

Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
July 19, 2023
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; E. Dill; T. Govert

Also Present: D. Angersola (via phone); L. D'Aquila; S. Pare; A. Shaltiel; M. Velez; L. Zemienieski; and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimous aye.

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of June 21, 2023 and Special Meeting of June 27, 2023

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 21, 2023, as written. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of June 27, 2023, as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

There was no correspondence discussed at the meeting.

5. First Selectman's Report

Ms. Haines provided the following report:

- Swingbridge closures are still scheduled; however, several overnight closures have been suspended.
- Work on the two roundabouts on the Haddam side of the bridge is scheduled to begin next year and representatives from East Haddam, Haddam and the business community participated in a meeting with the CT DOT to strategize the project.

Mr. Dill reported that he had also attended a CT DOT meeting regarding planned work on the bridge replacement over Dykas Brook project. He stated that it is projected to be a one-year project. The construction start is scheduled to begin in October 2025 (subject to permit approvals). He added that engineering work is about 30% complete at this time. The DOT explained in the meeting that there will be a closing of the roadway for one summer (2026) to shorten the construction timeframe, keeping the project within one construction season, as opposed to keeping the road open which may extend into two construction seasons.

6. Public Comments: There were no public comments discussed at this time in the meeting.

7. Unfinished Business

- A. Board of Selectmen and Treasurer Term Length Ordinance Discussion: In response to an inquiry from Ms. Govert, Mr. Dill and Ms. Govert both supported bringing the revised ordinance extending the term for the Town Treasurer to referendum for a vote and also bringing the ordinance extending the term for the Board of Selectmen back to referendum for a vote.
- B. Open Space Award Discussion – Kronberg Property: Ms. Haines reviewed the status of this agenda item. Ms. Zemienieski stated she would ask the Town’s bond counsel to draft an appropriate resolution to move the item forward and there was a general discussion regarding timing of a referendum.

8. New Business

- A. Resident State Trooper Contract: Ms. Haines called the Board’s attention to a copy of the State’s June 20, 2023 letter and contract for Resident State Trooper services in their meeting packets. She noted that Ms. Zemienieski has highlighted the changes from the previous contract. Ms. Zemienieski reviewed the primary changes to the contact.

A motion to accept the contract was postponed allowing Ms. Govert and Mr. Dill time to review the contract.

- B. Solar Discussion: Ms. Haines called the Board’s attention to materials in the meeting packets related to this agenda item and tele-conferenced Facilities Director Angersola into the meeting. Mr. Angersola provided background information and reviewed the proposal to rent out the Municipal Office Complex and the Public Works garage roofs for solar arrays. He stated that the proposals are contingent upon receiving a grant for the projects. He noted that the grant application period begins August 1st and early applications are favored.

Mr. Angersola responded to questions from the Board. He confirmed that the solar contractor works with the manufacturer of the buildings’ roofing materials to ensure that the installation of the solar panels does not invalidate the warranty.

Motion was made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to authorize Irene M. Haines, the First Selectman, to move forward with the application process for installation of solar panels on the Municipal Office Building and Public Works garage. Unanimous aye.

- C. Transfer Station Fee Schedule Changes: Ms. Haines called the Board’s attention to materials in their meeting packets concerning this agenda item, including a letter and fliers with revised Transfer Station fees created by the Public Works Director. She introduced Public Works Director Michele Velez who reviewed the material. She noted that the increase to the commercial hauler’s fee will require an ordinance change and suggested the revision be more in-line with the language in the ordinance related to other Transfer Station fees which gives the Board of Selectmen the discretion to set the fees.

There was a general discussion regarding the increased fees for tire and rim recycling. Ms. Govert expressed her concern that increasing the fees could result in people no longer bringing old tires to the Transfer Station for recycling but, rather, dumping them in the woods. Director

Velez agreed to provide the Selectmen with a report of the number of tires the Transfer Station has received for recycling.

Director Velez reviewed proposed changes to issuing resident permit stickers and the Board discussed the pros and cons of an annual re-permitting process. She also proposed instituting a fee for commercial businesses and a temporary contractor license for bulky waste. Ms. Zemienieski noted the Town's policy for waiving the bulky waste fee for non-profits and agreed to provide Director Velez with a copy of the policy and related form.

- D. Grant Acceptance – Edmund T. and Barbara S. Delaney Fund and Whelen Family Fund at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets regarding notification of a grant to the Recreation Department.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to accept a grant in the amount of \$5,000.00 from the Edmund T. and Barbara S. Delaney Fund and Whelen Family Fund at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County for the purpose of supporting summer 2023 camp programs, and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

- E. Grant Acceptance – M. Jones Fund at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets regarding notification of a grant to the Recreation Department.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of \$1,000.00 from the M. Jones Fund at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County for the purpose of supporting summer 2023 camp programs, and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

- F. Grant Acceptance – FY24 Historic Document Preservation Grant: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets from the CT State Library, dated June 30, 2023, regarding an award of an Historic Documents Preservation Grant for \$6,000.00.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to recommend to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that a grant in the amount of \$6,000 is hereby accepted from the State of Connecticut, State Library, for the purpose of historic document preservation; and that Irene M. Haines, First Selectman, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality, a contract with the Connecticut State Library for an Historic Documents Preservation Grant
Unanimous aye.

- G. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (HDC, IWWC): Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets regarding the following Commission member changes:

Historic District Commission

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept, with deep regret, the resignation of Keith Bunnell as an alternate on the Historic District Commission. Unanimous aye.

Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a letter from Chairman Randy Dill, noting the recommendation made for reappointments to the Commission.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to reappoint Mary Augustiny, David Jahne and Bryan Goff as regular members for two-year terms to expire July 1, 2025 on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Unanimous aye.

H. Tax Refunds: There was one tax refund considered at the meeting.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to award a tax refund in the amount as presented.

- \$497.91 to Kevin Shields
Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: The following public comments were raised at the meeting:

Amalia Shaltiel made the following comments:

- She asked if Matt Shea has been appointed to the Sustainability Team. Ms. Zemienieski found his application and Ms. Haines advised that the Board could amend the agenda to consider Mr. Shea's application. Mr. Dill stated he would prefer to have time to review Mr. Shea's application and discuss his potential appointment with other citizens.
- She suggested someone write an article explaining to citizens how the proposed Open Space \$5M bond authorization would work and Ms. Govert suggested Ms. Shaltiel speak with Land Use Administrator Ventres about her suggestion.
- In response to a question about the proposed solar arrays for the Municipal Office Complex and Public Works garage, Ms. Haines confirmed that should the town be awarded a grant a financial and risk/benefit analysis for the project will be completed before the project is started.
- She agreed with Ms. Govert's concern about the potential negative impact of increasing the Transfer Station's fee to recycle old tires. There was a general discussion regarding potential alternative solutions to recycle old tires and Ms. Haines asked the Sustainability Team to research what options might be available.

Laurie D'Aquila made the following comments:

- She recommended that the Town conduct an exit interview at the next budget referendum to solicit input from taxpayers about what they think about the budget.
- She reported that she and representatives from the Town attended the North Central Region 3 EMS Council's June 27th meeting where the East Haddam Fire Department's application for a new ambulance service was reviewed. She stated that the Council had advised that a \$100k budget did not constitute sufficient funding for a new ambulance service and noted that typical start-up costs range between \$600k-\$700k, excluding the cost of the ambulance(s).

She noted that the Office of Emergency Medical Services' hearing on the Town's application to transfer the EHAA's Primary Service Area Responder (PSAR) assignment to the Town is

scheduled for July 27th and she does not believe the public has been adequately informed about the significant expense that the Town will incur if the transfer is approved. Ms. D'Aquila stated that she would like to see someone use some "fiscal responsibility" and stop this process from moving forward.

Ms. Shaltiel suggested the Board of Selectmen establish an ad hoc committee to consider all sides of the dispute and make an unbiased recommendation.

Ms. Haines provided more detailed budgetary information and noted that the gap between the existing Fire Department budget and the additional funds needed for the department to assume responsibility for responding to the Town's emergency medical calls is approximately \$100k, which the Board of Finance has put into their contingency fund for this purpose. She further advised that the Town had called in a mediator on this issue; however, the Ambulance Association turned down the mediator's recommendation.

Ms. D'Aquila provided additional information and reiterated the current performance statistics for the Ambulance Association. She supported Ms. Shaltiel's suggestion to appoint an unbiased ad hoc committee to listen to both sides and make a recommendation. In response to questions from Ms. Haines, Ms. D'Aquila reviewed the members of the Ambulance Association's board and the individuals on its staff.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

A. Liaison Reports: There were no liaison reports provided at the meeting.

B. Other

Motion was made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Ms. Haines, to amend the agenda to include a discussion about moving forward a new member for the Sustainability Team. Ms. Haines and Ms. Govert voted aye; Mr. Dill abstained from the vote. Motion passed by a majority of ayes.

Sustainability Team

Motion was made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Ms. Haines, to appoint Matt Shea to the Sustainability Team. Ms. Haines and Ms. Govert voted aye; Mr. Dill abstained from the vote. Motion passed by a majority of ayes.

There was no other business discussed at the meeting.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary