

Board of Selectmen
First Selectman's Office
March 1, 2007
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen present: Brad Parker, Randy Dill, and Pete Govert.
Also present: Stephanie Tatro.

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:08am by First Selectman Parker.
2. Budget Reviews: An initial discussion was held regarding the strategy of the meetings. All operating budgets will be discussed today, and all capital budgets to be discussed on Monday. There will also be discussion Monday on the revenue impact of the budgets discussed to date. The potential exists to meet on Tuesday if the discussions are not completed Monday. The Board of Selectmen were looking for lean budgets this year, and discussion was held regarding the Board of Education budget and the 4.91% increase they have proposed. It was also noted that the grand list has grown approximately 3.10%, which represents approximately \$550,000. There was also discussion regarding the governor's budget, and the potential \$370,000 increase. Mr. Parker recommended that the Town not include the additional \$370,000, as the governor's budget was being contested, and it would be more prudent to use the \$370,000 as a "safety net". The question was raised as to what the goal of the budget discussion was – more than 1 mill; less than 1 mill increase? The Selectmen were in agreement that they were hoping to keep the mill rate increase to less than 1 mill. Discussion then followed regarding the Board of Education long-range projections. The Selectmen agreed to go to the Board of Finance with their recommended budget, and include a recommendation that the Board of Finance look at the Board of Education budget if additional cuts were desired.

Mr. Dill asked where the 3.25% salary increase for all employees came from. Mr. Parker responded it came from a variety of sources, including the negotiated contracts with Town unions and surveys of towns in the area. He determined that 3.25% was low to in line with other towns.

Mr. Govert then stated that the Selectmen have two choices – raise taxes or cut services. He also stated that he felt very strongly that the Economic Development Commission (EDC) request for funding for a consultant position was absolutely necessary.

The comment was then made that the Selectmen need to go into this process with an open mind and objectivity – they need to be aware of dollars as well as percent cuts – the cuts need to be big dollars, not just big percentages.

Mr. Dill stated that he was in favor of the EDC position, but that Planning and Zoning has a plan, which was what the Town needed.

Mr. Govert then responded that the EDC position was an “experiment”, and they needed Mr. Dill’s feedback regarding working with Planning and Zoning – the two departments need to work together.

Mr. Dill responded that there needed to be more thinking regarding where to put businesses in Town, and they could not let the rural character of East Haddam overshadow business needs. The Board of Selectmen needed to be involved in the process.

At 9:46am the budget discussions began.

Mr. Parker handed out a summary of all the Selectmen’s budgets. Mr. Govert questioned if the salary study impact was included in the numbers as presented, and Mr. Parker responded no.

701 Selectmen: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

702 Town Clerk: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. It was requested that a note be added to show that the change excluding the accounting corrections was \$1,913 and 1.58%. No changes were recommended.

703 Probate Court: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

704 Board of Finance: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and a change was made to the clerical salary line to take out the 2% step increase, as this was not in agreement with the contract with the union. No other changes were recommended.

705 Auditors: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. Mr. Govert questioned if we were going out to bid this year, and the answer was no. No changes were recommended.

706 Election and Registrars: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, including the ballot line and staffing at elections. The Selectmen changed the assistant registrars and election workers lines to \$2000 and \$3500, respectively, from \$3098 and \$4000, respectively. No other changes were recommended.

707 Town Office: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and part-time help was decreased from \$5,000 to \$4,000. No other changes were recommended.

708 Assessor: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and training was changed from \$900 to \$750. No other changes were recommended.

709 Board of Assessment Appeals: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

710 Tax Collector: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

711 Treasurer: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

712 Town Counsel: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

713 Land Use: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

714 Zoning Board of Appeals: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

716 Historic District: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and it was noted that the postage line had been left out in error, and was recommended to add the \$75 back in. No other changes were recommended.

717 Conservation Commission: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

718 Economic Development Commission: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

721 Insurance: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

722 Tax Refund: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

723 Data Processing: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and the finance line was changed to \$10,352 from \$8,400, the assessor line was changed from \$8,835 to \$5,600 and the tax department line was changed from \$1,103 to \$1,100. No other changes were recommended.

724 Open Space: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

726 Legal Ads: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

727 Midstate Regional Planning: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

728 Health Insurance: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

729 Social Security Contribution: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

730 Town Employees Retirement: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

731 Unemployment Compensation Reserve: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

732 Duplicating: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

733 Town Reports: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

734 Town Records Maintenance: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

735 Town Meeting Hall Maintenance: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

736 River House & Annex: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

737 Grange Hall: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

738 Senior Center Maintenance: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and the line for building maintenance was changed from \$5,000 to \$4,125. No other changes were recommended.

739 Millington School House: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

The Selectmen broke at 11:41 am and reconvened at 11:50 am.

740 Building Department: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

741 Fire Department: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and the gas/oil line was changed from \$5,660 to \$5,000. No other changes were recommended.

742 Fire Marshal: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

743 Resident State Troopers: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

744 Police Department: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and the Cell phone/MDT fee line was changed from \$2,244 to \$1,860. No other changes were recommended.

746 Emergency Management: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, including discussion regarding adding a stipend for the Emergency Management Coordinator, as the Federal Government will reimburse the Town 50% of the stipend. The Board of Selectmen concluded they would make the Board of Finance aware of this option, and let them add in the stipend if they so desired. No other changes were recommended.

The Selectmen broke at 12:20 pm and returned at 1:10 pm from lunch.

747 Animal Control: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

750 General Highways: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, including a request have more than one year of history on the budget form. No changes were recommended.

753 Machine and Equipment Repair: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

754 Snow Removal: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, including the option of implementing the new salt alternative half this year and half next year. Mr. Parker indicated that was not an option – it was an “all or nothing” method. No changes were recommended.

755 Town Garage Maintenance: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

756 Sanitation: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended other than the changes proposed by Fred Thumm, Public Works Director.

757 Street Lights & Safety: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

761 Health District: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

764 Human Services: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

765 Aging & Elderly: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget, and the bus driver line was changed from \$16,000 to \$12,174. No other changes were recommended.

767 Youth and Family Services: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended, but it was noted that the Selectmen would like a full copy of the entire Y&FS budget.

770 Greens Maintenance: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

771 Recreation Commission: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

772 East Haddam Free Public Library and Rathbun Library: Discussion was postponed until Monday, at which time the capital and operating budgets for the libraries will both be discussed at the same time.

777 Debt Service: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

783 Reserve for Capital Projects: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

784 Reserve for Revaluation: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

785 Reserve for Capital Non-Recurring: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

786 Reserve for Open Space Acquisition: Discussion was held regarding the proposed budget. No changes were recommended.

Discussion was held to change the start time of the meeting Monday from 9:00 am to 8:00 am.

3. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 2:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter T. Govert, Secretary