

Board of Selectmen  
Town Office Annex  
January 2, 2008  
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen present: Mark Walter, Peter Govert, and Emmett Lyman.  
Also present: Paul Stuhlman and Sharon Wheeler.

1. First Selectman Walter called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of Agenda: Mr. Walter advised that he expected Mr. Harris to attend this evening's meeting to provide more details on his proposal to convert the Town's CL&P bills to electronic format and analyze its electricity usage. Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to amend the meeting agenda to accommodate Mr. Harris arrival. Unanimous aye.
3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of December 5, 2007, Special Meeting of December 11, 2007, Special Meeting of December 18, 2007, Regular Meeting of December 19, 2007, and Special Meeting of December 27, 2007.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 5, 2007, the Special Meeting of December 11, 2007, the Special Meeting of December 18, 2007, the Regular Meeting of December 19, 2007, and the Special Meeting of December 27, 2007 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence: Mr. Walter noted that he had received an e-mail from Ms. Sue Staehly on December 19, 2007, inquiring about the status of Mr. Govert's recommendation to form a Green Committee for the Town. She stated that she was interested in participating on such a committee and noted in her e-mail that Essex has a committee that was interested in working together with neighboring towns.

Mr. Govert advised that he had made the recommendation to the previous Board of Selectmen early last spring which had supported the idea. He noted that he had placed an ad in local newspapers soliciting volunteers for the committee but it had not generated much response. Mr. Govert stated that, in the meantime, several other priorities have prevented him from moving forward with the idea.

He stated that the High School has a Green Team and he has spoken with some of the members about participating on a Town Committee. The Selectman discussed several Town residents who might be interested in serving on the Committee or participating in some way. There was a general discussion about whether Mr. Govert should draft the Charge before meeting with potential committee members and Mr. Walter suggested that it could be useful to have the potential members involved in drafting the Charge. Mr. Govert agreed to organize a meeting of interested residents to draft the Resolution and Charge to bring to a Town Meeting to establish a formal Committee.

Mr. Walter stated that the Transfer Station could be a revenue generator for the Town if residents participate fully in recycling and noted that more education could be helpful. The

Selectmen discussed the possibility of having a regular green-column in the Town's quarterly newsletter. Mr. Govert also advised that the Board of Education has shifted to all green cleaning products in the schools.

5. First Selectmen's Report:

- East Haddam Swing Bridge: Mr. Walter advised that he has had difficulty connecting with the CT Department of Transportation to establish an action plan for times when the Swing Bridge was not working. He stated that he was also trying to confirm that State Police Troop K was, in fact, notifying the Fire and Ambulance Departments during such occurrences.

Mr. Walter further reported that he had received a call from a Town resident who felt that the sign located on the left side of the bridge advising that blinking lights would signify when the bridge was opening was confusing because the yellow blinking lights on the right side of the bridge are always on. He noted that DOT may have already resolved the issue.

- Mr. Walter reported on the following additional items:
- On January 1<sup>st</sup>, the Town's Volunteer Fire Department responded to a 4-alarm fire at a residence on Powerhouse Road. He advised that the Haddam, Colchester, and East Hampton Fire Departments assisted in putting out the blaze. He further noted that the firemen's efforts were hampered because there were no fire water pipes in the area and there was a large amount of trash on the property obstructing access. He stated the firemen could not pump out of the river because of the bridge construction so they pumped over 750,000 gallons of water from the Cave Hill Resort pond and transported it up to the fire. He noted that it was a well-organized effort but, unfortunately, the house was a total loss. Mr. Walter stated that the DEP, Scott Brooks, and the State Fire Marshal have investigated and reported that the cause of the fire could not be determined. He also noted that the owner does not have any insurance or financial means to rebuild and that he was temporarily staying with Mr. Will Brady and that the Red Cross has been notified. Mr. Walter advised that DEP will sample the properties water run-off to determine any run-off impact and that the Chatham Health District, Mr. Darin, and Mr. Ventres have initiated a clean-up plan. He also noted that he has requested advice from the Town's Attorney regarding the situation.
- A second notice advising residents in East Haddam and Moodus of their responsibility to clear their sidewalks of snow will go out in the mail shortly. Mr. Govert noted that he had received several calls from East Haddam residents about poor snow removal on the sidewalks.
- The contract with the consultant that had done the Town's property revaluation was reviewed and it was not clear whether or not the consultant was responsible for updating the property values on the internet. The first mailing was scheduled to go out and will provide information on the criteria used to determine property values.

6. Citizen's Concerns: Mr. Stuhlman commented that he had been unaware of the December 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Town Meeting until the day after the meeting. He asked if the Town could look into a better way to communicate public meeting schedules to Town residents.

Mr. Stuhlman also inquired about the conveyance to the Town of property on Matthews Drive. Mr. Walters advised that the property in question was two very small parcels on either side of the entrance road to the Industrial Park, just before the cul-de-sac at the end of the road. He stated that the conveyance of the property was simply to allow for turn-around space for the Town's snowplows.

In response to a question from Mr. Stuhlman, Mr. Govert advised that admission to the high school athletic games was being charged to off-set the cost of lighting the fields. He stated that he did not know if any analysis has been done as to whether or not the increased electricity expense was being covered by the admissions' fees, however, suggested Mr. Carroll at the Board of Education would have that information.

Ms. Wheeler stated that the previous Board of Selectmen had considered instituting an ordinance requiring residents' to secure trash that was being transported to the Transfer Station to prevent it from littering the roads. She noted that there was quite a bit of litter along Route 149 between Mott Lane and Falls Basham Road and inquired about the status of the proposed ordinance. There was a general discussion concerning how well an ordinance could be enforced and whether or not more public education would help. Mr. Walter stated it would discuss the matter with Mr. Thumm.

7. Old Business:

A. 4 - 8 Middle School Discussion: Mr. Walter reported that as soon as a few more windows are installed the structure would be entirely enclosed. Mr. Lyman suggested scheduling another walk-through of the building.

Mr. Walter also stated that he was not sure that the fencing would deter any vandalism of the fields. Additionally, he noted that he had gotten a call from a resident who was concerned that there was no stop sign at the end of the access road. In response to a question from Mr. Govert, Mr. Walter confirmed that the resident was concerned about the access road that empties onto Clark Gates Road. He stated that he has asked Mr. Moss to put up a temporary stop-sign until a permanent sign can be installed.

Mr. Walter also reported that another resident had complained that the snow plowed from the access road had been put on his property. He stated he would follow-up on this complaint.

B. Goodspeed Update: Mr. Walter advised that there were no updates to report.

C. Mobility Project Update: Mr. Walter advised that there were no updates to report.

D. Ethics Policy: The Selectmen rescheduled their January 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting to January 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. In response to a question raised by Mr. Stuhlman, Mr. Walter confirmed that the meeting would be open to the public.

E. Clean Energy 20% by 2010 Campaign: Mr. Walter advised that Mr. Harris had planned to come to this meeting to present more information on the long range benefits of the analysis he proposed. He noted that Mr. Harris had suggested that the analysis could identify occurrences of overcharges and confirmed that the analysis would cover a 12-month period.

A motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept Mr. Harris' proposal to convert a 12-month period of the Town's electricity bills to electronic format and analyze the information for a fee of no more than \$350.00.

Mr. Govert provided a copy of Mr. Harris' proposal and it was noted that the charge for the initial conversion and analysis was \$210.00. Mr. Walter agreed to amend his original motion as follows:

A motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to accept Mr. Harris' proposal to convert a 12-month period of the Town's electricity bills to electronic format and analyze the information for a fee of no more than \$250.00. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Walter reported that the Town has also enlisted the services of a consultant who was researching the accuracy of CL&P's billing for street lights. He advised that the consultant's fee was based on a percentage of any overcharges identified. Mr. Stuhlman advised that Mr. Frank Sabatino and Mr. John Russell may also be able to provide the Town with some perspectives on how to manage its electricity costs.

8. New Business:

A. Tax Refunds: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to one tax refund.

Motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to award a tax refund in the amount of \$34.87 to Emmett J. Lyman III. Mr. Lyman abstained from the vote. Motion passed by a majority of ayes.

9. Public Comment: Mr. Stuhlman stated that he found attending this evening's meeting very informative and noted that he would plan on attending future meetings.

10. Selectmen's Discussion: Mr. Govert stated that he had received an e-mail from Ms. Golec which contained the following requests:

- Consider changing the name of the Committee on Aging to Commission on Aging.
- Consider giving the responsibility for overseeing the building operation and budget to the Committee on Aging.
- Clarify who has governance over the cleaning person assigned to the Senior Center.
- Consider using the Board of Education equipment and staff to clean, wax and buff the floors at the Senior Center.

The Selectmen discussed the requests and agreed that the Board of Education would, most likely, not approve use of their equipment and staff to clean the Senior Center. There was a general discussion about the motivation behind the request for the name change and, it was agreed that before the Selectmen considered this request, Mr. Walter would talk with the Town's Attorney about the legal appropriateness of the change.

Mr. Walter advised that Public Works was responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the Senior Center and noted that he had referred Ms. Golec to Mr. Thumm for a discussion on the Committee's two requests concerning cleaning issues. Mr. Lyman stated that Mr. Thumm should

also be informed that the doors at the Center need to be repaired because they do not line up correctly which results in a considerable amount of heat loss from the building.

Mr. Govert advised that he would be attending a Committee on Aging meeting and would try to elicit the reason for their request to change the Committee's name to Commission on Aging.

Mr. Govert reported that he had attended a meeting of the Middle School Re-Use Committee and advised them of the Selectmen's interest in pursuing green alternatives in the renovation and re-use of the building. He stated that he had provided the Committee with some ideas for energy efficiencies and green alternatives and asked Mr. Walter if he would like him to be the "green liaison" to that Committee to encourage consideration of those alternatives.

Ms. Wheeler stated that she was a member of the Middle School Re-Use Committee and also on the Legal/Grants Sub-Committee. She advised that, as a result of her participation on the Legal Sub-Committee, the Committee had asked her to draft a Request for Qualifications for architectural services. She noted that when she started the project she had consulted the American Institute for Architects website and found recommendations for writing a "green RFQ". Ms. Wheeler advised that she had incorporated a number of the recommendations into her draft and agreed to provide the Selectmen with a copy of the draft RFQ.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Unanimous aye.

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Respectfully submitted,

Emmett Lyman, Secretary