

Board of Selectmen's Meeting – December 6, 2017 (Approved Minutes)

Lizz Milardo called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. at the Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, Haddam CT 06438

Larry Maggi, Melissa Schlag and Town Attorney, Rich Carella were present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Welcome to the meeting with our new Board of Selectmen.

Approval of Agenda: Maggi made a motion for the addition to the Agenda to send to the Board of Finance a request from Public Works to reallocate funds from the Capital Plan to purchase a Wheel Excavator. No Discussion. Approved Unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Milardo made a motion to approve the November 15, 2017 minutes. No Discussion. Maggi and Schlag abstained.

Public Comments: Schwing: Made a comment regarding the role of the secretary in the Executive Session and the secretary not being allowed in the Executive Session. Milardo referred to the Town Attorney, Rich Carella: The secretary can attend to make sure that there are no votes and to record who is in attendance at the meeting. Once out of Executive Session the secretary can report who was in attendance and whether or not any votes were taken.

Mary Alice Hughes, 238 Moodus Road, Haddam Neck: Made a comment regarding the Higganum Cove. She stated that she has been in contact with the Tax Collector and that she has been very helpful. Hughes is on the Haddam Parks & Recreation Commission and they have discussed expanding the adult recreation and the Higganum Cove would be a great place to do that. Hoping town officials somehow acquire this property and can the Town pull out of the deal if it goes to developers?

Sean Moriarty: I believe under executive session you guys will be talking about a property on Route 81 – if the town could get it, it would be a great use of property. If there is contamination maybe we can ask the current property owner to remediate it.

Meghan Peterson, Filly Road: Congratulates the Board on the election results and raised a concern regarding a Selectman on the Board. Unlike other town boards and commissions, the Selectmen on this board are salaried, in order to avoid a conflict of interest between journalistic integrity and public office duties, I would like to offer that Selectman Schlag step down from her post at the Haddam Bulletin for the duration of her seat.

Tax Refunds:

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Real Estate (01)		
Haase	Landon	\$1,452.36
Haase	Landon	\$1,404.00
Haase	Landon	\$501.18
Total:		\$3,357.54
Personal Property (02)		
Total:		\$0.00
Motor Vehicle (03)		
Jones	David	\$8.34
Mosca	Elizabeth	\$93.91

CCAP Auto Lease		\$186.39
Sierpinski	Joseph	\$135.63
Total		\$424.27
Motor Vehicle Supplement (04)		
Total:		\$0.00
Grand Total:		\$3,781.81

Maggi made a Motion to accept the December 6, 2017 Tax Refunds. No discussion. Approved Unanimously.

Reports:

- **Social Services:** The Emergency Fuel Bank has serviced 30 adults and 17 children and distributed 35 gift baskets to the community. She is assisting the HK Backpack Program to help those families in need. The Haddam Emergency Fuel Bank has serviced 11 families in November. 6 oil, 3 propane and 2 electric. The Emergency clothing bank has served a total of 9 children and 7 adults. The Women's Empowerment Group had their second meeting. High Meadow is considered a private facility, not a public facility. There were issues with getting the power back on Eversource was helpful. We made Emergency kits for the High Meadow Residents as well as any shut-ins we may have.

Old Business: The Charter approved by the residents during the election. The changes are effective December 7, 2017. A copy of the new Charter is on the website.

New Business:

- **Appoint Town Attorney:** Milardo made a motion to approve Attorney Rich Carella from Updike, Kelly and Spellacy to be our Town Attorney for the next two (2) years. Maggi seconded. No discussion. Schlag opposed.
- **Set Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting dates for 2018:** There is a conflict with continuing the meetings on Wednesday nights. The meetings will be on the second and fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall (21 Field Park Drive, Haddam) Maggi made a motion to accept the 2018 Board of Selectmen. No discussion. Approved unanimously.
- **Adopt Municipal Option to Exempt Pleasure Horses for Personal Property:**
Horses and ponies used for pleasure in the Town of Haddam must be declared annually on a Personal Property Declaration. There is a cost for preparing, mailing, administering and processing these account declarations. The horses are valued by owners typically at \$1,000 or less, and there is an exemption of up to \$1,000 per pleasure horse. This nets a -0- assessment for each animal. The Connecticut Statutes currently exempts all horses that are used as farm 'machinery'; but allows for the taxation of pleasure horses. Having said that, there is a municipal option in the Connecticut State Statutes that allows municipalities to exempt pleasure horses from taxation. It is my recommendation that we adopt this municipal option. The cost for us to prepare, administer, review and file declarations for these horses far exceeds the tax dollars received and is counterproductive. The statute I am referring to is: Connecticut General Statute Section 12-81gg. Municipal option to exempt horses and ponies from property taxation. "Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (68) of Section 12-81 and Section 12-91, any municipality may, by vote of its legislative body or, in a municipality where the legislative body is a town meeting, by vote of the board of selectmen, exempt from property taxation horses or

ponies of any value." I sincerely ask for your approval on this measure and ask that it begin with the 2018 Grand List. Very truly yours, Jennifer L. Gauthier, CCMA II Assessor, Town of Haddam. Maggi made a motion to accept the Municipal Option to Exempt Pleasure Horses for Personal Property. There was a brief discussion regarding Riding Stables and businesses using the horses. Milardo and Maggi in favor. Schlag opposed.

- **Tylerville Water Update:** The Town has a Consent Order that Milardo has approval to sign when the time comes. That order has gone between DEEP, DPH, our attorneys and Connecticut Water. The Town needs the commissioners at the state to sign off and then we need to make sure the language is there to protect the town. The goal is to have that signed by the end of next week. Once the Consent Order is signed we are able to go to the Bond Commission and request the rest of the funds to be approved. We are looking to do that in January.
- **Haddam Elderly Housing – Apply for Small City Grant:** Haddam Elderly Housing has expanded their Board of Directors, they are now compliant. There are improvements that are long overdue at High Meadow. There is an opportunity to apply for a Small City Grant. The application needs to be done by April. Since they are a non-profit 501(c) the funds cannot go to them they must go to the Town of Haddam. It also has to go to the Board of Finance and get approval. The first step the Haddam Elderly Housing Commission has requested is support from the Board of Selectmen for them to pursue that grant. There is one (1) conflict of interest, one member of the Haddam Elderly Housing Commission is also on the Board of Finance – there is no financial gain to that – as long as the board of finance member recuses himself there should not be a problem getting approval for the grant. The grant can go as high as \$700,000.00 and will include the driveway, siding and windows. Maggi made a motion to support pursuing the Small City Grant with the Haddam Elderly Housing Commission. There was a brief discussion regarding precluding Haddam residents getting into the housing first. It is a HUD property and cannot discriminate on who can live there. The HUD designation isn't set to go away for 7 years and if we do receive this money it will extend another 15 years. There was also discussion regarding the grant writer. Schlag seconded. Approved unanimously.
- **Committee on Aging Members:** Maggi made a Motion to accept the following members to the Committee on Aging: Jackie Crysler, Thurston R. Clark, Marge DeBold, Susan DeCarli, Beth Hartke, Mary Lou Hager, Gloria Maynard, Susan Rutty, Adele Vynalek, Robert Waller and Mary Lou Pierce. No discussion. Approved unanimously.
- **Update on Higganum Cove:** The Town does not own the property. EPA and DEEP did spend several million dollars to clean up the property. The intent of the town is to take the property out of the abandoned land owner and have it move forward so there can be enjoyment. There are three methods we can do that by, which were discussed at the last Selectmen's meeting. John Watt's is the Attorney working for the Tax Collector. This comes under the purview of the Tax Collector. The Town Attorney also looked at those conditions. The Tax Sale is set for January 30, 2018 at 11:00 am at the Town Hall. There are terms and conditions being worked on for this sale. The terms and conditions can be changed. It is the Town's intent is for the residents to enjoy the property. The Tax Sale gives us the most control.
- **Wheel Excavator for Public Works:** Public Works has been using a wheel excavator. The company who owns this wheel excavator has offered to sell it to us for \$119,200.00. The owner is willing to credit the town the money it paid to rent it which is \$4,800.00. The price is available now. Milardo made a motion to recommend to the Board of

Finance to reallocate \$88,000.00 in Capital towards the purchase. There was a discussion with Chris Corsa, Assistant Director of Public Works and Pete Santoro, Public Works Foreman. Milardo and Maggi in favor. Schlag opposed. Schlag would like see more bids.

Schlag made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:10 pm, no discussion, approved unanimously.

- Per C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(A); Discussion concerning employment matter related to Town Tax Assessor. In attendance: Secretary, HR Director, Tax Assessor, Town Attorney
- Per C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(D); Discussion of the selection and potential purchase of real estate by the Town off Route #81, Higganum. In Attendance: Secretary, Town Attorney
- Per C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(D); Discussion of the selection and potential sale of Town owned property on Silver Spring Road. In Attendance: Secretary, Town Attorney.

Milardo made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:02 pm.

Per C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(D); Discussion of the selection and potential sale of Town owned property on Silver Spring Road. In Attendance: Secretary, Town Attorney.

Milardo made a motion to publically advertise and have a public auction on lots 9, 25, 61, 141 and 195 of Silver Springs to be conducted on May 5, 2018 by the Town Attorney. Maggi seconded. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

Per C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(A); Discussion concerning employment matter related to Town Tax Assessor. In attendance: Secretary, HR Director, Tax Assessor, Town Attorney: No votes were taken.

Per C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(D); Discussion of the selection and potential purchase of real estate by the Town off Route #81, Higganum. In Attendance: Secretary, Town Attorney: No votes were taken.

Correspondence: Bette Dybick is retiring on January 1, 2018. She has served the town for several years as Registrar of Voters and then the Town Office Building Receptionist.

Public Comments: **Sean Moriarty:** Made a comment regarding the Higganum Cove and the Tax Sale. **Schwing:** Made a comment regarding the lots for sale for Silver Springs and going to an additional town meeting. He also asked if the public will have a copy of the consent order from the DPH when it is finished being drafted. Lastly he commented on the Haddam Elderly Housing and Mrs. Hayden having to leave town since there was not any room in the Haddam Elderly Housing did not have any room and hopes to add more elderly housing in Haddam.

Maggi made a motion to adjourn at 8:09 pm. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

Minutes taken by JoAnn Ricciardelli