

Board of Selectmen's Meeting – November 2, 2016 (Unapproved Minutes)

Lizz Milardo called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. at Haddam Neck Volunteer Fire Department, 50 Rock Landing Road, Haddam Neck 06424

Robert Duval & Sean Donlan were present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda:

Donlan made a Motion to approve the Agenda. Duval seconded. No Discussion. Approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Board of Selectmen meeting: October 19, 2016. Donlan moved to approve the minutes. No Discussion. Approved unanimously. Donlan made a motion to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting: October 26, 2016. No Discussion. Approved unanimously.

Public Comments: Thank you for coming to Haddam Neck!

Sue: Can you explain what is going on with the roads over here in Haddam Neck? We have a schedule for the roads to start in the Spring. Between all of the villages in Haddam there is over 100 miles of roads and they have not been maintained the way we would like them to be. I often hear “we don’t want them great because we don’t want people speeding through” and I understand that. Between the water issues and a lot of the roads deteriorating – it is affecting aprons on driveways – there are a lot of things that need to be done. We bonded for 6.8 million dollars to do road repair. Some of those roads are going to just have milling, digging up what’s there and we’ll make whatever needs to be done to catch basins and then they are going to have paving. Some of them are going to need total road reclamation. Roads that were scheduled to be done last year, those roads were just completed on the other side of the river as of yesterday. The roads that are going to be affected in Haddam Neck, those roads will be done as soon as the frost and the thaw is ready and we will do them as soon as we can. We have a new Assistant Public Works Director, Chris Corsa, he has been over here a few times looking at some of the irrigation issues and things that are going on. I know a few people had an issue with the water running off and we need to put in some curbing. All of that road work will take place in the spring. What I will do at that point in time – trying to figure out the best means of communication to the residents that are going to be affected. When we did the milling we did it all at once, different parts in different areas. It took about a month to get all the milling done and then to get all the roads paved. I will either send a letter out to all of the residents affected or some other means of communication so you know what is going to be happening and when. We are putting a new website in at the Town Hall – there will be information on that – but I know not everyone checks the computer. As far as prioritizing, I often hear “How come you’re doing this road? Why aren’t you doing my road?” The town engineers have met and we’ll be working on those roads that are numbered not in great shape and we’ll be working our way from there. I sat with Chris and we talked about a plan for road maintenance so this doesn’t happen again. If we are able to do just some chip/seal and maintenance that’s so much less expensive than having to reclaim a road which is millions of dollars. There is some road work that needs to be addressed. The milling, it’s an expense but we can’t let it get that far. **Sue:** I think people here would like to know what the plan is for each road in Haddam Neck. I know I would appreciate it particularly, Rock Landing. **Milardo:** Eversource has done a lot of damage to the road and Eversource is willing to compensate for that damage. That is one of the reasons why I pushed that off until the spring, because according to Eversource, once they are done with their projects, that is when they are going to pave. They are not going to waste the money of fixing the road and then have Eversource come back and go over the road with their heavy trucks and dragging everything out of there. They told me their schedule is to be completely done if not by the end of fall then by early spring. **Sue:** I don’t know what they are doing now, but there are heavy trucks going up and down Quarry Hill Road. **Milardo:** Part of the problem is I wasn’t given complete information on some the roads that do need additional work for drainage for catch basins and that type of thing. I will have more information about what is happening. Those roads that have run off – for example – I just had an issue on Old Ponsett, there was so much run off, where it’s surveyed to be, the road isn’t even a road anymore. We need to make sure those things don’t happen. I will probably send a letter out to the homes so everyone is aware of the schedule. **Resident:** Little City Road is like a through-way now. **Milardo:** There is another part of Little City Road that needs to be done. Foot Hills was really what needed to be fixed and tied that in. There will be some funds available that are not available yet, for example,

Candlewood Hill. We are trying to tie everything together so that by the time we get things in it will be ready to go. I will have Chris come through. He comes from working for the Town of Marlborough, he has 13 years of experience. He is up to date with a lot of the technology. I'm really looking forward to him saving us some money on some of the repairs and things that need to happen. There was more discussion among the residents regarding roads and speeds.

Milardo: We did work on Dish Mill Road in Higganum has been a project going on for the past ten (10) years. We finally got Dish Mill Road going on June 1, 2016. It is complete with the exception of the guardrails being replaced. I have been waiting for the guardrails to come in. I was told initially they would be going in in the middle of October and now I'm being told the middle of November. Those guardrails that are on the bridge on Dish Mill are going to come over to Clark Hurst to protect where there is a "fall-off" Chris is aware of the situation. He will be able to get over here and look at it. It's not safe to drive down there. A lot of people walk over there. Liz Glidden (Town Planner) said that building a walk-way for people to go through would be positive. I didn't know there was an issue there until June when I asked what we were doing with the guardrails from Dish Mill. Now I know and I am on it. It's on the list. I know about and so does Chris. The goal is to get it done before the bad weather comes.

There was discussion among the residents regarding Clark Hurst Road.

Real Estate (01)		
Coburn	Joann & Eugene	\$2,944.66
		\$2,944.66
Motar Vehicle (03)		
Hilt	Wayne & Phyllis	\$53.35
Helenek	Katherine	\$27.36
Little	Haylee	\$140.40
Coburn	Joann	\$92.98
Coburn	Joann	\$414.96
Coburn	Joann	\$163.80
Ntoukiantzis	Michael	\$63.15
Hyundai Lease Tilting Trust		\$509.84
Lazicki	Elizbieta & Andrzej	\$94.22
Lazicki	Elizbieta & Andrzej	\$104.21
Maynard	William & Gloria	\$37.44
		\$1,701.71
Grand Total:		\$4,646.37

Donlan made a motion to accept those tax refunds. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

Reports:

- **Municipal Agent for the Elderly**

In March we hired a new Municipal Agent for the Elderly. Her name is Eleanor Farrell. She's wonderful. She has a background with a law degree. She works out of the Annex Building where Public Health is held. She helped 69 individuals in the month of October. She saw 41 people in person and helped 28 people on the phone. What is great about Eleanor is that those seniors that are homebound or can't get out, she is very happy to go to them and meet with them. She is also spending a lot of time at High Meadow. CRT was there last week. She is working with them to further help seniors. There is a bus that is available a lot of towns are using to offer some type of Dental. We are looking to have that come in for the seniors and be available to Public Health. I will look to see if we can have that bus come here (Haddam Neck) and set up at the Firehouse. This is something that has been around for a couple of years and Haddam hasn't taken advantage of the program. I think it will be a good thing for our residents who don't have dental insurance or cannot afford dental care.

Old Business: No old business

New Business: As you may or may not know, there is a very big concern for a cell phone tower. There is no cell phone connections on the 154 corridor and it's a big concern for safety. Especially down in Tylerville. The Board of Selectman hired a Real Estate – Cell Phone Developer to look for a company who would be interested in putting up a cell phone towers in town. The goal was to find as many municipal properties as possible so that the municipalities could actually collect the rent on those towers. They have identified three (3) sites on the 154 corridor. The first site would be at the Volunteer Firehouse at 439 Saybrook Road, the second site would be on the Jail Hill property and the third site has not been disclosed to me. It is a private individual. It is in the Tylerville area but because they are negotiating that lease there is a confidentiality agreement and it cannot be shared with the town. At the end of the day, it is not up to the Town to decide where these cell phone towers are going go. It is up to the citing counsel. They are the ones who give their blessing at the end of the day. We have lease agreements/rental agreements in front of us with Homeland Towers that I cannot sign unless we go to a Town Meeting and we approve it at a Town Meeting. Due to our Charter, we cannot lease property without permission of the people from the town. What I have tonight with me is a Resolution that our Town Attorney drafted up that gives permission for the Board of Selectman to set a Town Meeting which will be held on Thursday, November 17, 2016 at 7:00 pm at the Firehouse in Higganum. I will have the gentleman from Homeland Towers there to answer any questions that any residents have. The amount of money that we are going to be paid while they are looking to construct the tower and put it up is \$1,000.00 per site a month and once that tower is erected we will be receiving rent of \$2,000.00 a month or 20% of the gross revenue, whichever is greater. We are guaranteed \$2,000.00 a month for each site. As far as how high the towers are, the citing counsel the say at the end of the day. They do a balloon test as well as other tests. It had gone and been approved by Planning and Zoning a few weeks ago. The Firemen went and appeared before Planning and Zoning and gave their blessing on where these locations are going to be. The town is going to be able to put all emergency equipment on these towers free of charge. They do have an interested carrier – they would not be going this far if they didn't – it may have 1 -3 carries on this tower. **Resident:** Has anyone considered how it will look from the other side of the river? **Milardo:** I don't know that you will see it from the other side of the river. They are going to do a balloon test - that is how they will determine if it will be seen. Homeland Towers will be able to answer these questions. This is why I am having him come. I have so many residents complain that there is no cell service. If you get into an accident or if something happens in the Meadows you can't get a signal. **Donlan:** The cell phone towers can't trump regulations. They would have to comply with whatever regulations there are. **Milardo:** When word got out to the residents of Haddam that we were interested in putting up a cell phone tower, I had 5 residents come into my office and asked me to put it on their property and I had 4 more letters requesting that it goes on their property because they want the revenue. **Resident (Deb)** I'm concerned about my view especially if it's on Jail Hill. **Milardo:** It's Jail Hill on the upper side of Quarry. It's across the street at the high point. **Donlan:** I think people pay attention to cell phone towers too cause it's pretty permanent. There is usually a lot of input from neighbors. **Milardo:** It's a ten (10) year lease, if we decide not to renew they have to take the tower down and put the land back the way it was. There was more discussion about the cell phone tower among the residents. **Neal Perron:** Does it have to go through Gateway? **Milardo:** It has to go through siting counsel which takes Gateway into consideration. **Mary:** You said there was \$1,000.00 a month? **Milardo:** While they are constructing, while they are looking for a "renter" let's call it... if the Tower company starts construction, they have to be actively looking for someone – a carrier – to use the tower – so while they are doing that we will be paid \$1,000.00 a month for twelve (12) months and we have the right to extend it if they are having trouble finding a carrier. I don't believe that is going to be the issue. **Resident:** When is the meeting? How do you let residents know about the meeting? **Milardo:** November 17, 2016. It has to be published in the Middletown Press (our local paper) per our Charter. We do put it on our board outside the Town Clerk's office and we do put it up on our website. Any other questions? I

normally don't do public comment in the middle, but its fine. I want you all to feel comfortable and ask questions. The meeting for the cell phone tower, the developer and Homeland Towers and the Town Attorney will be at there to answer any and all questions. Tonight I'd like to get permission to set a Town Meeting to open this up for discussion.

Duval made a motion to set up a Town Meeting for November 17, 2016 at 7:00pm for the cell phone towers. Donlan seconded. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

There is another Town Meeting. There are transfers that need to be done that the Board of Finance has recommended on November 7, 2016 at 6:00pm at the Old Town Hall. There was \$95,500.00 that was left from last year's budget in Capital non-recurring and we're looking to use those dollars to make improvements to the Old Town Hall, there's a large asbestos issue there and some leak issues that need to be repaired that have been going on for quite a long time. Make some repairs to the Community Center and a few other buildings that have neglected. There was about \$300,000.00 excess from last year. Approximately \$200,000.00.00 is going back into the general fund and \$95,500.00 is being re-appropriated. That Notice was in the Middletown Press.

CHRAD is a new health district that we joined July 1, 2016. I (Lizz Milardo) sit on that board. They are asking me to appoint one (1) or two (2) alternates to that board. I have been able to make it to all of the meetings. They sit and share space in the Land Use/Building Department so I'm asking if we can appoint Liz Glidden at least until she has her baby in February and then after that if I cannot attend a meeting or Liz couldn't attend a meeting I ask that JoAnn Ricciardelli be the other back-up alternate incase Liz or I couldn't get to a meeting. **Donlan** made a motion to appoint Liz Glidden as the first alternate and JoAnn as the second alternate. Duval seconded. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

Loan Closet: Public Health, located in the Annex Building on Jail Hill Road, that Candy Casale runs had a loan closet for many years. It was brought to my attention by CIRMA who is our town insurance that I had to be clear that they needed to have their own insurance for liability to loan out any type of equipment. They are a separate entity from the town. I had a meeting with the CIRAM representative. They are going over a lot of insurance changes that you would never think of. i.e. does the town own a drone? Lots of different things that are now being covered under insurance policies and I was told that we didn't have any type of coverage to cover the loan closet nor were we able to get coverage so they asked me to have a meeting with the Board of Directors to make them aware of that. I had that meeting. I guess there was some confusion as to who was supposed to be calling the insurance company. It has been addressed. Last I checked with them they were waiting on the insurance agent to get back to them to see if it was available. I had some citizens e-mail me, call me and send me letters that they were disappointed about the loan closet. I want to let them know that is something that the town doesn't have control over.

It's a completely separate entity. We are limited to municipality insurance. There are only a few carriers that are available. That is not something that we can do. We tried to make arrangements, there is a place in Guilford that has things available. We're trying to find ways to replace the need for those individuals that were using it. I wanted to bring this up publically so if someone had questions you can ask. There was brief discussion with residents regarding the loan closet.

Resident: Is it in our Charter that we need to have a Public Health Department in our town?

Milardo: The state requires us to have a "Health Department" and that's what CHRAD does for us. CHRAD does the vaccinations, they are doing the education etc... the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance are looking to have a Social Services Department under the Town to be able to take care of some of the other things that fall into place part-time. We are not, under our Charter, required to have Public Health but under the State Health Department we are required to belong to a district or have our own health department. With that, the State of Connecticut is making changes – if you don't belong to a district they are going to try to force you to belong to one and they are actually looking to cut the health districts down to maybe only have one (1) or

three (3) in the state. The new mention from the Commissioner of the Department of Health to all the Health Directors is: we're going to do that and each town is going to be assessed 1 ½ % their operating budget to pay for being part of a district. So right now we pay about \$85,000.00 a year to be part of that health district. That would mean for the town of Haddam, if this goes through the way the State wants it to - it would be approximately \$500,000.00 out of our budget would go towards being part of a Health District. We are fighting it. It's the way the state is looking to go they want to have more control. I am glad we made the change when we did. Everything is running smooth. I don't think we'll be under the scrutiny of being forced to go to a health district because we are a part of one.

Public Comments: Donlan: I'd like a little more effort from the camera man!

Deb Olsen: How is the Charter Revision coming along? **Milardo:** They have been meeting on a monthly basis. They had Joseph Centofanti come in, who is the chair of the Board of Finance for the last meeting to talk about some of the limitations to try to bring our numbers more up to date. They had Matt Heart come in, who is the Town Manager for Mansfield – to look at that form of government to see if that would be something we should look at or not. They are going to make a recommendation to have another committee look at that. They had one (1) public comment meeting. I have been to about 90% of those meetings. It's really been a lot of discussion, just trying to simplify it. It's so generic right now and sometimes that good and sometimes it's not helpful. **What's the timeline for the Charter?** It has to be done by April. **When do you think the next public meeting will be?** Would think after the first of the year. They meet again on November 21, 2016. **I heard through the grapevine that there was only going to be enough funding for one truck and one driver on this side? I am concerned about that, although we are small here in Haddam Neck we have a lot of roads.** That is not true. That's never come up. That's never been discussed. I don't know who said that to you, but that grapevine is sour.

The money that you are requesting to be transferred that you plan to use for Capital Improvement Projects, were those already in the Capital Plan? Some are and some are not. Once thing that has been on Capital Plan for a while has been the floor down in Land Use and when they went to replace the floor it's got asbestos underneath it. \$9,500.00 of that money needs to go to remediation to fix the floor. Some of those things are projects that have been in the works that have been funded and we just didn't have the funds for them. The biggest expense is the \$32,000.00 for the remediation of the Old Town Hall. **I remember a few years ago we had the Old Town Hall be repointed, what does it need now?** Bill Beroni, who is a member of the Masons contacted me and told me that there was a leak coming in to the Old Town Hall and water was pouring in. This has been going on since Paul DeStefano had been in office. The flashing around the false chimney, and I went up there and witnessed it myself, water was pouring in. A claim was put in last September with CIRMA and they started to investigate it and look into it and it cost \$1,400.00 for the record to fix the problem where the water was coming in. The damage totals \$130,000.00. The insurance company is only willing to pay for \$74,000.00 of the damage. They will not cover any of the asbestos abatement; that is not covered by insurance or any other repair that has to go back in. On top of that, we have to pay deductibles because it wasn't taken care of the first time there was water there was a secondary event so every time there is an event the insurance company can add a deductible. So before we start paying out any more money in deductibles I have to get repaired what the issue is. In their social room where they meet the walls and the plaster are crumbling. It's open with asbestos issues, I'm concerned about things being airborne. Our building budget to take care of all of the buildings in town is \$50,000.00. If I was to do just that one building that would wipe out our entire budget for everything else. It's got to get done. **Just to go back a step, I am confused as to why it hasn't been addressed ten (10) years ago when it first happened.** I was told it started about 3 or 4 years ago. **Donlan:** It was never brought to our attention. **Duval:** A new roof was put on so we thought it was fixed. **Deb Olsen:** And that's why I'm confused about why we are having these problems. I suppose too many years have gone by to hold the person who did the work responsible. **Milardo:** Yes. And now we are stuck with a mess. We are going to have to break it

up – we had a meeting with the Finance Director, Public Works and the Contractor and CIRMA to talk about the best way to go about fixing it because a big part of it is the remediation. It's really expensive. There are some things that will probably go into Capital this coming year that we just push forward. In the Town Clerk's office, he has a lot of valuable documents – so there's \$3,000.00 in there for cameras. The Community Center floor needs to be redone, there's \$5,000.00 in for that. They painted in 2010 – the Veterans Museum and the Community Center however there is lead so we can't repaint. So that has to be cleaned and abated. Instead of a \$6,000.00 paint job it's a \$28,000.00 job. Those are the things that we moved into to use for this year so come Spring we can get those repairs done. **Deb Olsen.** Every time I see the Haddam Bulletin I see Parks & Recreation has a large program up and running, and I am grateful for all for all of the services and opportunities that Park & Recreation offers to our town and the town of Killingworth. I also know that their budget continues to grow and it continues to cost taxpayers more money, I was wondering what the relationship is between the Selectmen or is there someone who goes to their board meetings that represents the town because I can't help but wonder what is their participation levels? At what point do they say "this isn't working, we're not going to offer this anymore" I welcome new opportunities, but as a tax payer I just wonder why the funding continues to grow? **Donlan:** Are you talking about HK Rec or the Parks & Recreation Commission? **Deb:** Park & Rec? **Milardo:** They are their own separate entity. **Donlan:** HK rec is its own separate entity. Park & Rec is just mowing the lawn. **Deb:** I'm talking about HK Rec. We have no control of what they do, don't we fund them? **Donlan:** Partially. I don't have the numbers in front of me, but HK Rec charges for their programs. **Duval:** They get about 75% from users fees. **Donlan:** We split about 25% - you would have to look at each individual program because they start programs and then not enough people sign up, and they cancel them. **Deb:** It just keeps getting bigger and bigger and it keeps costing taxpayers more money. My question is bigger than Park & Rec, it's not just Park & Rec, it's a lot of other services that we pay for as taxpayers – they are not in the Charter, they are not required. It's actually quite arbitrary when you think about which ones we fund and the ones we decide not to fund. It's a case of the squeaky wheel. Living on this side of the river we don't often take advantage of the things that are offered on the other side of the river and I consider that especially true for me now that my kids are older and no longer in the HK school system. I don't go over there as much as I used to, I don't take advantage of a lot of the opportunities and yet the budget continues to grow and our taxes continue to increase. I think that the things our town offers are wonderful but when I have to pay my taxes every year I feel it. I think we all do. I'm curious, what is the percentage of our budget or what's the total dollar amount of just the town budget that's not actually required to be funded per our Charter? How much of this is – we think the library is wonderful and we're willing to give them \$500,000.00 a year. How many of those types of services do we now pay for as tax payers? **Milardo:** quite a bit. Specifically for the Rec Department, it's not a lot and we didn't increase that amount. **Donlan:** It's required by law that we have to have a Rec department, we don't have to fund it, we fund it as we see fit. What else? **Milardo:** We have the Library, we have Public Health, Youth and Family Services. We are really looking at those numbers. **Deb:** I can't help but wonder if we only funded what we were required to fund, freeing up my dollar, and I think the library is great, and I'm going to give them \$5,000.00 this year. **Milardo:** I think the Town Meeting is the time for you to vocalize that – what we fund and then changes are made. **Deb:** What is that number? What do we give to un-mandated opportunities we give to our residents. **Milardo:** we'd be guessing now, but we can figure it out. **Deb:** My last question: have you made strides to work with other nearby towns so we don't pay for these things just with our tax dollars? **Milardo:** Yes. The River Cog, we do planning and transportation with them, we do shared grants with them. Kathy and I met with Howard Thiery, we talked about shared services. For example, they have a crew that works on clearing through their snow and their driveways but they can't start school until our roads are clear, so maybe their town crew comes through and does our parking lot to free up some of our help so they can focus on the roads. There are a lot of incentives with dollars being shared for equipment for towns sharing equipment. Yes, we are actively looking at those types of things to

see how we can share. Some of the savings can be large and some just isn't. I want to make sure we're getting the most bang for our buck.

Neal Perron: I spoke with Chris last week, there was a tree done, he had a guy here in ½ hour. I also went to the well testing today, very informative. They knew exactly what they were talking about. As far as the cell phone tower, I'm all for public safety – the Connecticut River is very majestic out here and where I am at, we can see the transfer station, I can see the new tower that Valley Shore put up – people love the view out here and to think of looking over there and see a cell phone tower – it's not going to be a pretty sight anymore. We are very fortunate that we don't have any city lights – light pollution – we don't have any bridges – other than the East Haddam Bridge, which is very fitting – but a cell phone tower, regardless if they make it look like a tree it's going to stand out like a sore thumb. **Milardo:** I understand, there will be pros and cons about it and it's really up to the people of the town. It's a big safety concern for me and that's really the biggest need – it's something that the residents asked for and I brought it to the table and now it's going to be up to the people in the town to decide if they want it or not.

Duval moved to adjourn meeting at 8:10PM. Donlan seconded. Approved unanimously.
Minutes taken by: JoAnn Ricciardelli