Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
May 18, 2022
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; E. Dill
Also Present: K. Comisky; D. Denette; D. Dill; R. Smith; S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski; and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines 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

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

3. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of April 22, 2022 and Special Meeting of April 26, 2022

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of April 22, 2022, as written. Unanimous aye.

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of April 26, 2022, as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

   A. Employee Endorsement – Building Department: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a copy of an email in the meeting packets from Tom Kress Carpentry, dated May 3, 2022, thanking Ruth Ziobron for her assistance, which stated, in part, "*You're a great asset to the Building Department!*"

5. First Selectmen's Report

   A. Discussion of Potential Ordinance for Election Term Lengths – Deb Denette: Ms. Haines recognized Ms. Denette, who presented a proposal to modify the terms for some elected positions as well as some appointed Board and Commission memberships. She noted that it is difficult to find volunteers for 6-year terms, and 2-year election cycles for some of the elected positions can also be challenging. She further stated that the Town might be better served by changing some of the elected positions into appointments; however, that would require a town charter. She noted that modification of term lengths could be accomplished through ordinance revisions. Ms. Denette solicited feedback from the Board of Selectmen.

      There was a general discussion regarding Ms. Denette's proposal. Ms. Haines and Mr. Dill both stated that they are in favor of term limits; however, they acknowledged the merit in Ms. Denette's comments. Ms. Haines stated she would contact the Town's attorney and request sample ordinances with alternative term lengths for municipal positions and they agreed to revisit the subject after Ms. Haines speaks with the attorney.

   Ms. Haines provided the following report:

- The Town's composting program started on May 16th and it appears to be well-received. She is hoping that, in the future, it can be expanded to schools and local restaurants.

- Solar-powered speed tracking signs, that were provided by the state, have been installed on Beebe Road. Public Works is also conducting a study on one section of the road to determine how it can be improved.

- CT DOT plans on selecting a bid for the Swingbridge repair work by the end of this month and the contractor should be in place by mid-July. Work on the bridge is expected to begin in the fall. The DOT stated it will update its website with current information.

- Personnel updates: a new police officer has been hired and will start work on June 1st; the Fire Department is working on hiring several per-diem staff; there is a posting for the Public Works Director position; she is meeting with the chairs of the Boards of Finance and Education to discuss and try to resolve the Human Resource and Finance Director/Business Manager positions, and the Town has begun negotiations with the Fire Fighters union.

- She is meeting with representatives from the Wallingford Electric Company and several other municipal electric companies to determine if a municipal electric company is an option for East Haddam.

6. Public Comment

Mr. Smith made the following comments:

- Regarding Ms. Denette's proposal to modify term lengths he also suggested the Town consider instituting a brief overlapping transition period when a new First Selectmen is elected.

- He recommended using the state payments for the NIPs surcharge to supplement the Town's composting project.

- He expressed his concern over several items in the Town's approved Redevelopment Agency ordinance, including: the number of members for the Agency, a requirement to include Town and privately owned property under the Agency's charge, its ability to apply the Eminent Domain exemption, and the need for a Master Plan. He recommended another public hearing and/or Town Meeting to address the issues.

Ms. Haines thanked Mr. Smith for his comments.

7. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business discussed at the meeting.

8. New Business

A. Transfer Station Fee Waiver – East Haddam Land Trust: Ms. Haines called the Selectmen's attention to a completed Transfer Station fee waiver application in their meeting packets.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to approve the application to waive Transfer Station Fees for the East Haddam Land Trust for tires and scrap metals on a newly acquired Snell-Talbot Preserve as requested in their May 16, 2022 application. Unanimous aye.

B. Beer & Wine Approvals – Rathbun Library: Ms. Haines called the Selectmen's attention to an email in their meeting packet from Michael Gilroy, Director of Library Services, dated May 17, 2022, requesting permission to serve beer and wine at the Rathbun Library's art show opening on June 11, 2022.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to approve the serving of beer and wine at the Rathbun Library for the "Art Show Opening" on June 11, 2022. Unanimous aye.

C. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (CC): Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to an email from the Conservation Commission Chairman noting a recommended appointment.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to appoint Joseph Sina as an alternate member to fill a vacancy on the Conservation Commission with a term to expire June 30, 2023.

D. Tax Refunds: There was one tax refund presented at the meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to award a tax refund in the amount presented:

- $2,286.35 to ACAR Leasing LTD.

Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment

There were no additional public comments made at the meeting.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

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

B. Other

1. Referendum (May 24, 2022 – Municipal Office Complex): Ms. Haines reminded the Board and the public of the May 24th referendum. She noted that the referendum would be the public's opportunity to vote on the proposed budget, funding the High School track project, and the Town's proposed cannabis ordinance.

2. Memorial Day Parade (May 30, 2022): Ms. Haines called the Board's and the public's attention to the planned May 30th Memorial Day parade.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss Mr. Dill made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill

Secretary