

Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
November 14, 2007
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen present: Mark Walter, Peter Govert, and Emmett Lyman.

Also present: Jack Agosta, Randy Dill, Arthur Merrow, and Sharon Wheeler.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by First Selectman Walter and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of Agenda: Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimous aye.
3. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of November 1, 2007: Mr. Govert voted to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of November 1, 2007. Mr. Walter and Mr. Lyman had also attended the November 1st meeting as citizens. Both noted that they had read the minutes and found them in order.
4. Correspondence: Mr. Walter referenced a letter in the Selectmen's meeting packets, dated October 30, 2007, from Mary Augustiny, Vice Chairman of the Inland/Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. He noted that the letter reported that the Commission had, "...at its regular meeting on October 16, 2007, voted to approve the Town of East Haddam's drainage improvement plan for Bashan Lake Road". Mr. Govert provided some background on the project.
5. First Selectmen's Report:

Mr. Walter reported that it has been a busy first week for him, noting that he held two employee meetings, one for management and the second for non-management staff, where he explained his goals and asked for the employees' help in reducing the operating budget. He stated he also met with the Public Works crew, and the fire and police departments. He advised that he was hoping to resolve some of the issues that came up in discussions with both public safety departments by changing some of the reporting structure in those organizations and noted that he would be meeting with the State Police Lieutenant to finalize the plan for the Troopers and the Constables.

Mr. Walter advised that he also met with the heads of several boards and commissions as well as representatives from the Goodspeed. Further, that he expected to be updated on all pending legal matters in the near future. He stated he felt he has a grasp on the key issues in Town and, in response to a question from Mr. Govert, noted that one of the top issues was getting the volunteer agencies (fire and police) working more collaboratively. He noted that he has scheduled meetings with the State Police Lieutenant and Fire Commissioner to work toward this goal. At Mr. Govert's request, Mr. Walter agreed to keep him apprised of any anticipated changes to the reporting structure of those agencies.

Mr. Walter further advised that he would be meeting with all Town employees individually and that he has asked them to come to those meetings prepared to discuss their top three goals for the year as well as what help they would need from him to accomplish those goals.

There was a general discussion concerning public meeting minutes and the use of Executive Sessions. Mr. Dill advised that there was a Freedom of Information presentation scheduled for November 26th and noted it might be helpful for Mr. Walter to attend that session.

A. Appointment of Secretary: A motion was made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Walter, to appoint Mr. Lyman as Secretary. Unanimous aye.

B. Liaison Appointments: The Selectmen discussed the liaison positions; it was noted that, by Statute, First Selectmen Walter would be an ex-officio member of all of the Town Boards and Commissions. Mr. Govert expressed a desire to continue to participate on the Local Prevention Council and Emergency Management Board. The following appointments were accepted by consensus of the board:

Peter Govert Liaison Appointments: Local Prevention Council, Senior Services, Youth and Family Services, Recreation, and Emergency Management.

Emmett Lyman Liaison Appointments: Land Use (Planning and Zoning, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses, Conservation, Water Pollution Control Authority), Zoning Board of Appeals, Historic District, and Open Space.

Mark Walter Liaison Appointments: Board of Finance, Board of Education, Public Works, School Building Committee, Public Safety (Police Department, Fire Department and Ambulance Association), Economic Development, and all other issues.

Mr. Walter noted a letter would be sent to each board and commission informing them of their liaison.

6. Citizen's Concerns: Mr. Agosta introduced himself to the Selectmen and noted that he was on the Zoning Board of Appeals. He stated that he had been in a management position for a number of years during his career and was familiar with the concept of pay raises being tied to meeting stated goals and also how favoritism could play a role in a business environment. He referenced a recent newspaper article quoting the newly elected First Selectman which indicated that Mr. Walter was asking Town employees to identify three goals that they would achieve over the next year.

In response to Mr. Agosta's request for clarification, Mr. Walter advised that he did request Town employees to identify three top goals for the year and he expected to evaluate them on achieving those, however, he was not sure that pay for municipal employees could be tied to the achievement of stated goals.

Mr. Agosta stated that he wanted to be sure that there would be no favoritism in the Town's government.

Mr. Merrow introduced himself and stated he wanted to speak in favor of the Town's current policy on acquiring open space. He noted that there were several significant parcels under consideration by the Town and encouraged Mr. Walter to support the purchase of those properties. He stated that Mr. Ventres was a strong advocate for acquiring open space and could provide Mr. Walter with the background of all relevant parcels. It was also noted that, through the efforts of Mr. Ventres, East Haddam has received a significant amount of State grant money for several recent open space purchases.

7. Old Business:

A. 4 - 8 Middle School Discussion: Mr. Govert noted that the project was on-time and on-budget.

Mr. Walter advised that a tour of the site was scheduled for 12:00 noon on November 15th, and invited Mr. Govert to participate. In response to Mr. Govert's suggestion that the Building Committee also be invited, Mr. Walter noted that they had just completed a walk-through.

B. Goodspeed Update: Mr. Walter reported that he had had an introductory meeting with Michael Price, Dan McMahon, and Hattie Guin-Kittner from the Goodspeed and has scheduled a follow-up meeting for the next week. He noted that he was very positive about the theatre's proposed new actors' housing and initiatives with the Town.

C. Ethics Policy: Mr. Walter stated that he had briefly reviewed the draft policy. Mr. Govert provided some background on the draft, noting that the previous Selectmen had used Colchester's Ethics Policy as a guide. He stated, however, that after Attorney Bennet reviewed the draft he had several concerns. Mr. Govert advised that the previous Board of Selectmen had discussed the need for a committee to pursue finalizing a draft policy and Mr. Walter might want to consider the same.

Mr. Lyman advised that he believed an Ethics Policy was a good idea and would like to see the Town move forward on this item. Mr. Govert counseled patience and recommended meeting with Attorney Bennet as a first step. Mr. Walter advised that he would table the item until the next Board of Selectmen's meeting so that he would better familiarize himself with the subject matter.

D. Clean Energy 20% by 2010 Campaign: Mr. Walter advised that he has a file on the Town's electrical usage. Mr. Govert provided some background on the Clean Energy 20% by 2010 Campaign and noted that the next step was to provide Mr. Wall with the usage data so that he could analyze it to determine the premium the Town would have to pay to participate.

8. New Business:

A. Acceptance of Braverman Conservation Easements & Restrictions, Drainage Easement, Open Space Conveyance and Roadway Conveyance: Mr. Walter provided a map related to the Braverman property and the Selectmen reviewed same.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, that the Board recommends to the town meeting the acceptance of the following conveyances:

1. A certain Conservation Easement and Restriction granted by ROBERT J. BRAVERMAN and CLAIRE M. BRAVERMAN to the TOWN OF EAST HADDAM, affecting certain property described on a certain map entitled "Record Subdivision Map Land Now or Formerly of Robert J. Braverman and Claire M. Braverman Bogue Lane and Shanaghan Road Tax Map 29 Lot 1 East Haddam, Connecticut Date: February 6, 2007 Scale 1"=40' Revised 6/01/07 Added Cons. Easement Annino Survey, LLC, Deep River, Connecticut, said map being on file in the Land Records of Town of East Haddam, and that the First Selectman is hereby authorized to execute into such Conservation Easement and Restriction on behalf of the Town.

2. A certain Drainage Easement granted by ROBERT J. BRAVERMAN and CLAIRE M. BRAVERMAN to the TOWN OF EAST HADDAM, as shown on the survey map referenced herein.

3. A certain Warranty Deed granted by ROBERT J. BRAVERMAN and CLAIRE M. BRAVERMAN to the TOWN OF EAST HADDAM, of property for Open Space purposes, as shown on the survey map referenced herein.

4. A certain Warranty Deed granted by ROBERT J. BRAVERMAN and CLAIRE M. BRAVERMAN to the TOWN OF EAST HADDAM, of property for highway purposes, as shown on the survey map referenced herein.
Unanimous aye.

B. Matthews Drive Industrial LLC Property Conveyance: The Selectmen reviewed a map related to the Matthews Drive Industrial LLC Property Conveyance and there was a general discussion regarding the purpose of the conveyance. It was noted that the purpose for the proposed conveyance was for ease of snow-plowing.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, that the Board recommends to the town meeting the acceptance of two certain conveyances, one from PARR INDUSTRIAL, LLC and one from MATTHEWS DRIVE INDUSTRIAL, LLC which, when taken together, convey the remaining portion of Matthews Drive to the Town of East Haddam. The property being conveyed to the Town are shown and described on a certain survey entitled "Survey Plan Showing Parcels to be Conveyed to the Town of East Haddam, Matthews Drive, East Haddam, Connecticut, Date: November 16, 1999, Prepared by Angus McDonald/Gary Sharpe & Associates, Inc." said map being of file with the Town Clerk of East Haddam. Unanimous aye.

C. Open Space – Sabine Property Agreement: Mr. Dill provided some background on this item. It was noted that the item was on the agenda for informational purposes only at this time.

D. Acceptance of Donation through Neighborhood Assistance Act: Mr. Walter noted that Maus & Son has made a donation to the Open Space Acquisition Fund through the Neighborhood Assistance Act and the gift must be accepted and appropriated at a Town Meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept a donation of \$500.00 from Maus & Son through the Neighborhood Assistance Act Program, to send to the Board of Finance for approval, to send the acceptance to Town Meeting for approval, and to send a letter of appreciation to Maus & Son. Unanimous aye.

E. Volunteer of the Month: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a letter from Sophie Soja, Food Bank Manager, dated April, 2007. Ms. Soja nominated Veronica Bogel for Volunteer of the Month. She noted in her letter that, "*[Ms. Bogel] has worked diligently and effortlessly these past eight years servicing the families of East Haddam*".

Motion made by Mr. Govert, with gratitude, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to name Veronica Bogel as a volunteer of the month for November 2007. Unanimous aye.

F. Tax Refunds: Mr. Walter reported that there were no tax refunds to consider at this time.

9. Public Comment: Mr. Dill advised that he would make his files available to the new Selectmen. He also provided background on the following issues:

- Members of the Transfer Station Staff Planning Group included himself, Bob Bennett, Paul Varkala, Brad Parker, and Fred Thumm. The group was to review the operations of the Transfer Station and the facility and recommend a plan for more efficient operations. He noted that follow-up should be done on a proposed schedule change and offered to continue on the committee.
- During his term on the Board of Selectmen, he had been appointed to the Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed Study Committee. He offered to step-down from the position in favor of one of the current Selectmen.
- Keys to the handicap elevator at the Grange Hall would have to be distributed to appropriate people and those people would need to attend training. Mr. Walter stated he would follow-up with Ms. Zemienieski on this item.
- The Board of Selectmen have been negotiating with the Goodspeed regarding a piece of property that would provide easier access to the Town Office Site. Mr. Dill expressed disappointment that the Goodspeed appeared to have backed-away from those negotiations at this time and recommended follow-up steps should be taken.
- He was a member of the Police Study Committee and he would turn his notes and back-up materials over to the new Board of Selectmen.
- He noted that parking at the Annex on the evenings when Town meetings and theatre performances coincide was often problematic. Mr. Dill suggested moving some of the Board of Selectmen meetings to the Grange. Mr. Walter noted that he would look into that, but it was his understanding that the Grange was heavily booked. It was noted that a change in location should not be made before January 1st since the meeting schedule and locations for 2007 have already been published.

10. Selectmen's Discussion:

Mr. Lyman referenced materials in the Selectmen's meeting packets regarding a traffic control program know as "Pace Car". He provided a brief explanation of how the program worked and stated that many cities were using the program to help reduce speeding. He advised that participants pledge to drive safely, courteously, and within speed limits. Participants get a "Pace Car" decal to put on their vehicle window. Mr. Lyman noted that it not only helps control traffic, but also gets the public involved in the solution.

Mr. Govert expressed support for the idea and recommended bringing the program to the attention of the State Troopers and the Constables. He also suggested advertising it in the Town newsletter. Mr. Lyman agreed to do some additional research on the Program and would bring his findings to the next Selectmen's meeting.

Mr. Govert noted that Selectmen Walter and Lyman had campaigned on a promise to reduce the budget. He pointed out that the Board of Education was the largest budget item at 62%. He advised that he was a strong supporter of education and that he would be very cautious about reducing their budget in any way.

Mr. Govert further stated that Public Works was the second largest budget item at 10%. He advised that studies have shown that there was a long-term price for putting off road maintenance and noted that reports show that the savings achieved were not proportional to the increased expense to do the work at a later date.

Mr. Lyman advised that it was not the new Selectmen's intention to cut the budget, but rather, to maintain a zero-growth budget. Mr. Govert stated that he would keep an open mind on suggestions to keep expenses in control, however, he wanted Mr. Walter and Mr. Lyman to be aware of his position.

Mr. Govert requested the other Selectmen keep him in the loop on Town business and stated e-mail works well for him. He also wanted the Selectmen to be aware that items would come up that they do not all agree on and, when he was arguing his points, he was arguing about differing opinions and it was not personal.

A. 2008 Board of Selectmen Meetings: The Selectmen reviewed the proposed 2008 meeting schedule. Mr. Govert recommended changing the January dates to the 2nd and 16th. The Selectmen agreed to change those dates and finalized the schedule.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Tape 539B
540A
540B

Respectfully submitted,

Emmett Lyman, Secretary