Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
December 17, 2025
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: T. Gelston; E Dill; T. Sevigny
Also Present: W. Barney; M. Callahan; D. Dill; M. Robidoux; A. Shaltiel; L. Zemienieski and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Gelston called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Gelston reviewed the meeting agenda and stated that he would like to add Inland Wetlands & Watercourse Commission membership reappointments to agenda item 8.B. Board, Commission and Committee Changes.

Motion made by Mr. Sevigny, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve the agenda as amended. Unanimous aye.

3. Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting of December 3, 2025

Mr. Gelston called the Board's attention to draft minutes in their meeting packets.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Sevigny, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of December 3, 2025 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

Mr. Dill reported that he had received an email from Nicholson Baker on December 10th advising that he does not think 416 East Haddam-Colchester Turnpike is an appropriate location for a 6-pump gas station and drive-thru convenience store. Mr. Dill stated he would forward the email to Ms. Zemienieski for proper distribution to the applicable Commission(s) and/or Board(s).

5. First Selectmen's Report

Mr. Gelston reported on the following:

- Smith, Alger, Daniels and Cove Roads have been repaved and Public Works will finish up work on the aprons and striping as soon as weather permits. He noted the estimated cost for repaving the four roads is approximately $1.75M.
- The Town continues to finalize posting the following open positions: Public Works Director, Driver-Laborer position and Road Foreman.

- He provided an update on the proposed cell tower at Fire Company #1 and advised that it will not have a red light at the top of the structure.
- He reiterated the public's concerns about the proposed ATESD program and recapped alternative plans to address speeding on the Town's roads.
- A workshop with the EHAA and EHFD had been conducted and "excellent progress" was made. A follow-up session is scheduled for December 18th.
- He would like the BOS to establish a study committee to look into the proposed purchase of Black Birch Golf Course. He read a resolution drafted for this purpose and stated that the subject would be discussed further under New Business.

A. Sustainability Team Update

Mr. Gelston recognized Amalia Shaltiel who advised that she is co-chair of the East Haddam Sustainability Team. She reviewed a presentation about the purpose, goals, and accomplishments of the Team. She noted that, this year, the Town achieved its gold level certification and also received $12,500.00 to be used for energy efficiency, tree-planting, and street improvement projects. Ms. Shaltiel requested the Board's input on the best use of the funds.

Ms. Shaltiel stated that the Team has identified a need for: more communication among Town organizations to avoid overlap of efforts; a community calendar; regular meetings of non-profit and service organizations, and sharing of their resources.

Ms. Shaltiel provided an overview of the Team's goals for 2026 and emphasized that it is dedicated to having a thriving community. Mr. Gelston stated that he supported the Team's goal of establishing regular Town-wide clean-ups and, in response to a question he raised, Ms. Shaltiel provided additional clarification on the pollinator program. There was a brief discussion regarding the Town's previous composting program.

6. Public Comment

The following public comment was raised at the meeting:

- Michael Robidoux – stated he is Vice-Chair of the Town's Economic Development Commission (EDC). He urged the Board of Selectmen to consider the Black Birch Golf Course proposal. He stated EDC has worked on the project for the past year and has a verbal agreement with the owner to sell it to the Town. He noted that EDC has drafted balance sheets for acquisition, refurbishment and operating costs. He stated that EDC supports the First Selectman's recommendation to establish a Study Committee for the project.

- Amalia Shaltiel – suggested the Town install speed humps on the back roads to mitigate speeding.

7. Unfinished Business

A. Cell Tower Discussion – 440 Town Street: Mr. Gelston reviewed the leasing proposal for the planned cell tower at Firehouse No. 1. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Dill, Mr. Gelston stated he would confirm whether or not the Siting Council still requires that municipalities are given first and highest use for emergency service satellites on new towers constructed within their towns. In response to a question from Mr. Sevigny, Mr. Gelston confirmed that the proposed contract states that the Town will receive $18k, plus an escalator, each year and $200 for each new satellite lease acquired for the location.

B. Open Space Discussion – Sprecher Property Exchange Proposal – Shanaghan Road: There was no update on this agenda item.

C. Open Space Discussion – Dale King Property – South Sheepskin Hollow Road: There was no update on this agenda item.

8. New Business

A. Black Birch Golf Course Discussion: Mr. Gelston noted that this agenda item had been discussed earlier in the meeting. He noted that the Town has received several applications for the feasibility study committee. Mr. Sevigny recommended that the charge for the feasibility committee include a statement requiring the members to also research whether or not adequate water is/will be available at the golf course.

B. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (EHLS, IWWC)

Library Trustees

Mr. Gelston called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a letter from Juliana Tryon Ranaudo on behalf of the Board of Library Trustees regarding an appointment to the board.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Sevigny, to appoint William Barney to the Board of Library Trustees to fill the balance of a vacant term to expire with the 2027 municipal election. Unanimous aye.

Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission

Mr. Gelston called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a letter, dated December 17, 2025, from Randy Dill noting reappointment recommendations on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission.

Motion made by Mr. Sevigny, seconded by Mr. Gelston, to reappoint Randolph Dill and Jennifer Burton-Reeve as regular members for two-year terms, to expire June 30, 2026, on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Mr. Dill abstained from the vote and the motion passed by a majority of ayes.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Sevigny, to reappoint Mary Augustiny, David Jahne and Bryan Goff as regular members and David Walls as an alternate member for

two-year terms, to expire June 30, 2027, on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Unanimous aye.

C. Tax Refunds: Mr. Dill called the Board's attention to one tax refund.

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

- $291.01 to Toyota Lease Trust.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Gelston, Tax Collector Dill advised that since the lease had terminated, the leasing company was entitled to a pro-rated refund. Motion passed by a unanimous aye vote.

9. Selectmen's Discussion

A. Liaison's Reports: Mr. Sevigny reported that the Broadband Committee had applied for a state grant in 2024 but their application had not been approved. He stated that the Committee had discussed applying for a low-interest loan with the USDA; however, communication with the USDA had gone silent after the new presidential administration was inaugurated last January.

Mr. Sevigny stated he had attended the CT Conference of Municipalities conference in early December where Civitas Networks was a vendor. He advised that Civitas installs wireless technology within municipalities for public access to the internet. He noted that the installation cost for their wireless service is much lower than what it would cost to install fiber.

Mr. Sevigny stated that he has a call into the town of Shelton, CT, which installed the Civitas Networks technology last year to discuss their experience with the company and its technology; further, that the COO of Civitas will attend an upcoming Broadband Committee meeting to discuss a private/public partnership.

There was a brief discussion regarding the wireless technology and concerns with the state grant program. Mr. Sevigny responded to questions from the Board.

B. Other

1. Freedom of Information Workshop (12/22/25 at 7:00 p.m.): Mr. Gelston called the Board's and public's attention to this workshop.

10. Public Comment

The following public comments were raised at the meeting:

- Amalia Shaltiel suggested asking the River COG to coordinate a combined low level engineering program of fiber networks for membership towns to reduce the financial impact on the towns. In response to her inquiry about accessing the Frontier engineered plan for a fiber network in East Haddam, Mr. Sevigny advised that that information was most probably proprietary to Frontier.

- Ms. Zemienieski stated that she had received emails from Mary Tomasi and Joan Dill advising that they were having difficulty hearing all of the discussions at tonight's meeting. There was a general discussion concerning the new microphone technology and Ms. Zemienieski stated she ask Matt Hall to check the microphone again.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Sevigny, seconded by Mr. Dill, to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m. .

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary