

## **Board of Selectmen's Meeting – July 10, 2023 (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 was present. Sean Moriarty was absent.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Approval of Agenda:** Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda. There was a brief discussion. Motion amended to include the following Agenda items: under new business appointments to Inlands/Wetlands and Conservation Commission, discuss the Business Interruption Grant Proposal, and HK Youth and Family Services update. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes: June 12, 2023:** Kate Anderson made a motion to approve the June 12, 2023 minutes. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**June 29, 2023:** Kate Anderson made a motion to approve the June 30, 2023 minutes. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Public Comment:**

**Ron Matulavich** – Read a letter under the record. Attached as Schedule I.

**Liz Bazazi** – asked if there will be a rotary on the corner of 154 and 81? McGarry replied “no” and has asked for a Traffic Safety Analysis from the state. The draft should be ready in about a month. She also commented on kids riding dirt bikes on the road. McGarry suggested contacting the Resident Troopers. She asked about what section of the roof will be fixed at HES. McGarry said doing the old part first. An architect has been asked to give a review of the space at HES and possible uses.

**Eric Hesselberg** is the septic contingent on the Scovil Development. McGarry answered that the green is the primary area for the septic for Scovil as well as surrounding businesses. The charm of the Higganum Green will be taken into consideration if needed.

**Ed Schwing: Chairman Higganum Cove Advisory Committee:** Attached as Schedule I

**Selectman's Update:** Attached as Schedule II.

**Anderson:** Kate mentioned that the farmer's market had light attendance but it was picking up.

**Board of Education Update:** (Attached as Schedule III)

**HK Youth & Family Services (HKYFS) Update:** (Attached as Schedule IV)

**Tax Refunds:** No refunds in July

**New Business:**

**Conservation Commission Appointment:** Anderson made a motion to appoint Barbara Fernandez to the Conservation Commission. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Resignation from Connecticut River Gateway Commission:** Susan Bement has resigned from the Connecticut River Gateway Commission. Anderson made a motion to accept the resignation of Sue Bement. There was a brief discussion thanking her for her service on this commission. Motion carried unanimously.

**Inland/Wetland Commission Appointment:** Anderson made a motion to reappoint Mark Stephens, Thomas Worthley and Curt Chadwick for another 3 year term and move Gail Reynolds alternate position to a full member. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Tylerville Business Interruption Grant:** Anderson made a motion to approve to forward to the Board of Finance the Guidelines for Business Interruption Grant Program for the Tylerville District Zone. There was a brief discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Peddler's Permit:** Anderson made a motion approve extending Tyler Boyd's permit for an additional 30 days. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business:** N/A

**Next Meeting date/place:** The next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, August 14, 2023** and will be held at the Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, Haddam CT 06438.

**Adjournment:** Anderson made a motion to adjourn. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm. Minutes taken by Kristin Battistoni

RJM

Preserving the Town Green

7/10/23

I'm Ron Matulevich, third generation resident of the town of Haddam, and a self-employed builder for 58 years. In that time, I have amassed a vast knowledge of building related topics.

Tonight, I'm here to state my objections to the plan to tear up our beautiful and historic Town Green, where our Gazabo and Veteran's Monument stand, to install a 7,000 gallon/day leaching field to benefit a single private developer.

consider

Why we would even ~~contemplate~~ sacrificing our Town Green for a private sewer system is beyond me!

Leaching fields and trees do not go well together, so I imagine many of the stately maples and sycamores, planted there to honor family members, would have to go. Yes, these are memorial trees. Then there's the boulder marking the old Union School – which I attended by the way – a historic site. Are we going to just roll it off to the side? You can still see in the ground foundation stones from the old school from the late 1800s. ~~All these memories gone~~. Will those be dug up and carted off to the dump? What are we thinking?

Now, I've been told the issue of the sewer system on the Town Green is settled, that townspeople OK'd this a year ago; but I would argue that none of those who voted for this ludicrous idea, fully understood the implications. Maybe that was the intention. To slip it by us.

(just)

I don't want to offer ~~just~~ criticisms. I think there are alternatives to ~~destroying~~ *spoilng* our Historic Green.

Recently, after coming out of Jack's restaurant, it dawned on me that the Brookside Restaurant is on septic tanks and leaching fields and that

prompted me to think about the huge piece of property behind the Village Market. I went to the Haddam Land Use office and looked up the village sewer records on file, which are vague or nonexistent.

Each building has its own mishmash system, which prompted me to look up deep well records. These reveal approximately 50 feet of gravel in that area, perfect for leaching. I then took my knowledge of H<sub>2</sub>O galley, suitable for under parking lot leaching and heavy loads passing over them. You ask what is an H<sub>2</sub>O galley? An H<sub>2</sub>O galley is a precast concrete modular unit 4 feet by 4 feet by 4 feet, designed for under parking lots. Each unit has tremendous leaching capabilities.

With this type of thinking we have the possibility of solving the decades long village sewer problem.

And, in so doing, preserve our beautiful and historic Town Green for future generations to enjoy – and not turn it into a dumping ground for someone else's waste.

Haddam July 10, 2023.

To: Haddam Board of Selectmen  
From: Ed Schwing Chairman Higganum Cove Advisory Committee

Dear Bob, Kate, and Sean,

As unanimously agreed by our members at our committee meeting of June 15, 2023, I am forwarding you this request for your consideration and further action.

In light of all the work that has been performed at the Higganum Cove, from the original remediation to the current implementation of the master plan, and the unique environmental and historical qualities of the area, the committee feel strongly that the town should make all efforts to preserve the Cove as a park for the enjoyment and benefit of all Haddam residents, present and future.

This should start with, but is not limited to, the deed of the property. Indeed, in reviewing the property deed, it was noted that there were no permanent stipulations, liens or encumbrances that would protect the Cove from being abandoned as a park, or worse, at the whim of a future administration.

Therefore, our committee recommends that the BOS request town counsel to draft a resolution authorizing the dedication of the Higganum Cove as a park (with other restrictions if necessary) according to the following State Statute (section 47-42e):

*Title 47 - Land and Land Titles Chapter 822 - Easements and Restrictions*

*Section 47-42e - Municipal property acquired with intent to place restriction or dedicated as park or open space land. Recording in land records. Enforcement.*

*(c) Whenever a municipality intends to permanently protect any municipal property by dedicating such property as a park or open space land, such municipality shall record in the land records a description of such property, the date of such dedication and the local legislative body action that authorized such dedication.*

Once drafted and approved, the BOS would then send it to a town meeting for final approval by town residents to be added to the deed as required by the statute.

The BOS should also consider making the Higganum Cove Committee more permanent at the same town meeting, with a number of members ranging from 5 to 7 appointed by the BOS. (This would allow continuity in managing the park. Under its current structure the entire committee is disbanded every 2 years and only reappointed at the pleasure of a new administration.)

Our committee members are ready to meet with you should you have any questions or concerns,

Sincerely



Ed Schwing

July 10, 2023 - Board of Selectmen's Meeting - Schedule II  
**BOS Meeting Selectman's Update 2023-07-09**

**Projects**

- Rossi Property
- Scovil Hoe
- HES
  - State approved our selection of roofing contractor. We'll do the work required on the old section of the building. We'll re-bid the gym roof for asphalt shingles versus metal roofing.
  - We posted an RFP for an architectural firm to do a building condition and utilization study for moving municipal functions into HES. Due 7/27.
- Swing Bridge
  - This will be a tough year for our Tylerville businesses. Please patronize them.
  - Business Interruption Grant Program
  - The project is on schedule.
- Bridge Road/Haddam Center Sidewalks – Nothing to report
- Tylerville Water
- Private Projects
  - Blueway Commons
  - 105 Bridge Road apartments
- Road work
  - Culvert washout on Old Chester at Dudley Clark – Repair work will delay starting on Cedar Lake Rd
  - TOB parking lot will be paved this year. Working on scheduling
  - Ruth Hill will have millings put on it.
  - Silver Springs Drive – Fog sealing will require closing road for hours. Will address with residents.

**Personnel**

- Resident Trooper interview conducted. CSP will make assignment
- Accepting applications for FD Assistant until 7/22.
- JoAnn out until 7/24.

**Other**

- Conducted the Saybrook Road Road Safety Analysis site walk with DOT on 6/14. Approximately 17 people from DOT. I expect to get a preliminary report this month. (P.S. – There are no plans for a roundabout in Higganum Center.)

July 10, 2023 - Board of Selectmen's Meeting - Schedule III  
**Summary of June 2023 RSD17 Board of Education Meetings**

**Cougar Pride**

The board held its annual recognition ceremony to celebrate the accomplishments of Class of 2023's Top Ten Students, award the District's Staff Members and Teachers of the Year and thank the District's Retirees for their many years of service to the students in our District. Notable awards went to this year's Valedictorian, Abby Jones, and Salutatorian Kristen Thebeau. Brianna Hill was named District Staff Person of the Year and Margaret Amaio was named Teacher of the Year. With gratitude we celebrated the retirements of Patricia McCay, Thomas Mrozowski, Michael Reilly, and Lorelei Casey

KES Principal Dennis Reed introduced a group of 3rd-grade students led by Music Teacher Irina Rubalsky in an impressive recorder performance including several songs.

**Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Wihbey also discussed the completed work of the HKMS Study. In his summary, Dr. Wasta identified issues as well as recommendations, including the creation of a broad-based task force. The goal is to create, in a collaborative fashion, a vision and structure for HKMS to become one of the highest-performing middle schools in the state. Principal Ventura and Assistant Superintendent Miller will head the task force.

**Finance/Facilities Subcommittee**

On June 28th, RSD17 held its second of four community conversations to discuss the development of a long-range facilities plan to improve the physical and programmatic conditions at RD17. An online survey was conducted with 309 responses from the community. 81% of respondents see a need to improve the physical spaces and identified the high school as the top priority and Burr Elementary School the second priority. Several options were discussed including some project costs, benefits, and challenges of various scenarios. On September 13th, a tour of the high school facilities will take place from 4:30 pm- 6:00 pm followed by a community conversation where more detailed information on options will be presented.

Director Solin reported to the Board on the Fiscal year-end status and updates. Because several object lines were over budget, while next year's audit may still produce a balance to apply to next year's budget, there is no year-end fund balance expected by June 30th. In addition, the 721 Capital Needs line was underfunded by more than \$200k to balance the budget for year-end.

**Communications/Strategic Planning Subcommittee**

Committee Co-Chair Shawna Goldfarb presented the four options of student-created graphics for the new RSD17 logo. Co-Chair Goldfarb also discussed the Communications and Community Engagement plan for next year's referendum and analysis of the communication process for this year's budget. Committee Co-Chair Prem Aithal reported on the committee's plan to release a dashboard that will track and provide information on the District's critical measures of success.

**Personnel & Evaluation**

Committee Co-Chair Suzanne Sack reported on the process for hiring and the creation of consistent benefits and offerings.

**Policy/Curriculum Subcommittee**

Committee Co-Chair Zandi reported that the High School scheduling process will be moved back by two weeks to align with the budget process.

**ON OUR WEBSITE:**

The RSD 17 Master Plan Information and video from the last community conversation is available on the website under the District Facilities menu option [RSD 17 Facilities Study and Master Planning Website](#).

## July 10, 2023 - Board of Selectmen's Meeting - Schedule IV

HKYFS is your Youth Service Bureau, dedicated to the young people and their families in the community by providing a bridge to the resources and support they need. YSBs do have state-mandated work and also get to choose the areas of focus that suit their own community's needs. We are funded through the towns of Haddam and Killingworth and received five grants totaling \$180,000 to aid our work.

In the summer of 2022, HKYFS began to work on a three-year **strategic plan** with a community survey of what services were most requested. The community survey responses ranked the most critical services offered by HKYFS as: #1: Child Therapy, #2 Youth Prevention Programming, #3 Family Therapy. The community response to the level of concern regarding issues impacting YOUTH #1: Mental Health, #2: Bullying, #3: Prescription drugs, illicit drugs, and alcohol.

The plan was completed in the Spring of 2023 with five priorities identified including mental health, prevention, financial sustainability, and community awareness. You can find the HKYFS strategic plan on our website at [hkyfs.org](http://hkyfs.org)

Our **Board of Directors** has grown in this past year to 10 members with six Haddam representatives from Haddam and four from Killingworth. The now-larger board has divided into committees that are each responsible for helping guide the implementation of the five strategic plan objectives. Our 2023/24 slate of officers include Chair- Jane Baird; Vice Chair- Heather Pach; Treasurer- Kerry Emerson; and Secretary- Kim Kelly.

Kyana Anderson joined HKYFS as our new **Prevention Coordinator** in May. Kyana comes to us with vast experience in Youth Service from Bristol. Her main responsibilities will be working with two of our prevention grants which focus on alcohol and vaping prevention for HK youth. Since starting, Kyana has been out in the community enhancing events such as HKHS Street Fest, HK Senior Prom, Project Graduation, Brainerd Memorial Library Ag Day, and Higganum Farmers Market. This Fall, she will lead three clubs at the High School, Middle School, and Intermediate School and will be available as a resource for the community and parents in prevention efforts.

Kyana also runs the **HK Community Coalition**, which is comprised of community representatives from 12 sectors of the community. This year they continued their work tackling the issues facing the community developing plans, policies, and strategies to meet those challenges. Topics addressed included Safe Prom, Safe Summer, and Social Host Law messaging with videos for the high schoolers and billboards for the parents. A postcard will be coming out soon to remind parents how to support positive choices for their children. The Coalition brought the problem of the Higganum Vape shop selling to underage youth to DMHAS, who initiated a multi-agency initiative to address those issues. The Coalition is working on collaborating with both towns on policies that will promote safer spaces for our youth.

Our **mentoring program** just finished its third year of partnership with RSD17 and will begin the next school year with ten students partnered with mentors. Mentoring programs have shown improved school attendance, school engagement, and school performance. And they are less likely to start using illegal drugs and alcohol. We are looking for more adult mentors to join as volunteers for the upcoming school year. Mentors meet with their students for an hour each week in the school setting. We will be hosting a new mentor training session on August 23<sup>rd</sup>

The HKYFS **Juvenile Review Board (JRB)** is a community-based diversion process for youth that may otherwise be referred to the Juvenile Court for minor violations of the law. YSBs are the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment, and follow-up services.

HKYKFS has partnered with Westbrook Youth and Family Services on a state grant to share resources and coordinate services to serve our youth. Our first case as a team is already in progress.

HKYFS has spent the last six months evaluating and reconfiguring **staff roles** to make the most efficient use of our limited resources. The Board has begun the search for a full-time Executive Director to bring the work of the agency to the next level and to fulfill the mission of the Strategic Plan. We anticipate being at the second round interview stage in early August and welcome the involvement of town leaders in that process again as we have in the past.

While the role of the Interim ED will continue on and support the work of our Prevention Coordinator, transition and support the new Executive Director and build community and regional partnerships. We value our community partnerships as a way to increase the impact of our small team, especially now as we rebuild our capacity.

**Upcoming Events, planned so far include:**

**August 23rd- New Mentor Training**

**August 27th - 5th annual free haircut event**

**September 9th - Family Field Day at the Haddam River Days**

**October 16th - Internet Safety Presentation to HKIS and HKMS with a Zoom presentation for parents**

**October 28 - National DEA Drug Take Back Day**

**October 28 - Fall Festival/ Grimms Haunted House at Haddam Elementary School**

**November 21- Why Character Matters assembly at HKHS**

**December 2 - HKMS Craft Fair**