

## **Board of Selectmen's Meeting – February 12, 2024 (Approved minutes)**

Robert McGarry called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, Haddam CT 06438

Kate Anderson and Peter Baird were present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Approval of Agenda:** Anderson made a motion to approve the Agenda. There was a brief discussion. Anderson made a motion to amend the agenda to include the appointment of the Zoning Board of Appeals full member and alternate member and appointment of the Board of Finance full member. There was a brief discussion. Anderson amended her motion to include the above referenced appointments and to discuss the process of creating the Planning Implementation Committee and Architectural Review Committee. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

**January 8, 2024:** Baird made a motion to approve the January 8, 2024, minutes. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**January 17, 2024:** Baird made a motion to approve the January 17, 2024, minutes. There was a brief discussion. Minutes were amended to change the vote from Unanimous to motion carried, baird abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

**January 22, 2024:** Anderson made a motion to approve the January 22, 2024, minutes. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**January 24, 2024:** Baird made a motion to approve the January 24, 2024, minutes. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**January 29, 2024:** Anderson made a motion to approve the January 29, 2024, minutes. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**February 5, 2024:** Baird made a motion to approve the February 5, 2024, minutes. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**February 7, 2024:** Anderson made a motion to approve the February 7, 2024, minutes. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comment:** Perron, Neal: commented that residents are making comments about our First Selectman. Personally, attacking the First Selectman based on where he lives is unacceptable. Haddam Neck is part of Haddam. People need to work together and make this town strong. The audience agreed.

**Selectman's Update:** Attached as Schedule I

**Board of Education update:** Attached as Schedule II.

**HKYFS Update:** Attached as Schedule III

**Tax Refunds:** Baird made a motion to accept the February 2024 Tax Refunds of \$ 13,336.87. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously. (Attached as Schedule IV)

**New Business:**

**Discuss Town Ordinance to dedicate the Higganum Cove as a preserve to be permanently protected:**

**Discuss Town Ordinance to establish permanent Higganum Cove Preserve Commission**

Ed Schwing made a presentation to the Board. (Attached as Schedule V)

Anderson Made a motion to move to legal counsel for review to dedicate the Higganum Cove as a preserve to be permanently protected and to establish the Higganum Cove Preserve Commission as a permanent Commission and to send to Town Meeting. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

**Appointment of Zoning Board of Appeals:** Baird made a motion to appoint Ron Borelli as a full member and Jamin Laurenza as an alternate to the Zoning Board of Appeals. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Appointment of Board of Finance:** Anderson made a motion to move Lundgren to full member of the Board of Finance. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Discuss ARC/PIC Committee/Appointments:** There was a brief discussion regarding the process of creating new Committees and appointing members to the Committee. The question has been sent to the Town Attorney for his review. The Board will be updated when it is received by the Attorney.

**Old business:** N/A

**Date & Location of next meeting:** March 11, 2024, at 6:30pm at the Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, Haddam CT 06438.

**Adjournment:** Baird made a motion to adjourn. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:17 pm. Minutes taken by JoAnn Ricciardelli

## **BOS Meeting Selectman's Update 2024-02-12**

### **Projects**

- Rossi Property
  - Information meeting – HKHS Auditorium, Sat 2/24, 1:00 p.m.
- Scovil Hoe
  - Nothing to report
- HES
  - No report
- Swing Bridge
  - Nothing to report
- Roundabouts – No report.
- Tylerville Water – No report
- Higganum Cove – On tonight's agenda
- Private Projects – No report

### **Personnel**

- Appointments to ZBA.

### **Other**

**Summary of January 2024**  
**RSD17 Board of Education Meeting**

**Cougar Pride**

HKHS teachers Kasha Topa-Finberg and Marcy Webster and students Molly O'Neal and Mason Mazzotta spoke about the HKHS Holiday Telethon in December. The event raised over \$15,000 toward Kindness Over Muscular Dystrophy. There were over 3,833 views of the event via the live stream.

**Student Representatives**

Madison Moriarty reported that several Music program students participated in the Southern Region Music Festival. Michael Perry spoke about the High School Midterms and the 8th-grade orientation at HKHS.

**Superintendent Report**

Superintendent Wihbey reported that the Office of School Construction Grants & Review (OSCGR) has completed its audit of the 2019 High School solar project and made the final payment of \$436,518 on 12/21/23. This gave the project an effective reimbursement rate of 48.57%.

The Superintendent advised that the FY23 audit is in the process of being completed by the end of the month. An EFS extension was received from the state, and a preliminary update was submitted in December.

The Food Services department featured several items on the December menu that were previously tasted by and approved by the Elementary School Nutrition Ambassadors.

**Board Subcommittee Chairs and Member Appointments**

Board Chair Sack reviewed the breakdown of the Board subcommittee assignments.

Communications Chair: Lisa Connelly

Curriculum Chair: Kathy Zandi

Facilities Chair: Shawna Goldfarb

Finance Chair: Prem Aithal

Personnel & Evaluation Chair: Corey Roberts

Policy Chair: Hamish MacPhail

Strategic Planning Chair: Prem Aithal

**HKEA Teacher's Contract**

The Board unanimously approved the new Teacher's Contract agreed upon by HKEA representatives and the Personnel & Evaluation Subcommittee. Board Chair Sack thanked

and acknowledged all who took part in the negotiations as well as all HK teachers for the work they do.

Items of note will include:

- The contract is a 3-year term and is available online
- The contract represents a 13.79% increase in salaries over the term of the contract
- Insurance cost share will increase by 1% over the next three years

### **Master Plan Update Report**

The January 18th Tri-Board meeting was successful, and Superintendent Wibhey has received positive feedback from several town attendees. A meeting is scheduled with the District, Arcadis, and Tecton to discuss continued planning and information discussed at the meeting. Two new potential options (9A & 9B) were added to be considered. The next steps will be to obtain more information and review the data of options 8, 9A, and 9B. Then, updated material will be brought to the next Finance and Facilities subcommittee meeting.

### **Curriculum Subcommittee**

Kathy Zandi reported that HKMS Principal Dorothy Ventura presented to the subcommittee the planned scheduling changes for the Middle School. This will be presented in a future BOE meeting once the plan is finalized.

The Board approved new Integrated Science, AP Chemistry, AP Statistics, Probability and Statistics, Civics and Contemporary Issues, AP Spanish, and Health textbooks.

RSD17 was one of only 17 out of 86 districts to have our Reading Waiver approved, and the state has added the RSD17 curriculum to its approved curriculum list. Several districts have contacted Jenn Beermuender to walk through our reading program model. The district received a \$64,000 Right to Read Grant to be spent over the next two years specifically for the approved reading programs.

### **On Our Website**

The RSD 17 Master Plan Information is available on the website under the District Facilities menu option [RSD 17 Facilities Study and Master Planning Website](#). Email [masterplan@rsd17.org](mailto:masterplan@rsd17.org) with any questions regarding RSD17's Master Plan project.

## February 12, 2024 - Board of Selectmen Meeting - Schedule III

I am pleased to provide our quarterly update on the events and services offered by the HK Youth and Family Services (HKYFS).

We are happy to report that the HK Craft Fair was a significant success, attracting 2,100 shoppers, our largest turnout to date. We extend our thanks to Middle School and High School student volunteers for their invaluable assistance.

We also extend our gratitude to community partners, including our school staff, for their collaborative effort in making our 2023 Holiday Giving Program a success. Thanks to diverse sectors of the HK community, we brought joy to 104 children and their families during the holiday season..

Looking ahead to 2024, HKYFS is prioritizing mental health, prevention, family connections, and overall wellness.

Last month we trained eight community members in QPR suicide prevention training, with plans to continue these sessions quarterly to equip our community with the tools to prevent suicide and support those in need. These can be offered in various settings and should be considered CPR for Mental health.

This past weekend we hosted a family planting event in collaboration with Running Brook Farms, with 18 participants, emphasizing the importance of connecting with nature, family, and community for wellness and stress reduction.

Coming up we are excited to welcome renowned Keynote Speaker Erica Cuni for “Burnout Be Gone: A Modern Guide to Healthy Parenting,” a two-part workshop series via Zoom, scheduled for February 27 and March 19. This series will offer practical, research-based tips for navigating the complexities of parenting in today's world.

On March 16th, we launch the “HK Family Hikers” program, in collaboration with the Killingworth Library and Trail Talk Blog. We invite families to embrace nature and togetherness through organized hikes with fun activities.

To participate in these events, visit [HKYFS.org](https://www.hkyfs.org) and sign up online.

We are pleased to announce that Denise Grodzicki has joined us to provide counseling services for HK Youth. With her extensive experience as a Licensed Professional Counselor since 2010, she will play a crucial role in supporting the mental health and well-being of our youth and their families.

Finally, our “Youth Voices Count” survey results have arrived. We will share them first with district administration and the BOE. In April we will host a community conversation to share information, provide resources and identify next steps to work together for our community youth.

## February 12, 2024 - Board of Selectmen Meeting - Schedule IV

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Bill Number</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Prior/Current</u>	
<b>Real Estate (01)</b>				
mueller, philip	2020-01-2551	\$3,219.22	prior	paid by homeowner & closing attorney
mutch, elizabeth - Chelsea Groton	2022-01-2580	\$1,082.83	current	paid in july by bank and homeowner. Bank paid in January
hansen thomas - Chelsea Groton	2022-01-1597	\$151.06	current	paid in july by bank and homeowner. Bank paid in January
best, maribel	2020-01-306	\$103.02	prior	just paid too much
corelogic - larosa	2021-01-1967	\$2,297.70	prior	old owner paid july, new owner and bank paid in janauary.
burge, elizabeth	2022-01-499	\$2,990.55	current	paid twice in january
cichowski patrick	2022-01-706	\$64.19	current	paid whole amount in July, paid additional money in January.
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$9,908.57</b>		

<b>Personal Property (02)</b>				
tin lizzy farm	2021-02-40860	\$8.08	prior	paid whole amount in July, paid additional money in January.
irrigation llc	2021.02-40221	\$66.28	prior	paid whole amount in July, paid additional money in January.
wall, linda	2022-02-41110	\$80.61	current	Just paid double
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$154.97</b>		

<b>Motor Vehicle (03)</b>				
Mainetti, Dominick	2022-03-55713	\$36.71	current	
mccarthy, robert	2022-03-56021	\$476.96	current	
toyota lease	2022-03-59379	\$88.07	current	
ANRG - JTR	2021-03-54358	\$43.90	prior	fee collected in house in error
hedges, todd	2021-03-53913	\$27.90	prior	
livieri ralph	2021-03-55322	\$8.06	prior	
French, David	2021-03-53133	\$14.74	prior	
Tamiso, Richard	2021-03-58877	\$16.17	prior	
Henry, Alexander	2022-03-54022	\$27.78	current	
acar leasing	2022-03-50024	\$490.60	current	
Mauri, Stephen	2022-03-55969	\$13.70	current	
winner, stephen	2022-03-60000	\$21.36	current	
Riebold, Richard	2022-03-57644	\$10.99	prior	
Grenier, Eugene	2022-03-53677	\$42.26	current	
vcfs - lease	2022-03-59538	\$304.93	current	

**Total** **\$1,624.13**

<b>Motor Vehicle Supplement (04)</b>				
terhune, john	2022-04-81283	\$235.50	current	
stevens, robert	2021-04-81386	\$235.43	prior	
jj motor corp	2021-04-80742	\$793.60	prior	
conlon, noah	2022-04-80234	\$7.92	current	
Cox, Brendan	2022-04-80246	\$29.37	current	
Whitney Ridge Stables	2022-04-81395	\$347.38	current	
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$1,649.20</b>		

**Grand Total:** **\$13,336.87**



## February 12, 2024 - Board of Selectmen Meeting - Schedule V

### Why a Higganum Cove Commission?

As I mentioned in my letter of July 10, 2023, and August of 2023, the Higganum Cove has unique environmental and historical qualities that would really qualify it to be a town monument, like our national parks, but of course on a smaller scale.

Indeed, with the waterfalls exhibiting exceptional geological features, with its historical building foundations spanning more than 200 years of our town's history, and with its direct environmental connection to the Connecticut River, the committee feel strongly we should make all efforts to preserve the Cove for the enjoyment and benefit of all Haddam residents, present and future.

Under its current structure, our entire committee is disbanded every 2 years and only reappointed at the pleasure of a new administration. The committee strongly believes that a permanent Cove commission with members appointed by this board, can provide the continuity and special attention needed to accomplish that goal.

For the foreseeable future, there is still a lot of work to be done to execute that master plan. This is always evolving, maybe more grants to be written, organizing private donation drives, budgeting a solid maintenance program, adding descriptive panels, specific park rules and much more.

Another big challenge is that, unlike the other town areas, we have a parking deficit and also the fact that the Cove is not only popular with town residents but also popular with out-of-town visitors.

We need a group of dedicated people who are knowledgeable and aware of the delicate balance between environmental limitations, historical preservation and making the Cove as accessible as possible to the public.

A permanent commission would provide the needed attention and oversight.

Thank you.



Ed Schwing for the Higganum Cove Committee

2/12/2024