Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
August 4, 2021
Via YouTube Live
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: R. Smith; T. Govert; C. Quinn
Also Present: E. Blaschik; D. Dill; E. Dill; M. Gleeson; J. Moreau; A. Shaltiel; P. Stuhlman; S. Wheeler; 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 7:01 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 July 21, 2021.

   Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 21, 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 the following:

   - Public Works is continuing to remove dead trees.
   - The road paving project on the roads in the vicinity of the Elementary School has been delayed two weeks due to rain.
   - The state has completed its ledge work on Route 149.
   - It appears that a quarter mile section of Creek Row was damaged by large trucks that had to detour off of Route 149 due to the state's work; the Town will repair the damage.
   - Rick Shea has started work as a full-time Grounds Lead.
   - The budget passed and the Town was able to place an order for a $125k backhoe before a 4% price increase took effect.

   Mr. Smith reviewed several other capital/vehicle purchases that are included in the budget and also noted that the Town continues to process FEMA reports.

   In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn, Mr. Smith reviewed the Public Works project on Ballahack Road.

A. CIRMA Member Equity Distribution: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from CIRMA, dated July 5, 2021, advising that the Town's share of its Equity Distribution program this year is $25,840.00. He advised that the funds will be split between the Board of Education (51%) and the Town (49%).

B. COVID-19 Reopening Report: Mr. Smith provided an update on the recent surge in positive COVID cases caused by the Delta variant. He advised that the state's positive testing rate has risen from <1% to 3.35% and that all counties in CT have reverted to the cautionary range. He noted, however, that East Haddam's status has remained below both the red and orange cautionary ranges.

Mr. Smith recommended that anyone that has not yet been vaccinated for COVID should get the vaccine.

C. 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 clarified the COVID status of East Haddam and several surrounding towns. There was a general discussion regarding the benefits of the COVID vaccine and it was noted that 64.25% of the Town's residents are vaccinated.

- In response to a concern raised by Ms. A. Shaltiel, Mr. Smith advised that the Town and the Chatham Health District (CHD) are taking every reasonable opportunity to make the vaccine available to residents. Ms. Govert reviewed a number of upcoming vaccine clinics that CHD will be hosting.

7. Unfinished Business

A. East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee Update: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of letter in their meeting packets, from Crary Brownell, Chairman of the East Haddam Planning & Zoning Commission advising that P&Z had done a Section 8-24 review of the potential development of the old Town Office Site. He noted that the review had been conducted at a public hearing on July 27th and the Commission had unanimously approved "... *the development of the site since it was consistent with present and past East Haddam Plans of Conservation and Development".*

B. Ordinance Amendment Request – Lake Hayward Speed Limit: Mr. Smith reviewed an email that had been sent in from Amy and Doug Clark voicing their support of the proposed Lake Hayward speed limit changes to the ordinance. He noted that the Board of Selectmen does not approve new ordinances or ordinance revisions but, rather move it to a vote by the Town's residents. He reiterated that a Public Hearing has been scheduled for August 11th to consider the revisions to the Lake Hayward Speed Limit ordinance.

In response to an inquiry from Ms. Quinn, Mr. Smith confirmed that he had received several other letters/emails concerning the proposed changes to the ordinance and the majority were in favor of implementing a watercraft speed limit for Lake Hayward.

C. 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, which provided more detail regarding the proposed approach sidewalks and lighting for the Swing Bridge. He noted that the Board can have further discussion of this item after the Board of Finance makes its determination regarding funding for the Town's portion of the project.

D. Open Space – Mullazi et al Property – O'Connell Road Extension – The Hayward Lot: There was no new update on this agenda item. Mr. Smith advised that he is waiting for the Town's bond counsel to submit a resolution for the purchase of this property.

E. 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 in their meeting packets. He reiterated that Ms. Zemienieski had highlighted the changes from the previous contract. He further stated that the IT staff has confirmed that there is capacity to store the feeds from the police dash and body camaras. He noted that he is still waiting for clarification regarding how long the data must be stored.

There was a brief discussion regarding the added language related to office space and mutual aid.

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, that Robert R. Smith, the First Selectman, be and is herewith authorized to execute a contract on behalf of the Town of East Haddam with the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of State Police for the services of one (1) Resident State Trooper for a two-year period from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023. Unanimous aye.

8. New Business

A. State of Connecticut – Proposed Property Acquisition – Bridge No. 01138 Replacement Project: Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets from Planning & Zoning Chairman Crary Brownell, dated July 28, 2021, advising that, per a Section 8-24 Review, the Commission had "…*approved the minor transfer of property and construction easement…"* to the CT DOT for the Bridge No. 01138 Replacement Project.

Mr. Smith noted the property is approximately 635sf and he anticipates the state will pay the Town $500.00 for the acquisition.

B. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (BOFC)

Board of Fire Commissioners

Mr. Smith advised that the Board of Fire Commissioners has received four applications to fill the vacant position resulting from Jennifer Spencer's resignation. He noted that the BOFC is reviewing the applications and has not yet made any recommendation. Consequently, he recommended postponing any action on this agenda item until the next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting. The Board agreed with Mr. Smith's recommendation.

C. 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 amount presented:

- $95.64 to David M. Lord
- $36.84 to Thomas Ceniglio

Unanimous aye.

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

    - Mr. J. Moreau made the following comments:
        - He suggested the next appointment to the BOFC should be someone that is not serving on the Fire Department.
        - It is his opinion that people should not be "shamed" into getting a COVID vaccination and that restricting access to any public buildings should not be imposed on un-vaccinated individuals.
        - He reviewed the recent referendum votes on the budget and noted that a number of Town residents are "tired" of what they view as possible budgetary favoritism for some causes and/or groups. He provided several examples including the Firehouse renovation project, change in Senior Center staffing over the last few years and the hiring of the BOE Superintendent and stated that he hopes the proposed candidates for the Board of Selectmen got the message. He added that he also hopes that Town projects will be more carefully scrutinized in the future.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

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

    B. Other: There were no additional items discussed at the meeting.

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 7:59 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Govert, Secretary