

Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
June 13, 2007
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen present: Brad Parker, Randy Dill, and Peter Govert.

Also present: Deb Denette, Nancy Gieseey, Bernie Gillis, Michael Harris, Jim Ventres, Richard Watson, and 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 deference to the guests in attendance, Mr. Parker recommended the agenda be amended so that items 8.E. and 8.C. could be discussed at the beginning of the meeting, in that order, and item 8.A. could be discussed upon the arrival of Mr. Ventres. Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the agenda as amended. Unanimous aye.

8. New Business:

E. Historic Document Preservation Grant Acceptance: Ms. Denette referenced materials in the Selectmen's meeting packet regarding an award of a Historic Document Preservation Grant in the amount of \$7,000.00. She noted that the Town has received several Historic Document Preservation Grants in the past and the proposal for the current grant was to remove cardboard backing from a number of historic Town maps. She advised that a vendor has been identified who would do the work at a cost of approximately \$150 per map. In response to a question from Mr. Dill, Ms. Denette confirmed that the grant would cover the cost to restore all but approximately 30 maps. In response to a question from Mr. Govert, she noted the maps would not be added to the Town's website, however, the vendor would micro-film them and the micro-film could then be used to print out accurate replicas on the Town's large copy printer.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to recommend to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that a grant in the amount of \$7,000 is hereby accepted from the State of Connecticut, State Library, for the purpose of historic document preservation; and that Bradley P. Parker, First Selectman, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality, a contract with the Connecticut State Library for a Historic Document Preservation Grant. Unanimous aye.

C. Earth Charter Endorsement: Mr. Watson introduced himself and stated he was the President of the local Earth Charter Community of the Lower Valley, Inc. He also introduced Nancy Gieseey and Mike Harris who provided some background on their involvement with the Earth Charter project. Mr. Watson informed the Selectmen of the history of the Earth Charter and stated its purposed was to encourage people to live sustainable and inter-dependent life styles. He advised that the four basic tenets of the Charter are: (1) Respect and Care for the Community of Life, (2) Ecological Integrity, (3) Social and Economic Justice, and (4) Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace. He stated that the U.S. Conference of Mayors as well as a number of towns around the country, including several in Vermont, endorsed the Charter.

Mr. Watson stated that their purpose in attending tonight's meeting was to educate the Selectmen about the Charter and ask that they consider being the first town in Connecticut to endorse the Charter. He then played a 10-minute educational film documenting the international nature of the Earth Charter.

Following the film, Mr. Watson responded to several questions from the Selectmen and advised that neither the Charter nor the local Lower Valley chapter was affiliated with any religious organization and that the local chapter fully endorsed the Charter. Mr. Govert noted that he was very familiar with the Earth Charter and has, in fact, attended several meetings of the local chapter.

Mr. Parker thanked Mr. Watson, Mr. Harris, and Ms. Giesey for attending the Selectmen's meeting and for the information they had provided. He stated that he would give the Selectmen some time to review the materials and would include the item on their next regular meeting agenda.

Mr. Dill acknowledged that there appear to be a number of positive aspects to the Earth Charter, but noted that the Town did not, in general, endorse specific external organizations. Mr. Govert stated that he understood Mr. Dill's concern and suggested consulting the Town's attorney to find out if there were any legal guidelines the Selectmen should be aware of.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Special Meeting of March 1, 2007: Motion made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of March 1, 2007 as written. Unanimous aye.

Special Meeting of March 5, 2007: Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of March 5, 2007 as written. Unanimous aye.

Special Meeting of April 25, 2007: Mr. Dill advised that he had not had a chance to review the minutes and requested a vote on same be postponed until the next Selectmen's meeting. The Selectmen agreed to his request.

Regular Meeting of May 16, 2007: Mr. Dill advised that he had not attended the meeting and would abstain from the vote, however, noted the following typographical error:

- Page 1, 2nd bullet under item #5, First Selectman's Report – "Earth Chapter" should be changed to "Earth Charter".

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Parker, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 16, 2007 as amended. Mr. Dill abstained from the vote. Motion was passed.

4. Correspondence: Mr. Parker advised that the Town had received notification from the State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation, dated May 11, 2007, of paving work on Route 149 scheduled for the 2007 construction season.

Mr. Parker also referenced a copy of a Legal Notice from the Planning & Zoning Commission and Open Space Committee that was in the Selectmen's meeting packets. The notice

was for a Town Meeting scheduled for June 11, to discuss, “*Potential Open Space Acquisitions of properties located on Baker Lane and Daniel Peck Road...*”.

5. First Selectmen’s Report: Mr. Parker reported on the following items:

- The Middle School graduation is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on June 18th. Weather permitting, the ceremony will be held outdoors.
- The High School graduation is scheduled for June 20th and will also, weather permitting, be held outdoors.
- The Town Beach will open on June 23rd and will be open 7-days a week for the summer.
- The ground breaking ceremony for the new Middle School was well-attended. Work was progressing nicely, however, there has been some delay in getting a CL&P hook-up. Mr. Govert noted that there has also been a delay in getting DEP approval of the septic system but Mr. Parker advised that he believed the issues had been resolved. Mr. Dill noted that he had participated in a walk-through at the construction site with the Wetlands Commission, during which he noted that the location of the driveway and the grading for that may be too close to a property boundary.

8. New Business (continued):

A. Potential Open Space Acquisition: Mr. Ventres referenced materials in the Selectmen’s meeting packets concerning two open space acquisitions: (1) the Patrell Parcel, and (2) the Sabine Property. He advised that he and Mr. Gillis were attending the Selectmen’s meeting to request a letter of recommendation to move forward with a grant application to the State for both parcels and to secure a resolution to enter into an agreement with the Nature Conservancy.

Mr. Ventres noted that the Patrell property was a parcel of 42 acres in East Haddam and Lyme on Baker Road and along the Eightmile River - 37.02 acres are in East Haddam. The property would be purchased as a cooperative effort between East Haddam, Lyme, the Nature Conservancy, and the East Haddam and Lyme Land Trusts. He advised that the property owner has agreed to a bargain sale price of \$550,000 and East Haddam’s share of the cost would be \$385,000. He noted that the Town’s share of the purchase cost could be reduced to \$231,000 if it could secure an Open Space Grant from the State of Connecticut. Mr. Ventres also stated that the bargain price was contingent upon signing a contract with the owner by September 1st with final payment to be made by December 31st due to tax considerations.

In response to a question from Mr. Dill, Mr. Ventres noted that one appraisal for the property came in at approximately \$800,000.00, and the second came in at slightly more than \$1,000,000.00. He noted that the parcel could be divided up into 6 building lots, 5 of which would be in East Haddam.

Mr. Ventres informed the Selectmen that the Sabine Property is a 76 acre parcel located on the Upper Moodus Reservoir accessible via Daniel Peck Road. He noted that it was the largest parcel of land without protection on the upper section of the lake. The property would be purchased by the Town of East Haddam through the State’s Open Space Grant Program. He advised that the

first appraisal has come in at approximately \$760,000.00, but the second appraisal has not yet been received.

Mr. Ventres felt that there was a very good chance of being awarded State Open Space Grant funds for both properties, and noted that the application deadline was June 30. Mr. Gillis noted that the cooperative efforts of East Haddam, Lyme, the Nature Conservancy, and the Land Trusts for the two towns to purchase the Patrell parcel would be viewed as a positive by the State.

Mr. Dill expressed reservation about supporting the Sabine purchase without having the second appraisal for the property. He noted that the parcel was lakefront property and could, therefore, have a greater value. There was a general discussion about his concern and it was agreed that a motion in support of the grant application did not bind the Town for either purchase and, further, the State would also have an appraisal done on the properties as part of their approval process.

A motion was made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Govert, that the Board of Selectmen support an application to the State of Connecticut's Open Space Grant program for funds to purchase both the Patrell parcel and the Sabine properties as described in the May 31, 2007 document submitted by the East Haddam Open Space Commission, Land Use Office. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Parker agreed to Mr. Ventres' request to ask the Town Attorney to draft the appropriate resolution for the agreement with the Nature Conservancy.

B. Review of Draft Plan of Conservation and Development: Mr. Ventres advised that the first draft of the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development had been completed and members of the Planning and Zoning Commission were meeting with the Town's other Boards and Commissions to get feedback. He stated that comments could also be submitted via e-mail or by providing P&Z with a marked-up copy of the draft. He noted that, after the initial review was completed, the document would be notated with potential revision/discussion comments.

Mr. Govert stated that the Local Prevention Council should be added to the list of Town organizations. He commented that he felt the draft was on target conceptually (i.e. maintaining the small town, rural nature of the Town) and that utilizing the information gathered in two previous Town-wide surveys to develop the initial draft was appropriate, however, he suggested that, going-forward, Planning and Zoning should encourage as much public input as possible.

Mr. Dill advised that he had reviewed the draft and had several comments. He distributed a copy of a memo containing his observations on each chapter of the document. He noted that the initial draft lacked the input of the public and he continued to encourage using committees to work on individual sections of the Plan. He stated that his biggest concern, however, was that the Plan lacked any depth regarding economic development. Mr. Dill noted that the Plan should recognize the financial challenges of achieving an acceptable balance between maintaining a rural, small-town atmosphere and an affordable tax burden. In particular, he stated that Moodus offered a good opportunity for economic development and suggested the issue of sewage treatment for that area should be identified in the Plan as a topic for further discussion.

Mr. Ventres advised that the Economic Development Commission recognized that its section of the plan needs to be strengthened and there was a general discussion concerning the basic conflict between economic development and the rural nature of East Haddam. All agreed that discussions on the subject need to continue so that the issue could be appropriately addressed in the Plan.

Mr. Dill contributed several other comments, including the following:

- He felt the Plan should include more timelines and responsibility for achieving certain goals should be designated to specific entities;
- The airport was an asset on many levels, should be mentioned in the Transportation section of the Plan, and the Town should voice a position on it;
- The section on Roads needs more work and should take into consideration future development so that the Plan could provide more direction to the Public Works Department when prioritizing their work;
- The section on Facilities contained a wish-list that would be very expensive to acquire underscoring the need for a well-thought through economic development plan;
- There should be more detail on the use of the riverfront;
- He did not understand the comment on the access to the Rathbun Library.

Mr. Ventres advised that Planning and Zoning was waiting on traffic count information and would do more work on the Roads section when that detail was received. Mr. Gillis noted that the current draft was not complete and that the more people and time spent on it the better it would be. Mr. Parker reviewed the process and noted that the re-drafts would be discussed in public sessions.

Mr. Dill asked if there had been any discussions about attracting low-impact industries to the Town and Mr. Ventres advised that the Plan was first and foremost one of Conservation, but that it should include comments on the maintaining a balance between a desired character and economic development.

The Selectmen thanked Mr. Ventres and Mr. Gillis for attending the meeting and commended the Planning & Zoning Commission on its work on the Plan of Conservation.

6. Citizen's Concerns: No citizen's concerns were discussed.

7. Old Business:

A. 4 - 8 Middle School Discussion: Mr. Parker referenced the Selectmen's discussion under the Agenda Item #5, First Selectman's Report, above.

B. Goodspeed Update: Mr. Parker stated that the Selectmen should schedule another meeting with representatives of the Goodspeed and suggested they review their availability following this meeting. The other Selectmen agreed.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Dill, Mr. Parker advised that the Goodspeed has leased the Williams Chevrolet property for a period of 3-years to a high-end, pre-owned car sales and service dealership. He noted that the dealership was expected to open next week. He agreed with Mr. Dill that it would be a good thing to get the property back on the Town's tax rolls.

Mr. Parker also reported that a new owner has reopened the package store located in the Village and that the previous owners of Nino's have applied for a liquor permit and would be reopening the Bistro by Benigno as a family-style restaurant. He further advised that the Gelston House appeared to be doing well.

C. Ethics Policy: Mr. Parker referenced materials that he had put in the Selectmen's folders regarding the draft Ethics Policy, including comments from Attorney Wells and information from a workshop Mr. Parker had recently attended. There was a general discussion about Attorney Wells' comments and the Selectmen agreed to schedule a separate meeting to discuss those comments.

8. New Business (continued):

A. Potential Open Space Acquisition: This item was previously discussed.

B. Review of Draft Plan on Conservation and Development: This item was previously discussed.

C. Earth Charter Endorsement: This item was previously discussed.

D. State Police Contract (Resident Trooper): Mr. Parker referred to Attorney Bennet's correspondence of June 6, 2007, concerning his review of the contract and noted that Attorney Bennet had advised that, "*The contract as written is acceptable for approval and execution*". He advised that, if approved by the Board of Selectmen, the contract would then have to go before the Board of Finance and be approved in a Town Meeting because it was a multi-year contract.

Mr. Dill stated that he did not believe the contract under discussion contained any significant changes from the previous one. He expressed his concern with several items in the proposed document and stated that he did not feel he could support the contract as it was written.

The Selectmen discussed the fact that the contract called for all Town investigative records to be maintained by the Department of Public Safety and Mr. Govert and Mr. Parker stated that they did not feel that would preclude the Town from keeping duplicate copies of such reports. It was Mr. Dill's position, however, that that right should be spelled out in the contract. Mr. Dill also expressed his concern that the Chain of Command and Evaluations provisions were one-sided in favor of the State Police. He further expressed dissatisfaction with the provision on Risk of Loss and Indemnification because he felt it placed all liability for the actions of constables, municipal police officers, etc., on the Town without recognition of any State Police culpability in directing such liable action.

Mr. Govert noted that the Town was not presently in a position to establish an independent police department and stated that he did not feel there was an alternative to signing a contract with the State Police, without jeopardizing public safety. Mr. Dill reiterated that he could not support the contract in its current state.

Motion made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Govert, to send to the Board of Finance, then to Town Meeting for approval, the authorization for the First Selectman to execute a contract on behalf of the Town of East Haddam with the Connecticut Department of Public Safety -- Division of

State Police for the services of two Resident State Troopers for a Two-year period from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2009. Motion passed with two ayes, one against.

E. Historic Document Preservation Grant Acceptance: This item was previously discussed.

F. Commission Resignation (HDC): Mr. Parker referenced materials related to several Commission resignations, status changes, appointments, and re-appointments contained in the Selectmen's meeting packets and the appropriate motions follow.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept with regret the resignation of Stephen Shaw from the Historic District Commission effective immediately. Unanimous aye.

G. Commission Status Changes (CONS): Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to change the status of Susan Merrow, effective immediately, from an alternate member to a regular member to fill a vacant term to expire June 30, 2007 on the Conservation Commission. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Govert, to change the status of Paul Stuhlman from an alternate member to a regular member, effective July 1, 2007, for a two-year term to expire June 30, 2009 on the Conservation Commission. Unanimous aye.

H. Commission Reappointments (CONS, COA, EDC): Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to reappoint Susan Merrow as a regular member and Katherine Klein as an alternate member for two-year terms to expire June 30, 2009 on the Conservation Commission. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Govert, to reappoint Ron Brennan for a three-year term to expire June 30, 2010, Jovita Cozean and Mary Ellen Klinck for two-year terms to expire June 30, 2009, Rosalie Hoffman for a one-year term to expire June 30, 2008 as a regular members and Marion Campbell for a one-year term to expire June 30, 2008 as an alternate member on the Committee on Aging. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Govert, to reappoint Joseph Albuquerque as a regular member for a five-year term to expire June 30, 2012 on the Economic Development Commission. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Parker noted that the terms for the members of the Committee on Aging should be adjusted so that the reappointments do not occur all at the same time in the future.

I. Commission Appointments (CONS, COA, REC): Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to appoint Peggy Carlson, effective July 1, 2007, as a regular member on the Conservation Commission for a two-year term to expire June 30, 2009. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Govert, to appoint James O'Brien as an alternate member on the Committee on Aging to fill a vacant term to expire June 30, 2007 and reappoint him at the end of that term for another one-year term to expire June 30, 2008. Unanimous aye.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to appoint Cynthia Deming as a regular member on the Recreation Commission to fill a vacant term to expire July 1, 2007 and reappoint her at the end of that term for another three-year term to expire July 1, 2010. Unanimous aye.

J. Tax Refunds: Mr. Parker called the Selectmen's attention to two tax refunds.

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

- \$ 139.68 to Colleen A. Chapman, and
- \$ 36.93 to Joan A. Bond.

Unanimous aye.

Mr. Parker reported that the Town's tax collector had held a tax sale on June 1st and sold three parcels at auction. He noted that all expenses were covered by the sale.

9. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

10. Selectmen's Discussion:

A. 2007 Neighborhood Assistance Act Public Hearing: Mr. Parker reported that a public hearing was held on the NAA proposals on June 13, 2007. We now need to send the proposals to the State for final approval.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve and forward to the State for their approval four projects requesting funding by the Neighborhood Assistance Act for 2007. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Parker noted that the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is on the calendar for the following Wednesday and recommended that it be rescheduled for June 27th. The Selectmen and Ms. Wheeler all agreed that they would be available on that date and the meeting was rescheduled for 7:30 p.m. on June 27th.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Govert, to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 p.m. Unanimous aye.

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Respectfully submitted,

Peter T. Govert, Secretary