Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
June 16, 2021
Via YouTube Live
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: R. Smith; T. Govert; C. Quinn
Also Present: E. Blaschik; M. Burns, J. Riley; P. Stuhlman; L. Zemienieski, and other members of the public via virtual media.

1. First Selectman Smith 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. Smith stated that he would like to add EDC to agenda item 8D.

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

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of May 19, 2021

   Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 19, 2021 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

   Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Eliza LoPresti, Financial and Administrative Assistant, of the Lower CT River Council of Governments. He advised that Ms. LoPresti stated that the Regional Plan of Conservation & Development is available for public comment. He stated that individuals can contact his office for information on how to review the draft and submit comments.

5. First Selectmen's Report

   A. COVID-19 Reopening Report: Mr. Smith reported that there has been no significant increase in the Town's positive COVID cases.

      He stated that there is no longer a limit on the number of individuals that can attend public meetings in the Municipal Office Complex and he suspended the mandatory use of masks at meetings with a small attendance. He noted that the Town will continue to post meetings on YouTube.

   B. Responses to Previous Meeting Questions: There were no responses to previous meeting questions discussed at the meeting.

      Mr. Smith addressed a question raised at the Public Hearing on the Budget. He provided the following list of items that would be paid for with surplus funds from the Municipal Office Complex building project: repairs to fix a parking lot drainage problem, roof and dormer repairs,

gutter and downspout repairs, rewiring of the building's generator to provide more balanced air conditioning throughout the building, and replacing all office and meeting room door knobs to allow them to be locked from inside for security purposes.

Mr. Smith further advised that $42,000.00 had been allocated to install A/V equipment in additional meeting rooms and for upgrades to the existing A/V system. He responded to several questions from Ms. Quinn regarding the bids for the A/V work.

6. Citizens' Concerns: The following citizen's concerns were discussed at the meeting:

- Mr. Jeffrey Riley introduced himself and stated he is one of the managing members of the Centerbridge Group, LLC, the selected developer for the Town property in the Village. He reviewed a section of the RFQ and RFP for the 1 and 7 Main Street site that stated the Town's primary objective for developing the site is "…*in a way that maximizes financial and community benefits. The Town desires for the property to realize its highest and best use and to contribute to East Haddam's economic development and tax base*". He noted that the RFP also states that "*it will be up to the development team to decide what is feasible physically and economically*".

  Mr. Riley stated that he and Ms. Wilson have invested a significant amount of their time and finances in this project and, over the past two years, met with 80-100 residents and business owners from the Village District to solicit ideas and comments. He emphasized that their proposal meets all of the vision guidelines stipulated in the RFP and noted that they have received support and encouragement from the Revitalization Committee, the Historic District Commission and a majority of the members of the Board of Finance.

  Mr. Riley stated that he and Ms. Wilson have the following three questions: (1) What kind of support do they have from the leadership of the town? (2) If they have the leadership's support, how will it be expressed publicly, or at the Town Meeting? and (3) When will the Town Meeting and referendum be called?

  Mr. Smith responded that the Town Meeting will be scheduled in mid-August and the referendum at the end of August, at the latest. He stated that, regarding support from leadership, he feels that the members of the Board of Selectmen should maintain neutrality on the proposal; however, other members may feel differently. In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn, Mr. Smith stated that he doesn't feel he should be influencing the voters in any way.

  Ms. Govert agreed with Mr. Smith but expressed her deep gratitude to Mr. Riley and Ms. Wilson for their work and stated that she is excited about the vision they have created. Mr. Smith stated that he could support, without question, that CBG had met every standard, guideline, and requirement of the Village Revitalization Committee. Mr. Riley clarified that the referendum question is basically whether or not CBG is the right group to shepherd the development project through to successful completion and Ms. Govert stated that she does feel CBG is the right choice.

  Ms. Quinn expressed her deep concern that the other Board members would not commit to either support the project or not. She noted that the CBG proposal has the support of numerous other Town Boards and Committees, so she is very disappointed that the other members of the Board of Selectmen will not take a stand.

  Ms. Quinn further stated that she feels CBG presented an amazing proposal and noted the very high quality of their previous projects. She commented that she believes the development of the

Village District site is vital to Town's future economics and, without it, the Town cannot and will not sustain itself. She thanked Mr. Riley and Ms. Wilson for coming forward with their proposal and stated that she believes the majority of citizens are in favor of it.

Mr. Riley and the Board also discussed the question for the referendum, the cost of the hazardous waste remediation on the site, and that tax and other financial incentives for developments of this nature are the norm. Mr. Riley pointed out that, in fact, a number of such incentives were noted in the RFP.

Mr. Riley thanked the Board for their time and stated that any support for CBG that they felt was appropriate be made public.

- Mr. Stuhlman stated that he supports the CBG proposal but commented that the original video presentation may have "scared" some people. He also suggested CBG continue to emphasize the positive tax implications of the project on the Town's grand list.

7. Unfinished Business

   A. East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee Update: Mr. Smith reiterated that he anticipates a Town Meeting regarding the Village Revitalization project will be scheduled in mid-August with a referendum to follow two weeks later.

   B. Ordinance Amendment Request – Lake Hayward Speed Limit: Mr. Smith advised that the revisions to the Lake Hayward Speed Limit ordinance are being reviewed by the Town's attorney. He stated that he plans to hold a Public Hearing on the subject on June 30, 2021 followed by a Board of Selectmen meeting to move this forward to be included on the planned July 13th Town Meeting on the revised budget.

8. New Business

   A. Hazard Mitigation Plan Resolution: Mr. Smith recognized Margot Burns who distributed a packet of materials regarding the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan to the Board. She stated that she is the Senior Environmental Planner for the RiverCOG and reviewed the information contained in the packets and noted that Jim Ventres represented East Haddam for the drafting of the plan.

   In response to a question from Ms. Govert, Ms. Burns confirmed that, relative to the state's problem with dead/damaged trees, FEMA recently added the remediation of damage caused by invasive species to their list. She also discussed the invasive aquatic plants with the Board.

   Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to adopt the following resolution:

   A RESOLUTON concerning the
   2021 Lower Connecticut River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
   Dated May 2021

   For the purpose of adopting the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan as required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in order to be eligible for certain Federal assistance for any natural hazards.

WHEREAS, the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, at 42 U.S.C. § 5165, and 44 CFR Part 201.6 of the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, require the municipalities to adopt a mitigation plan in order to be eligible for grants to implement certain mitigation projects; and

WHEREAS the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) municipalities have experienced past flooding and other natural hazard events that pose risks to public health and safety, may cause serious property damage, and a plan is needed to address the results of these events: and

WHEREAS the planning process fostered by the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, and set forth by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, offers the opportunity to consider natural hazards and risks, and to identify mitigation actions to reduce future impacts of such hazards; and

WHEREAS the State of Connecticut has provided federal Hazard Mitigation Assistance program funds to support development of the mitigation plan; and

WHEREAS a Hazard Mitigation Plan (the "Plan") has been updated by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee and staff from RiverCOG and 15 of its municipal members, including the Town of East Haddam; and

WHEREAS the Hazard Mitigation Plan recommends several mitigation actions that will help minimize and reduce safety threats and damage to private and public property; and

WHEREAS a public meeting was held on June 16, 2021, to present the Plan and proposed mitigation actions and to solicit questions and comments.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, that the Hazard Mitigation Plan, including Volume I and the annex for our municipality, is hereby adopted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the municipal offices identified in the Plan are hereby directed to pursue implementation of the recommended priority actions that are assigned to their agencies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any action proposed in the Plan shall be subject to and contingent upon budget approval, if funding is required, and this resolution may not be interpreted so as to mandate any such appropriations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Departments of Land Use and/or Emergency Management are designated to coordinate with other offices and entities and shall periodically report on the activities, accomplishments, and progress, and shall prepare a progress report as required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Unanimous aye.

B. Renewal of Grant Application with Middlesex Hospital for Paramedic Services: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a letter from Middlesex Hospital's EMS Manager James Santacroce, dated June 2, 2021, regarding the per capita charge for Paramedic Services to the Town

residents. He noted that there is no change to the $1/per person charge and that the Amendment to the Agreement simply extends the term of the Agreement by one year.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Ms. Quinn, that Robert R. Smith, First Selectman, is hereby authorized to sign a one-year renewal of the Grant Application with Middlesex Hospital for Paramedic Services with a term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Unanimous aye.

C. 2021 Neighborhood Assistance Act Approvals: Mr. Smith reported that on June 16, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. a virtual public hearing was held on the Neighborhood Assistance Act proposals. He noted that the Goodspeed Opera House applied for $128,735.00 for energy efficiency upgrades and the Town of East Haddam applied for $20,000.00 for the Open Space Trust Fund. Mr. Smith advised that the next step is for the Board of Selectmen to approve the applications and send the proposals to the State for final approval.

Mr. Blaschik provided additional information regarding the Goodspeed Opera House's Neighborhood Assistance Act application.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve and forward to the State, for their approval, two (2) projects requesting funding by the Neighborhood Assistance Act for 2021. Unanimous aye.

D. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (ETHICS, EDC)

Ethics Commission

Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to correspondence from Scott Jezek, Chairman of the Ethics Commission, noting a resignation of one of their members.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Pamela Gourlie from the Ethics Commission. Unanimous aye.

Economic Development Commission

Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to correspondence from Sharon Wheeler, Recording Secretary for the Economic Development Commission, with motions made at EDC's June meeting regarding membership.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to reappoint Michael Robidoux, Robert Casner, and Jessica Stone as regular members of the Economic Development Commission for five-year terms to expire June 30, 2026. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Smith reported that EDC Commissioner James Fennema does not wish to be reappointed at the end of his term which expires June 30, 2021, leaving a vacancy of a regular member position.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept Mr. James Fennema's decision not to renew his term on the Economic Development Commission. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to change the status of William McEnery from an alternate member to a regular member, filling a vacant position with a term expiration of June 30, 2026, on the Economic Development Commission. Unanimous aye.

E. Tax Refunds: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to one tax refund.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to award tax refunds in the amount presented:

- $110.80 to Michael Koff.

Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: There were no additional public comments discussed at the meeting.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

A. Liaison Reports: No liaison reports were discussed at the meeting.

B. Budget Update: Mr. Smith provided the following schedule for budget referendum related meetings:

- Board of Finance: June 17, 2021, 6 pm, Municipal Office Complex – Prep for Public Hearing
- Public Hearing: June 29, 2021, 7 pm, Nathan Hale-Ray High School Auditorium
- Board of Finance: Immediately following Public Hearing to send to Town Meeting
- Board of Selectmen: June 30, 2021 to send to Town Meeting
- Town Meeting: July 13, 2021, 8 pm, Nathan Hale-Ray High School Auditorium
- Budget Referendum: July 27, 2021, 12 pm to 8 pm (unless decided differently at Town Meeting), Municipal Office Complex Gymnasium
- Board of Finance: Immediately following Referendum

C. Other: There were no additional issues discussed.

D. Executive Session – Clerical & Public Works Collective Bargaining Agreements:

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to enter into executive session at 8:40 p.m. to discuss the East Haddam Clerical (CSEA, SEIU, LOCAL 2001, CWT) and the East Haddam Department of Public Works (General Teamsters, UNION LOCAL 493) Collective Bargaining Agreements. Unanimous aye.

The Board of Selectmen returned to regular session at 9:37p.m. No motions or decisions were made.

E. Vote on Clerical Collective Bargaining Agreement:

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of East Haddam and CSEA, SEIU, LOCAL 2001, CWT for the period from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024. Unanimous aye.

F. Vote of Public Works Collective Bargaining Agreement:

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to accept the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of East Haddam and General Teamsters, UNION LOCAL 493 for the period from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024. Unanimous aye.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to adjourn the meeting at 9:39p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Govert, Secretary