Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
June 18, 2025
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; T. Bourgoin; E. Dill
Also Present: M. Callahan; R. Casner; L. D'Aquila; D. DiStefano; J. Lovejoy; R. Malbuission; C. O'Hare; L. Zemienieski; D. Zimmerman and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:00 p.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 June 4, 2025

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

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 4, 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 stated that Governor Lamont has enacted an extreme hot weather protocol for Sunday, June 22nd through noon on Wednesday, June 25th. She listed the locations of the Town's cooling centers and provided several cautionary recommendations to follow during extremely hot weather.

   A. Recreational Pathway on Route 149 Presentation – Jack Lovejoy: Ms. Haines introduced Jack Lovejoy and stated that he had a creative idea for a recreational pathway on Route 149 in the Village.

      Mr. Lovejoy stated that he is a resident of East Haddam and a member of the East Haddam Historic District Commission. He provided a brief history of the development of the roads in the Village and noted that Route 149, along the CT River, is currently a dangerous travel path for pedestrians and bicyclists. Mr. Lovejoy described a reconfiguration of vehicular traffic flow that would mirror the Town's original road into and out of the Village area, as well as provide a greenspace that is more conducive to pedestrians and bicyclists.

He stated he calls his plan the Champion's Wharf Greenway Park and said that it creates a safe common area for the townspeople with public access to river views. He advised that it allows access for emergency vehicles, as well as access to the boat launch and private properties. Mr. Lovejoy stated that, without changing the layout of any existing roads, the plan removes traffic from the Town's most dangerous intersection, at Routes 149 and 82, and redirects it onto Town Street, which is straighter and wider than Route 149 is along the CT River.

Mr. Lovejoy stated that rerouting traffic according to his plan does not slow down vehicular travel in any way and he reviewed the plan's economic and environmental benefits.

Ms. Haines thanked Mr. Lovejoy for his presentation and agreed that state approvals would be the biggest challenge to the plan. She suggested he send his presentation to the Redevelopment Agency and stated that it could potentially be made part of the Village's Master Plan that is currently being developed.

In response to a request from Ms. Bourgoin, Mr. Lovejoy agreed to email his presentation to Ms. Zemienieski for distribution to the Board.

6. Public Comment: The following public comments were made the meeting:

- Denise DiStefano complimented Mr. Lovejoy on his concept. She stated that Ms. Haines proposed cuts to the Shared Services budget make no sense to her and also objected to the proposed $25k reduction in the East Haddam Ambulance Association's $100k funding request for FY2026. She reviewed a number of her concerns about the relationship between Ms. Haines and the EHAA. She asked the Board to vote No on agenda item 8D to award a contract which would allow the Town to bill for EMS transport services provided by the Fire Department's career staff. She also asked the Board not to support a cut in the EHAA's funding request for FY2026.

- Laurie D'Aquila stated she represents the EHAA and advised that she believes it is too late and too premature for the Town to initiate billing for the Fire Department's career staff's EMS work. She provided her justification for her stated opinion and noted that the EHAA has frequently covered shifts for the EHFD and also provides all of the equipment used by the Fire Department to respond to EMS calls.

  Ms. D'Aquila stated that EHAA is still waiting for the Town and Fire Department to develop a plan for shared services and asked the Board to vote No on agenda item 8D or, at the very least, table it until a plan for shared services is presented. She noted the Town and EHAA have a meeting scheduled for early in July.

- Ken Tosi – Ms. D'Aquila read a letter from Mr. Tosi because he could not attend tonight's meeting. Mr. Tosi wrote that the Board of Selectmen has voted 2 to 1 to approve EHAA's FY2026 funding request of $100k. He noted that the Board of Finance had cut $25k out of the request and stated that he feels that is an arbitrary number. Mr.

Tosi suggested lowering the reduction to $10k and reviewed data supporting his recommendation. He wrote that he believes there are other areas where the FY2026 budget could be reduced rather than public safety.

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 noted that there has been correspondence addressed to the Board of Selectmen about this issue and she will bring those letters/emails to the Public Hearing where they will be considered.

Ms. Haines advised that the proposed ordinance is available for review on the Town's website.

B. Resident State Trooper Contract: Ms. Haines noted that the class of officer assigned to the Town would determine the rate charged by the state for East Haddam's Resident State Trooper. In response to a question from Ms. Bourgoin, she confirmed that the Town has no say in who is assigned to East Haddam.

Ms. Zemienieski reviewed the following two material changes to the contract: (1) if the Town denies a pistol permit, it is now the Town's responsibility to defend that decision to the Firearms Bureau, and (2) if the Town doesn't coordinate compatibility with state equipment and any Town planned technology changes with the State Police, it could constitute a breach of contract.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, that Irene M. Haines, the First Selectman, be and is herewith authorized to execute a contract on behalf of the Town of East Haddam with the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of State Police for the services of one (1) Resident State Trooper for a two-year period from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027. Unanimous aye.

C. 2025 Neighborhood Assistance Act Approvals: Ms. Haines reported that on June 11, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., a Public Hearing was held concerning the proposals received for the state's Neighborhood Assistance Act. She noted that the Goodspeed Opera House applied for $71,000.00 for Actor, Artist & Production Employee Housing HVAC Replacement, I-Park Foundation, Inc applied for $78,572.00 for Solar Panel(s) at I-Park Artists-in-Residence Campus 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. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve and forward to the State, for their approval, three (3) projects requesting funding by the Neighborhood Assistance Act for 2025. Unanimous aye.

8. New Business

A. Set Mill Rate: Ms. Haines advised that, by state statute, municipalities must set their mill rate before July 1st. She noted that since the budget had failed the first referendum, and because the subsequent referendum is not scheduled until July, she recommends setting the Town's mill rate for FY2026 at the FY2024-2025 rate.

   Ms. Haines stated that setting the mill rate for FY2026 at tonight's meeting will allow the Tax Collector to send out property tax bills on time and then she will send out supplemental bills after the budget passes referendum and the Board of Finance sets the appropriate mill rate. In response to an inquiry from Ms. Bourgoin, Ms. Haines provided clarification about the property tax billing process.

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to make a rate bill at 26.76 pursuant to General Statutes § 12-123. Unanimous aye.

B. Grant Acceptance – Eightmile River Watershed – Conservation Commission: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to a copy of materials in their meeting packets regarding a grant from Eightmile River Watershed.

   Motion made by Ms. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to accept a grant in the amount of $5,260.00 from the Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee for the development of educational curriculum combining field study with digital programming at Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School, and send approval for acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

C. Gift Acceptance - Haslam Memorial Foundation – Summer Camp Programs: Ms. Haines called the Selectmen's attention to information in their meeting packets from the Haslam Memorial Foundation advising of a $1,000.00 donation to the Town. Ms. Haines explained that the Haslam Memorial Foundation donation is to be used by the Town's Park and Recreation Department for its Summer Camp programs.

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to accept a gift from the Haslam Memorial Foundation on behalf of the East Haddam Park and Recreation Department, in the amount of $1,000.00, for Summer Camp programs and send acceptance of said donation to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

D. RFP Award – EMS Billing Services: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to materials in their packets with results of an RFP for billing services and recommendations for the contract award. She reviewed the two bids received and provided information about how she came to her recommendation.

Ms. Bourgoin expressed her concern that the RFP had not been previously discussed with the Board of Selectmen. She stated she would like to receive details about the RFP and the responders. There was a general discussion regarding this agenda item.

In response to an inquiry from Ms. D'Aquila, Ms. Haines stated that she would make an exception to this part of the meeting not being open to public comment and clarified that the Town has authority to operate one ambulance and bill for the services provided. She confirmed that it is not operating an ambulance service under the EHAA PSAR.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Haines, to award the contract for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Billing Services for the East Haddam Fire Department-Medical Division to Certified Ambulance Group for a percentage of revenue recovered of 5.0%. Ms. Haines and Mr. Dill voted aye; Ms. Bourgoin voted nay. The motion carried by a majority of ayes.

E. Homeland Security Memorandum of Agreement Resolution: Ms. Haines explained that this is a regional collaboration grant. She advised that funding goes to the Region 3 Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) to benefit all Region 3 towns.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Town of East Haddam may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Irene M. Haines as the First Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of East Haddam and to do and perform all acts and things which she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.
Unanimous aye.

F. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (AGC, CC)

**Agriculture Commission**
Ms. Haines called the Selectmen's attention to correspondence in their meeting packets regarding changes to the Agriculture Commission's membership.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Ronald Gross from the Agriculture Commission. Unanimous aye.

**Conservation Commission**

Ms. Haines called the Selectmen's attention to correspondence in their meeting packets requesting a change in status and reappointments on the Conservation Commission.

Motion made by Ms. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to change the status of Gary Wilson from a regular member to an alternate member on the Conservation Commission and reappointment of membership with a term to expire June 30, 2027. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Ms. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to change the status of Alan Ponanski from an alternate member to a regular member on the Conservation Commission and reappointment of membership with a term to expire June 30, 2027. Unanimous aye.

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

9. Selectmen's Discussion

Ms. Haines reminded the Board and the public about the following dates:

- June 24th – Budget Hearing at the Nathan Hale-Ray High School,
- June 25th – Public Hearing on the Wake Boat draft ordinance,
- July 8th – Town Meeting on the FY2025-2026 budget, and
- July 22nd – Budget Referendum.

A. Liaison's Reports: Ms. Bourgoin advised that the Sustainability Team is on track to receive its Gold certification by the end of the year.

Ms. Haines reported that she had attended a RiverCOG meeting to discuss the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update program and there was a discussion about additional potential revenue streams for mitigating hazard concerns due to, for example, flooding.

B. Other

1. Executive Session – Black Birch Golf Course Discussion

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to enter into executive session at 8:12 p.m. to discuss Black Birch Golf Course and to invite Robert Casner, Dan Zimmerman, Patrick Burke, Michael Callahan and Linda Zemienieski into this session. Unanimous aye.

Selectmen returned to regular session at 8:57 p.m. No motions or decisions were made

2. Executive Session – Clerical Collective Bargaining Agreement Discussion

Motion made by Ms. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to enter into executive session at 8:58 p.m. to discuss the East Haddam Clerical Union (CSEA, SEIU, Local 2001,

CTW) Collective Bargaining Agreement and to invite Linda Zemienieski into this session. Unanimous aye.

Selectmen returned to regular session at 9:07 p.m. No motions or decisions were made.

3. Vote on Clerical Collective Bargaining Agreement

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to accept the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of East Haddam and Clerical Union (CSEA, SEIU, Local 2001, CTW) for the period from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. Unanimous aye.

10. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. .

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary