Proposal was issued for VOIP and the Town worked with its technology vendor, Vertitech, who has extensive experience in telephony. He advised that the two firms that ranked highest based on the RFP were interviewed and Broadsmart was selected as the vendor to provide the phones and host the Town's phone services.

Mr. Walter stated that the Town has budgeted for this project for two years and is financially in a position to implement VOIP. He advised that it is anticipated that VOIP will save the Town on its monthly phone line costs. He noted it will also provide voicemail (which is not presently available) enabling employees to more professionally respond to calls and serve the Town citizens. Mr. Walter also informed the Selectmen that it has not yet been decided whether to purchase or lease the phones. He stated that after the contract is negotiated, any multi-year commitment required will have to be brought to Town Meeting for approval.

Mr. Walter also stated that the proposal does not include the Board of Education. Mr. Edward Blaschik pointed out the risk of losing phone service during power outages since the system is internet based.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Blaschik, to negotiate and finalize prices with the selected vendor, Broadsmart, for a Voice Over Internet Protocol System within the scope of the current budgeted amount. Unanimous aye.

C. Bid Waiver – Fire Department Light Tower: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen’s attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Shawn Daigle, Chief of the East Haddam Fire Department, requesting a bid waiver for installing a light tower on Engine 1-15. Chief Daigle advised that there is only one distributor of this equipment in Connecticut.

Mr. Daigle’s email also noted that \$19,000.00 was put into the Fire Department’s capital improvements budget by the former Fire Chief for the purchase of three light towers. He further advised that the light tower being requested is built by Will-Burt, a highly regarded company in the industry. Mr. Daigle noted that the unit will be a huge asset to the fire department during night time calls.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Blaschik, for discussion purposes, to waive the bid process for the purchase of a light tower for Engine 1-15 and authorize the Fire Chief to negotiate with Firematic Supply Co. Inc. per their quote of \$19,364.00 for this equipment.

Mr. Blaschik said he felt there may be distributors in the surrounding states and was not comfortable with waiving the bid process without more information. There was a general discussion regarding ensuring consistency across the units purchased. The other Selectmen agreed that it would be helpful to invite Fire Chief Daigle to the next Board of Selectmen’s meeting to discuss his request.

Motion made by Mr. Blaschik, seconded by Mr. Walter, to table this agenda item and invite Chief Daigle to the next Board of Selectmen’s meeting. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to withdraw his earlier motion regarding this agenda item. Unanimous aye.

D. Grant Acceptance – Boating Infrastructure Grant: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen’s attention to materials in their meeting packages regarding a grant from the State of Connecticut to install floating docks at the end of the Goodspeed parking lot. He advised that the Town has an easement from the Goodspeed Opera House for the site where the dock will be built; however the State requires a letter of authorization for the work from the owner of the property. Mr. Walter stated he will request the appropriate letter from the Goodspeed’s Board of Directors.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to adopt the following resolution to be referred to the Board of Finance and then Town Meeting for approval:

RESOLVED: That a grant in an amount of \$45,000.00 is hereby accepted from the State of Connecticut, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, BOR-Boating Division to design and install floating docks for transient dockage for transient boaters upon the terms and conditions set forth in the Personal Services Agreement.

In furtherance of this resolution, Mark B. Walter, the First Selectmen, is duly authorized to enter into and sign said contracts on behalf of the Town of East Haddam. Mark B. Walter currently holds the

office of First Selectmen and has held that office since November 7, 2007. The First Selectman is further authorized to provide such additional information and execute such other documents as may be required by the local, state or federal government in connection with said contact and to execute any amendments, rescissions, and revisions thereto.

Unanimous aye.

E. Farmers Market Committee: Mr. Walter discussed the need for a Farmers' Market Committee and distributed a sample charge. At Mr. Walter's request, Mr. Lyman agreed to draft a charge for the Farmers' Market Committee and assist in whatever is needed to get the committee established.

F. Open Space Discussion – Pages & Zeiller Properties: This agenda item was discussed earlier in the meeting and is reported on above in these minutes.

G. Senior Center – Beer & Wine Approval: Mr. Walter noted that the Community Lions had submitted a request to serve wine at the Senior Center for their dinner/business meeting in February and a Game Night/Gathering in March.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Blaschik, to approve the serving of wine by the Community Lions at the Senior Center for a dinner/business meeting to be held on February 26, 2013 and a Game Night/Gathering on March 23, 2013. Unanimous aye.

H. Volunteer of the Month: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to an email from Tara Houle recommending Robin Zachariewicz be named Volunteer of the Month. Ms. Houle stated that. *"Robin Zachariewicz is a wonderful asset to our community ... is always doing something to help others... [is a] role model [and] the most beautiful woman inside and out"*.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Blaschik, to name Robin Zachariewicz as Volunteer of the Month for January 2013. Unanimous aye.

I. Tax Refunds: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to two tax refunds.

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

- \$321.72 to Alexis Devlin, and
- \$183.38 to Ernest Thody.

Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: There was no public comment at the meeting.

10. Selectmen's Discussion: There were no additional topics discussed by the Selectmen.

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 8:25 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Respectfully submitted,
Emmett Lyman, Secretary