

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES APRIL 23, 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 after exiting Executive Session at 7:15.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT [Document I-Town Manger Report and Addendums]

1. A. Mr. Haddad reported that Article 6-Capital Budget-Groton Pool and Golf Center #9 Pool Filtration System had a bid opening last week on the new Filtration System. Mr. Haddad enclosed a memorandum from Bob Whalen outlining the bid results. The Town received two bids. Mr. Whalen is recommending that the bid be awarded to Guarino's Swimming Pool Service at a cost of \$48,782. While this is higher than the other bid (\$19,450), it is a commercial filtration system that better meets our bid requirements and will provide a more long term solution for the Pool. The down side to this bid is that we will not be able to conduct any deck repairs as the filter will take up the entire \$50,000 appropriation request. In addition, the Board had requested a proposed budget on other repairs needed for the pool. Mr. Haddad noted that enclosed was projected repairs and costs. Mr. Dillon asked about a residential bid verse a commercial bid and that the RFP called for a commercial bid. Mr. Haddad explained that a third bid, which was not received in time, was \$45k. Mr. Cunningham asked how crucial the deck repairs were. Mr. Haddad stated that the deck repairs would not close down the pool. Mr. Degen looked to the long term infrastructure of the club and was concerned with costs moving forward. Mr. Degen did not want to go with the commercial filter bid without an overall cost for all repairs. Mr. Dillon stated that he did not know enough about non commercial and that the pool needed a good system and more discussion was needed. Mr. Haddad stated the time constraints and that the pool will open for the season in three weeks. Mr. Degen asked if the non commercial bid had a warranty. Mr. Haddad would get the warranty information to the Board. Mr. Dillon suggested the discussion be delayed until Town Meeting to gather more information.

B. #10-Golf Carts- The Board had requested a final cost breakdown on the costs of the Golf Carts and a proposal on the best way to procure these carts. Enclosed with the report is a proposal from Mr. Whalen. Along with the proposal is a question and answer document that addresses some of the questions raised by the Board. The price received is \$19,900k along with utility carts. Mr. Degen asked what the revenues would be for the carts for the next three years. Mr. Haddad stated that he would get back to the Board with Revenues. Mr. Dillon stated that it was a safety issue. The Board supported this article 4-1 with Mr. Degen against.

C. #11 Cart Paths and Tee Box Repairs- The Board requested a breakdown of the funding would b to repair the Cart Paths and Tee Boxes. Mr. Haddad referred to Mr. Whalen's memorandum and requested \$25k and the Golf Association would make up the difference.

Article 7- Current Year Line Item Transfers- *Mr. Haddad proposed that the following items be used to cover the requested transfers (a total of \$206,475):*

Board of Assessor-Wages \$3,000- This funding is available due to the recent resignation of Katherine Miller. The position will not be replaced at this time.

Insurance and Bonding \$10,000-This funding is available because Worker's Compensation Rates came in lower than originally budgeted.

Planning Board-Consultant \$500 This funding is available because the Planning Board did not need additional consultant services during FY12.

Building Inspector-Salaries \$15,000 This funding is available because we had budgeted the previous Building Commissioner at a full-time salary (Boxboro would have covered this additional expense) and replaced him with a part-time Commissioner.

Police & Fire Communications-Wages \$60,000 This funding is available because the Town received a 911 Grant that covered a portion of out Dispatchers' Wages.

Highway Department-Wages \$8,000 This funding is available due to the fact that a full-time employee did not receive his entire pay for the year.

Groton Country Club-Minor Capital \$12,975 The Pool and Golf Center General Manager has decided to reallocate his line items for the current Fiscal Year.

Employee Benefits-County Retirement \$57,000 This funding is available because the Town received a reduce rate by paying its entire assessment in one payment instead of quarterly.

Health Insurance/Employee Expenses \$40,000 This funding is available due to the fact that we budgeted for vacancies and open enrollment transfers that did not materialize and the premium increase was less than projected.

The following line items have been identified as needing additional funding to cover the remaining Fiscal Year (a total of \$206,475):

Board of Assessors-Expenses \$3,000 This funding will be used to hire a consultant to assist the Principal Assessor with building permit review. The Town is utilizing this process instead of replacing the departed Assistant to the Assessor position until next fiscal year while we undergo a review of all financial department positions.

Town Counsel- Expenses \$12,000 this funding is being requested to cover any anticipated shortfalls in the legal budget. At this time, we do not believe it will be needed and will more likely than not close out to Free Cash.

Town Hall Expenses-Telephone Expenses \$3,000 This funding is being requested to cover a projected shortfall in the phone budget. FY12 was the first year of the consolidated phone line item and expenses came in higher than anticipated. The FY13 line item has been adjusted accordingly.

Planning Board- Expenses \$500 This funding is necessary to cover additional public hearing notice advertising. FY12 was busier than expected.

Police Department- Wages \$25,000 This funding is necessary to cover overtime costs caused by the

resignation of two officers last fall.

Police Department –Expenses \$20,000 This funding is primarily necessary to cover the cost of gasoline caused by increased fuel costs.

Police Department-Public Safety Building \$10,000 This funding is necessary to cover the heating fuel and other miscellaneous expenses incurred during the current fiscal year.

Police Department-Minor Capital \$15,000 This funding will be used to pay for a new digital fingerprint machine that will replace the current way finger prints are taken.

Fire Department-Wages \$25,000 This funding is necessary to cover wages caused by overtime to cover various full-time shifts as well as the costs associated with the three major fires during FY12.

Fire Department-Expenses \$40,000 This funding is necessary to cover various additional expenses incurred in FY12, including fuel costs, vehicle repairs, uniforms, medical supplies, Town's share of air pack grant, and miscellaneous repairs to items damaged during the various fires mentioned above.

Highway Department-Expenses \$20,000 This funding will be used to cover the additional cost of fuel and to repair the Library parking lot.

Country Club-Salary \$250

Groton Country Club-Wages \$4,725

Groton Country Club-Expenses \$8,000 The Pool and Golf Center General Manager will use the reallocation from his Minor Capital Line Item to cover anticipated shortfalls in the above line items. The operating budget remains self-sufficient.

Employee Benefits-Unemployment \$10,000 This funding is necessary to cover the unemployment costs of the two police officers who resigned last fall.

Employee Benefits-Medicare/Social Security \$10,000 This funding is necessary to cover the additional payroll taxes caused by additional overtime earnings. Etc.

Discussion

Mr. Haddad reiterated that there is no change in the operational budget, just monies redistributed. Mr. Dillon asked about the Police overtime line. Mr. Haddad stated it was due to the resignations earlier in the year. Mr. Degen was concerned with the total amount being transferred and noted it was much higher this year. Mr. Degen asked if there was too much in the department's budgets. Mr. Haddad replied that there was no fat in the budget and there were clear explanations for the transfers. Mr. Haddad stated that this breakout was so taxpayers could see where the money was going.

Mr. Haddad stated that Article 10 may be withdrawn since there are no prior year bills. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to defer their discussion on Article 12 and 13 until the Center Fire Station Building Committee reports.

Center Fire Station Building Committee has recommended this parcel as the site for the New Center Fire Station. The Selectmen need to determine the final price and whether or not to accept the recommendation

and move forward with this proposed purchase at Town Meeting. *Article 13 – Design Funding for a New Center Fire Station*

This Article requests an appropriation of \$800,000 to design and put out to bid the new Center Fire Station. Regardless of the outcome of the vote on Article 12, Mr. Haddad recommended that we go forward with this appropriation request and consider one of the other two sites under consideration.

Article 22 – Endorse Comprehensive Master Plan Article 23 – Amend Various Sections of the Zoning Bylaw
The Board decided to hold off a vote on Article 22 until Town Meeting. Article 23 was unanimously supported by the Board.

2. Mr. Haddad stated that Jason Strniste, a Shirley Police officer, has worked a couple of details in the Town of Groton and needs to be appointed a Special Police Officer in order to be paid. Mr. Haddad has made the appointment and would respectfully request that the Board consider ratifying this appointment at Monday's meeting pursuant to Section 4-2(c) of the Groton Charter.

Mr. Cunningham moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Jason Strniste as a Groton Special Police Officer. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

3. Mr. Haddad stated that he had asked the Board to ratify James Kuzmitch as the new Town Hall Custodian. The Board requested that a more formal background check be done before Mr. Kuzmitch's appointment. The background check has been completed and nothing was found that would prohibit Mr. Kuzmitch from serving the Town as a Custodian. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to ratify his appointment.

Mr. Dillon moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of James Kuzmitch as the Town Hall Custodian. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

4. Mr. Haddad stated that Valerie Jenkins has announced her retirement as Town Accountant effective at the end of this year. Her current contract expires on June 30, 2012. Mr. Haddad would like to reappoint Valerie as the Town Accountant from July 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012. She would be paid the pro-rated rate of her annual salary of \$74,160, or \$37,080 (this includes a three (3%) percent wage adjustment provided for all non-union employees). Included with the report is a copy of the proposed contract for the Board's review and approval. Mr. Haddad requested the Board ratify this appointment and approve her contract.

Mr. Cunningham moved to ratify the Town manger's contract with the Town Accountant. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

Mr. Degen moved to have the Town Manager sign the contract effective July 1. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

5. Mr. Haddad stated that Ms. Jenkins is planning on taking some time off during the months of May and June (May 19, 2012 through June 17, 2012). This is similar to the time she took off last year. In order to maintain continuity within the Accountant's Officer, Mr. Haddad is appointing Patricia DuFresne as the Acting Town Accountant during Valerie's absence. Ms. DuFresne will be paid a stipend for performing these duties. The rate of pay will be Grade 13, Step 1 of the Bylaw Wage and Classification Schedule. Mr. Haddad referred to the MOU regarding this matter. Mr. Haddad requested that the Board ratify his appointment.

Mr. Schulman moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Patricia DuFresne as Acting Accountant, while Ms. Jenkins' is away. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

6. Mr. Haddad stated that the State Legislature has begun reviewing the Governor's Proposed FY13 Operating Budget. The House of Representatives has increased the amount of proposed local aid for the Town of Groton in FY13. The Governor had proposed level funding local aid at the FY12 level or \$756,717. The House Ways and Means Committee proposed budget would increase this amount by \$45,750 or \$802,467. This is good news for the Town and would bring the Town's Proposed FY13 Operating Budget to \$626,109 under the levy limit. An updated Cherry Sheet was provided.
7. Mr. Haddad asked how the Board would like to proceed with a wetland protection bylaw review committee. Mr. Dillon suggested drafting a charge and membership. Mr. Haddad stated that he would work with selectmen Eliot and Cunningham to draft a charge. Mr. Nice of the Conservation Commission stated that if it's not broke don't fix it. Mr. Nice had concerns with a bylaw committee and sighted the recent examples of GELD and 134 Main Street. Only 1 application has not worked and that has been GELD, showing that the process works. Mr. Cunningham stated that bylaws should be reviewed periodically and the term "public good" needed to be defined. Mr. Schulman stated that all bylaws are reviewed regularly.
8. Mr. Haddad asked the Board their feelings on the current MOU with GELD regarding free space at the GELD site. Mr. Haddad was asking if the Board still supported this MOU. The Board supported the MOU.
9. Mr. Haddad requested that the Board ratify two prospective Pro Shop members.
Mr. Dillon moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Allen Littig and David Vincent at the Pool and Golf Pro Shop at \$9.50 an hour, contingent on being properly vetted. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

FIRE STATION BUILDING COMMITTEE-FINAL RECOMMENDATION (Document 2-Final CFBC Report)

Mr. Haddad gave a land update. The parcel at Lawrence Homestead Trust is 2.79 acres and with an easement in the back with sewer hookups the price is \$350k. Mr. Petropoulos gave the Center Fire Station Recommendation presentation. Mr. Petropoulos stated that the recommendation of the committee is the LHT site. It had the optimal program. Mr. Petropoulos explained the process undertaken to get to this recommendation and how shifting the building to the other side of the parcel did not impact Response Time. Mr. Petropoulos stated that a mailing will be received by all residents this week outlining the committee's process and conclusion. Mr. Cunningham stated that the committee had a thorough process. Ms. Eliot added that the number of hours were enormous.

Mr. Moore, member of the Agriculture Committee was concerned with the loss of valuable agricultural land.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board if they were ready to decide how to vote if Article 12 was defeated at Town Meeting. The Board voted unanimously to support Article 12 but was reluctant to offer support at that time for Article 13. Mr. Haddad stated that the Town needed a station and recommended supporting Article 13 if Article 12 is defeated. Mr. Dillon asked for input from the committee. Mr. Petropoulos stated that his committee has not had time to discuss this and would report back. The Board supported Article 13 in favor by 4 and 1 at Town meeting if 12 pass.

LIAISON REPORTS

The Board reported on events and activities they had attended throughout town.

MINUTES

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the regular scheduled minutes of April 2, 2012. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried. [Document 3-Minutes 4-2-12]

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of April 2, 2012, to release them. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried. [Document 4-ES Minutes 4-2-12]

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Dillon moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Approved: _____
Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk

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

Date Approved: 5-14-12