Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
June 4, 2025
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; T. Bourgoin; E. Dill

Also Present: C. Brownell (P&Z Chair); B. Duhaime; C. Leidemer (EHFD Captain); L. Zemienieski and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of May 21, 2025

   Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to draft minutes in their meeting packets.

   Motion made by Ms. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 21, 2025 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence: There was no correspondence discussed at this time in the meeting.

5. First Selectmen's Report

   Ms. Haines reported on the following:

   - The Swingbridge had its official reopening; however, they are still finishing up some punch list items. The walkway along the bridge is also open.

   - The budget referendum failed by 9 votes and the Board of Finance has asked the Town and Board of Education to make their best effort to find potential reductions in their budgets of $100k and $200k respectively.

   - The Board of Selectmen will need to set a mill rate before July 1st; however, the Tax Collector will hold off on sending out the July property tax bills until immediately following the next budget referendum so, hopefully, she can use the mill rate approved by the voters.

In response to a concern raised by Ms. Bourgoin, Ms. Haines encouraged the Board to send her their suggestions for potential Town budget reductions.

Ms. Zemienieski advised that Board of Finance Chairman Gelston had requested an additional 25 road signs be printed and installed before the next budget referendum. There was a general discussion about the cost of additional road signs.

6. Public Comment

The following public comments were made the meeting:

- **Chris Leidemer** – distributed informational materials and stated that he is a Career Captain on the East Haddam Fire Department. He said that he had attended most of the budget workshops and was attending tonight's Board of Selectmen meeting to advocate in favor of not eliminating the pay raises in the Fire Department's FY2025-2026 budget. He advised that the East Haddam Fire Department's current pay rate for firefighter/EMT positions is 26% below the state median. He noted the difficulty the department has recruiting qualified individuals and reviewed comparative financial information from neighboring town's fire departments. Captain Leidemer stated that, even though the pay rate in the proposed FY25-26 budget is still below the state's median rate, it does make the Town competitive with surrounding comparable fire departments. He responded to several questions from Ms. Bourgoin.

- **Crary Brownell** – inquired about repairs to Beebe Road and stated that he is still waiting for as-builts and information on what work is going to be done to the bridges and guardrails along the road. Ms. Haines stated she would research the issue and get back to him. Mr. Brownell expressed concern that neither he nor Ms. Haines have been kept informed of the planned repairs to Beebe Road.

  In response to another question from Mr. Brownell, Ms. Haines stated that she has not been made aware of any plans to demolish the last standing mill in East Haddam. She stated she would not be in favor of such plans and confirmed that she would also research this issue and get back to Mr. Brownell.

Ms. Haines read an email she had received from Eric Chamberland suggesting a compromise alternative to a complete ban of wake boats on Bashan Lake. Mr. Chamberland suggested allowing wake boats to operate on the lake between the hours of noon and 6:00 p.m. Ms. Haines stated she would bring his suggestion to the public meeting scheduled to discuss the proposed Wake Boat ordinance.

7. Unfinished Business

A. Bashan Lake/Moodus Reservoir – Wake Surfing Potential Ordinance Discussion: Ms. Haines stated that a Public Hearing has been scheduled for June 25th to present and discuss the proposed ordinance banning the use of wake boats on Bashan Lake and Moodus Reservoir. She encouraged the Selectmen to provide her with any feedback they have on

the proposed ordinance. Ms. Zemienieski provided background information on the development of the proposed ordinance.

Mr. Dill expressed concern about how an ordinance banning wake boats could be enforced.

8. New Business

A. RFP Award – Redevelopment Planning for Downtown East Haddam: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to materials in their packets with results, evaluations and a recommendation for contract award. She advised that the valuation results and documents have been sent to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for their review and they have agreed with the award recommendation. In response to questions from Ms. Bourgoin, Ms. Zemienieski provided additional background information regarding the award recommendation.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to award the contract for Redevelopment Planning for Downtown East Haddam to Vannasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) in an amount of $76,300.00 which includes concurrence of the Department of Environmental and Community Development State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Unanimous aye.

B. Resident State Trooper Contract: Ms. Haines advised that the state had submitted its new contract for the Town's Resident State Trooper Program. She noted that the Town is very happy with the current Trooper assigned to the Town and she has expressed her wish to retain him; however, she noted that the Town does not get much say in which Trooper is assigned to East Haddam.

Ms. Zemienieski stated that she would provide the board with a copy of the new contract with the changes tracked from the old one. The Board agreed to defer its vote to accept the new contract until they could review the changes.

C. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (MFBC)

Moodus Firehouse Building Committee

Ms. Haines called the Selectmen's attention to correspondence in the Board's meeting packets requesting a change in status and appointment to the Moodus Firehouse Building Committee.

Motion made by Ms. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to change the status of Walter Parkus from an alternate member to a regular member on the Moodus Firehouse Building Committee to serve until the completion of the project. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to appoint Edward Blaschik as a regular member to the Moodus Firehouse Building Committee to serve until the completion of the project. Unanimous aye.

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

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

- $132.32 to Kayla Arevalo.

Unanimous aye.

9. Selectmen's Discussion

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

B. Other

1. Neighborhood Assistance Act Public Hearing (June 11, 2025 @ 5:30pm – Municipal Office Complex): Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a Public Hearing on June 11th to consider the state's Neighborhood Assistance Act applications.

Ms. Haines also reminded the Board members and public about the planned June 24th Public Hearing on the FY2025-2026 budget and the July 8th Town Meeting and July 22nd referendum on same. There was a brief discussion about scheduling a Special Board of Selectmen's meeting, prior to July 1, to set a mil rate.

10. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 a.m.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary