

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
March 11, 2019**

A special meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on March 11, 2019 in the Haddam-Killingworth High School Student Commons Area. Board of Education Chair, Joanne Nesti, called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

***Members Present:** Eric Couture, Gerry Matthews, Joel D'Angelo, Sue Williams (Arrived at 5:35 PM), Brenda Buzzi, Kathleen Zandi, Maura Wallin, Suzanne Sack and Joanne Nesti*

***Members Absent:** Peter Sonski and Eileen Blewett*

***Also Present:** Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery, Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Holly Hageman, Haddam First Selectwoman, Lizz Milardo, Haddam Board of Selectmen, Larry Maggi and Melissa Schlag, Haddam Board of Finance Chair, Joseph Centofanti, Killingworth First Selectwoman, Catherine Iino, Killingworth Board of Selectmen, Louis Annino, Jr., and Nancy Gorksi, Chairman of Killingworth Board of Finance, Gwenne Celmer, Chairman of P&Z for Haddam, Jamin Laurenza, RSD 17 Counsel, Attorney Floyd Dugas, Town Counsel for Haddam, Richard Carella, Town Planner, Bill Warner and Town of Haddam's EDC Chair, Kate Anderson*

***Visitors:** Approximately 150*

***Call to Order/Opening of Meeting:** Board of Education Chair, Joanne Nesti, called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

There was a brief Introduction of Board Members, and everyone that was seated at the Table.

“Right of First Refusal” Town of Haddam:

First Selectwoman for the Town of Haddam, Lizz Milardo, spoke about Swan Hill and donating it to the Town of Haddam and/or Haddam Land Trust. She stated that Swan Hill is very important to Town of Haddam and asked that it stay in open space and perpetuity. Lastly, she spoke briefly about P&Z and putting Swan Hill into conversation.

*Kathleen Zandi **MOVED** and Joel D'Angelo **SECONDED** a motion to donate the Swan Hill parcel to the Town of Haddam.*

*Kathleen Zandi **AMENDED** and Joel D'Angelo **SECONDED** a motion to donate the Swan Hill parcel to the Town of Haddam for open space in perpetuity.*

*Kathleen Zandi made a **SECOND AMENDMENT** and Joel D'Angelo **SECONDED** a motion to initiate the process of donating the Swan Hill acreage at Haddam Elementary School to the Town of Haddam for use as open space in perpetuity and to have legal counsel for RSD 17 pursue the development of a detailed plan for possible transfer of ownership.*

Discussion on the legal steps, acceptance of donation, access to the property, the process to donate the Swan Hill parcel, and status of Town of Killingworth's interest to the property took place.

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following votes:

Suzanne Sack	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Joel D' Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	Absent			Eileen Blewett	Absent		
Maura Wallin	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Eric Couture	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Gerry Matthews	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Sue Williams	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>

Attorney Richard Carella, and Attorney Floyd Dugas spoke about the Right of First Refusal. Attorney Carella spoke on title restrictions that RSD17 might have, statutory requirements, the 1972 Board Resolution regarding HES. He read the Right of First Refusal. Attorney Floyd Dugas briefly stated that he was in agreement with what Attorney Carella presented.

Kathleen Zandi **MOVED** and Joel D'Angelo **SECONDED** a motion to initiate the process of donating/selling the HES Building and property to the Town of Haddam.

First Selectwoman for the Town Killingworth, Cathy lino, briefly spoke about how she is in support of the motion but wanted to assure that Killingworth's interests would be considered in any decision to transfer ownership.

Selectwoman for the Town of Haddam, Lizz Milardo, addressed the Board. She spoke about how there is a process that the Town needs to follow in order to decide if they want to acquire HES by Town meeting and/or Referendum.

Selectwoman for the Town of Haddam, Melissa Schlag, addressed the Board. She asked the Board if they would consider dropping their petition to P&Z and their lawsuit against Haddam. She also asked if the Board would pause, leave HES as is and further obtain a task force committee and sufficient data.

Selectman for the Town of Haddam, Larry Maggi, addressed the Board. He asked the Board if the Town of Haddam Selectman asked them to pause the closing of HES for one year and have a complete study done would they have said yes. He further spoke about Swan Hill and his concerns about the economics of the Higganum center. Board Vice Chair, Suzanne Sack, advised that if the First Selectwoman's position has changed, and they stand united for this pause, that they would need to say same.

Board Members, Maura Wallin, and Brenda Buzzi spoke about pausing the HES closure. There was further discussion from Board Member, Joel D'Angelo, about if the Board did pause the closure, then would the Towns support the extra 1.2Million dollars that would be needed to keep it up and running.

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following votes:

Suzanne Sack	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Joel D' Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	Absent			Eileen Blewett	Absent		
Maura Wallin	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Eric Couture	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Gerry Matthews	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Sue Williams	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion of Process for Review of HES Proposal:

The Board briefly discussed reviewing the RAK Proposal, and the possibility of holding a Q&A session with them but that was not recommended at this time.

Also, discussion about future use of the HES building, cost of maintaining same and a no more than 60-day window to allow the Town of Haddam to go to referendum took place. Concerns of the HES building sitting empty, and a request for a public comment session to be added to the meeting were also addressed.

Adjournment

Board Chair, Joanne Nesti, called for the meeting to adjourn at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



*Jamie Sciascia
Board Clerk*

Approval:  Date: 5/7/19
Eileen Blewett, Secretary