Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
March 2, 2023
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; E. Dill; T. Govert
Also Present: D. Angersola; T. Delventhal; D. Dill; Rob Funk; M. Gleeson; P. Govert; C. Mansfield; J. Olin; W. Schulz; T. Sevigny; R. Smith; P. Stricker; L. White; L. Zemienieski; and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of February 2, 2023, Special Meeting of February 7, 2023, Special Meeting of February 11, 2023, Special Meeting of February 14, 2023, Special Meeting of February 16, 2023, Special Meeting of February 18, 2023,

   Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 2, 2023, as written. Unanimous aye.

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 7, 2023, as written. Unanimous aye.

   Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 11, 2023, as written. Unanimous aye.

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 14, 2023, as written. Unanimous aye.

   Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 16, 2023, as written. Unanimous aye.

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 18, 2023, as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence

   A. Letter of Appreciation – Michele Velez: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a copy of an email in their meeting packets from Tom Kress, dated February 13, 2023. She reviewed the email which stated that Mr. Kress had met with Public Works Director Velez to discuss the water issues at Lake Hayward and *"…was very impressed with her understanding of the situation and the issues that need to be dealt with".*

B. Thank You from Boy Scout Troop 22: Ms. Haines stated that a letter thanking herself and Ms. Govert for their involvement in facilitating a Town donation to help fund a scout project and for assisting her son with his citizenship scout requirement.

5. First Selectman's Report

A. Broadband Feasibility Committee Presentation: Ms. Haines provided some background information on the broadband feasibility study that had been done. She recognized Mr. Sevigny, Chairman of the Broadband Feasibility Committee.

Mr. Sevigny introduced members of the Committee that were in attendance at the meeting. He reported that the Committee had contracted with EntryPoint to conduct a broadband feasibility study for East Haddam. He introduced Jeff Christensen and Nicole Banyai of EntryPoint who were attending this meeting remotely.

Mr. Christensen presented EntryPoint's findings regarding the feasibility study and advised that Phase I had been completed. He reviewed the findings of a resident/business survey that had been conducted and stated that an engineering analysis had been done to help determine cost projections for the project. Mr. Christensen provided an overview of the history of the cable industry and EntryPoint's role in it. He projected future options for the Town, reviewed a potential range of project costs and potential funding opportunities.

Mr. Christensen stated that, should the Town decide to move forward with its research on initiating a municipal broadband project, the key decisions that should be discussed in the next phase are: ownership, governance and operational model. He advised that the Town will have to decide on the scope of the project for EntryPoint to determine what its involvement in the project might be.

There was a general discussion regarding the pros and cons of municipal ownership of a broadband utility and the impact of 5G on a fiber network. Mr. Haines provided information regarding Frontier's current fiber network build-out in East Haddam. Mr. Christensen responded to questions from the Board and members of the public, Laurel White, John Olin & Peter Govert.

In response to questions raised by Ms. Zemienieski, it was noted that Mr. Sevigny, Ms. Govert and the Broadband Feasibility Committee have the expertise to draft the charge for the next phase of the Broadband Committee's responsibilities, and Mr. Christensen confirmed that there could be opportunities for regionalization of the support services for municipal fiber networks.

Ms. Haines stated that, given the Board's discussion tonight, she believes there is a consensus to proceed to Phase II and asked Mr. Sevigny to have the current Committee put together a draft charge for the Selectmen's consideration. She thanked Mr. Christensen and Ms. Banyai and the Committee members for their work on this project.

6. Public Comment

The public participated in the discussion of the broadband feasibility study findings. The following comment was also discussed at the meeting:

- In response to a comment from Robert Smith, Ms. Haines explained that recent regular Board of Selectmen's meetings had been rescheduled to allow her to participate in an EMR course that is held on Monday and Wednesday nights. She stated that the course will conclude on March 15th after which the Board of Selectmen's meetings will revert to their regularly scheduled time.

7. Unfinished Business

A. FY 2023-2024 Budget Discussion and Potential Budget Resolution: Mr. Funk provided an update on several budget revisions, including corrections to Wages & Salaries, the Assessor's budget, and the Chatham Health District budget. He noted that CHD had just recently finalized its budget.

Mr. Funk stated that these most recent revisions totaled $17,608.00 more than the Town's operating budget figure that was discussed at the Board's last budget workshop. This brings the Town's operating budget for FY2024 to an increase of $358,096.00 over the prior year, excluding the BOE budget and assuming that Transfers and Capital is flat to the prior year. He advised that the proposed Town budget represents a 2.4% increase and, if the BOE proposed budget is taken into account, he projected the overall increase to be approximately 2.9%, assuming Transfers and Capital spending remains flat.

Ms. Govert noted that health insurance and the 2.5% contractual Wages & Salaries increase account for approximately 90% of the budget's increase. Mr. Funk responded to several questions from the Board.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to recommend to the Board of Finance for fiscal year 2023-2024, a budget of $15,400,225, which represents town government, debt service and transfers. The Board of Selectmen budget assumes no changes in Fund Transfers from the FY2023 budget and understands that the Board of Finance will address any needed changes in this department. The Board of Selectmen requests the opportunity to work with the Board of Finance to evaluate capital needs (in accordance with the Capital Policy and the evaluation process conducted by the Long-Range Capital Improvement Committee), any state and federal grants, and reserve and capital funding. The Board of Selectmen also recommends that the Board of Finance authorize the allocation of $1,262,260 of Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF aka ARPA) to Town and Board of Education capital projects and the remaining ARPA balance for future grant matching requirements. The Board of Selectmen list of recommendations is included with this motion.

<u>Board of Education Capital Requests</u>:

- Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School Exterior Basketball Court - $6,000.00
- Nathan Hale-Ray High School ADA Softball Field Design and Related Work - $5,000.00
- Nathan Hale-Ray High School Fire Panel Upgrade - $65,000.00
- Nathan Hale-Ray High School PA System - $15,000.00
- Nathan Hale-Ray High School Stage Lighting - $250,000.00
- Nathan Hale-Ray High School Tech Ed Building - $58,820.00
- NHRHS Softball Field Scoreboard - $12,000.00
- Nathan Hale-Ray High School Athletic Complex Equipment - $100,000.00
- Elementary School Generator - $61,160.00
- Elementary School Fire Alarm - $46,000.00
- System-Wide Back-up Server - $15,000.00

Town Capital Requests:

- Rathbun Library Window Replacement - $35,000.00
- Town Meeting Hall Window Replacements - $68,000.00
- Grange Hall Window Replacements - $30,000.00
- Grange Hall Back Wall Rot Repair - $10,000.00
- Library Network Rebuild - $14,000.00
- Land Use/EDC Moodus Center Conceptual Master Plan Study - $55,000.00
- EDC Bike/Walking Path - $12,000.00
- Redevelopment Agency Grant Writer - $50,000.00
- Redevelopment Agency Tax Incremental Financing Services - $60,000.00
- Rec Commission Complementary Climbing/Sliding Structure for Town Beach - $20,000.00
- Rec Commission Electricity to Nichols Field - $14,280.00
- Heritage Park Walking Track Lighting - $40,000.00
- Public Works John Deere 544 Loader - $220,000.00

Unanimous aye.

B. Update on Request to Create an Ordinance Regarding Term Lengths for Elected Officials Discussion: Ms. Haines advised that this agenda item will be scheduled for a Public Hearing on March 16th. She noted that she is still waiting for the BOE's feedback on changes to the section of Town ordinances related to terms for their Board.

C. Cemetery Committee Letter & By-Laws: Ms. Zemienieski advised that the Committee is separating its by-laws and regulations into two documents based on the advice of legal counsel. Further discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

D. Road Acceptance – Taylor Lane: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

E. Comprehensive Energy Efficient Facility Upgrade (EHFPL & Rathbun Library) – Multi-year Contracts: Ms. Haines provided the background on this agenda item.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to authorize the First Selectmen to enter into an 18-month agreement on behalf of the Town with Energy Resources for a comprehensive energy efficient facility upgrade at the Rathbun Free Memorial Library and send the 18-month agreements to the Board of Finance and Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

F. Paper Shredding Events Discussion: Ms. Haines reiterated that, based on an inquiry from a member of the public, she had researched municipal paper shredding events through the RiverCOG. She reviewed the findings of her research and reported that the RiverCOG holds four shredding events per year in several towns in their district. East Haddam is already a member of SCRRA and they also hold a number of hazardous waste recycling and paper shredding events throughout the year. She advised that the most cost effective approach for the Town is to stay a current member with SCRRA. SCRRA will be coming out with their household hazardous waste recycling and paper shredding flyer and there will be copies available at the Transfer Station for our citizens with the dates/time and locations of those events.

8. New Business

A. Request for Proposal Award – Archaeological Services – Devils Hopyard State Park: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a memo in their meeting packets, dated February 28, 2023, from Land Use Administrator Ventres regarding three proposals received for archaeological services at Devil's Hopyard along with the selection committee's recommendation on awarding the contract. She recognized Mr. Smith who provided additional background on this agenda item and noted that it is a "pass through" grant.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to accept the recommendation of the Archaeological Services Project Selection Committee and award the contract for Archaeological Services-Devils Hopyard State Park to Heritage Consulting, LLC in the amount of $19,816.25. Unanimous aye.

B. Moodus Firehouse Renovation Committee Charge Resolution: Ms. Haines advised that she plans to establish a committee to move the Moodus Firehouse Renovation Project forward and provided a charge for the Board's review.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to accept the Moodus Firehouse Renovation Committee charge and send said charge to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

RESOLVED: That the Moodus Firehouse Renovation Committee is hereby established for the purpose of improvements to the Moodus Firehouse (Company No. 2), including, without limitation, the costs of (i) the repair, renovation or expansion of existing size, interior upgrades of kitchens, bathrooms, offices and other designated areas as needed or required, (ii) all required structural repairs to concrete footings, foundation, floors and all structural steel to Company 2 firehouse building, (iii) the installation of new building electrical service, interior electric, HVAC, plumbing and vehicle exhaust system, (iv) the removal of existing parking lot to accommodate correct slopes and grades for water drainage with installation of new asphalt pavement surface at Moodus Firehouse.

Section 1. The Committee shall consist of 3 members and 1 alternate, to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The term of office of said members shall continue until the project is complete and accepted by the town and the committee is discharged, except that any member may resign or be removed by a vote of the Board of Selectmen for just cause. Any vacancy on the Committee shall be filled by the Board of Selectmen. The Committee shall select its own chairman, secretary and treasurer. This committee shall answer to the Board of Selectmen and shall make quarterly progress reports to the Board of Selectmen.

Section 2. The members of the Committee shall not receive any compensation for their services. The necessary expenses of the committee shall be included in the estimated project cost and any appropriation to be requested by the Committee from the Town. All records of the Committee shall be filed with the Town Clerk and open to public inspection in accordance with applicable state statutes.

Section 3. The Town of East Haddam Land Use Administrator and Facilities and Finance Directors will serve as advisory staff to the committee.

Section 4. The Committee shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) To consult with the Fire Department, Office of the Fire Marshal, Emergency Management and its administrators concerning the plans for said project and its construction and the schedule therefore;

(b) To develop schematic drawings and outline specifications for the project and to review and approve all plans for said project, and to supervise and/or provide for the proper supervision of the project in the Town's best interest;

(c) To assist in the application for any grants that may be available to the Town for said project, and provide or execute any necessary documentation for such a grant application;

(d) Within the future approved appropriations, and subject to the limits thereof, to contract with architects, engineers, contractors and others in the name and on behalf of the town to design, build and complete the project, and approve all design and construction expenditures for the project.

Section 5. Upon completion of the Moodus Firehouse Renovation project, the Committee shall make a complete report and accounting to the Board of Selectmen.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Govert, Ms. Haines provided clarification regarding the anticipated size of the renovation building committee and the overall size of the project. Unanimous aye.

C. Wine Tasting Approval – East Haddam Senior Center: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a request from Brad Parker, Senior Center Director, for permission to host a wine tasting at the Senior Center.

Motion made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve and permit the Senior Center to host a wine tasting event at the Senior Center on March 31, 2023 from 6:00 to 8:00pm. Unanimous aye.

D. Board/Commission/Committee Changes: No Board, Commission, or Committee changes were considered at the meeting.

E. 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 as presented.

- $266.53 to Damian Anglisz.

Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: The following public comments were discussed at the meeting:

In response to questions from Ms. Marilyn Gleeson, Ms. Haines advised the following:

- The Treasurer was not included in the updates to the Town's term lengths ordinances because this position is statutorily designated for two years, and
- When it was last checked, composting had not had any noticeable impact on the solid waste weight; however, the Town is planning on doing more publicity about the benefits of composting with the hope of increasing resident participation.

In response to Mr. Smith's questions, Ms. Haines stated the following:

- The Shadybrook pond had not been mucked out when the state was working on the road due to equipment scheduling conflicts. She will research what the Fire Department's plans are to make the pond adaptable for fire prevention use and let him know her findings.
- The new security cameras and electric gate are part of planned upgrades to the Transfer Station and she will research the funding sources for these projects and let him know her findings.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

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

    B. Other: Ms. Zemienieski provided information regarding scheduling for a Town Meeting. The Board agreed to schedule a special meeting on March 8th at 8:30 a.m. to pass a call for a Town Meeting on March 22, 2023.

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 7:13 p.m.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary