Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
February 20, 2008
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen present: Mark Walter, Peter Govert, and Emmett Lyman.
Also present: Charlotte Gelston, Peg O'Brien, Deb Prater, M. Reiter, Susan Reiter, Eileen Schwartz, Linda Stuhlman, Paul Stuhlman, and Sharon Wheeler.

1. First Selectman Walter called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda: Motion made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Govert, to approve the meeting agenda as written. Unanimous aye.

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of February 6, 2008

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 6, 2008 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence:

Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of a letter in their meeting packets from Mr. Warren Morse containing a "*Proposal for Service to the Town of East Haddam*". He noted that Mr. Morse has offered to clean up litter on the Town roads using a pedal-powered cargo trike for a "*one-time contract basis for $20/mile, approximately $2400*". The Selectmen discussed the Town's annual clean-up day, where the Scouts, Community organizations, and Town residents participate in a one-day litter removal project in the Spring and their consensus was that they did not want to jeopardize that project. They felt, however, that some combination of efforts might be appropriate and perhaps, the Town could consider Mr. Morse's proposal for a Fall clean-up. Mr. Govert agreed to bring the proposal to the Green Committee for consideration. The Selectmen also discussed the possibility of neighborhoods, community organizations, and businesses adopting streets or sections of roads in Town for on-going litter maintenance.

Mr. Walter referenced a letter in the Selectmen's meeting packets from Mr. Anthony Ferraz, CEO of Brownell & Company, discussing Ms. Ziobron's efforts on behalf of his company. In part, Mr. Ferraz's letter stated, "*She is a dedicated, persistent, hard working lady who has the best interest of the East Haddam community … and we at Brownell & Company are grateful for her efforts in assisting us to meet our objectives"*. It was noted that Ms. Ziobron works with EDC as the Town's Economic Development Coordinator.

Mr. Walter advised that he had asked Trooper Rhoades to investigate a way to make the crosswalks in the Village safer for pedestrians. He noted that there were copies of two letters written by Trooper Rhoades in the meeting packets. The letter dated February 19, 2008 was written to Mr. John Carey of the CT DOT, Division of Traffic Engineering, advising that Trooper Rhoades had requested a PMT-1 permit so that he could "*place traffic barrels in the middle of the crosswalks in an attempt to slow traffic"* and requesting recommendations on "*how DOT in conjunction with the Town of East Haddam can make these two (2) crosswalks safer"*. His letter dated February 19th to Mr. John Decastro, Special Services Manager of CT DOT was written to thank him for his help on the project and advise, "*Our temporary fix to this situation is to place*

traffic barrels in the crosswalks … [and to ask] the state to repaint the crosswalks". The letter also stated that Trooper Rhoades has asked Mr. Carey, Division of Traffic Engineering, for "*a more permanent solution to this dangerous area of RT 82"*.

5. First Selectmen's Report

A. Dog Park Presentation: Mr. Walter invited Ms. Susan Reiter to give her presentation on a proposed dog park for the Town of East Haddam. Ms. Reiter introduced herself and distributed copies of their proposal. Mr. Walter provided Ms. Reiter with information on a proposed dog park in the town of West Hartford.

Ms. Reiter provided some background information and stated that a group of individuals interested in the project had collected over 400 signatures on a petition for the park. She stated that the group's mission statement was:

> "To establish a fenced-in, off-leash dog park where well-behaved canine citizens can exercise and socialize in a clean, safe environment without endangering or annoying people, property or wildlife. To develop a beautiful, well-maintained space open to all dog lovers and friends who are willing to uphold the park's rules and restrictions. To view this park as a community project, in partnership with the town of East Haddam, designed to satisfy the needs of dog-owners and non-dog owners alike."

She advised that the Parks and Recreation Commissioners endorsed the proposal and Mr. Walter read a letter of support for the project written by Ms. Quinn on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Ms. Reiter identified the question of liability as a main concern and advised that Connecticut State Law denotes the owner of the dog as responsible for any injury or damage done by their pet regardless of the circumstances. She stated that the group would like the Town to donate 1-2 acres of appropriate land to be used for the dog park.

In response to a question from Mr. Govert, Ms. Reiter advised that an on-going committee could be formed to manage the park. She also noted that one of the High School Vo-Ag teachers has expressed interest in the project and thought some of her students would also like to participate in the project. Mr. Walter provided an overview of the process that the proposal would have to follow for approval. He further noted that he had spoken with Mr. Ventres about the project who had identified three locations that might be suitable. Mr. Walter suggested that the group's next steps would be to meet with Mr. Ventres and walk the suggested sites to identify the best one for their purposes. They should then develop a formal proposal for submission to the Selectmen. He stated that their proposal should include a budget and information on how they would achieve financing for the project as well as how the on-going maintenance for the park would be managed.

Mr. Govert advised that the project's long-term success would be best achieved if the group could create an on-going volunteer committee to manage the maintenance of the park. There was a general discussion about management responsibilities and Ms. Gelston reinforced Mr. Govert's advice. She stated that Town residents would be more inclined to vote favorably on the proposal if they believed that it would involve no on-going expense to the Town. She also suggested the group create more publicity around the project to get residents on-board early in the process.

Mr. Walter made a motion, seconded by Mr. Govert, that the dog park steering committee be authorized to meet with Mr. Ventres to identify a suitable location for the park for the purpose of developing a formal proposal to submit to the Board of Selectmen. Unanimous aye.

6. Citizen's Concerns: Ms. Gelston stated that she has attended a number Commission and other Town meetings at the Grange and has had difficulty hearing some of the discussions at those meetings. In particular, she stated, the comments of individuals addressing the Commissioners were hard to hear because they generally have their back to the audience. Ms. O'Brien advised that both she and her husband have hearing problems and, even when they sat in the front row, it was often difficult for them to hear everything.

Ms. Gelston advised that she had done some research on portable PA systems and provided the Selectmen with information on what she felt was a suitable system available through Radio Shack. She further stated that she felt that an appropriate PA system might encourage more residents to attend the meetings.

The Selectmen stated that they felt that Ms. Gelston's recommendation was a good one and Mr. Walter agreed to research a portable PA system for the Grange.

Ms. Linda Stuhlman introduced herself and stated that she had two requests. First, she would like the Selectmen to set up a committee to research outdoor lighting ordinances and draft a recommendation for the Town. Ms. Stuhlman advised that she lived near the industrial park and stated that she felts everyone would benefit if the outdoor lights at the park had some shields installed. She distributed copies of sample lightening ordinances from other jurisdictions.

Ms. Stuhlman also noted that the blowers at the park were very loud and irritating and the number of them was increasing. She requested that the Town consider establishing a formal agreement with the owners and occupants at the industrial park that outlined some "good neighbor" policies. Mr. Walter agreed to look into her concerns.

Mr. Stuhlman advised that he planned on attending the re-scheduled Town meeting on the draft Plan of Conservation and Development next Tuesday and he would raise the issue of outdoor lighting at that meeting.

7. Unfinished Business:

A. 4 - 8 Middle School Discussion: Mr. Walter advised that the Building Inspector, Keith Darin, had reported a code violation with the electrical panel at the new Middle School. Mr. Darin had informed him that he raised the problem with the contractor who was aware of the issue. The estimate to repair the panel was $19,000.00 and Mr. Darin documented his findings and discussion with the contractor for the Building Committee. Mr. Walter stated that Mr. Moss would follow-up on this issue. He noted that the Building Committee has been diligent in keeping down cost over-runs and that they have used less than 1% of the contingency fund to date.

B. Goodspeed Update: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to an agenda in their meeting packets for a multi-Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 26, 2008, at 7:15 p.m. at the Grange. He stated that the Board of Selectmen, and the Commissions of Inland Wetland and Watercourses, Historic District, and Economic Development would meet simultaneously to have an informal discussion regarding the Goodspeed's actor housing project.

C. Ethics Policy: Mr. Walter reported that he had heard from Attorney Wells regarding revisions to the Ethics Policy addressing potential conflicts with the language concerning public officials' "*advocacy for members of the public"*. He stated that he has not yet had a chance to review Atty. Wells' comments. He read Atty. Well's February 19th letter, which was included in the meeting packets, and Mr. Lyman stated that he would make the appropriate changes to the policy unless Atty. Wells has already done so on his electronic copy.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Gelston, Mr. Walter advised that this was the final issue to resolve and he expected the Selectmen would vote to accept the draft policy at their next regularly scheduled meeting. At that time, the Policy would be posted on the Town's website prior to scheduling a Public Hearing and Town Meeting for residents vote on the Policy.

D. Clean Energy 20% by 2010 Campaign: Mr. Walter advised that he had met with Mr. Harris earlier in the day to discuss his analysis of the Town's electrical usage and his recommendations regarding sources of alternate energy. The Selectmen reviewed the options outlined on Mr. Harris's report. Mr. Lyman stated that he would like more information concerning the generation of wind and low impact hydro power and Mr. Govert advised that the Community Energy CCEO website contains a good deal of informative material on how their alternative energy was generated.

Mr. Govert reported that he had spoken with Mr. Harris and they agreed that it would be appropriate for the Green Committee to review his report and make a recommendation to the Town. There was a general discussion about whether or not Town residents would want to incur the additional expense of alternative energy sources and Mr. Govert agreed to do an informal survey regarding same. Mr. Walter stated he would get Mr. Govert information on the Town's total electrical bill so that he could have a context for his discussions.

E. Green Committee Resolution: Mr. Walter stated that Attorney Bennett had informed him that teenagers participating on the Green Committee can vote on matters that come up in their meetings as long as the vote does not bind the Town. In response to Mr. Govert's request, he stated he would forward a copy of the draft resolution to Atty. Bennett for his review. Mr. Govert agreed to have the 11 Committee members and two alternate member's names available at the next regular Selectmen's meeting so that they could vote on establishing the Committee.

F. Food Bank Transportation & Bus: Mr. Walter reported that he had learned that a Service license was required to drive the Senior Bus and that the volunteer that has been transporting the Food Bank staff on shopping trips has agreed to get that license. He advised that Mr. Thumm would research the requirements for obtaining a Service license. He stated that the Town could also place a "Help Wanted" notice in the Town Newsletter for Service licensed back-up drivers.

G. Signage Discussion: Mr. Walter informed the Selectmen that he had discussed the issue of a Town slogan for the Lions Club's Welcome signs with the Economic Development Commissioners. He stated that EDC has been using the slogan, "*Alive with history, art, and natural beauty"* on all of their publications for a number of years. There was a general discussion about the appropriate branding for East Haddam.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to use "*Alive with history, art, and natural beauty"* as a slogan on the two "Welcome to East Haddam" signs. Unanimous aye.

Mr. Walter agreed to notify the Lion's Club of the change for the signs.

The Selectmen discussed an appropriate location for the High School Championships sign and all agreed that replacing the sign at its present location on the East Haddam side of the swing bridge could contribute to a traffic hazard. They felt that a better location would be near the Middle or High Schools. It was agreed that Mr. Walter would consult with the Board of Education on the best location for the sign. Mr. Govert suggested that designing the sign would be a good class project for the High School graphics art class and Mr. Walter agreed to pursue his suggestion.

8. New Business:

A. East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee: Mr. Walter referred to a copy of an article that was published in the Regional Standard, titled "*Working to make Village area pedestrian-friendly*". He stated that the concurrent projects of the Town Office Site re-development, the Goodspeed's actor housing, and Mobility improvements, along with the possibility of a new theatre would have a significant impact on the Village. He noted that the projects would also raise some complex and challenging issues that would need to be addressed and coordinated. Consequently, he recommended that the Town should consider establishing a steering committee to provide guidance and oversight to the Village revitalization projects.

Motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to initiate the process for establishing a Village Revitalization Committee. Mr. Govert noted that a charge and resolution would have to be drafted and Mr. Walter agreed to enlist EDC's assistance in researching appropriate language for those documents as well as potential committee members. Unanimous aye.

B. Public Works Road Maintenance: Mr. Walter reported that he has asked Mr. Thumm to create a 5-year prioritization plan for Town road maintenance, including culvert, tree, and road work. He stated that he would like to create a master repair/maintenance plan and he also wants to differentiate the work that the Town was responsible for and the work for which other entities were responsible. Mr. Govert noted that, within the past two years, a consultant had created a computer modeled prioritization plan for the Town's road work and Mr. Walter acknowledged that Mr. Thumm would use that analysis to create his report.

C. Acceptance of Drainage Easement: Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to adopt the following resolution to be referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission and then Town Meeting for approval:

RESOLVED, that the Town Meeting authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept and acquire a certain drainage easement over land of Peter Govert and June Plecan, or current owner know generally #60 Bashan Road, East Haddam, Connecticut, together with the right to drain water and to install and maintain drainage facilities and appurtenances all as more particularly described in the proposed drainage easement and shown on a survey map of the same, copies of which are on file with the office of the Town Clerk.

Mr. Govert recused himself from the vote. Motion passed by a majority of ayes.

D. Grant Acceptance – Emergency Management Performance Grant: Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Govert, to accept a grant in the amount of $3,000.00 from the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, entitled "FY 2008 Emergency Management Performance Grant", and send acceptance of said grant to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting for approval. Unanimous aye.

E. Grant Acceptance – Athletic Field Improvements: Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to adopt the following resolution to be referred to the Board of Finance and then Town Meeting for approval:

RESOLVED, that an Athletic Field Improvement grant in the amount of $50,000.00 is hereby accepted upon the terms and conditions set forth in a certain Personal Services Agreement between the Town of East Haddam and the Department of Environmental Protection of the State of Connecticut, and the First Selectman, Mark B. Walter, is empowered to execute and deliver all documents necessary to said grant in the name and on behalf of the Town of East Haddam with the Department of Environmental Protection of the State of Connecticut for the fulfillment of the Athletic Field Improvement grant, and is authorized to affix the corporate seal of the municipality.

BE IT FURTHER KNOWN, that Mark B. Walter was elected as First Selectman and his term of office began on November 7, 2007 and will continue until November 3, 2009. As the First Selectman, Mark B. Walter serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the Town of East Haddam and is duly authorized to enter into agreements and contracts on behalf of the Town of East Haddam.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Govert, Mr. Walter advised that there are no stipulated conditions for the grant. Mr. Govert recommended sending a letter to Mr. Holmgren to thank him for his efforts on behalf of the Town in securing the grant. Unanimous aye.

F. Volunteer of the Month: Mr. Walter referred to a copy of an e-mail dated December 19, 2007, nominating Mary Beth Mordecai for Volunteer of the Month. He advised that Selectmen Govert had submitted the nomination, noting that Ms. Mordecai has been, "…*very active in contributing to the betterment of East Haddam*". His e-mail referenced her involvement in an Ad Hoc School Space Research Committee, the School Building Committee, and the Board of Education. He also referred to the buy-a-brick program which was initiated by Ms. Mordecai to raise money for a fitness trail at the new Middle School.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to name Mary Beth Mordecai as a volunteer of the month for February 2008. Unanimous aye.

G. Tax Refunds: Mr. Walter called the Selectmen's attention to five tax refunds.

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

- $ 303.04 to Jaguar Credit,
- $6,500.00 to Ralph Gometz,
- $ 56.12 to Thomas E. Miller Jr.,
- $1,117.56 to William S. Reiman, et al, and
- $ 74.98 to Robert W. Ballek.

Mr. Walter noted that the refund to Mr. Gometz was the result of a 2005 judgment that was never paid. Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

10. Selectmen's Discussion:

A. 4-8 Middle School Walk-Thru (2-27-08 @ 3:00pm): Mr. Walter advised that he has scheduled a Board of Selectmen's meeting for 3:00 p.m. on February 27th, for the purpose of a walk-through of the new Middle School.

B. Other: Mr. Lyman reported that he had met with the Committee on Aging and that the purpose of their request to change their name to Commission on Aging was simply to be consistent with the other Town Commissions. He advised that they had also requested EMR training for the paid staff and that the Town consider purchasing a defibrillator for the Senior Center. There was a general discussion concerning the cost of defibrillator as well as EMR training. Ms. Stuhlman advised that the Red Cross would provide training for a nominal fee and that other Town staff and residents could participate in the sessions. Mr. Lyman agreed to inform Ms. Roczniak that she should contact the Red Cross and/or Mr. Mansfield concerning EMR training. Mr. Govert suggested that grant funding might be available for the purchase of the defibrillator. Mr. Walter noted that the Senior Center should be equipped with a defibrillator and stated that it should be included on their budget's long-range plan.

Mr. Govert asked about the status of the cleaning issues and Mr. Walter advised that Mr. Thumm was working with the Senior Center on those issues. He also reported that Mr. Thumm had interviewed Mr. Havens and was satisfied with his qualifications as a handyman for the Senior Center and had authorized him to purchase supplies at Shagbark on the Town's account.

Motion made by Mr. Govert, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to bring forward at the next Town meeting a recommendation to change the name of the Committee on Aging to the Commission on Aging. Unanimous aye.

There was a general discussion concerning the future dates scheduled for Budget meetings.

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 9:31 p.m. Unanimous aye.

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Respectfully submitted,

Emmett Lyman, Secretary