Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
September 15, 2021
Via YouTube Live
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: R. Smith; T. Govert; C. Quinn
Also Present: E. Blaschik; J. Christensen; J. Dobai; T. Gelston; M. Gleeson; T. Hayes; S. Palmer; T. Sevigny; Amalia Shaltiel; 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 7:02 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda: Mr. Smith noted a correction to be made. The second 5.B. on the agenda should be 5.C.

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

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of September 1, 2021 and Special Meeting of September 7, 2021.

   Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 1, 2021 as written. Unanimous aye.

   Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 7, 2021 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

   Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to, and reviewed, copies of the following correspondence in their meeting packets:

   - An email from Ashley and Kevin Cotton, dated September 2, 2021, thanking the Public Works staff who repaired their road after the 9/2/21 rain storm. The email stated, in part, "*Kudos to the road crew and thank all of you again who are in charge of addressing the problems that arise promptly and beautifully".*

   - A letter from Graham MacDonald, dated, September 1, 2021, expressing appreciation "*…to the employees of the Public Works division for the excellent job that they did on Ballack Road #2."*

5. First Selectmen's Report

   A. Broadband Evaluation Committee Presentation: Mr. Smith introduced Mr. Sevigny, Chairman of the Broadband Evaluation Committee.

      Mr. Sevigny reviewed the findings of the Committee, noted several weaknesses in East Haddam's access to reliable internet service, and detailed the benefits of a fiber optic network. He stated

that the Committee recommended the Town (1) pursue a feasibility study to determine the cost and logistics of installing a Municipal Automated Open Access Fiber Optic Network, (2) begin a public education campaign about the benefits of a fiber network, (3) research funding opportunities, including state and federal grant programs, and (4) investigate regionalization opportunities. Mr. Sevigny introduced Mr. Christensen of Entry Point Networks with whom Committee had consulted.

Mr. Christensen provided some background on the cable network industry and stated that Entry Point Networks' philosophy is that internet service should be managed as a public utility. He stated that the company provides a network management platform that is designed for municipalities and its open access to multiple internet service providers fosters competition, thereby driving down the cost to subscribers. He discussed the benefits of a fiber optic network and responded to several questions from the Board and the public.

Mr. Smith thanked Mr. Christensen for his presentation and the Broadband Evaluation Committee for their work.

B. COVID-19 Reopening Report: Mr. Smith reported that positive COVID cases in Town, and the state in general, are trending down. He stated that East Haddam is in the state's Orange risk level category.

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

6. Citizens' Concerns: The were no citizens' concerns discussed at the meeting.

7. Unfinished Business

A. East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee Update: Mr. Smith reiterated that the Town is moving forward with a plan to establish a Redevelopment Agency. He advised that the proposal is with the Town's attorney who understands the Town's desire for an expedient review.

B. Ordinance Amendment Request – Lake Hayward Speed Limit: Mr. Smith reported that this item is on the agenda for tomorrow's Public Hearing.

C. State of Connecticut – Proposed Property Acquisition – Bridge No. 01138 Replacement Project: There was no new update on this agenda item.

D. Cemetery Committee Ordinance Discussion: Mr. Smith reported that this item is on the agenda for tomorrow's Public Hearing.

E. New Library Study Committee Charge Discussion: There was no new update on this agenda item.

F. Tax and Business Incentive Program Application (Scully Land Development LLC): Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets regarding this agenda item. He stated that an application for a tax and business incentive abatement for Scully Land Development LLC was received from Mr. Casner, the Economic Development Committee Chairman. Mr. Smith noted that the Tax Assessor had calculated a tax abatement of $2,789.83 for 2021.

Motion made by Mr. Smith , seconded by Ms. Quinn, to accept the application of Scully Land Development, LLC for abatement of property taxes under Town of East Haddam ordinance entitled " Tax and Business Incentive Program" adopted June 30, 2010 and amended June 30, 2015, subject to: (i) the applicant entering into a written agreement with East Haddam on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance and with the affirmative vote of the Town Meeting; and (ii) the applicant complying with all general and specific requirements of an applicant under said ordinance; and, further move to authorize the Town's attorney to prepare such written agreement between Scully Land Development, LLC and the Town of East Haddam. Unanimous aye.

8. New Business

   A. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (BOFC): Mr. Smith called the Board's attention to four applications for the vacant position on the Board of Fire Commissioners. Ms. Quinn noted she is one of the applicants and recused herself from the discussion. Mr. Smith and Ms. Govert reviewed the qualifications of the applicants.

      Board of Fire Commissioners
      Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to appoint Craig Mansfield to fill a vacant position with a term to expire January 1, 2024 as a member of the Board of Fire Commissioners. In favor: Mr. Smith and Ms. Govert. Ms. Quinn abstained from the vote and the motion passed by a majority of ayes.

   B. Tax Refunds: No tax refunds were considered at the meeting.

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

10. Selectmen's Discussion

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

   B. Other: Mr. Smith reminded the Board and the public of the following dates:

      - 9/16 – Public Hearing on the Lake Hayward Speed Limit and Cemetery Committee Ordinances.
      - 9/21 – Town Meeting on the Mullazi et al open space purchase and various grant approvals.
      - 10/5 – Referendum on the Mullazi et al open space purchase.

      Ms. Govert stated that she had invited Sen. Needleman, who is Co-Chair of the state's Energy and Technology Committee, to attend tonight's meeting to hear the Broadband Evaluation Committee's presentation; however, he had a conflict in his schedule. She stated that she will forward him a link to the recording of the meeting.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made Mr. Smith by seconded by Ms. Quinn, to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Govert, Secretary