

Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
January 17, 2006
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen present: Brad Parker and Peter Govert. Absent: Randy Dill.
Also present: Trooper Mike Hassett, Sharon Wheeler.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by First Selectman Parker and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of Agenda: In consideration of Trooper Hassett's attendance at the meeting, Mr. Parker suggested discussing his portion of agenda item 5 – Selectmen's Discussion - as the first topic of the meeting. Mr. Govert agreed. Motion made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Govert, to amend and approve the agenda as recommended by Mr. Parker. Unanimous aye.

5. Selectmen's Discussion:

Trooper Hassett introduced himself and provided the following report:

- He has been very busy the past several months investigating a number of break-ins in Town. He attributed the break-ins to an increase in heroin addiction among some of the Town's young people. Trooper Hassett stated that three weeks ago two people were caught breaking into a house and information collected from those individuals led to several arrest warrants being issued relative to a number of other burglaries in town. He noted that his investigation was on-going and he would be collecting a written statement from an incarcerated individual that may lead to further arrests. He noted that warrants have also been issued for 6-7 individuals in Colchester as part of an on-going investigation related to several vandalism incidents at Banner Lodge.
- Two intoxicated drivers were arrested and Trooper Hassett noted that the DWI grant seemed to be paying off.
- The Federal Highway Safety Program Hazardous Moving Violation Enforcement grant was approved. Trooper Hassett noted the funding would allow for an increased police presence in Town.
- He recently completed his 7th year of teaching the DARE program.

There was a general discussion about the high recidivism rates of individuals arrested on drug and drug-related charges. It was noted that the court generally referred individuals convicted of drug-related crimes to two weeks at Rushford Center but there was no follow-up after the individual had been discharged. Trooper Hassett advised that he, Toni McCabe, and Trooper Dave Luke, were drafting a letter recommending that East Haddam residents arrested on drug related charges be referred to a Town counselor. They felt that the Town's Youth and Family Services counselor has more familiarity with Town residents and would also be able to provide follow-up services. He stated that the letter would be sent to the prosecutors of such cases.

Mr. Govert inquired about references to "cells" in town and Trooper Hassett stated that there were groups that were involved in drug use and that he was aware of the individuals

involved. He also noted that the youth have taken note of an increased police presence in town. Mr. Govert stated that Youth and Family Services and the Local Prevention Council were sponsoring a Community Conversation on February 11th to discuss ways to address these issues. Mr. Parker stated that he had attended the recent DARE graduation and noted that there was a lot of support for the program.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Parker advised that he had reviewed the agenda of tonight's meeting with Mr. Dill who requested that approval of the minutes be tabled until the next meeting. Motion made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Govert, to table the approval of the minutes for the December 20, 2006, December 26, 2006, and January 3, 2007 Special Meetings until the next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence:

Mr. Parker noted that the Board of Selectmen had received the following correspondence:

- An e-mail from Deirdre Devaney requesting the Selectmen's attendance at the Charter Study Committee's meeting on February 12th. Ms. Devaney stated the Committee was looking for input from the Selectmen on the problems and benefits of the Town's current form of government. It was noted that both Mr. Parker and Mr. Govert were available on that date. Mr. Parker agreed to follow-up with Mr. Dill and ascertain his availability.

- A copy of letter addressed to Andrew Lord, Chairman of the WPCA, from Colin Kagel. Mr. Parker read the letter, which noted the excellent service that had been provided by Grant Weaver when Mr. Kagel's sewer pump failed.

5. First Selectman's Report (continued):

Mr. Parker reported on the following items:

- A Blood Mobile would be held at the Senior Center on the afternoon of January 25th. Mr. Parker encouraged participation.

- LaVita Gustosa was sponsoring a lock-up on January 22nd to raise funds for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Mr. Parker noted that he would be "arrested" on the morning of the 22nd but since he has already raised his \$1,800.00 bail, he would not have to spend any time in "jail".

- The referendum for the middle school project would be held on January 25th from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm. He stated that they need help coordinating the bulk mailing of the explanatory text brochures and delivering them to the post office. Mr. Govert advised that he would be available to help.

- The swing bridge will be closed for repairs on January 22nd from 8:30 p.m. until 4:30 a.m.

- The Goodspeed, in conjunction with the University of Hartford Theatre Project, was hosting three nights of plays on January 17th, 18th, and 19th. Tickets are \$10 apiece. Mr. Parker encouraged people to pass the word about the shows.

6. Citizen's Concerns: There were no citizen's concerns to discuss at this meeting.

7. Old Business:

A. 4 - 8 Middle School Discussion: Mr. Parker advised that a Town Meeting to discuss the Middle School Building project was held on January 16th. He noted that 4500 postcards had been mailed advising residents of the meeting and approximately 50-75 people had attended. He stated that, although three people had spoken against the project, the overall attitude was in favor of the project. Mr. Parker advised that it would be important to get people out to vote at the January 25th referendum.

B. Police Study Committee: Mr. Parker advised that Mr. Dill was preparing a report for February.

C. Goodspeed Update: Mr. Parker reported that he had met with representatives from the Goodspeed earlier in the week. He advised that the Goodspeed has received their appraiser's report and the appraised value of the property was very close to the Town's appraisal. He noted, however, that their report did not include data on the value of an easement on the property and their appraiser was updating the report to include same. He also advised that the Goodspeed expects a report from Pat Pinnell within a month. Mr. Pinnell was hired by the Goodspeed to evaluate its properties and develop a proposal on how to use its existing inventory of physical assets to address its need for actors' housing. Mr. Parker advised that they had agreed to meet again after the Goodspeed received Mr. Pinnell's report. Mr. Govert recommended inviting EDC and Mr. Ventres to the meeting also. Mr. Parker agreed.

D. Ethics Policy: Mr. Parker report that he was continuing to work on the Ethics Policy.

8. New Business:

A. Grant Acceptance – Historic Document Preservation: Mr. Parker reviewed a December 8, 2006, letter from the Connecticut State Library advising that the Town had been awarded a \$7,000.00 Historic Documents Preservation Grant. He noted that Ms. Denette would use the grant funds to scan and archive old Town records.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Parker, to accept a grant in the amount of \$7,000 from the State of Connecticut, State Library, for the purpose of historic document preservation; and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance for appropriation and to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

B. Grant Acceptance – Federal Highway Safety Program (Hazardous Moving Violation Enforcement): Mr. Parker reviewed a January 2, 2007, letter from the Connecticut Department of Transportation, advising that the Town's application for funding for its highway

safety project, effective from 12/20/06 through 9/30/07, was approved. The letter advised that \$30,000.00 in Federal funds would be obligated to the project.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Parker, to accept a grant in the amount of \$30,000.00 from the State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation, entitled "Hazardous Moving Violation Enforcement Program", and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

C. Grant Acceptance – AT&T Foundation (AT&T Excelerator – Senior Technology): Mr. Parker reviewed a November 22, 2006 letter from AT&T providing a grant of \$5,000.00 to, "...*support technology upgrades and computer education for Senior Center staff and clients and provide greater outreach services to seniors via the town website*". In response to a question from Mr. Govert, Mr. Parker advised that a senior Town resident has volunteered to teach the computer classes.

Motion made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of \$5,000.00 from the AT&T Foundation, entitled "AT&T Excelerator Grant Program", and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

D. Approval for Wine Appreciation Class at Senior Center: Mr. Parker explained that the board had received a request for permission to host wine appreciation classes at the Senior Center from Joanne Roczniak, Senior Services Coordinator. The dates for the classes have not been set at this time but Mr. Parker noted that it would be a 6-8 week class. In response to a question raised by Mr. Govert, Mr. Parker advised that he did not know who would be sponsoring the classes.

Motion made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve and permit the Senior Club to host wine appreciation classes at the Senior Center with dates to be determined. Unanimous aye.

E. Commission Resignation (EDC): Mr. Parker advised that Harvey Thomas had submitted a letter of resignation to the Economic Development Commission. He summarized the letter, noting that, as a result of EDC's position of advocacy on a number of current development projects in town, Mr. Thomas was concerned about a conflict of interest with his role on the Planning and Zoning Commission. There was a general discussion concerning providing EDC with the names of potential candidates to fill the vacancy.

Motion made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept with regret the resignation of Harvey Thomas from the Economic Development Commission effective February 1, 2007. Unanimous aye.

F. Volunteer of the Month: Mr. Parker read a letter recommending Jane Kagel as volunteer of the month. The letter noted Ms. Kagel's volunteer activities on the committee for the Holly Ball, the Rathbun Library Farmers Market, and the planning committee for the celebration of the Library's 70th Anniversary.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Parker, to name Jane Kagel as volunteer of the month for January 2007. Unanimous aye.

G. Tax Refunds: Mr. Parker called the Selectmen's attention to five tax refunds. Mr. Govert noted that the refund to Dawn Lynn Stix seemed high. Mr. Parker advised that he had noted that also but he had not yet been able to obtain any background information on the refund. He stated that he would continue to follow-up and would advise the Selectmen of his findings.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Parker, to award tax refunds in the amounts of:

- \$ 76.81 to Jeffrey C. Lawrence;
 - \$ 260.49 to GMAC;
 - \$ 448.91 to Ford Motor Credit Co.;
 - \$ 350.05 to CAB East LLC; and, contingent upon Mr. Parker's findings,
 - \$2198.64 to Dawn Lynn Stix.
- Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: There was no public in attendance at this point in the meeting.

10. Selectmen's Discussion:

The Selectmen had no additional topics for discussion.

11. Executive Session – Property Negotiations:

Mr. Parker advised that Mr. Dill had requested the Selectmen postpone the Executive Session until the next Regular Meeting. Mr. Govert agreed.

12. Adjournment: Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Parker, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Tape 522A

Respectfully submitted,

Peter T. Govert, Secretary