

Selectmen's Meeting – July 9, 2014

Schlag called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Donlan was present. Duval arrived 6:05 P.M.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Donlan moved to adjust the agenda to allow representatives of CL&P Clean Energy Communities Pledge, under New Business, up at this time. Approved unanimously. Natalia Sudyka, Michael Manzi and Pat Bandz were present to explain the Clean Energy Communities Municipal Pledge. "The Clean Energy Communities program is an initiative funded by both the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority (CEFIA-formerly known as the CT Clean Energy Fund) and the CT Energy Efficiency fund. CEFIA and the Energy Efficiency Fund develop programs which collectively seek to have CT cities and towns both reduce energy use and increase support for clean, renewable energy for municipal facilities. Energy Efficiency Fund programs are administered by the CT Light and Power Company, The United Illuminating Company, Yankee Gas Services Company, The Southern CT Gas Company, and/or CT Natural Gas corporation (collectively, "the Companies"). The Town of Haddam pledges to reduce its municipal building energy consumption by 20% by 2018. The Town of Haddam understands that the Clean Energy Communities Municipal Pledge is not a contract, and that CEFIA, the energy Efficiency Fund, and the Companies have not contracted, committed, agreed or promised, to perform or incur obligations, in any manner. The full pledge is on file in the First Selectman's Office. After a brief discussion, Donlan moved to authorize the First Selectman to sign the pledge. Approved unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes – June 18, 2014:** Schlag moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Approved unanimously.

**Public Comments:** Stewart Gilmore asked about the transfer station stickers. Schlag stated the first stickers were purchased and they were static cling stickers and kept falling off the windshields. The second batch was ordered and the printer printed the wrong type of sticker. The third batch should be here by the end of this week.

**Reports – Resident Troopers Report for the month of June:** The DARE program had their graduation on June 17, which went well. The HKHS graduation and Project Graduation was held on June 20, with no problems. The Troopers continue to be diligent with traffic patrols, etc. There were no fatalities in June.

**Animal Control Officer's Report for June:** She continues to give very detailed reports and responds to calls quickly. Schlag stated the town is very lucky to have Daun Kowalski as our ACO.

Schlag moved to add the Municipal Agent's Report for June to the agenda at this time. Approved unanimously.

**Municipal Agent's Report for the month of June:** Mark Lundgren was present to discuss his report. Club 60 had two great trips in June, the Mystery Trip was in Cape Cod and they also took a trip on the River Quest cruise. The annual Committee on Aging picnic was held at Field Park, which was a beautiful day, many attended. Lundgren thanked Ms. Buzzi for volunteering to drive seniors from Haddam Neck and the First Selectman for everything she did including the loan of a canopy. The "media corner" is starting to make progress. At year end, a 50" television with wall mounting bracket was purchased and a local business person donated two office partition panels with coasters on them for easy moving. The July trip will be to the Shoreline Trolley with limited seating available. The August trip will be to the Thimble Island Cruise. Lundgren received the Farmer's Market coupons again this year. Seniors will receive them if they are within certain income levels.

**Additions/Transfers:** The BOS received a request from the BOF Chairman to transfer \$120 from line item 01-80-800-84-80000 Contingency into line #01-10-025-12-02503 Board of Finance Secretary in the 2013 – 2014 budget to address necessary additional hours and unexpected costs incurred beyond the funds originally budgeted for this department. After a brief discussion, Donlan moved to approve the request and forward to the BOF for final approval. Approved unanimously.

**Appointments – Brainerd Memorial Library:** Schlag received a letter from BML requesting to add Pamela Crum to complete an opening on the Board of Trustees for the 2014-2015 year and to reappoint the following members for a three-year term, Raul deBrigard, Virginia L. Evensen and Mary Karkutt-Kulak. Duval moved to appoint and reappoint the members as requested. Approved unanimously.

**Tax Refunds:** Donlan moved to approve the refund of \$7.15 to Keith Chandler for a motor vehicle for excess payment. Approved unanimously.

**Old Business – Higganum Cove Update:** Schlag stated the EPA has been on site since Monday, fencing off areas to be worked on. The cove will be closed for the summer and the Resident Troopers will go patrol the area and let the kids know they cannot swim there. Also, Wharf Road will be closed. The project should be complete by December. The water tower will need to come down. RFP's will go out for this in the near future. Schlag stated the empty trucks will go over the Dublin Hill Bridge, but when they are filled with debris, the truck will go out Dublin Hill toward Middletown. The State Historic Preservation will try and save some granite rocks

**FOIA Copy Cost Discussion:** Schlag tabled this discussion until she gets more information. Schlag moved to add Valley Shore Communications to the agenda. Approved unanimously.

**Valley Shore Communications:** Schlag stated that she would like to stay with Valley Shore Communications for this side of the river and in Haddam Neck. Currently, KX is the provider of dispatch for Haddam Neck. Valley Shore can provide this service and it will save the town \$20,000 a year. Valley Shore would like the town to sign a five-year contract. Schlag will be meeting with Valley shore next week for further discussion and clarification.

**New Business – Award Bid for Revaluation for 2015:** Four bids were received on June 26, 2014 for the Revaluation of Real Estate effective October 1, 2015 as follows; J F Ryan associates - \$133,000, Tyler Technologies - \$85,000; Municipal Valuation Services, LLC - \$82,000 and Vision Government Solutions – \$79,500. Donlan moved to accept the bid of \$79,500 from Vision Government Solutions. Approved unanimously.

**Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption:** Schlag received a letter from Jeremy DeCarli, Regional Planner, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG announcing that the Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan originally begun by the Mid-State Regional Planning Agency has been approved by FEMA. They are asking each town to please adopt the final plan. After a brief discussion, Donlan moved to authorize the First Selectman to execute the plan as submitted. Approved unanimously.

**Elderly Tax Relief Program:** A local couple applied for the Town's Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief Program for the 2013 Grand List. Their application was denied by the Assessor's Office because they were over the \$55,000 income by \$844.60. They are applying for an appeal of that decision from the BOS. Donlan moved to approve the appeal and allow them the appeal. Approved unanimously. Lundgren stated the Committee on Aging will have on their agenda for September to review the ordinance and suggest some changes if needed.

**Haddam Neck Fair Association Contract:** This item was tabled. No discussion.

**Mileage Policy for Elected Officials:** There was a brief discussion regarding mileage for elected officials.

Schlag does not feel that mileage should be given to officials going to the bank and post office during working time. It's part of their job. Schlag stated if an official goes to a class for further education, they should get mileage. Duval feels salaries should have nothing to do with mileage. Schlag will draft a policy and bring to the BOS for further discussion.

**Abandoned/Discontinued Road Discussion/Policy:** Schlag stated she would like to set up a separate meeting with the BOS and have the Town Attorney there to set up a procedure regarding abandoned and discontinued roads. One of the problems is there is no documentation to prove that these roads were town roads. One road issue is the Rand property located off Sima Road. Phil Goff, Asst. Director of Public Works asked Jeff Sanborn, Land Surveyor, to investigate. Mr. Sanborn did respond and his letter is on file in the First Selectman's Office. One item that is on the agenda for an upcoming Town Meeting is the Oktavec property located off Little City Road. Schlag stated she received a call from an abutting property owner who was never contacted by the attorney as previously requested is upset about the way things are being done. Schlag also found out that the DEEP has a right-of-way on this property. Schlag stated the town has no authority to approve a road that the town doesn't own. She feels the onus should be on the property owner. Duval asked how Mr. Rand gets to his property if it's land-locked. Donlan stated it depends on why the property is land-locked. Is it because the town owns the property or another property owner? If the town owns the property the town would have to give access, but if it's privately owned by an abutting property owner, it is a civil matter. Donlan feels title searchers for the landowners should be doing the work for these issues and not the town.

**Public Comments:** Mark Lundgren asked when the BOS approves their procedures for the abandoned roads to address benefit assessment or front footage assessment. This will hold up better in the courts and will discourage property owners from thinking the town will build a road for them.

Lundgren stated there is up to 4 feet of silt from the Flood of 1982 and Hurricane Gloria in the Higganum cove. As progress continues on the cove, he feels dredging should be done to open up the aquatic portion.

Lundgren stated the town should assess CY at a higher rate because the way they developed the land during the closing of the plant. Schlag stated that the assessor has a separate contract to reevaluate that property.

Ed Munster feels that the mileage issue (reimbursement) should not be based on elected official's salaries. Mileage and salaries are two different entities.

Munster stated during the past week there has been a lot of things on social media regarding the Tax Collector's Office being closed in the mornings this past week. He stated that the BOF and BOS put money in the budget, and it was voted on by town residents, for this type of situation. The Assistant Tax Collector was out for medical reasons, which left the Tax Collector alone to do the job. Munster feels someone should be in the tax office that's what that extra money is for. He questioned whether there is still a temp in the Finance Office. Schlag stated the temp was hired through a temp agency and the agency doubled the price, so he was only there for a short while until a Finance Director is hired, which should be within 30 days.

Schlag stated she had read some of the comments on social media regarding the tax collector. Schlag wanted to remind everyone that the tax collector is an elected position and it is her responsibility to manage that office. The Tax Collector was out because she was teaching Bible School with her children. Schlag stated the First Selectman's Assistant has been taking some payments in her office to help in the mornings, but we cannot staff the tax office with someone who is not bonded when the tax collector is out. Schlag stated she feels if someone cannot get their work done in twelve hours a week then that person needs to work later or on weekends to make up that work. Schlag stated there have been many complaints about the tax collector not coming in on time. She stated the tax collector currently works 30 hours a week and it is not sufficient time during the busiest time of the year. Schlag stated she did

talk to the tax collector today and told her she needs to work more hours to get the job done. Munster stated the tax collector had a prior commitment to be out in the mornings that week before her assistant became ill. He feels Schlag should be using that money that was set aside for circumstances like this and get help in her office. Schlag stated she would be happy to use that money when she sees the tax collector working 40 hours a week to get the job done. She is not pulling her weight in that office. Schlag stated she cannot get a certified person in there in the mornings while the tax collector is out. Once Schlag sees that the tax collector is working 40 hours a week and still can't get the job done, she will gladly get someone to help her. Schlag told Munster to take it up with the tax collector.

Ed Schwing thought it was a bad idea for the BOS to override the Tax abatement for the elderly couple. He also feels that the elderly need to know that the information given to the town is public record.

Schwing stated he feels that asking the First Selectman to pay for someone in the tax office while the tax collector is out of the office is a waste of taxpayer's money.

Schlag moved to remove the Oktavec easement from the Town Meeting agenda scheduled for July 15, 2014. Approved unanimously.

Duval moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 P.M. Approved unanimously.

Minutes taken by – Alice Zanelli