

Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
November 3, 2010
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: Mark Walter, Pete Govert and Emmett Lyman

Also Present: C. Behilo, E. Blaschik, D. Denette, T. Gelston (arrived 7:58 p.m.), D. Angersola, 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: Mr. Walter stated he would like to amend the Agenda to move item 7.I., Unfinished Business – Donation Acceptance, 1977 Maxum Ladder Truck, up as the second topic under Agenda Item 5, First Selectmen’s Discussion. Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the agenda as amended. Unanimous aye.
3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of October 20, 2010: Mr. Walter requested the following change to the minutes:
 - Page 4 – 1st line: change “... *the Town may not execute the contract ...*” to “... *the Town may execute the contract ...*”.Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 20, 2010 as amended. Unanimous aye.
4. Correspondence: There was no correspondence discussed at the meeting.
5. First Selectman’s Report:

A. General Code Update – Deb Denette: Ms. Denette advised that in 2006 funds had been put aside for a project to update the Town’s ordinances with General Code. She said that the project had stalled but that approximately \$12,000 remains encumbered to finish it. She stated that she has revived the project and was working with a firm to verify that the Code was statutorily accurate and to make any appropriate updates. She noted that the company will formulate the information, make sure the order was compliant with the State Statutes, and provide some legal analysis. She confirmed that no history will be lost in the process.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Govert, Ms. Denette confirmed that she was checking to ensure that the encumbered funds will cover the cost of the project. She stated that the end result will be a bound book of the Town’s General Code as well as a digital copy that was searchable and could be loaded onto the Town’s website.

There was a general discussion about the project and it was agreed that the Town’s Attorney should be informed. Mr. Walter advised that Ms. Denette will, as needed, rely on subject matter experts on the Town’s staff and will report back to the Board of Selectmen as she makes progress on the project. It was noted that the final product will have to be presented at a Public Hearing.

7.I. Unfinished Business: Donation Acceptance – 1977 Maxum Ladder Truck: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen’s attention to a letter from the Board of Fire Commissioners, dated October 12, 2010, advising of an offer to donate to the Town a 1977 Maxum 85’ Ladder Truck from Essex Fire Engine Company #1. The Board of Fire Commissioners recommended accepting the donation on behalf of the East Haddam Fire Department. He noted that there would be approximate additional costs of \$1,100 for ladder tests and insurance.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept a donation of a 1977 Maxum 85’ Ladder Truck from the Essex Fire Engine Company #1 for the East Haddam Fire Department and send acceptance of said donation to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval.

In response to questions raised by Mr. Lyman, Mr. Angersola provided some background on how the donation came about and stated that, when collapsed, the ladder was approximately 35’. Mr. Lyman expressed his concern about what impact accepting the truck would have on proposals to construct taller buildings in East Haddam. There was a general discussion about potential uses for the truck and Mr. Angersola advised that it would make putting out chimney fires much safer.

The motion was passed with a unanimous aye vote. Mr. Angersola confirmed that he would attend the November 8th Board of Finance meeting to provide the financial data relative to the donation.

5. First Selectmen’s Report (continued): Mr. Walter reported that he has signed a contract with the Town of Chester to share East Haddam’s Assessor. He advised that the Assessor will work a 36-hour week, splitting her time between the two towns – 20 hours for East Haddam and 16 hours for Chester. He advised that East Haddam will pay the Assessor and bill Chester for the hours she worked for them. He noted that she will not use an East Haddam vehicle during the hours she was working for the Town of Chester.

Mr. Walter stated that he was also in discussion with several neighboring towns about sharing the services of East Haddam’s Zoning Enforcement Officer and Animal Control Officer. Mr. Govert stated that he supported such regionalization efforts.

Mr. Walter noted that he had recently hired a new Animal Control Officer and planned on making a recommendation to the Board of Finance to increase the annual salaries of the Animal Control Officer from \$8,000.00 to \$15,000.00 and the Assistant Animal Control Officer from \$4,000.00 to \$5,000.00.

He also advised that he will be posting the Public Works Director job as a 30-hour position, rather than a 40-hour position, to help contain expenses. There was a general discussion regarding additional opportunities to regionalize personnel and equipment.

6. Citizen’s Concerns: In response to a question from Mr. Behilo, Mr. Walter stated that he had asked Mr. Thumm to send Mr. Behilo a letter explaining the changes at the Transfer Station.

7. Unfinished Business

A. 4-8 Middle School: Mr. Walter reported that Mr. Moss has informed him that all of the paperwork had been completed regarding the final, rejected, change order and has been turned over to Mr. Carroll. He noted that he anticipated a favorable decision will be forthcoming from the State.

B. Goodspeed Opera House Update: In response to questions from Mr. Walter, Mr. Blaschik advised that construction on the new actors' housing was going well and that they continue to make progress with the State on the water system.

C. Old Middle School: Mr. Walter advised that the Town had received three bids on the old desks in the school. He noted that the furniture and fixtures remaining at the school were slowly getting cleared out.

D. Road Acceptance and Associated Drainage Easement – Meadow Brook Road: There was no new update on this agenda item.

E. STEAP Power House Road Grant: Mr. Walter reiterated that responsibility for processing the paperwork for this grant has been re-assigned to a higher level at the State who has promised they will take action on getting the paperwork completed.

F. Clark Gates Road Petition: Mr. Walter advised that moving traffic violations summons at this location have increased.

Mr. Walter also noted that he had spoken with Mr. Smith at the polls regarding his concern over holding future Relay for Life events at the new Middle School. He further advised that he had spoken with Mr. Carroll and Mr. Parkus concerning improvements to the condition of the sidewalks at the schools.

G. Rotary Club Donation of Edgar D. Williams Park: Mr. Walter reported that Ms. Kittner agreed to get him copies of the Goodspeed's Phase I and II reports on the property. He stated that he has also requested that the Town Attorney draft language for acceptance of the donation at a Town Meeting.

H. DCS Energy – Solar Panel Offer: Mr. Walter advised that the Town Attorney was still reviewing the contract. The Selectmen discussed the two locations for the solar panels and Mr. Govert advised that the panels should save the Town approximately \$3,700 annually in electricity expense. At Mr. Walter's request, he agreed to call Ms. Golec to advise her of the plans to install solar panels on the roof of the Senior Center.

Mr. Govert emphasized that the contract must be signed by the end of November otherwise the offer expires. Mr. Walter agreed to research whether or not acceptance of the offer must be voted on at a Town Meeting.

8. New Business

A. Fee Schedule for Contracted Snow Plowing: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a memo in their meeting packets from Mr. Thumm, dated November 3, 2010, with his recommendation for snow plowing contractors.

Mr. Walter explained that this was the process used to set the fee schedule for different size trucks for contracted snow removal. He noted that if we used contractors other than the ones who submitted prices they would be paid at the set rates.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Govert, Mr. Walter confirmed that the requirements were the same as last year.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept the recommendation of the Public Works Director and set the snow plowing rates as follows: up to 10,000 GVW with sander \$115.00 per hour; between 10,000 and 26,000 GVW without sander \$90.00, with sander \$115.00 per hour. Unanimous aye.

B. Grant Acceptance – Bullet Proof Vest Grant: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of an e-mail in their meeting packets from Ms. Zemienieski, dated October 7, 2010, providing background on this grant award.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of \$1,750.00 from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bulletproof Vest Grant Program, and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

C. Commission Reappointment (CONS): Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of an e-mail from Cynthia Matthew, Chairman of the Conservation Commission, recommending the reappointment of a member of the Commission.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to reappoint Nancy Mackinnon as a regular member for a two-year term to expire June 30, 2012 on the Conservation Commission. Unanimous aye.

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

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

- \$ 252.93 to DCFS Trust, and
- \$ 110.31 to Colin B. and Andrea M. Morris.

Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: Mr. Gelston stated that he had come to the meeting to speak in favor of the Open Space acquisitions; however, he noted that it was not on the Agenda. Mr. Gelston expressed his desire to move the process forward to a resolution by the end of the year. Mr. Walter inquired about his sense of urgency and Mr. Gelston advised that he was concerned about losing the properties given the current economic environment and potential changes to taxes after the first of the year.

There was a general discussion about improvements to the Town's Open Space areas and promoting them to encourage more tourism in the area. Mr. Walter stated that the acquisitions would have to be approved by the Board of Finance and noted that the Town may consider using reserves, rather than bonding, to fund the purchases.

Mr. Govert suggested Mr. Gelston review an economic analysis that had been done several years prior comparing the preservation of open space to development.

10. Selectmen's Discussion: Mr. Walter advised that he had spoken with Mr. Sassi about the bids for the Town's electrical power. He stated that Mr. Sassi felt Trans Canada was a good company and

supported the advice of Mr. Smith to sign a short-term contract. Mr. Walter reviewed the bids with the other Selectmen and advised that he had signed a contract extending the term of the previous contract for 23 months, effective January 11, 2011, at a reduced rate of \$.086.

A. 2011 Board of Selectmen Meetings: The Selectmen reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for 2011.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the following dates as the meeting schedule for the Board of Selectmen for the 2011 calendar year: January 5 & 19, February 2 & 16, March 2 & 16, April 6 & 20, May 4 & 18, June 1 & 15, July 6 & 20, August 3 & 17, September 7 & 21, October 5 & 19, November 2 & 16, December 7 & 21, and January 4 & 18, 2012. All meetings will be held at 7:00pm in the Town Office Annex. Unanimous aye.

B. Joint Budget Information Meeting (November 9): Mr. Walter stated that he was working with the Finance Administrator to prepare materials for the meeting. He noted that they have developed a draft work schedule and will also create a list of factors that could impact the Town's budget. There was a general discussion about what type of factors could affect next year's budget. Mr. Govert cautioned that the Selectmen should not base any of their budget decisions on information that cannot be backed-up with factual details.

C. Public Hearing Middle School Conversion Committee (November 10): Mr. Walter noted that the Middle School Conversion Committee has scheduled a Public Hearing at the High School Auditorium at 7:00 p.m. on November 10th. In response to a question raised by Mr. Govert, he stated that projected operating expenses for the new municipal offices have been compiled by Ms. Varricchio and that Mr. Ventres had also provided input. Mr. Govert stated that he wanted to make sure that the discussions about the projected expenses were based on numbers that all parties agree were realistic and fair.

In response to a question from Mr. Govert, Mr. Lyman advised that the Environmental Round Table was scheduled for November 13th, at 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon, at the Sportsman's Club. Mr. Lyman noted that the topic will be Honoring Open Space Champions.

11. Executive Session – Property Negotiation: Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to enter into executive session for the purpose of property negotiations at 8:55 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Selectmen returned to regular session at 9:55 p.m. No motions or decisions were made.

12. 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 9:56 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Tape 625B
626A
626B

Emmett Lyman, Secretary