Meeting Minutes

Town of East Haddam
Black Birch Golf Course Feasibility Study Committee
Special Meeting

Date: May 5, 2026
Location: Municipal Office Complex, Meeting Room #3

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, & Attendance

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Alan Ponanski at 5:30 PM in Meeting Room #3. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Committee Members Present:
Alan Ponanski, Steven Longobardi, Mike Morris, Jeff Miller, Donald Lorusso, Jef Wolter.

Additional Attendees:
Karl Augenstein, Managing Partner, and James Leach, Partner, FCG Associates, Providence, RI.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Meeting Agenda prepared by Chairman Ponanski was reviewed by the Committee and a motion to approve was made by Longobardi, second by Miller and approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes for Tuesday, April 28, 2026 Special Meeting

Minutes were distributed by Secretary Miller and reviewed by the Committee. No corrections or additions were proposed by the Members. Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes, made by Wolter with second by Miller and approved unanimously.

4. Old Business

Secretary Miller reported on his meeting on April 30 with Jeff Hartman, CEO, and Jamie Miner, CFO, of Elm Tree Communities, based in Old Saybrook and the developer of the Blueway Commons multifamily project on Rte. 154 in Haddam just over the Swing Bridge. The purpose was to discuss their potential interest in either the Black Birch G.C. residential development and/or the East Haddam Village Master Plan. CEO Hartmann said they are

more interested in smaller scale mixed-use and rental housing development like that anticipated in the East Haddam Village master plan than lower density single-family development at Black Birch.

5. Public Comment

No members of the public were present for comment.

6. New Business

Secretary Miller reported on his video conference on May 1 with Matt Glilchrist, President of EG Home, a potential residential developer at Banner Estates/Black Birch. The purpose is to interest EG Home in possibly partnering with a golf course manager like Alliance Golf to restart residential construction at Banner and start the restoration of the golf course. EG Home would not be willing to incur the cost of a community septic systems at Banner/Black Birch, but would consider building single-family homes on lots with individual septic systems and wells.

7. Executive Session

The Committee went into Executive Session at 5:45 pm on a motion by Miller, second by Morris, and a unanimous vote. The purpose was to discuss confidential financial information, cost estimates, and details of contractual relationships.

The guest speakers were Karl Augenstein, Managing Partner, and James Leach, Partner, FCG Associates, Providence, RI. Over 35 years ago FCG took over restoration and management of Triggs Memorial, a course designed by famed architect Donald Ross and owned by the City of Providence. FCG restored it with private capital and has been managing it since 1989 on a series of 10-year net leases. It is now ranked as one of the best public courses in the nation. The FCG partners shared their thoughts on the potential Black Birch restoration and some details of their net lease structure with the City of Providence.

Chairman Ponanski returned to Regular Session at 7:10 pm stating that no motions or decisions were made while in Executive Session.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm on a motion by Longobardi, second by Miller, and a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Miller
Secretary, Black Birch Golf Course Feasibility Study Committee