

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES JANUARY 9, 2012
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 reported that Sandy Pellancia has started as the new Business Manager for the Water Department and introduced her to the selectmen.
2. Mr. Haddad stated that as the Board is aware, there is a Sergeants vacancy in the Police Department. Chief Palma put together an outstanding promotional process that included a written exam, oral exam and administrative review. There were four candidates that passed both the written and oral examinations and moved on to the administrative review. Based on that review, Chief Palma has recommended that Detective Edward Sheridan be promoted to the rank of Sergeant. **[Document 1- Chief Palma recommendation]** Mr. Haddad has accepted the recommendation and has promoted Edward Sheridan to the rank of Sergeant effective January 9, 2012. Mr. Haddad requested that the Board ratify his appointment. Chief Palma said a few word about Mr. Sheridan.
Mr. Cunningham affirmed the Town Manager's appointment of Edward Sheridan to the rank of Sergeant, effective January 9, 2012. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.
3. Mr. Haddad stated that it was the time of year for the Board of Selectmen to open the Warrant for the 2012 Spring Town Meeting. **[Document 2- Town Meeting Schedule]** The Town bylaw calls for the Town Meeting to be held on the last Monday in April, unless the Board calls for a different Monday between March and May. Since there are five Monday's in April this year, the Town Meeting would be held on April 30th. The Board may want to consider scheduling the meeting on April 23rd instead. Mr. Haddad noted that there will be no Special Town Meeting within the Spring Town Meeting this year. Mr. Dillon asked if there was a positive or negative to moving the date. Mr. Haddad stated that having Town Meeting on the 30th meant more time to coordinate. *Mr. Dillon moved to set the 2012 Spring Town Meeting on Monday, April 30th at 7pm. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.*
Mr. Cunningham moved to open the 2012 Spring Town Meeting Warrant and to close at the end of business on March 1, 2012. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.
4. Mr. Haddad reported that the Town has completed the installation of the Septic System at the Tarbell School. The Town is awaiting final approval from the Board of Health. Mr. Haddad reported that everything went smoothly and that there were no surprises. Mr. Haddad is waiting to hear back from Robin Kane on their review with the proposed Purchase and Sales Agreement.
5. Mr. Haddad reported that the Town has completed the installation of the new filing system in the attic of Town Hall. The next step is to transfer all of the files into the new system. Mr. Haddad stated that he would be working with various departments over the next several weeks to accomplish this task. At the conclusion of this transfer, we will have several file cabinets that will be surplus. Mr. Haddad stated that he has had several calls by people interested in purchasing these file cabinets from the Town. In order to properly dispose of them, Mr. Haddad needs to ask the Board to adopt MGL c 30B sec 15(f) titled Disposition of Surplus Property with an Estimated Net Value of Less than \$5,000 in the Town of Groton.
Mr. Cunningham moved to adopt MGL c 30B sec 15(f). Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion carried, 1 abstention Mr. Degen.

LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Eliot noted that she attended the Bonfire that raises money for the Firemen's Association.

MINUTES

Mr. Dillon moved to approve the regularly scheduled minutes of November 21, 2011. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

Mr. Degen moved to approve and not release the Executive Session meeting minutes of December 3, 2011. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

Mr. Degen moved to approve and not release the Executive Session meeting minutes of December 4, 2011. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the regularly scheduled minutes of December 5, 2011, as amended. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

JOINT SESSION WITH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE; PRESENTATION OF TOWN MANAGER'S PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2013 TOWN OPERATING BUDGET

Mr. Haddad thanked his Finance Team putting the FY13 Budget together. Mr. Haddad began his power point presentation with the budget process. Mr. Haddad noted that for the first time in three years a "maintenance budget" will not be proposed. Departments have done an outstanding job maintaining services without significant increases over the last three years. Departments were directed to take a hard look at the services they provide and whether or not changes in the way of services are delivered need to be adjusted. Mr. Haddad added that departments did a good job with their individual budgets. Mr. Haddad stated that FY13 is classified as a "Needs Budget" that maintains the same level of services and addresses areas that will improve the delivery of services.

Mr. Haddad next discussed budget issues. Mr. Haddad stated that in FY12 the approved budget was \$279,566 under the levy limit. Town Meeting approved using an additional \$200,000 from "Free Cash" to offset the tax rate bringing the total amount under the levy limit to \$479,566. Mr. Haddad stated that this translated to \$.32 decrease in the tax rate (\$128 average tax bill). The Town was reimbursed from the Sewer Department for the original central sewer project, which lowered the excluded municipal debt for the last two years. In FY12 the amount used was \$100,000, along with the Groton Dunstable refinancing of their debt. These actions taken have lowered the tax rate from \$16.38 in FY11 to \$16.08 in FY12. Mr. Haddad stated that there will be a rise in excluded debt in FY13 to \$200k.

Mr. Haddad stated that other budget issues were the health insurance revenue forecast for FY13, \$479k unexpended tax capacity, increase in excise, decrease in building permits is being offset by increasing recycling revenues. Mr. Haddad stated that health insurance and pension expenses will not overly tax the budget. Mr. Haddad did not anticipate a decrease in local aid for the first time in three years.

Mr. Haddad reviewed Revenue projections to calculate the 2013 Levy Limit. Mr. Haddad forecasted 12 million in new growth. Mr. Haddad stated that the expected levy limit was \$23,830,390. Mr. Haddad also reviewed the tax levy total with excluded debt for the Town and schools bringing the total levy calculation to \$25,920,517. Other estimated revenues for the town were also reviewed with a total of \$4,142,000. Mr. Degen asked about Snow and Ice. Mr. Haddad stated that he was carrying a \$150k deficit and had no plans to alter that amount. Ms. Sartini asked why the budget was up 2.88% and not 2.5%.

Mr. Haddad reviewed the FY13 Budget Highlights. Mr. Haddad stated that the state's health insurance reform legislation was approved by the commonwealth which allows towns to alter plan design. Mr. Haddad worked with the Insurance Advisory Committee and received overwhelming support for a new health insurance design, saving the town money. Mr. Haddad noted an additional sergeants and patrolman positions in the police department that will held with supervision of shifts and make things more efficient.

A new firefighter position is in the budget to make weekend shifts more adequate with coverage. The money for the position will come from ambulance receipts. The cost of the benefits for the position is what will impact the town. Mr. Haddad stated that there would be a consolidation of office supplies from \$21k to \$12k, due to Centralized Purchasing. Mr. Haddad stated that he was going to rebuild restoration of taxpayer support for the Groton Public Library's book/materials budget. Mr. Haddad suggested \$20k over three years from the Trust Funds to support the Library.

Mr. Haddad increased the Groton-Dunstable School budgets by 2.5%. The Capital Budget will be \$967,200k, and \$450k of this is for a fire truck replacement. Mr. Haddad stated that the Water and Sewer Enterprise budgets were essentially level budgeted with strong forecast for revenues. Mr. Haddad listed each Function of the budget with their percentage change totally the Municipal Government Budget to \$11,638,157 an increase of 2.88%.

Mr. Haddad displaying charts showing where tax dollars go. Mr. Haddad pointed to the tax impact and that the FY12 tax rate was \$16.8 and the FY13 projected tax rate is \$16.59. Mr. Haddad stated that the FY13 Budget was \$100k below the Levy limit. Mr. Haddad directed the Board to his five year forecast for the budget and concluded by stating that the Town was in good shape and once the Governor's budget comes in he would know more. Mr. Haddad asked the Finance Committee to schedule meetings for further discussion on the FY13 Budget.

Mr. Degen asked if the Pool and Golf Center would be broken out to meet with the boards to discuss their Capital Budget. Mr. Haddad stated that \$30k was returned from the Pool and Golf Center. Mr. Prager stated that there was a lot of Country Club in the Capital Budget. Mr. Degen has questions regarding the budget but decided to hold off until the next joint meeting between the boards.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Schulman moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15pm. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Meeting Adjourned

Approved: _____
Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk

respectfully submitted,
Patrice Garvin
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

Date Approved: 2-6-12