Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
February 19, 2026
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: T. Gelston; E Dill; T. Sevigny
Also Present: D. Angersola; B. Auld; V. Belles; C. Bourne; M. Callahan; L. D'Aquila; Dr. T. DeBrito, D. DiStefano; M. Hall; C. Leidemer; R. Swol; K. Thompson; K. Tosi; L. Zemienieski and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Gelston called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. 2026-2027 General Budget Review Workshop

   A. Board of Education Capital: Mr. Angersola reviewed the following Board of Education Capital requests:

- Elementary School Playground - $390k FY27 (New Request)
- Elementary School Rear Access Road - $45k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- High School Exterior Doors - $35k FY27 (New Request)
- High School Roof Insultation - $41,506 FY27 (New Request)
- 2026 Ford F250 - $49k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)
- Middle School Building Mgmt System - $62.5k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- Update to District Lockdown System - $64k FY27 (New Request)
- System Wide Cafeteria Equipment - $25k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)
- System Wide Ventrac Tractor - $66k FY30 (Scheduled Replacement)
- Middle School Boiler Replacement - $159k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)
- High/Middle Schools Driveway Crack Sealing - $50k FY28 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- System Wide Modernization of Learning Environments - $50k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- System Wide Carpet/Floor Replacement - $15k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)
- System Wide Field Improvements - $18k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)
- System Wide Gymnasium Floors - $25k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- High School Ceiling Tiles - $25k FY28 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- System Wide Interior Paint - $15k FY27 (New Request)
- Middle School Exterior Sealing/Painting - $25k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- Elementary School Grades 2/3 Playground Equipment - $25k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- Elementary School Roof Replacement ('85 Wing) - $1.5M FY28 (Scheduled Replacement)
- High School Track/Field Bleachers - $110k FY28 (New Request)
- High School Track Resurfacing - $50k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)

- Middle School Office Carpeting - $21k FY28 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- System Wide IAQ Testing - $38k FY30 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- System Wide Mandated Radon Testing - $21K FY30 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- System Wide Mandated Duct Cleaning - $109k FY30 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- Special Education Transition Program Vehicle #1 - $65k FY30 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- Middle School Roof Replacement - $2M FY28 (Scheduled Replacement)
- System Wide Interior Key Lock/Swipe System - $65k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- Elementary School Sidewalk Repair/Replacement - $25k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- Control Heating Valves - $205k FY27 (New Request)
- High School Office Carpeting - $25k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)

Mr. Angersola responded to questions from the Board and noted that there may be grant funds available for the Middle School roof replacement project.

Mr. Gelston noted that the Board of Education's system wide maintenance programs total approximately $150k annually. In response to a request made by Mr. Gelston, Mr. Angersola agreed to look into the expense and scope of work required to switch the boiler at the Middle School to propane fuel.

IT Director Hall reviewed the following technology capital requests:

- System Wide Wireless Network Access Points - $120k FY28 (Scheduled Replacement)
- System Wide Network Switches - $80k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)

B. Shared Services: Finance Director Belles provided background information on the Shared Services budget. It was noted that the increase in this budget over FY25-26 is $124,147.00 (8.14%). Dr. DeBrito noted that approximately $95k of the total increase is related to increases in the technology expenses. She confirmed that no new employees have been added to this budget; however, there was a one-time increase of $10k to the IT Desktop Specialist position to bring it up to market rates.

   There was a general discussion concerning the over-all increase in the cost of technology subscriptions and the impact of the mandated transfer of the Town's website to a .gov domain. Mr. Hall advised that the planned new Fire House will increase the cost of internet access to that building. He noted that there are no good alternatives to Verizon and MicroSoft based technology.

   The Selectmen and Mr. Hall reviewed the Shared Services summary of accounts line-by-line and Mr. Hall responded to questions from the Board members.

C. Early Childhood Council: Ms. Belles advised that she had included $9k in this budget as a placeholder. Dr. DeBrito confirmed that there is no longer any grant funding for this program.

D. Fire Department Operating/Capital: Deputy Fire Chief Swol reviewed line items in the Fire Department's Operating budget that had increased from the FY25-26 budget. He explained the reasons behind a $49,223.00 (51.82%) increase in the Repairs and Maintenance line and an $8,365.00 (16.73%) increase in the Equipment (Gear) line. It was noted that the overall increase in the Department's FY26-27 Operating budget is $19,301 (2.63%).

Mr. Swol reviewed the following Capital requests:

- Air Pack Replacement – $50k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)
- Helmet Replacement - $23k FY27 (New Request)
- EMS – ADT - $22k FY27 (New Request)
- Ropes/Repel Gear - $18k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)
- Thermal Imaging Camera & Gas Meters - $15k FY27 (Update to Existing Capital Plan)
- Fire Hose – $15k FY27 (Scheduled Replacement)

Mr. Swol responded to several questions from the Board.

The Board discussed the pros and cons of the ClearGov software and the Board of Education's Capital requests for FY26-27. It was noted that the Board of Education's Capital requests for FY26-27 total $1,485,600.00 as compared to their FY25-26 Capital requests which totaled $1.8M; $650k of which was funded by the Board of Finance.

E. Ambulance Association: Ms. D'Aquila, President of the East Haddam Ambulance Association, introduced Denise DiStefano and Ken Tosi, members of the Association's Finance Committee. She provided opening comments and reviewed current metrics, noting that the EHAA responded to 800-900 calls annually, 10% of which are mutual aid calls. She reviewed the Association's 5-year accomplishments and goals for FY26-27.

Mr. Tosi read a letter from a resident expressing his appreciation of the efforts of EHAA in helping to coordinate his LifeStar transfer to the hospital.

Mr. Tosi stated that the EHAA's expenses continue to outpace its revenue and the projected shortfall for FY2026 is $126k. He advised that the Association feels a contingency line in the Town's budget is not an appropriate way to fund the EHAA's shortfall on a long-term basis and they would prefer a dedicated line-item in the Town's budget.

Mr. Tosi responded to questions from the Board and confirmed that, per the existing Memorandum of Understanding with the Town, EHAA carries the expense of utilizing the Fire Department's career staff for back-up EMS calls is carried in the "Reimbursement to the Town" line item. He noted that there is a new agreement for the EHAA, Town, and Fire Department in draft format and, if that is signed, it should reduce the EHAA's budget shortfall to under $100k. Mr. Tosi also reviewed a number of cost reduction opportunities the Ambulance Association is considering.

There was a brief discussion regarding creating a line-item in the Town's budget for the EHAA and Ms. Belles reviewed the process for submitting requests for payments from that line and she responded to several questions.

F. Other Operating/Capital Budget Discussion: No other Operating or Capital Budgets were discussed at the meeting.

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

4. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Sevigny, to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. .

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary