Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
December 7, 2022
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; E. Dill; T. Govert
Also Present: D. Angersola; S. Bertini; E. Blaschik; D. Denette; D. Denette; D. Dill; K. Thompson; L. Zemienieski; and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of November 16, 2022

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 16, 2022, as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

   There was no correspondence discussed at the meeting.

5. First Selectmen's Report

   Ms. Haines reported that CT DOT is keeping the Town updated on the swing bridge work. She advised that as of December 1st bridge openings for marine traffic have stopped; however, openings for marine traffic will resume February 1st. She reminded the Board and the public that CTRoads.org provides real-time information about traveling the roads in CT, including Route 82 and the swing bridge.

6. Public Comment

   Keira Thompson made the following comments:

   - She stated that "people were really stunned" by the significant increase in property tax assessments. She suggested someone from the Town provide additional information to the public about how the assessment increase could potentially impact property taxes.

- Concerning the Board of Selectmen's project regarding term lengths for elected officials, she stated that as a member of the Board of Education, she feels 4-year is a reasonable term and, if the Board is also considering imposing term lengths, she feels that a limit of two terms would also be reasonable.

Ms. Haines advised Ms. Thompson that the Town will be publishing a Citizen's Guide to the budget which will include information on assessments, mill rates, and property taxes. She also confirmed that there appears to be support to change the Board of Education's term length from 6 to 4 years and she explained how the change could be phased in for existing BOE members. She noted that the BOS would like the BOE members to vet the proposal to change the BOE's term length.

Steven Bertini expressed concern that his children have been "denied a public education" because of vaccine mandates. He stated they have gone through the court system and he would like advice on what his next steps might be. Ms. Haines advised that she had returned his call earlier in the day and she will be in touch with him after the meeting.

7. Unfinished Business

A. Update on Request to Create an Ordinance Regarding Term Lengths for Elected Officials Discussion: Ms. Haines advised that the Town's attorney had provided an updated draft of the ordinance related to the Registrar of Voters. The Board reviewed the draft and Ms. Haines stated she would advise the attorneys of the two edits that were noted.

There was also a brief discussion of Ms. Denette's recommended edits to the revised Board of Education ordinance and creating a short overlap of terms for elected officials. Ms. Govert noted that there was a recent article in the CT Examiner regarding how towns are struggling to fill boards and commissions and how some are addressing the issue.

B. Nutmeg Nor'easter Event Approval: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

C. Cemetery Committee Letter & By-Laws: Ms. Haines advised that the draft Cemetery Committee by-laws will be sent to the Town's attorney for review.

D. Request for Proposal for Architectural/Engineering Services for Company 2 Renovations Discussion: Ms. Haines reported that an RFP for architectural and engineering work on Fire Company No. 2 had been published and she asked Mr. Angersola to update the Board on the results.

Mr. Angersola advised that they received three bids, the Fire Commissioners interviewed representatives from two of the companies and are recommending awarding the contract to the company with the middle bid. He noted the company has done work in the Town previously and came to the interview well-prepared. Ms. Zemienieski advised that the contract could not be awarded until the Board of Finance appropriates funding for the project and a Town Meeting would probably need to be held for the public to approve the Board of Finance's decision for transferring the funding.

Mr. Dill expressed his concern with the Fire Commissioner's choice of contractors. There was a general discussion regarding outstanding issues with that contractor's most recent work for the Town. Mr. Angersola and the Board discussed possible alternatives to the Fire Commissioners' current recommendation.

E. Fee Schedule for Contracted Snow Plowing Discussion: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a copy of a memo in their meeting packets from Michele Velez, Public Works Director dated December 5, 2022, regarding her request for the Board of Selectmen to consider updating the fee schedule for contracted snow plowing to $200.00 per hour for the winter of 2022-2023. Ms. Haines noted that if we used contractors other than the ones who submitted prices, they would be paid at the set rates.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to accept the recommendation of the Public Works Director and revise the snow plowing rates as follows: Between 10,000 and 25,999 GVW with sander-$200.00 per hour. Unanimous aye.

8. New Business

A. 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 $1,136.40 from the M. Jones Fund at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County for the purpose of supporting summer 2023 camp programs, and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

B. Request for Beer and Wine Service – Grange Hall: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets from Bonnie Buongiorne, dated December 6, 2022, requesting permission for attendees of their holiday party to bring their own beer or wine to the Grange Hall on December 18, 2022.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve beer and wine service at the Grange Hall for the "Ray of Light Holiday Party" on December 18, 2022. Unanimous aye.

C. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (REC)

Recreation Commission

Ms. Haines advised that there are two changes to the Recreation Commission.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Tina Pisciotti from the Recreation Commission. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to appoint James Kehlenbach as a regular member to fill a vacancy on the Recreation Commission with a term to expire July 1, 2025. Unanimous aye.

D. Tax Refunds: There were no tax refunds considered at the meeting.

9. Public Comment: There was no additional public comment discussed at the meeting.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

Ms. Govert noted that the state had passed legislation regarding how vehicle assessments are determined that may go into effect this assessment year. There was a general discussion regarding the new legislation.

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

B. Other: Ms. Haines called the Board's and public's attention to the following event:

1. Christmas in the Village (12/13/2022)

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to adjourn the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary