Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
July 21, 2021
Via YouTube Live
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: R. Smith; T. Govert; C. Quinn
Also Present: E. Blaschik; M. Gleeson; 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 7:02 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of June 16, 2021 and Special Meeting of June 30, 2021.

   Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 16, 2021 as written. Unanimous aye.

   Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of June 30, 2021 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

   There was no correspondence discussed other than the correspondence related to the other agenda items.

5. First Selectmen's Report

   Mr. Smith reported that the Town had reached an agreement with the Transfer Station's operating engineers regarding their collective bargaining agreement and it was noted that the agreement had ratified. He noted that the Police collective bargaining agreement is the only outstanding contract and it will be going to arbitration.

   A. PURA One Touch Make Ready Process: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Sandra Amado, CT Conference of Municipalities, dated July 1, 2021, regarding the CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority's (PURA) request for comments concerning their proposal to establish a One Touch Make Ready process to expedite repairs of utilities on power poles. Mr. Smith provided some background information on the process and stated he would like to send a letter in support of the proposal. Ms. Quinn and Ms. Govert agreed with his recommendation.

   B. SB 1201 Cannabis Municipal Authority: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Martin Heft, Undersecretary, State of CT Intergovernmental Policy and Planning Division, Office of Policy Management, dated July 1, 2021, forwarding an

informational sheet related to SB 1201. Mr. Smith recommended asking the Planning & Zoning Commission to establish a temporary moratorium on the creation of any zoning changes or regulations related to the sale of cannabis in the Town. Ms. Quinn supported Mr. Smith's recommendation and Ms. Govert suggested a 6-month moratorium would be appropriate. Mr. Smith agreed to make the recommendation at the next Planning & Zoning Commission meeting.

C. COVID-19 Reopening Report: Mr. Smith reported that the Town's positive COVID cases have remained relatively stable and that there have been no additional deaths from COVID in the last several months. He briefly reviewed the status of several other towns in CT and noted that the Delta variant is responsible for approximately 60% of the current positive COVID cases in the state.

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

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

- In response to a concern raised by Mr. Edward Blaschik, Mr. Smith advised that political signs are not allowed on Town property and the Department of Transportation has removed several signs related to the Budget referendum from the state roads. He stated he would ask the Building and Grounds Department to remove the signs Mr. Blaschik observed at the old Town Office site.

- In response to a question raised by Mr. Stuhlman, Mr. Smith advised that East Haddam had the lowest rate of positive COVID cases of all of the towns in the Chatham Health District (CHD); however, he noted that the information may be somewhat misleading because some Town residents' zip-codes may imply residency in Salem or Colchester. Ms. Govert provided additional information regarding vaccination rates for towns in the CHD.

7. Unfinished Business

A. East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee Update: Mr. Smith reported that the failed budget referendum has pushed out the dates for the Town Meeting and referendum for the Village Revitalization project to mid-September. In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn, Mr. Smith stated that it was technically possible to combine the Town Meetings and referendums for the Budget and Village Revitalization, as well as an Open Space issue; however, he believes it would be confusing.

B. Ordinance Amendment Request – Lake Hayward Speed Limit: Mr. Smith reported that the Town Meeting regarding the revisions to the Lake Hayward Speed Limit ordinance has been rescheduled to August 11th because the notice for an earlier meeting had been inadvertently dropped from the East Haddam News. In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn, he stated that there had been a few concerns related to watercraft speeding raised earlier in the season; however, he has not heard of anything recently.

8. New Business

A. Grant Acceptance – American Recovery Fund for Library System: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets related to this agenda item. He advised that

Library Director Gilroy had applied for and been awarded a grant to create an outdoor Wi-Fi garden.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of $16,508.00 from the State Library as part of the American Rescue Plan Act Funding by the Institute of Museum and Library to be shared equally between both libraries for the purpose of creating outdoor Wi-Fi gardens for safer and healthier technology access, and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye. In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn, Mr. Smith stated that he expects Director Gilroy will provide drawings of the proposed Wi-Fi gardens.

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

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, 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 youth camps, and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

C. Grant Acceptance – FY 2020 Emergency Management Performance Grant & EMPG Supplemental for COVID: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets from Deputy Commissioner Regina Rush-Kittle of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, dated January 27, 2021, advising that the Town had been awarded an Emergency Management Performance Grant and an EMPG-Supplemental for COVID Grant.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of $5,000.00 from the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, entitled "FY 2020 Emergency Management Performance Grant", and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to accept a grant in the amount of $13,303.60 (of which $6,651.80 is federal funding, $0 subgrantee match and state in-kind match of $6,651.80) from the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, entitled "FY 2020 Emergency Management Performance Grant-Supplemental for COVID", and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

D. Bid Waiver – Police Tasers: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of an email from Director of Finance Cindy Varricchio and Police Officer Jeffrey Rhoades, dated July 20, 2021, requesting waiver of the bid requirement for police tasers.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to waive the bid process for the East Haddam Police Department Taser Replacement Project and authorize Director of Finance and Police Department, to negotiate with Axon Enterprise per their quote of $26,480 for this project with a five-year interest free payment plan. Unanimous aye.

There was a brief discussion regarding replacement packs and limited vendor availability.

E. East Haddam Swing Bridge – Approach Sidewalks & Lighting: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets from the CT Department of Transportation, dated May 26, 2021, advising that a Demand Deposit of $150,000.00 is due to the DOT for the Town's share for the cost to install approach sidewalks and lighting, to the proposed walkway that will be mounted on the south side of the Swing Bridge.

Mr. Smith advised that the Board of Finance is aware of and will be responsible for complying with the request. In response to a concern raised by Ms. Quinn, Mr. Smith stated that if the State deems it is not feasible to install the walkway on the Swingbridge, he believes they will return the deposit.

F. Open Space – Mullazi et al Property – O'Connell Road Extension – The Hayward Lot: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a memo in their meeting packets from the Open Space Committee, dated March, 2021, proposing the purchase of the Hayward Lot as Open Space.

Mr. Smith noted that the parcel consists of 125.37 acres, the contract cost and other expenses total approximately $328,000.00 and, after state and other grants, the cost to the Town would be approximately $221,100.00. He advised that the Town's Bond Counsel is working through how the purchase of the property would affect the budget and will prepare an appropriate resolution for the Board to consider. Mr. Smith stated that the Open Space Committee has ranked this property very highly in its list of possible acquisitions.

G. Resident State Trooper Contract: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of the state's June 16, 2021 contract for Resident State Trooper services. He noted that Ms. Zemienieski had highlighted the changes from the previous contract and most were standard revisions. He stated however, that he would like to defer a motion to approve the contract until he has had time to research all of the ramifications of the Town's taking responsibility for storing data from the police dash and body cameras. There was a general discussion regarding data storage and the Board agreed with Mr. Smith's recommendation.

H. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (ETHICS, COA, BOFC)

Ethics Commission

Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to correspondence from the Ethics Commission, noting changes to their commission.

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

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to appoint Paul Stuhlman to fill a vacant three-year term, expiring June 30, 2024 on the Ethics Commission. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to appoint Kevin Staehly to fill a vacant three-year term, expiring June 30, 2024 on the Ethics Commission. Unanimous aye.

The Board thanked Mr. Jezek for his service and Mr. Stuhlman and Mr. Staehly for volunteering.

Commission on Aging

Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to correspondence from Barbara Davis, Secretary for the Commission on Aging, with recommendations for commission changes.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to reappoint Maureen Gillis as a regular member for a three-year term to expire June 30, 2024 on the Commission on Aging. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to change the status of June Guertin from an alternate member to a regular member on the Commission on Aging to fill a vacant three-year term to expire June 30, 2023. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to reappoint Mary Ellen Klinck as an alternate member for a one-year term to expire June 30, 2022 on the Commission on Aging. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Smith seconded by Ms. Quinn, to appoint Elaine Flaherty to fill a vacant a one-year term to expire June 30, 2022 as an alternate member on the Commission on Aging. Unanimous aye.

The Board thanked Ms. Gillis, Ms. Guertin, and Ms. Klinck for their continued service and Ms. Flaherty for volunteering.

Board of Fire Commissioners

Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to correspondence from the Fire Commissioner Jennifer Spencer.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Jennifer Spencer from the Board of Fire Commissioners, effective August 3, 2021. Unanimous aye.

The Board thanked Ms. Spencer for her many years of service to the Town.

I. Tax Refunds: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to two tax refunds.

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

- $175.64 to Toyota Lease Trust, and
- $ 68.52 to Toyota Lease Trust.

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. Other: In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn concerning the impact on the Town of Shagbark's proposed sale of their solar farm, Mr. Smith stated that the Town has not yet signed off on the estopple related to the proposed sale. He advised that the Board of Education handles

the billing for the contract related to the Town's agreement to purchase electricity generated by Shagbark's solar farm and has raised a concern that the projected savings have not been realized. He stated that the agreement may have, in fact, significantly increased the Town's electricity expense.

Mr. Smith stated that the issue came to his attention approximately three months ago and the Town's attorneys have been reviewing the agreement and the bills to see if it makes sense to continue to the contract. He stated he would keep the Board updated on the attorneys' progress.

Ms. Quinn also asked about the status of the Broadband Committee and Mr. Smith advised that the Committee is very active and meets every two weeks. He provided some additional information regarding their work. Ms. Govert advised that the state has received a significant grant from the federal government that is to be used for connectivity projects.

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 8:41 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Govert, Secretary