Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
June 15, 2022
Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; E. Dill; T. Govert
Also Present: E. Blaschik; M. Cohen; L. Conroy; B. Free; C. Shaddox; A. Shaltiel; E. Thereault; S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski; and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

   Ms. Haines advised that she would like to make the following addition to the agenda:

   - Under New Business: 8.G. Disposition of 48" Exmark Walk Behind Mower

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

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of June 1, 2022

   Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 1, 2022, as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

   Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets, dated June 15, 2022, from Joene Hendry expressing her opposition to "…*immediately imposing a parking fee on non-residents at the Town Beach and/or hiring a part-time employee to collect such fees*". Ms. Hendy's email offered several incremental steps that could be taken prior to imposing a non-resident parking fee.

5. First Selectmen's Report

   Ms. Haines reported that Officer Steve Bellandese had recently been hired and she had asked him to stop in prior to the meeting to meet the other Selectmen. In response to a question from Mr. Dill, she advised that Officer Bellandese would work the Wednesday to Sunday night shift.

   Ms. Haines stated that due to public interest in discussing the Recreation Commission's recommendation to impose a non-resident parking fee at the Town Beach, and time constraints, she would postpone the First Selectmen's Report.

6. Public Comment

   The following public comments were made:

   - C. Shaddox – expressed her opposition to imposing a non-resident parking fee at the Town Beach. She stated that she believes it is un-Constitutional, exclusionary, and a money loser.

- E. Thereault – concurred with Ms. Shaddox opposition to imposing a parking fee at the Beach and said he is also concerned about the impact of hiring an employee to collect the fees on the Town's budget. He stated he believes that the Town should enforce existing rules and regulations to address the problems at the beach.

- M. Cohen – stated her initial reaction is not in favor of imposing a non-resident parking fee; however, she wanted to know more about what motivated the Recreation Commission's recommendation.

- A. Shaltiel – voiced her opposition to the Recreation Commission's recommendation and expressed her concern about accommodating family members of Town residents for parking at and using the Town Beach. She stated she does not agree with "segregating" state or municipal beaches and noted that East Haddam depends on the resources that tourism brings to the Town.

- Recreation Director Conroy – provided some background on what had motivated the Recreation Commission's recommendation to institute a non-resident parking fee at the Town Beach. She stated that, in the summer, her most frequent calls are about problems at the beach. She noted multiple thefts, belligerent behavior to the staff and other beach goers, loud inappropriate music being played around families with young children, drug use, and general disregarding for the rules and for others. She responded to several questions and reviewed the policies in surrounding towns.

Ms. Govert acknowledged that there is a valid concern regarding the disrespectful behavior at the Town Beach; however, she expressed her concern about the expense of hiring a new Beach employee and the impact a $40 parking fee could have on tourism. She stated that the Town may have other means to address the problems and there was a general discussion about using more police enforcement.

7. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business discussed at the meeting.

8. New Business

A. Town Beach Parking Discussion & Potential Resolution: The Board discussed the Recreation Commission's resident parking pass & non-resident parking fee proposal.

Mr. Dill supported more spontaneous police presence at the Town Beach and noted that the "No Fishing from the Causeway" regulation should also be enforced. He expressed concern about adding a new employee at the Beach if the position cannot be supported by the proposed parking fee. He also stated that the Town offers a few extra amenities, which residents pay for through their taxes, such as the Transfer Station and the Town Beach, and he did not believe that charging non-residents a fee for their use is "racist".

Mr. Dill stated that he supports a non-resident parking fee if it enhances the beach experience for everyone that uses it. He also supported restoring the gate at the street entrance which would reenforce the park closure after dusk and before dawn.

Ms. Haines reviewed discussions she has had with the police regarding more enforcement support and the Facilities Director regarding the need for a kiosk-type shed for the proposed parking attendant. She also read emails received throughout the week from Amalia Shaltiel, Xenia Coulter, Edwina Trentham and Helen Charov opposing the Recreation Commission's proposal and from Chelsea Francolino in favor of the proposal.

Ms. Govert reiterated that she feels a $40/day non-resident parking fee would negatively impact tourism and recommended the fee be set at $10/day. There was a general discussion regarding the amount of the non-resident parking fee and Ms. Haines recommended $20/day initially. She suggested the Recreation Commission could gather information this summer regarding the impact of the new fee and, if needed, it could be adjusted going forward.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to approve the recommendation presented by the Recreation Commission for East Haddam Town Beach and Dog Park Parking Pass Regulations with a modified fee schedule of $20 per day. Ms. Haines and Mr. Dill voted aye; Ms. Govert voted nay. The motion passed with a majority of ayes.

B. Transfer Station Schedule Discussion: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a copy of a request to change the Transfer Station's public and staff operating hours in their meeting packets. She provided additional information regarding the reasoning behind the request.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to change the Transfer Station Operating hours, effective July 3, 2022, as follows:

Public Hours	**Staff Hours**
Monday, 7:00am – 5:00pm	Monday, 7:00am – 5:15pm
Wednesday, 6:00am – 6:00pm	Wednesday, 6:00am – 6:15pm
Friday, 7:00am – 5:00pm	Friday, 7:00am – 5:15pm
Saturday, 7:00am – 2:00pm	Saturday, 7:00am – 2:15pm

Unanimous aye.

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

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, 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.

D. Neighborhood Assistance Act Approvals: Ms. Haines reported that on June 15, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., a public hearing was held concerning the Neighborhood Assistance Act proposals received. She noted that the Goodspeed Opera House applied for $84, 804.00 for energy efficiency upgrades and the Town of East Haddam applied for $20,000.00 for the Open Space Trust Fund. Ms. Haines 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.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve and forward to the State, for their approval, two (2) projects requesting funding by the Neighborhood Assistance Act for 2022. Unanimous aye.

E. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (AGC, EDC): Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to materials in their meeting packets from Ron Gross, Chairman of the Agriculture Commission, and Robert Casner, Chairman of the Economic Development Commission, advising of changes in their membership.

Agriculture Commission

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Peter Dean as a regular member on the Agriculture Commission. Unanimous aye.

Economic Development Commission

Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a letter, dated June 7, 2022, from Robert Casner, Chairman of the Economic Development Commission regarding a recommendation of a term completion for the Commission.

The Board thanked Mr. Albuquerque for the time he served on the Economic Development Commission.

F. Tax Refunds: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to one tax refund.

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

- $186.56 to Nissan Infinity CT.

Unanimous aye.

G. Disposition of 48" Exmark Walk Behind Mower: Ms. Haines provided information regarding the proposed donation of an unused walk behind mower to Adult & Teen Challenge Connecticut. Ms. Govert inquired if the selection of the non-profit was made in an open process. Ms. Haines advised that the Director of Operations had noted that the equipment was not being used and could be donated to an organization. Ms. Zemienieski provided historical information regarding other equipment donations that were made. Ms. Govert expressed her concern that the selection had not been made in an open process.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to authorize the donation of a 48" Exmark Walk Behind Mower to Adult & Teen Challenge Connecticut, 39 North Moodus Road, Moodus, CT. Ms. Haines and Mr. Dill voted aye; Ms. Govert voted nay. The motion passed with a majority of ayes.

9. Public Comment

In response to a question raised by Ms. Shaltiel, Ms. Haines stated that she would be uncomfortable imposing a non-resident fee for services provided at the Town Beach such as lifeguards.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

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

B. Other: There were no other items discussed by the Board at the meeting.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss Mr. Dill made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill

Secretary