

Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
December 5, 2007
Regular Meeting Minutes

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

Also present: Linda Zemienieski, Randy Dill, Kate Swift, Nick Dodd, Harvey Thomas, Joel Ide, John Matthew, Charlie Farrow, Maryjane Malavasi, Ernie Malavasi, and Jim Ventres.

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: Mr. Walter asked that item 7.E. Open Space – Sabine Property Agreement be moved to follow item 5.B. Plan of Conservation and Development Discussion to accommodate guests speaking on that issue. Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the agenda as amended. Unanimous aye.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Special Meeting of November 14, 2007 (1:00pm): Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the special meeting of November 14, 2007 (1:00pm) as written. Unanimous aye.

Regular Meeting of November 14, 2007 (7:30pm): Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 14, 2007 (7:30pm) as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence: Mr. Walter presented an invitation to the Oak Grove 25th Anniversary celebration on December 9 at 1:00pm. He noted that if anyone wished to attend they should contact Linda Zemienieski to respond for their attendance. Mr. Govert asked who attended this event. Mr. Walter responded he believed it was the residents.

Mr. Walter also presented a packet of information sent out by the Economic Development Commission to all business owners in East Haddam. He pointed out that the flyer for advertising in the new events magazine was also included in the mailer.

5. First Selectman's Report: Mr. Walter reported on the following items:

- He would be participating in the Children's Night on Moodus Green on December 6. The festivities start at 5:30 p.m. with the parade at 6:00 p.m.
- It was brought to his attention by Laurie Alt that the space at the present polling location (old Town Hall) was no longer suitable given the amount of traffic it received during an election and her goal was to move the polling location to one of the schools. He noted that he has asked Laurie Alt to research the requirements for using a school with Dr. Solek and report back to him. He commented that there were too many unanswered questions that needed to be answered before a decision could be made. Mr. Dill added that there was a discussion after the last election that the

difficulty of using the old Town Hall was that the town has 30 privacy booths but could only set up 12 in the space available. He commented that he understood that Dr. Durham was already approached on this and that he did not believe it would be difficult to change to a school location. Dr. Durham had offered the high school and thought he could work around the school issues. Mr. Govert noted that he did not understand the timing nor the rush on this. Mr. Walter explained that Ms. Alt was trying to complete this for the primary on February 5 and there needed to be a public notice 31 days prior to the primary. In order to do that the town needed to determine a location. Mr. Lyman commented that primaries tend to have relatively low turnouts and he felt it was not critical to move for the primary but they should focus on the move for November. Mr. Govert agreed and suggested a special meeting to discuss this once further information was received. The board agreed and would make a decision later on in the meeting regarding the date.

- Employee meetings would be starting shortly. He explained that he would be meeting with each employee reviewing their goals and ideas for achieving better productivity for the town and reducing overall costs.
- The Town of East Haddam has a new Resident State Trooper, Steve Bellandese. He was the Resident State Trooper in Salem and would be joining Jeff Rhoades and his canine. Mr. Govert asked that Mr. Walter invite Trooper Bellandese to a Selectmen's meeting so that the board could meet him. Mr. Walter noted that he felt that was a good idea.
- He has met with the town's representative from CIRMA (Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency), our insurance company for liability, auto, property and workers' compensation and felt we had a good program through them. He noted that we were within the appropriate ranges regarding our claim activity. He explained that we were in the middle of our second year of our three-year rate guarantee. He noted that the company would not commit at this time to offering anyone the three-year rate guarantee contract again.
- He also attended a CCM (Connecticut Conference of Municipalities) workshop, FOI (Freedom of Information) workshop, CRVCEO (Connecticut River Valley Council of Elected Officials) meeting which promoted discussions between all the local First Selectmen, and DECD (Department of Economic and Community Development) workshop, which discussed a new state-wide strategic plan.

A. Middle School Conversion Committee Report: Mr. Walter introduced Maryjane Malavasi, Chairman of the Middle School Conversion Committee. Ms. Malavasi noted that part of the charge of the MSCC was to make quarterly reports to the Board of Selectmen and as chairman she was there to give their first report.

She noted that the committee was new, having only met twice as a full board. She explained that they have toured the current middle school twice and formed four subcommittees – facility needs, space needs, public relations, and grants/legal. Questionnaires have been distributed to town departments, boards & commissions, and other entities that may be considered for space, such as Youth and Family Services and the Ambulance.

She reported that five members toured Westbrook Town Hall, which was a recently converted school and that it was extremely beneficial and educational. She noted that the committee has two other tours scheduled for next week. The committee hoped to learn as much as they could from the experience of other towns on what they should do and what they should not do. She would be meeting with members of the Westbrook and Portland building committees to get advice on how to move the project forward in a timely manner.

Ms. Malavasi noted that the committee would be providing the Finance Director with a budget for operational expenses for the current middle school as of July 1, 2008; which was when the Board of Education was scheduled to turn the school over to the town. Bob Carroll, School Business Manager, has supplied the committee with documentation for use as a guide.

She commented that a series of public hearings would be held throughout the project. The committee felt that input and support from the public were vital to the project and were making public relations a priority.

She noted that the next regular meeting was December 17 and this report was just an introduction of the committee. She planned to report quarterly, or as often as needed throughout the project.

She added that if the board had not already chosen a liaison to the committee, they would like to suggest Pete Govert. She explained that one of their main focuses was energy efficiency, and she knew that Mr. Govert would be a tremendous asset in that area. She noted that she would work closely with whoever was chosen in order to focus on the needs and priorities of the entire board.

Mr. Govert asked if the committee received written reports from the towns they have visited or planned on visiting. Ms. Malavasi responded that at the moment they did not have anything but they would be getting some information when they met with the members of the other town's building committees. Mr. Walter asked if any of the converted town halls visited kept the basic structure of the school or were they completely gutted and rebuilt. He was interested in a comparison of the cost per square footage in the two options. Ms. Malavasi noted that Westbrook appeared to have gutted the entire building and redone the interior. Their project was approximately \$5 million. She noted that she would not know about the other town halls until they toured them as they had limited information at this time. They would be visiting Portland and Waterford next week and then possibly Old Saybrook, Montville and Cromwell. Ms. Malavasi noted that they spoke at length with the facilities manager in Westbrook and he has offered his services and contacts to us.

Mr. Govert asked when the MSCC met. Ms. Malavasi responded that they currently meet once a month, generally on the third Monday of the month barring any necessary changes for holidays and the subcommittees met more often. She explained that agendas and minutes were emailed to the Selectman's Office. It was requested that both Mr. Govert and Mr. Lyman be on the contact list as well. It was noted that Ms. Zemienieski would get the email addresses to Ms. Malavasi.

Mr. Govert asked what were some of the striking points learned from Westbrook. Ms. Malavasi noted that they viewed comparable offices such as Land Use and some of the spaces

looked just as small and crowded as what we have now. She explained that they learned more about what they should do differently than Westbrook. She commented that in speaking with the facilities manager his opinion was that you should put it in new, put it in right and it would pay for itself in the future. Mr. Ventres noted that they had a very tight grip on energy savings with heat and lighting.

Ms. Malavasi closed by saying that the committee wanted to reach out to as many civic groups as possible to tap into the knowledge that they might have. The committee had no intention of working in a bubble and was looking for as much community input as possible.

B. Plan of Conservation and Development Discussion: Mr. Walter introduced Harvey Thomas to speak on the Plan of Conservation and Development. Mr. Thomas noted that the previous board had two or three opportunities to express their concerns on the plan and that since the composition of the board has changed he felt the need to give the new members time to express their views and have any questions answered prior to the public hearing on December 6.

Mr. Walter asked how Mr. Thomas planned to run the public hearing. Mr. Thomas replied that he planned about an 8 to 10 minute general introduction then planned to go through the plan chapter by chapter. Mr. Walter asked if they considered sending out an email where ideas could be forwarded to them. Mr. Ventres responded that the Plan of Conservation and Development has been on the website for six months and in the beginning of the document there was a cover letter explaining who and where to contact with comments or questions and the date of the public hearing. He noted that a lot of people have commented that they have read it on line and came in with suggestions.

Mr. Thomas noted that in his opinion it was unlikely that they would get through the whole document at the December 6 public hearing and that it may require more than one public hearing. He noted that they anticipate reviewing the document annually to determine what has been accomplished and what needed to be revised. Mr. Walter noted that he advised making that real clear at the public hearing so there was no misunderstanding that this document would be cast in stone and that it was an evolving document. Mr. Ventres noted that there was a check list for departments to follow through with their projects. He noted that if they change the text of the document they would have to open it up to a public hearing which keeps the document fresh.

In response to a comment from Mr. Govert, Mr. Ventres explained that this document was a guideline. Mr. Thomas commented that the document set out goals that were desirable for the town to try to achieve. Mr. Ventres noted that one of the greatest strengths of the plan was that for future projects Planning and Zoning and the Board of Selectmen could look at the plan and see if a new project would be in conformance.

Mr. Thomas commented that the document as presently drafted represented a lot of work by many people and he felt it was worthwhile thanking all of those people. He added that other towns have spent as much as \$100,000 hiring someone to consult with the town on this effort and East Haddam's plan was done 100% in house with a lot of people's volunteer time. Mr. Govert suggested mentioning that at the public hearing. Mr. Thomas finished by saying that this was a plan for East Haddam and so it should be a product of East Haddam thinking not something copied from another town.

7.E. Open Space – Sabine Property Agreement: Mr. Walter explained that he had previously given the Selectmen the agreement to review regarding the purchase of the Sabine property. He noted that Planning and Zoning already approved this and it now must go to the Board of Finance and to town meeting.

Mr. Govert commented that it was noted in the motion that we were taking these funds out of our undesignated fund balance and asked why were not using our bonding authorization. Mr. Ventres noted that this was discussed at a Board of Finance meeting when purchasing the Patrell property and the plan was to temporarily use the undesignated fund and bond for the entire package when the town bonded for the school. Mr. Govert clarified that this was a stop gap measure until the bonding took place. Mr. Walter pointed out a letter from Governor Rell informing the town that we were approved for funding under the State of Connecticut's Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program for an award amount not to exceed \$240,000.00 for the purchase of this property.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam hereby adopts the following resolution to be referred to the Board of Finance and Planning and Zoning Commission for approval and referral to town meeting for approval:

RESOLVED, that the Town Meeting appropriate the sum of \$500,000.00 from the Undesignated Fund Balance, as recommended by the Board of Finance, for the acquisition of certain property described herein; and be it further,

RESOLVED, that the Town Meeting authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire for open space purposes the following parcel of land from Charles Sabine and Louis Ferrari, or current owner all that real property known generally as a parcel Daniel Peck Road, East Haddam, Connecticut and shown as Lot # 31 on East Haddam Assessor's Map # 59, together with any improvements thereon and appurtenances thereto, (collectively known as the "premises") and all as more particularly bounded and described in Schedule A to the contract between the Town of East Haddam, Buyer, and Charles Sabine and Louis Ferrari, Sellers, dated December, 2007, a copy of which is on file with the office of the town clerk."

Unanimous aye.

Mr. Walter noted that the Board of Finance would be having a special meeting to act on their approval in order to get this on the town meeting for December 27.

6. Citizen's Concerns: Charlie Farrow noted that before the next tourist season began he suggested uniting representatives from the restaurants, cultural organizations and environmental resources to discuss joint strategies. Mr. Walter asked if Mr. Farrow brought this suggestion to the attention of Bob Scherrer, Economic Development Chairman. Mr. Farrow responded that he had not and would call the office to get Mr. Scherrer's contact information.

Mr. Farrow also commented that he sent an email to the Selectman's Office 10 days ago and has not received a response. He asked what the procedure was for email and who answers them. Mr. Walter replied that emails should be sent to admin@easthaddam.org and asked Mr. Farrow to refresh his mind on the content of the email. Mr. Farrow noted that the email congratulated Mr. Walter on his election and asked why Pete Govert did not have a report at the Democratic Town Committee meeting regarding the selectmen's meetings Mr. Walter

commented on in his thank you article in the newspaper. Mr. Farrow clarified that Mr. Walter discussed in his article meetings with the Opera House, State Police and other folks but Mr. Govert had nothing to report on those meetings. Mr. Farrow did not understand if there were Board of Selectmen meetings why Mr. Govert had no report. Mr. Walter noted that Mr. Govert was not in attendance at those meetings. Mr. Walter explained that during his first few weeks in office he went out to numerous groups in town and he did not plan them as public meetings. He noted that Mr. Lyman attended some of those meetings. He added that after he was in office for a couple of weeks he did attend a Freedom of Information workshop and learned the appropriate rules for what constituted a meeting and would follow those guidelines in the future. Mr. Walter apologized for not getting back to Mr. Farrow regarding his email and noted that in the future he would be prompt with his email replies.

Mr. Dill added to help Mr. Farrow understand the process that Brad Parker attended a lot of meetings with various departments that Mr. Dill did not attend and did not know what was going on in every meeting even though he was a member of the Board of Selectmen. He noted that it was a common practice that the First Selectman met with various people on a daily basis and the other selectmen were not knowledgeable about all that took place. Mr. Walter noted that in the future he planned to contact Mr. Govert on a regular basis to keep him informed of the issues and that his schedule was open for review at any time. Mr. Walter noted that Freedom of Information was a complicated process and he was working through the process. Mr. Govert requested that a follow up meeting take place with the Freedom of Information organization.

Mr. Dill noted that there was a newspaper article noting that the Town of Canton set up on their website a provision that allowed residents to make complaints such as problems with roads, policing or other issues. Ms. Zemienieski noted that a website review committee was just formed to revamp our current website and this was one of the suggestions discussed as a potential option.

The board discussed at length what was learned at the Freedom of Information workshop regarding meetings, non-meetings, email correspondence, posting of agendas, caucusing and the need for a transparent and open form of government.

7. Old Business:

A. 4 – 8 Middle School Discussion: Mr. Walter noted that he went to the last School Building Committee meeting. He noted that there was an outstanding issue that came up just before the election regarding an easement from Comcast that needed to be signed and that issue has been resolved. He also noted that we received a \$2,266 refund of our installation fee because of the change from Adelphia to Comcast.

Mr. Walter explained that the other issue that came up at the meeting was that there was a big concern regarding the potential for vandalism of the fields that were just seeded. He noted that the committee has asked for additional police coverage to deter any vandalism.

Mr. Walter also discussed the claim of a neighboring well that went dry. He noted that the School Building Committee hired two consultants to investigate the claim and to prepare a report on their findings.

B. Goodspeed Update: Mr. Walter noted that he met with the Goodspeed and they laid out their actor housing plans to him. He noted that it was an impressive plan. He asked them at what point they felt they would have something concrete to show the different boards and they did not know yet.

Mr. Walter noted that there was a problem for the Gelston House and Goodspeed last Saturday night with the bridge. There was a long delay in getting the bridge fixed and getting DOT personnel on site. He noted that he would be placing a call to the DOT to discuss how they could improve communications when there was an issue with the bridge. Mr. Dill suggested that electronic signs be set up informing people when the bridge was out of service.

C. Ethics Policy: Mr. Walter noted that the board needed to set a date for a special meeting to discuss the ethics policy. It was determined that a special meeting would be held on December 11, 2007 at 10:00 am to discuss the ethics policy as well as the change of polling location. The board discussed the appropriate people that should attend this meeting in order to provide the necessary information regarding changing the polling location.

D. Clean Energy 20% by 2010 Campaign: Mr. Walter noted that there has been no progress on this at this time but he would try to work on following up on it over the next couple of weeks.

E. Open Space – Sabine Property Agreement: This item was previously discussed.

F. Powerhouse Road Safety Improvement Project – Phase I Discussion: Mr. Walter explained that on November 1 the Board of Selectmen approved awarding this bid to Hubert E. Butler Construction Company over the low bidder Old Colony Construction. This was done based on the trouble with Old Colony on the two bridge projects and the fact that they still owed two subcontractors money. He noted that this bid also required DOT approval for the award and Tom Burgess from the DOT informed the town that he did not recommend passing over Old Colony Construction as they were the low bidder. He noted that the town would be opening themselves to a possible lawsuit. Mr. Walter noted that he asked Fred Thumm, Public Works Director, for his opinion. Mr. Thumm noted that he was comfortable with Old Colony based on the nature of work to be done on phase 1 of this project, but he would prefer to go back out to bid for future phases of this project. Mr. Thumm also noted that the window for this \$400,000 grant was also shrinking. He noted that we were applying to extend the grant and for more money as the project has expanded.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to rescind the motion made by the Board of Selectmen on November 1 awarding the bid for Powerhouse Road Safety Improvement Project – Phase I to Hubert E. Butler Construction Company and authorize the First Selectman to interview Old Colony Construction to determine if they have the appropriate qualifications to complete Phase I of this project. Mr. Govert clarified that Mr. Walter was not looking for this motion to award the bid to Old Colony but just to investigate their ability to perform the job. Mr. Walter noted that was correct. Mr. Govert confirmed that Mr. Thumm was comfortable working with Old Colony and Mr. Walter replied that he was for Phase I. Unanimous aye.

G. Pace Car Discussion: Mr. Lyman explained that he spoke with Emily Burn of the Mayors Office in New Haven who administers this program. He noted that this was a traffic calming measure. He presented an example of a sticker and pledge used by New Haven. Mr.

Lyman explained that the town would produce the pledge and then would ask residents to read and sign the pledge and place a sticker on their car. The pledge stated that the participant would agree to drive within the speed limit and obey all traffic regulations. He commented that the program was non-punitive. He contacted the company for pricing and the cost ran about \$1.00 a piece for 500 or \$.70 a piece for 1,000. He also commented that he would work on an article regarding speeding for the newsletter and include this program.

Ernie Malavasi asked about the acceptance rate in New Haven as he was there on a regular basis and has not seen this program. Mr. Lyman noted that he was not sure as it was a relatively new program. Mr. Lyman noted that when he and Mr. Walter were campaigning one of the biggest complaints in town was about speeding. Mr. Govert discussed the perception and philosophy of speeding and he was fine with the concept. He did note that he was uncomfortable with the language in the motion specifying appropriate funding. He felt that indicated more of a blank check and he would prefer to determine a dollar amount for the program. The board discussed what they felt was needed to administer the program.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Govert, to explore the option of the Pace Car Program and approach the Board of Finance for not more than \$300.00 for funding. Unanimous aye.

H. 2008 Board of Selectmen Meetings: Mr. Walter noted that at the previous regular Board of Selectman meeting they did not vote on the meeting schedule for 2008 and they should take care of that at this meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the following dates as the meeting schedule for the Board of Selectmen for the 2008 calendar year: January 2 & 16, February 6 & 20, March 5 & 19, April 2 & 16, May 7 & 21 (5:00pm), June 4 & 18, July 2 & 16, August 6 & 20, September 3 & 17, October 1 & 15, November 5 & 19, December 3 & 17, and January 7 & 21, 2009. All meetings will be held at 7:30pm, with the exception of May 21, 2008, in the Town Office Annex. Unanimous aye.

8. New Business:

A. Appointment of Board of Finance Chairman: Mr. Walter explained that at the last Board of Finance meeting they deadlocked in selecting a chairman so the Board of Selectmen must now appoint the chairman. Mr. Walter read Connecticut General Statute 7-342 for the board.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to nominate Matt Budzik as East Haddam Board of Finance Chairman. Mr. Govert discussed Mr. Budzik's qualifications noting that he has been chairman for the last couple of years, has 12 years experience with budget issues, holds a B.A. in Public Policy and Administration and a law degree from Georgetown. He noted that he knows him well and he would be very well qualified for the position. Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Walter, to nominate Paul Maxwell as East Haddam Board of Finance Chairman. Mr. Lyman noted that he has known Mr. Maxwell for quite a number of years and felt he was very competent and capable. He noted that he has known Mr. Budzik for a long time and felt he was also very competent and capable but thought the town was looking for a change in terms of what happened last cycle and he felt that a change in that position was part of what the town sought. He felt that Paul Maxwell ought to be appointed and he would be very

capable and competent. Mr. Govert asked what type of experience Mr. Maxwell had on the Board of Finance. Mr. Walter responded that he was on the Colchester Board of Finance for four years. Mr. Govert asked if Mr. Walter could speak to the quality of his participation in Colchester such as was he ever the chairman or were there any initiatives that he undertook. Mr. Lyman replied that he was brought forth as a candidate for the legislature and ran a very successful campaign. Mr. Govert asked if it was against Linda Orange. Mr. Lyman noted that it was. He added that Mr. Maxwell was very competent and well respected and would make a very competent and capable leader for the Board of Finance.

Votes for Matt Budzik: Peter Govert

Votes for Paul Maxwell: Mark Walter, Emmett Lyman; Nay Peter Govert

Mr. Walter declared that Paul Maxwell was appointed as chairman of the Board of Finance.

B. Grant Acceptance – Federal Highway Safety Program: Mr. Walter reported that the town had applied for and been awarded a grant of \$20,400.00 for a comprehensive DUI enforcement program, effective November 21, 2007 through September 7, 2008.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of \$20,400.00 from the State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation, entitled “FY 2007/2008 Comprehensive DUI Enforcement Program”, and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

C. Resignation of Chatham Health District Representative: Mr. Walter explained that each town is responsible for appointing personnel to serve on the Board of Directors for the Chatham Health District. The number of representatives from each town goes by the population of the town. Brad Parker of East Haddam has resigned from this position. Mr. Walter read Mr. Parker’s resignation letter.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Brad Parker as East Haddam’s representative to the Board of Directors of the Chatham Health District. Unanimous aye.

D. Appointment of Chatham Health District Representative: Mr. Walter noted that the town is responsible for appointing a new representative to the Board of Directors of the Chatham Health District from East Haddam to complete Mr. Parker’s term.

Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Govert, to appoint Mark Walter as East Haddam’s representative to the Board of Directors of the Chatham Health District filling East Haddam’s vacant position that expires on July 1, 2008. Unanimous aye.

E. Tax Refunds: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen’s attention to several tax refunds.

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

- \$ 34.31 to Sotira Z. Tubaya;
- \$ 48.08 to Karen Murphy;

- \$ 47.64 to Becki Su Peckham.
- Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: Mr. Dill suggested the board to pay particular attention to the Plan of Conservation and Development, Chapter 12, Municipal Facilities. He explained that section has a long list of very expensive recommendations regarding pools, recreational complex and the idea of trying to acquire 10,000 acres in the next 15 to 20 years. He was encouraging the board to read that section as this would set a guideline for the town. Mr. Govert noted that he was questioning the concept of that at the beginning of the meeting. The board discussed questions that they would cover at the public hearing. Mr. Dill noted that one of the things the plan lacked was that it set out all these goals that the town should do but did not specify who should be carrying them out. He noted that at least 80% of the document has no responsibility assigned to any of the goals. Mr. Dill also suggested the board look at the Moodus provision as it was weak. The board discussed the plan at length and commented that these items would be addressed at the public hearing.

10. Selectmen's Discussion:

A. Elderly Tax Relief Public Hearing Discussion: Mr. Walter noted that at the Board of Finance meeting Monday night the Elderly Tax Relief Committee gave a presentation to the new members of the Boards of Finance and Selectmen. Mr. Govert noted that he did not attend because he called Chairman Mary Ellen Klinck and she noted it was the same presentation he had already attended. Mr. Walter noted that the public hearing would be December 13, 2007 at 7:00 pm in the Grange Hall.

B. Freedom of Information Act Discussion: This item was previously discussed.

C. Other: Mr. Govert asked to review the telephone conversation he had with Mr. Walter about the two constable positions. Mr. Walter explained the history of these positions. He noted that the Police Study Committee recommended a third Resident State Trooper but the town opted to hold off on that and advertise for two part time constables. The position closed and two part time constables were offered positions. Mr. Walter noted that he would like to hold off on the hiring of the officers and called the two applicants rescinding the offer until further review was done. He also wanted to give Jeff Rhoades and Steve Bellandese time to get a feel for the existing scheduling and constables and get a recommendation from them on whether the town needed to hire more constables. Mr. Govert noted that it was his understanding that the town had six constable and use to have eight. He asked if it was the intention of these hires to expand the pool of constables or increase the number of hours worked and in so doing increase the budget. Mr. Walter noted that the number of total hours would stay the same but there would be funds expended for equipment and uniforms. Mr. Walter noted that Craig Manfield explained that it was tough in the summer to meet the man hours needed with the lake duties. Mr. Govert suggested going through the budget process for the hires. Mr. Walter noted the he was looking at suspending the hirings not eliminating them. He just wanted more time to review the issue. Mr. Lyman mentioned the recommendation of the Police Study Committee of a third Resident State Trooper was still waiting to be acted upon. Mr. Govert noted that the recommendation was acted upon and the board chose not to fund it because they did not feel the town could afford it. Mr. Lyman noted that the recommendation was still valid and could be acted on at a later date. Mr. Govert agreed but just wanted to be sure this followed through the budget process. Mr.

Walter noted if the positions were needed it would follow though in the budget process. Mr. Govert mentioned how hard it was to get constables and keep the pool fresh and vital.

Mr. Govert stated that the idea Mr. Walter had about keeping employees accountable for their goals was wise and asked if Mr. Walter had given any consideration to the new EDC position and setting goals for that position as it was new to the town. Mr. Walter noted that he had an appointment scheduled with Bob Scherrer and Melissa Ziobron to review her performance and establish goals on December 10. Mr. Govert noted that he felt it wise to get them to develop some quantifiable, qualitative indicators of that position because we must review that position yearly. He noted that he advocated strongly for that position. Mr. Walter noted that in his three weeks in office the amount of effort Ms. Ziobron has put into that position has been amazing and he has seen some incredible information coming back from her as to what the businesses need.

Mr. Govert commented that there was a lot of chatter around town regarding the teacher to student ratio. He noted that education was a big part of the budget at 63% and of that percent 75% was for staff salaries. Mr. Walter noted that he was on record for saying that he would love to have a 20 to 1 ratio, it was a great goal, but the only warning he gave the BOE Finance Committee was that if the school were to pursue a 7% increase, which they were forecasting, it would eat up the entire increase and that would mean every other board and commission would not have any money if we tried to reduce the growth of spending in our town. Mr. Walter noted that he just gave them the warning that it was a great goal but they might meet resistance of that goal at the Board of Finance. Mr. Govert noted that the 20 to 1 ratio was a stated policy not a goal of the Board of Education so for it to be changed they would have to go through a policy mechanism change. Mr. Govert noted that his question to Mr. Walter was “did he support the 20 to 1 policy”. Mr. Walter commented that he would like a 20 to 1 student/teacher ratio but not at the expense of denying everyone else to achieve that policy. Also he would like to see the long-range analysis on numbers of potential students from the younger grades, which might make the 20 to 1 ratio happen naturally. He had heard there were only high student to teacher ratios in French and Spanish. He noted that the other warning he gave the board was that on the campaign trail some residents of our town, when bringing up that stated goal, felt that they went through school at a much higher ratio. Mr. Walter noted that he was not on record with an opinion of what we have to do, he was just stating to be aware that the town has elected him to keep the budget in line and reduce the rate of growth.

Mr. Govert noted that the other piece to the puzzle was the debate on a three school versus four school system. He explained that it was determined that a three school system had lower operating costs and was less fractured and it was discussed that when the town moved into the new school there would be room to bring in the extra teachers to meet the three school proposal. They held back hiring teachers year after year because of the space concerns. Mr. Walter noted that we might be able to achieve the three school proposal a little at a time.

11. Adjournment: Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 pm. Unanimous aye.

Tape 541A
541B
542A

Respectfully submitted,

Emmett J. Lyman, Secretary