

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES SEPTEMBER 19, 2011
APPROVED**

Present: Anna Eliot, Chairman; George Dillon, Jr., Vice Chairman; Peter Cunningham, Clerk, Joshua A. Degen; Stuart M. Schulman

Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Patrice Garvin, Executive Assistant

Ms. Eliot called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad distributed an updated spreadsheet showing funding recommendations for Fall Town Meeting. The Finance Committee and the Board have discussed the proposal to use some Free Cash to offset the Tax Rate. Mr. Haddad recommended that \$100,000 be transferred from Free Cash to offset the Tax Rate.
2. Mr. Haddad stated that he has provided the Board with a breakdown of cost to repair the Squannacook River Dam. The town currently has \$98,000 from a state grant to do the proposed work on the dam that includes approximately \$10,000 for the design work and follow up inspection. The specific work on the Dam will consist of the following in order of their priority:
 - Refacing of the spalling concrete on small areas of the dam nest to the spill way and also a couple of other areas on the dam face
 - Close off the spill way with some type of a pipe and valve system to maintain the low level flow as needed
 - Repair of section of the splash pad at the base of the dam. Mr. Degen commented that the center line for Groton and Shirley is in the center of the river and that anything done on the dam affects Shirley therefore Groton needs to approach Shirley and maybe place some public pressure on them to keep the dam in place. Mr. Degen suggested a meeting with Shirley because any future expense benefits both communities. Mr. Haddad added that it will cost an additional \$7k annually to maintain the 2 dams in town. The Board urged the Town Manager to set a meeting with Shirley.
3. Mr. Haddad stated that at the last meeting the Board requested a breakdown of the equipment requested for the Emergency Operations Center. *[Documents 1-Breakdown provided by Chief Palma and Jason Bulger]* The proposal being made is to improve the deficiencies identified during Tropical Strom Irene.
4. Mr. Haddad asked that Leroy Johnson be appointed to the EMC.
Mr. Dillon moved to appoint Leroy Johnson to the Emergency Management Agency to expire June 30, 2012. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.
5. Mr. Haddad stated that a meeting has been scheduled on Tuesday, September 27th at 7:00pm with residents impacted by the proposed installation of a sewer system in the Lost Lake. This would be a joint meeting with the Board and the Lost Lake Committee. Woodard and Curran will also attend the meeting.
6. Mr. Haddad requested that Violetta O'Donnell be appointed as an Election Worker.
Mr. Dillon moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Violetta O'Donnell to be appointed as an Election Worker to expire June 30, 2012. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.
7. Mr. Haddad noted that Passport Day would be held Saturday, September 17th at Town Hall from 9am-3pm.

STATION AVE

Mr. Haddad gave a brief history of the GELD site for a proposed Fire Station. Mr. Haddad stated that per Town Meeting request the Town investigated the GELD site. Mr. Haddad along with GELD looked at all possible ways to evaluate the costs and see where the savings could be if GELD and the Fire Station were on Station Ave. After three

months of evaluating a working with the Engineer and architects, a meeting was held with GELD Engineers, DPW, Fire Land Use, Conservation and Mr. Dillon. At the meeting they discussed every possible scenario to place two buildings on one site. Place Inc., an Engineering Firm for GELD looked at the groundwater and the drainage necessary to place a fire station on that site. There are also wetland concerns and that the Fire Station would need to stay outside the 50foot buffer. Based on all of this information the Engineers found that two buildings on this site would not work without encroaching on the buffer. This would make the site cost prohibitive. Mr. Haddad stated that he met with Mr. Lindemear and discussed every scenario. Mr. Lindemear had one more possible solution to try and stated that he would get back to the Town to see if a Fire Station could work on the site. Mr. Haddad stated that Mr. Lindemear understands the problems with the site. Mr. Dillon asked about the number of bays for the fire station. Mr. Haddad replied that Maguire designed a three bay station, which would not work because the fire department needs a minimum of four bays.

Mr. Degen suggested renegotiating with the Arch Diocese for the church land and to authorize the Town Manager to approach the diocese. Mr. Degen also proposed opening and closing the Town Meeting Warrant to add the fire station articles. Mr. Schulman stated that he was in favor of moving forward now that the GELD site has been ruled out. Mr. Cunningham also affirmed the decision to add as place holders to the warrant the fire station articles. Mr. Dillon expressed the idea of having a strategy with all the questions answered prior to going into Town Meeting. Ms. Eliot stated that it looked as though there would be no cost savings having it on the GELD site and that the Town Manager should approach the Arch Diocese. Ms. Eliot also recommended placing two articles on the warrant as placeholders.

Mr. Haddad requested that the Board continue to discuss this issue after the scheduled public hearing commences.

PUBLIC HEARING-REVIEW OF OCTOBER 17' 2011 FALL TOWN MEETING WARRNT IN JOINT SESSION WITH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE/ Documents 2-Draft Warrant]

Mr. Haddad read the public hearing notice. Mr. Cunningham moved to open the public hearing at 7:37pm. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Hearing opened.

Article 1- Mr. Haddad stated that the 2 prior year bills would come out of the water revenues.

Article 2- Mr. Haddad briefly reviewed the expenditures and transfers needed at the Fall Town Meeting. [*Documents 3-Breakdown Town Meeting Transfers Expenditures*]

Article 3- Mr. Haddad proposed putting \$300k into the Capitalization Stabilization Fund. Mr. Haddad mentioned the need to replace a fire truck at a cost of \$350k-\$400k. To pay for the new truck Mr. Haddad suggested taking some monies from Ambulance receipts and some from capitalization fund. Mr. Degen inquired about putting more into the fund if the town is planning to purchase property for a new central fire station. The consensus was that \$300k would be enough.

Article 5- Mr. Haddad recommended \$100k to offset the tax rate. This would be \$25 on the average tax bill.

Article 6- This position would allow the IT Director to be freed up. This article was discussed at the last Board meeting and the most recent Finance Committee Meeting.

Article 7- Mr. Prager, Chairman of FinCom understood the concerns of Shirley and wanted more information before commenting on the dam.

Article 8- Mr. Haddad stated that there was no impending threat of the barn at Hazel Grove. The question is how to get through the winter. Mr. Black stated that there is historic significance of the building and it could be stabilized for \$7k. The responsibility of this expense to sure up the building should be placed on the Riding and Driving Club. Mr. Black stated that the Riders and Drivers Club was meeting on 9/28 to discuss the issue. Ms. Eliot clarified by stating that if the riders club pays for the stabilization then the article would be pulled. Mr. Dillon encouraged the club to look at a longer term plan for Hazel Grove. Mr. Degen agreed the fairgrounds as a whole should be looked at and its future. Is there a standing order to demolish the building? Mr. Black stated that there is no standing order. Mr. Cunningham stated that if the building inspector was not happy with what is done to the building it can be demolished. Mr. Haddad suggested leaving this article on the warrant until a decision is made.

Article 9-Mr. Haddad stated that the repair of the septic at Tarbell has a quoted price is \$23,800 but may come down.

Article 10- Mr. Haddad stated that there is an RFP out and the town needs to see if there are any responses.

Article 11- Mr. Haddad stated that this was to give equipment to enable the firefighters to use the software it received through a grant.

Article 12- Mr. Haddad stated that the filing system in the attic is a placeholder. Mr. Dillon suggested cleaning out the attic first.

Article 13- Mr. Haddad stated that this was vetted at last week's meeting and that Mr. Palma was here to answers any questions regarding the EOC. Mr. Palma stated the reasons why this article was needed and that the current EOC was inefficient in an extensive emergency. Mr. Haddad added that keeping the EOC at the Public Safety building is key because dispatch is located in that building. Mr. Palma stated that it was a large upgrade at minimal costs and he has a prioritized list.

Article 14, 15, &16- Mr. Wheatley presented the Board with an alternative solution. Ms. Eliot stated that the Board can give the option to the Town Engineers for consideration. Mr. Degen was concerned with spending \$350k on an environmental impact study. Mr. Degen also commented on the impact of opening up the Four Corners area. Mr. Cunningham stated that there was a way to manage impact. Mr. Haddad stated that with four corners the project becomes cost effective. Mr. Haddad stated that Lost Lake will be discussed more next week and that he would get all questions answered.

Article 17- Cheney Harper, representing the Great Pond Advisory Committee stated that the weeds are getting worse and that the survey is needed.

Article 18- This easement would come out of the Water Enterprise Fund.

Article 19- Russel Burke, Chairman of the Planning Board stated that design guidelines for the center of town was critical and currently there are a lot of disconnects. Mr. Burke stressed that the town needed vision and asked for help from Dodgson Associates, who were the original consultants for the Station Ave guidelines. Ms. Eliot stated that Station Ave Guidelines and Center Overlay are different and need to be part of Expedited Permitting. Mr. Degen was concerned with this article. Mr. Burke reiterated that the town needed design principles in place to have a vision and that it is not a mass rezoning. Mr. Cunningham asked how the HDC came into play. Mr. Dillon asked if the change would affect Station Ave or the 134 Main street development. Mr. Burke replied that it would not affect those developments and the Town Center needs to be defined.

Article 20 & 21-Mr. Geminer, Sewer Commission stated that a written agreement was needed for this connection. The concern from the Board was that it would open up the rest of the street to be sewerred. Mr. Geminer stated that this would not be the case. Mr. Geminer stated that the sewer commission was in favor of both hookups.

Article 25-Mr. Haddad stated that he was working with GELD to find out what costs would be associated with this article. A PILOT plan would be put in place and the Town and GELD would benefit.

Mr. Degen moved to open the Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Warrant Open.

Mr. Cunningham moved to add 2 articles to the Fall Town meeting Warrant. 1-Purchase 279 Main Street and 2-Engineering cost to design a new fire station. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

Mr. Degen moved to close the Fall Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Warrant Closed.

Mr. Cunningham moved to continue the Public Hearing on the Fall Town Meeting Warrant until September 26, 2011 at 7:05pm.. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Hearing continued.

279 Main Street- Mr. Haddad stressed that there was no rush in approaching the Archdiocese. Mr. Dillon stressed that a strategy was needed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Dillon moved to adjourn at 10:06pm. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Approved: _____
Peter Cunningham, Clerk

respectfully *submitted*,
Patrice Garvin
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

Date Approved: 11-7-2011