Special Town Meeting
May 2, 2023

Bradley Parker called the Special Town Meeting to order at 8:17 p.m. at the auditorium in the Nathan Hale Highschool. Approximately eighty five (85) people were in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Ernie Malavasi motioned to nominate Brad Parker as Moderator, Theresa Govert seconded the motion. Mr. Parker inquired if there were other nominations, hearing none he called for a motion to close nominations. Jim Francese motioned to close nominations, said motion was seconded by Terry Gerrity. The motion closing nominations carried unanimously via voice vote. The motion approving Brad Parker as Moderator carried unanimously via voice vote.

The Moderator presented the call of the meeting and accepted a motion from MaryJane Malavasi accepting the call as read. Mrs. Patricia Stricker seconded the motion. The motion accepting the call as read carried unanimously via voice vote.

Item 1: Mrs. Stricker motioned, Maureen Goff provided the second that the legislative body herein assembled consider and act upon the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Town Meeting, pursuant to the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Selectmen, hereby authorizes the acceptance of one certain conveyance:

> The conveyance from M & W Construction of Colchester, Inc. to the Town of East Haddam of that portion of property known generally as Taylor Lane and shown and designated as "Taylor Lane" on a certain map (4003) entitled "(As-Built) Improvement Location Plan, Daniel Road Estates East Haddam Connecticut, Prepared for M & W Construction, dated September 25, 2015." Said map to be filed with the Town Clerk of the Town of East Haddam.
>
> Said Road is located on the south side of Daniels Road, eight hundred and seventy (870) feet west of Town Street. Said Road runs from Daniels Road south for approximately six hundred and sixty-five (665) feet ending in a cul-de-sac.
>
> The moderator offered opportunity for comment or questions. Nothing was offered. He called for a vote on acceptance of Taylor Lane, said motion carried unanimously via voice vote.

Item 2: Margie Roberts motioned, Mary Colpoys provided the second that the legislative body herein assembled consider and act upon the following resolution as recommended by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance:

> RESOLVED: That a grant in an amount of $5,000 is hereby accepted from the State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management, Intergovernmental Policy and Planning Division through the Neglected Cemetery Account Grant Program (Cemeteries operating budget, account 10544350-54424) to provide upkeep of local cemeteries to keep them in orderly and decent condition upon the terms and conditions set forth in the

Notice of Grant Award.

The moderator offered opportunity for comment or questions. Nothing was offered. He called for a vote on accepting a $5,000 Neglected Cemetery Account Grant. Said motion carried unanimously via voice vote.

Item 3: Jim Franchese motioned, Mrs. Stricker provided the second that the legislative body herein assembled consider and act upon the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to accept a grant in the amount of $5,000.00 from the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, entitled "FY 2019 Emergency Management Performance Grant", (revenue account 10542-43000 and expense accounts 10542070-51590).

The moderator offered opportunity for comment or questions. Nothing was offered. Accordingly, he called for a vote on acceptance of the $5,000 grant from the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security entitled FY2019 Emergency Management Performance Grant. The motion carried unanimously via voice vote.

The Moderator noted that the remainder all but the last remaining item have been pulled from a vote at town meeting to a vote by referendum by the Board of Selectmen.

Item 4: To consider and discuss (but not to vote on) the Town Budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year in the amount of $38,393,165 as recommended by the Board of Finance.

All those persons qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, are hereby further notified that pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam have removed the above item on the call of this Special Town Meeting for submission to the voters of the Town of East Haddam who are qualified to vote at Town meetings for "yes" or "no" vote by voting machine on the following question:

> Shall the Town of East Haddam budget of $38,393,165, as recommended by the Board of Finance for fiscal year 2023–2024 be approved?

The vote by voting machine ballot labels will be conducted at the Municipal Office Complex, Moodus, Connecticut between the hours of twelve o'clock p.m. and eight o'clock p.m. (in absence of a contrary determination at the Town Meeting) on May 16, 2023.

The Moderator called for discussion regarding the budget: John Tirone had a specific question regarding the assessment increase. He stated that it had been reported that the net increase was 35% and now it is 28.6%. Mrs. Gionta responded; she stated that assessment increase will be different for everyone. She stated that the budget has an effective mil rate increase of 1 mil, or 4%. Mrs.

Gionta stated that the 28.6% is the only number that the Board of Finance has been working with.

Anthony Chaplinsky commented that people should anticipate a mil decrease since the assessment went up. In response he was advised that there is a budget increase due to increased expenses. He reiterated that if there had not been a reassessment, the budget would show a one mil increase.

There being no further questions, Mr. Parker advised that the pass or fail of the budget would be determined at the referendum on May 16, 2023.

Item 5: To consider and discuss (but not to vote on) whether the town of East Haddam shall approve an amendment to the ordinance "**Chapter 12 Boards, Commission, Committees and Agencies to include Article XII Board of Selectmen**".

All those persons qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, are hereby further notified that pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam have removed the above item on the call of this Special Town Meeting for submission to the voters of the Town of East Haddam who are qualified to vote at Town meetings for "yes" or "no" vote by voting machine ballot labels on the following question:

> Shall the town of East Haddam approve an amendment to the ordinance entitled "**Chapter 12 Boards, Commission, Committees and Agencies to include Article XII Board of Selectmen**"?

Laurel White relayed concerns from Amalia Shaltiel. Ms. Shaltiel expressed disappointment with the lack of public input. She felt it should be voted on in November.

Ernie Malavasi stated from his experience as a Selectmen from 2013-2017 that these changes are long overdue and he was very supportive. He also questioned whether tax payers could vote at this referendum given it was election related. Mr. Parker responded that the attorney has already opined that as it is a town meeting, tax payers can vote. If it were on the November ballot, two ballots would be needed as tax payers can vote for the local questions, but not on the election.

Kim Dodge stated that she found the proposal egocentric.

The Moderator noted that the item had been pulled to referendum. He moved onto the next item.

Item 6: To consider and discuss (but not to vote on) whether the town of East Haddam shall approve an amendment to the ordinance "**Chapter 12 Boards, Commission, Committees and Agencies to include Article XIII Board of Education**".

All those persons qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, are hereby further notified that pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East

Haddam have removed the above item on the call of this Special Town Meeting for submission to the voters of the Town of East Haddam who are qualified to vote at Town meetings for "yes" or "no" vote by voting machine ballot labels on the following question:

> Shall the town of East Haddam approve an amendment to the ordinance entitled "**Chapter 12 Boards, Commission, Committees and Agencies to include Article XIII Board of Education**"?

The vote by voting machine ballot labels will be conducted at the Municipal Office Complex, Moodus, Connecticut between the hours of twelve o'clock p.m. and eight o'clock p.m. (in absence of a contrary determination at the Town Meeting) on **May 16, 2023**.

Jim Francese, a member of the Board of Education, expressed his support to lower the term to 4 years and noted that the 6 year term is too long and scares people away.

The Moderator noted that the item had been pulled to referendum. He moved onto the next item.

Item 7: To consider and discuss (but not to vote on) whether the town of East Haddam shall approve an amendment to the ordinance "**Chapter 133 Town Clerk to include Article II Term of Office**".

All those persons qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, are hereby further notified that pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam have removed the above item on the call of this Special Town Meeting for submission to the voters of the Town of East Haddam who are qualified to vote at Town meetings for "yes" or "no" vote by voting machine ballot labels on the following question:

> Shall the town of East Haddam approve an amendment to the ordinance entitled "**Chapter 133 Town Clerk to include Article II Term of Office**"?

The vote by voting machine ballot labels will be conducted at the Municipal Office Complex, Moodus, Connecticut between the hours of twelve o'clock p.m. and eight o'clock p.m. (in absence of a contrary determination at the Town Meeting) on **May 16, 2023**.

The Moderator noted that the item had been pulled to referendum. He moved onto the next item.

Item 8: To consider and discuss (but not to vote on) whether the town of East Haddam shall approve an ordinance creating a chapter for the **"Registrar of Voters**".

All those persons qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, are hereby further notified that pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam have removed the above item on the call of this Special Town Meeting for

submission to the voters of the Town of East Haddam who are qualified to vote at Town meetings for "yes" or "no" vote by voting machine ballot labels on the following question:

> Shall the town of East Haddam approve an ordinance chapter entitled **"Registrar of Voters"**?

The vote by voting machine ballot labels will be conducted at the Municipal Office Complex, Moodus, Connecticut between the hours of twelve o'clock p.m. and eight o'clock p.m. (in absence of a contrary determination at the Town Meeting) on **May 16, 2023**.

Mr. Todd Gelston stated that he found the questions on the ballot confusing. He stated that he would like more clarity on the ballot.

Lynn Woodward raised concern with the wording that the ordinances shall take effect immediately. She did not want to see this impact current office holders. She was advised that the new terms would take effect following elections in November.

The Moderator reiterated that the item had been pulled to referendum. He moved onto the next item.

Item 9: To consider and discuss (but not to vote on) whether the town of East Haddam shall approve an ordinance creating a chapter for the "**Tax Collector**".

All those persons qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, are hereby further notified that pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam have removed the above item on the call of this Special Town Meeting for submission to the voters of the Town of East Haddam who are qualified to vote at Town meetings for "yes" or "no" vote by voting machine ballot labels on the following question:

> Shall the town of East Haddam approve an ordinance chapter entitled **"Tax Collector"**?

The vote by voting machine ballot labels will be conducted at the Municipal Office Complex, Moodus, Connecticut between the hours of twelve o'clock p.m. and eight o'clock p.m. (in absence of a contrary determination at the Town Meeting) on **May 16, 2023**.

Harvey Thomas, concurred that there did not seem to be adequate opportunity for input. He questioned why Planning & Zoning terms were not being amended. Mrs. Haines responded that Deb Denette worked with all of the Boards and Commissions and in the case of the regulatory nature of Planning & Zoning it was determined by the Board and Land Use Department that the six-year term was appropriate. Deb Denette brought forward her recommendations and that is what is being acted upon. She also noted that this item has been on Board of Selectmen agendas for almost a year. Mr. Thomas further inquired whether consideration given to open this to a wider discussion such as a charter. Mrs. Haines stated that she would like to pursue a charter study, however, with three new committees

getting started, the Redevelopment Agency, cemetery committee and sustainable CT committee she was waiting a little bit.

Mr. Ken Tosi inquired what the point is of giving feedback if it doesn't change anything.

Elizabeth Fiechter inquired when citizens would have the opportunity to offer motions or amendments. Mrs. Haines explained the process.

Mary Colpoys disagreed with the process.

Karan Conover questioned why people could vote on first items and not on everything. The Moderator explained that when an item is moved to town meeting the townspeople can petition it to a referendum vote or the Board of Selectmen can move it to a referendum themselves. The selectmen moved it to referendum to offer opportunity for a larger group of people to vote. If it had not been pulled to referendum, it would be voted on at town meeting.

Maureen Goff stated that was also in attendance at public hearing referenced in Amalia Shaltiels statement. She stated, however, that she was in agreement and therefore did not speak. She added disappointment that the only voices you hear are the negative.

Item 10: Is To consider and discuss (but not to vote on) whether the town of East Haddam shall approve an amendment to the ordinance "Chapter 12 Boards, Commission, Committees and Agencies to include Article XIV Commencement of Terms".

All those persons qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, are hereby further notified that pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam have removed the above item on the call of this Special Town Meeting for submission to the voters of the Town of East Haddam who are qualified to vote at Town meetings for "yes" or "no" vote by voting machine ballot labels on the following question:

> Shall the town of East Haddam approve an amendment to the ordinance entitled "Chapter 12 Boards, Commission, Committees and Agencies to include Article XIV Commencement of Terms"?

The vote by voting machine ballot labels will be conducted at the Municipal Office Complex, Moodus, Connecticut between the hours of twelve o'clock p.m. and eight o'clock p.m. (in absence of a contrary determination at the Town Meeting) on May 16, 2023.

There were no comments.

Item 11: MaryJane Malavasi motioned to consider and vote on the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen that the polls shall be open at six o'clock a.m. to conduct the referendum on May 16, 2023. Maureen Goff provided the second.

Opportunity for discussion or comment was offered, none occurred.
The Moderator called for a vote on the motion to open the polls at 6:00 a.m. rather than the statutory 12:00 pm. The motion carried unanimously via voice vote.

Motion to adjourn to referendum made by Bryan Goff, seconded by Mary Jane Malavasi. The meeting concluded at 9:20 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Debra H. Denette
East Haddam Town Clerk