

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES NOVEMBER 18, 2013
APPROVED**

Present: Peter S. Cunningham, Chairman; Josh Degen, Vice Chairman; Anna Eliot, Clerk; Stuart M. Schulman; John G. Petropoulos

Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Mr. Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cunningham expressed his deepest sympathy to the friends and family of Kevin McKenzie who had passed away on November 13th. He said that Mr. McKenzie was Groton's representative to Nashoba Valley Technical High School adding that his passing was a huge loss to the community.

Ms. Eliot said that the Edmund Tarbell Trust Fund had placed 3 of Mr. Tarbell's paintings in the Town Clerk's office and encouraged people to stop by to see them.

Ms. Eliot said that Nashoba Valley Medical Center would be dedicating the new wing of the hospital, the Garvin Center, to Norma Garvin in honor of her years of dedication on Wednesday, November 20th.

Mr. Degen invited people to bring their rakes and shovels to Sargisson Beach on Saturday, November 23rd from 8am-12pm to take part in the Sargisson Beach Restoration Project.

Mr. Haddad said that the Town of Groton had just unveiled CodeRed, a reverse 911 system. He encouraged residents to register online and explained that the link could be found on the Town's website www.townofgroton.org.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that with the new fire station project moving along on time, he felt it was time to move forward with an RFP for disposition of the current Center Station on Station Ave. He said that the RFP had been drafted and provided a copy for the Board's review adding that he would like to place it on the Central Register on December 4th 2013 with proposals due on January 23, 2014. Mr. Haddad said that they would also be conducting a site walk on December 17th at 10:00am, allowing interested bidders an opportunity to look at the building.

Ms. Eliot asked if this time of year was a good time to put out an RFP. Mr. Haddad said that contractors looked to line up work for the spring and summer during the winter months. Mr. Petropoulos said that because they had had trouble selling their assets in the past, he wondered if they should try something new in order to get the word out there. Mr. Haddad said that when they put out the RFP for Tarbell School they reached out to 100 developers and listed in publications they had never used before. Mr. Petropoulos said that Art Campbell of the Groton Line had found a website, Municibid.com, where public entities for sale could be listed. Mr. Schulman said that he knew of other local communities that also had trouble finding reuse of their old buildings. It wasn't just a problem in Groton. Mr. Degen said that anything that provided them with a larger viewing audience was worth looking into.

TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING

Mr. Cunningham opened the tax classification hearing by reading the public hearing notice. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to continue the hearing until December 9th as they were waiting on DOR to respond.

Mr. Schulman moved to continue the hearing until December 9th. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT CONTINUED

2. Mr. Haddad said that as part of the acquisition of the Walker-Cox property on Chicopee Row, the Town agreed to put a Conservation Restriction (CR) on the property. He said that in the Boards packets he had included the language for the CR. Mr. Degen said that in light of the recent fire on the land behind Shaw's, the Town should have the right to cut and up-keep the fire road. Ms. Eliot said that she didn't see anything in the CR that prohibited them from doing that. Mr. Schulman said that he liked the idea of putting something in writing within the CR. Mr. Degen added that he would like to see language put in all CR's going forward. Mr. Haddad said that he would run it by Town Counsel and the Conservation Commission.
3. Mr. Haddad said that the Fall Town Meeting had voted to allow seniors who could not participate in the Senior Work-off Program to have a proxy complete their hours. He said that there were currently 2 seniors who were unable to finish their hours and 2 other seniors who had worked extra hours and were willing to donate their time. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to authorize the extra worked hours to be donated to the 2 seniors unable to complete their hours. Mr. Degen asked if the hours worked had been documented. Mr. Haddad said "yes."

Ms. Eliot moved to approve proxy work for the 2 individuals. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Mr. Haddad said that another matter involving the Senior Work-off Program had come to his attention. He said that the Board had set the cap on senior workers at 30. He said that applicants 31 & 32 were 2 other individuals that fell under the guidelines and would be a shame to lose them because they were over the cap of 30. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to raise the number of seniors allowed to work in the Senior Work-off Program to 32 for the next program year. Mr. Degen asked how much extra that would be. Mr. Haddad said an extra \$1,400. Ms. Eliot asked if the first 30 were all income eligible. Mr. Haddad said that the first 32 applicants all fell under the \$65,000 threshold set by the Board. Ms. Eliot asked if this was just for this year or every year going forward. Mr. Haddad said that it would be just for this year.

Mr. Shulman moved to extend the Senior Work-off Program to 32 individuals for this year. Mr. Petropoulos seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Mr. Haddad said that they had received a letter from Lawrence Academy notifying the Town that they had entered into a Purchase and Sales agreement with Mary and George Curry to purchase 73 Fairway Drive. A portion of the property was currently under Chapter 61A. The proposed purchase price was for \$1,050,000. Mr. Haddad recommended that the Board waive their first right of refusal. The Planning Board and Conservation Commission were not interested in purchasing the property. Mr. Degen asked if the land abutted any other town owned land. Mr. Haddad said no, it only abutted Lawrence Academy land. Rena Swezey said that the current owners were only paying taxes on 2 acres as the rest of the 17 acres was land under Chapter 61A.

Mr. Degen moved that the Town choose not to elect their first right of refusal on the land at 73 Fairway Drive. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to ratify the following appointments:
 - a. Suzanne Loverin – Town's Representative to Minuteman Nashoba Health Group
 - b. Catherine Myers – 7 Old Town Road, Ayer – Relief/Part-time Dispatcher
 - c. Donald Girard – 10 Old Meetinghouse Road, Townsend – Relief/Part-time Dispatcher
 - d. Samuel Welch – 33 Warren Street, Fitchburg – Relief/Part-time Dispatcher

Mr. Degen asked if the term end date was June 30, 2013. Mr. Haddad said yes.

Mr. Degen moved that the Board ratify the following appointments made by the Town Manager:

1. Suzanne Loverin – Town's Representative to Minuteman Nashoba Health Group
2. Catherine Myers – 7 Old Town Road, Aye – Relief/Part-time Dispatcher

3. Donald Girard – 10 Old Meetinghouse Road, Townsend – Relief/Part-time Dispatcher
4. Samuel Welch – 33 Warren Street, Fitchburg – Relief/Part-time Dispatcher

Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Mr. Haddad said that proposed meeting schedule, taking the Board through the end of the year was included in his Town Manager's report.

MINUTES

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the Special Meeting minutes of October 21, 2013. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the Special Meeting minutes of October 29, 2013. Ms. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the Regular Session minutes of November 4, 2013. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

BADDACOOK POND

James Luening, Vice President of the Groton Lakes Association and Chair of the Great Ponds Advisory Committee said that he was before the Board to discuss the weed problem at Baddacook Pond adding that the pond faced the same problems as Lost Lake/Knops Pond. He said that Baddacook Pond was the largest natural pond in Groton, covering 76 acres. He said that there was public access for boating, through a boat launch, fishing (the pond is stocked twice a year) kayaking and swimming done on the pond. Mr. Luening said that currently 45% of the pond or approximately 35 acres was covered with weeds and biomass (what's left when leaves, weeds, etc. breakdown).

Mr. Luening said that their options were to do nothing (their resources would be destroyed), continue with mechanical harvesting, which they have done for years, or use an herbicide treatment just like what was done at Lost Lake/Knops Pond. He said that the only known issue was the close proximity of the Baddacook Well which is 50ft from the pond. Mr. Luening said that herbicide treatment of the pond was the option they wanted to pursue with the goal of applying the treatment in 2014. He said that the cost was estimated around \$55,000 adding that they had also applied to the CPC for Community Preservation funds. Mr. Degen said that he took a canoe ride on the pond in August and felt as though the weeds were in fact a problem. He said that the only difference between Baddacook Pond and Lost Lake/Knops Pond was the close proximity to the towns' well. Mr. Petropoulos asked if the Lakes Association had been in contact with the Water Commissioners. Mr. Luening said that the Water Commissioners understood the problem and the Lakes Association was well aware of the water quality concerns. Mr. Petropoulos asked if the sewage disposal systems may be contributing to the problem. Mr. Luening said that he didn't think so as only 8 houses surrounded the pond. Tom Orcutt, Superintendent of the Water Department said that the Board of Water Commissioners was aware of the proposal and would like to see a formal proposal so that they may weigh in on it. Mr. Orcutt added that the entire pond was in Zone II in addition to 350ft of the pond being in Zone I emphasizing that they needed to work together on the proposal.

Mr. Cunningham said that it sounded as though the next step was for Mr. Luening to meet with the Water Commissioners and then come back to the Board. Mr. Degen added that they should also talk to the Conservation Commission.

LIASION REPORTS

Mr. Cunningham said that he and Ms. Eliot met with the Union Congregational Church in West Groton regarding Squannacook Hall. He said they identified core concerns such as the sewage disposal system serving the church. Parking was also of concern to the parishioners and they planned to meet with Halsey Platt to discuss it further. Mr.

Haddad said that the demolition permit process had been initiated on November 4th. Mr. Degen added that initiating the demolition permit process didn't mean that they will demo the building.

Mr. Cunningham said that he had attended the Lost Lake Sewer Advisory Committee meeting the previous Thursday and thought it was a good meeting. He said that the information provided was highly technical but believed that they needed to make a decision soon. Mr. Petropoulos agreed that it was a highly technical report. He said that the committee planned to meet in mid December to further discuss the report and the presentation given by CEI and to also discuss the lack of data they have on private drinking water wells. Mr. Cunningham asked if there was a way to do testing on private wells and asked what it would tell them. Mr. Petropoulos said that he hoped it would let them know what if any contamination there may be and if sewer was needed what the appropriate size of the district should be. Mr. Cunningham said that numerous studies had already been done adding that he was concerned about the timing. He said that if they spent too much more time on further testing, a lot of their current options could be limited or gone. Mr. Orcutt added that Groton was the only non-Cape Cod town that qualified for the 0% loan. Mr. Petropoulos said that he understood the attractiveness of the low cost loan but felt they needed to prove the need for sewer. Mr. Schulman found it hard to believe they didn't have more data than they had a year ago. Ms. Eliot said she wasn't sure what additional data the committee was looking for. Mr. Petropoulos said that he was disappointed in the test data they received adding that the data collected by CEI would not cause people to stand up and vote at town meeting for this project. Mr. Cunningham asked if it was possible for the committee to meet prior to December 19th adding time was of the essence. Mr. Haddad added that if they didn't fund the project by June 30, 2014, they would lose the loan money and would not be able to reapply. Discussion ensued. Mr. Petropoulos said that he would do his best to arrange a meeting prior to December 19th.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Degen moved to adjourn. Mr. Petropoulos seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved: _____
Anna Eliot, Clerk

respectfully *submitted*,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 12/11/13