

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES NOVEMBER 7, 2011  
APPROVED**

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

**Absent:** Joshua A. Degen

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

Ms. Eliot called the meeting to order at 5:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. Mr. Haddad stated that it was that time of year for the Town Manager to start preparing the FY2013 Town Operating Budget. Mr. Haddad noted that he is required to submit a balanced budget to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee by December 31, 2011. Mr. Haddad enclosed a budget preparation instruction memo. **[Document 1-Budget Memo]** Mr. Haddad stated that he has instructed department heads to place into their budgets ways to improve services. Mr. Schulman asked if COLA was a consideration this year. Mr. Haddad stated that all five unions were up for negotiations. Mr. Dillon pointed to the onetime revenue sources in the budget. Mr. Dillon added that departments will still be required to require justification in their budgets.

Connie Sartini asked why a zero based budget process was not used. Mr. Haddad stated that there are costs in the budget that come up every year and a zero based budget would not work. Mr. Haddad was comfortable using his budget approach. Mr. Haddad stated that he would get back to the board with a schedule for budget meeting with department heads.

2. Mr. Haddad enclosed the latest update of the FY12 Budget. Mr. Haddad explained that the town is in the final stages of preparing the Tax Recap Sheet. Mr. Haddad mentioned the current refinance of the GDRSD loans, which reduces the amount of excluded debt. Mr. Dillon asked if the amount paid back would be prorated. Mr. Haddad stated that it was the decision of the schools on how to pay back the loans. Mr. Haddad noted that the town was \$475,298k under the levy limit, and that the town was in great shape. Mr. Haddad was happy to report that the tax rate was going down and the average tax bill would decrease by \$100. **[Document 2-FY12 Budget]**

3. Mr. Haddad updated the Board on action taken since the Fall Town Meeting.  
Article 6-The town is in the process of looking for a part time IT assistant.  
Article 7- The Squannacook Dam is in the process of going out to bid.  
Article 8-Hazel Grove has been shored up and is safe for the winter.  
Article 9-The septic system work at Tarbell will begin sometime in December.  
Article 10- Counsel will be used to draft a P&S for Tarbell.  
Article 11- Mobile equipment is on order.  
Article 12-The attic is being cleaned out for the new file management system.  
Article 13-The IT manager is out on leave and material for the EOC will be worked on when he returns.  
Article 14, 15 and 16- There is a kick off meeting on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Article 22- Mr. Haddad asked the Board to consider bringing the elimination of the Personnel Board to the Spring Town Meeting.

4. Mr. Haddad requested that the Board ratify his appointment of David Silton as a Groton Special Police Officer from the Town of Westford.

*Mr. Cunningham moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of David Silton as a Groton Special Police Officer. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

5. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to sign the ABCC's population certification.

*Mr. Schulman moved to certify the projected 2012 population for Groton to the Alcohol Beverage Commission. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.*

#### **ATTORNEY ROBERT COLLINS-CHAPTER 61A NOTICE OF INTENT**

Mr. Collins requested the release of land from the Board. The Planning Board and Conservation Commission both voted to recommend the release. Mr. Collins stated that according to the Board of Assessors the back taxes owed is \$4300. Mr. Dillon asked why the taxes goes back only four years. Mr. Cunningham agreed that he would like to know how the roll back in taxes was calculated before voting. Mr. Haddad stated that he would get back to the board with answers to the back taxes question.

#### **CENTER FIRE STATION-DISCUSSION ON NEXT STEPS**

Mr. Haddad stated that residents understood the need for a new fire department now that 279 Main Street was out. The discussion needed to be what the next steps will be. Mr. Haddad stated that the Fire Station Relocation committee ranked three sites. Mr. Haddad would like to relook at all the tier one sites the committee discussed. Mr. Schulman hoped that the Church on the 279 Main Street site still moved. Mr. Haddad stated that the college was still interested in the church. Mr. Schulman added that having a fire station on Main Street was beneficial and that the committee had good representation. Mr. Haddad stated that the committee has a long list of tier one sites and the selectmen should go back and look. Mr. Haddad clarified the process for Eminent Domain for residents who may believe that it is an easy process.

Mr. Cunningham stated that perception is the issues and suggested having another independent group of people review the sites. Mr. Haddad stated that before another committee was created that he and selectmen should revisit other sites that may be worthwhile. Mr. Dillon suggested some Tier 2 sites be looked at and reviewed but believed a Main Street presence would have been good. Ms. Eliot suggested a working meeting with the Board, Fire Chief and members of the original committee to review the Tier 1 sites.

#### **Public Input**

1. Berta Erickson stated that the committee did a good job and suggested looking at sites not on the list. Mr. Haddad stated that everything was open. Ms. Eliot noted that a Architect was chosen for for the feasibility study for Prescott. Chief Joe stated that the Prescott site was looked at and he felt it was too big. Mr. Cunningham suggested hiring a consultant group to assist with the fire station going forward. Mr. Dillon asked what the consultant would do. Mr. Cunningham stated that the town could seek a needs analysis. MR. Dillon stated that the fire department did a good job identifying their needs.
2. Chief Joe stated that it was part of his job to determine the needs for the department. Mr. Cunningham stated that the consultant could be a support for the committee. Mr. Dillon stated that the easy part is the design of the station and the hard part is site selection.
3. Kevin Lindemere asked the Board to confirm if the GELD site was off the list of consideration. Mr. Haddad stated that there are concerns that GELD is not a viable site. Mr. Dillon stated that his personal opinion was that two buildings would not work at the GELD site. Mr. Cunningham agreed that there

was not enough land and that it was in the flood plain. Mr. Schulman stated that the GELD site was not feasible.

4. Bob Pine stated that the perception of 279 Main Street failing was the credibility around the GELD site. Mr. Schulman stated that he would have advocated for the GELD site if he felt it would have worked. ‘
5. Scott Harker expressed his concerns with the process and hoped the Board would look at the Prescott School site.

Mr. Haddad stated that he would get estimates from consultants and reach out to ex Relocation committee members.

**LIAISON REPORTS**

Mr. Schulman stated that he went to the Gay Men’s Chorus. Mr. Dillon attended the Nashoba Chamber of Commerce Awards. Ms. Eliot attended the Planning Board and HDC meeting. Ms. Eliot also attended a Grange Meeting on leasing land for agricultural purposes.

**MINUTES**

*Mr. Dillon moved to approve the regular session minutes of September 26, 2011. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.*

*Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the regular session minutes of October 10, 2011. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Mr. Schulman moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm to the Board of Health meeting. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Board of Health meeting adjourned at 10:10pm.*

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Cunningham, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ respectfully submitted,  
Patrice Garvin  
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

Date Approved: 12-5-11