

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MINUTES APRIL 7, 2014
APPROVED**

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

Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant; Members of the Community Preservation Committee (Gineane Haberlin, Richard Hewitt, Russ Burke, Bob DeGroot, Dan Emerson, Bruce Easom)

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cunningham said that the Board was in receipt of an email from Captain Susan Daly of the Fire Department. He said that there had been an emergency call the day before where EMS was requested for a 78 year old gentleman who suffered a cardiac arrest and then fell 10 feet from a ladder. EMS took over CPR upon arrival. *“Sergeant Derrick Gemos and Officers Rachael Mead and Kathy Newell applied their AED and administered multiple shocks. EMTs arrived on scene and took over CPR. EMTs who responded from Groton included Lieutenant Michael Culley and EMTs Heather Emslie, Betsey Reeves, Cathy Lincoln and Rob VanSchalkwyk. An ALS unit from Ayer Fire also responded and included Paramedic Tim Shea and EMT Frank Fowler. Prior to beginning transport to the hospital the crew determined the patient had regained a pulse and was breathing. The patient was brought to Nashoba Valley Medical Center and transferred to Mass General by helicopter.”* Mr. Cunningham said that the patient was resting at Mass General and the family was very appreciative of the response from both the EMS and Police.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that as the Board was aware, they had been searching for a new Human Resources Director. He said that he appointed a search committee made up of Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Robertson, Ms. Dufresne and Mr. Hartnett. He said that the committee interviewed 6 individuals and recommended to have the department heads interview 2 finalists. He said that it was a good process and he was pleased with the results. Mr. Haddad said that he was appointing Melisa Doig of Ashby as the new Human Resources Director. He said that she had worked in the Town of Ayer for the last 16 years and would be a great addition to the team. He respectfully requested that the Board ratify the appointment of Melisa Doig. Mr. Cunningham said that he was part of the process and thought she had a breath of knowledge. Mr. Schulman welcomed Ms. Doig. Mr. Degen said that thought that her skill set showed she was capable of handling the work well. He asked what she was going to do to work towards obtaining a degree that the job posting required. Mr. Haddad apologized adding that there had been a disconnect between the advertisement and the job description. He said that Ms. Doig more than met the qualifications. Mr. Cunningham said that they double checked the job description which stated “or equivalent experience” adding that the job posting was inaccurate.

Ms. Eliot moved that the Board ratify the appointment of Melisa Doig as the Human Resources Director effective April 22, 2014. Mr. Petropoulos seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Mr. Haddad said that he heard there were some concerns about the Country Club snack bar. Mr. Haddad said that for the past 4 years, the snack bar had been inadequate and in need of improvement. A focus group had been set up and an RFP issued for the operation of Mulligans. He said that Luke and Katie Kenney, owners of Blackbird Café were the only bidders. He said that part of the agreement was that we would renovate the snack bar for a total cost of around \$6,000-8,000. He said that lease calls for rent of \$400/month in addition to capital costs that the Kenney’s would be putting forward. He added that the Kenney’s would be paying the utilities also. Mr. Haddad said that it was a good deal for the Town and

applauded Mr. Whalen for his efforts. Mr. Degen said that he appreciated the update adding that Mr. Delaney and his staff had done a great job keeping the work in house. Mr. Petropoulos said that he was very impressed with the terms of the agreement but said that it would take them 20 months to make back their \$8,000 investment. Mr. Haddad said that he disagreed adding that it was the Town's asset and it needed the improvements. He said that the Kenney's were purchasing the tables, chairs among other items and also paying the utilities moving forward.

3. Mr. Haddad said with the recent resignation of the DPW Foreman, they had conducted an internal search which yielded 3 candidates. Mr. Haddad said that he was pleased to bring forward Troy Conley who had been with the department one month less than Mr. Delaney (28 years) as the new DPW Foreman and asked the Board to ratify the appointment. Mr. Cunningham said that Mr. Conley knew his way around town and was highly regarded by many. Mr. Degen said that his work ethic was excellent and thought he was well respected.

Ms. Eliot moved to ratify the appointment of Troy Conley as the DPW Foreman effective today. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE – REVIEW OF 2014 SPRING TOWN MEETING PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Hewitt called the meeting of the CPC to order at 7:23pm.

Mr. Hewitt said that they had a good problem this year. He said that DOR for a second year in a row had directed the CPC to only use 23% of the state match with the 2nd and 3rd rounds being available in November. He said that they had also received a portion of a \$25 million surplus in the FY13 State budget that added additional funds to the Community Preservation account. Mr. Hewitt said that they had received 7 applications total. He said that they had a give and take discussion at their last meeting with 5 of the applicants looking for money out of the Unallocated bucket.

- Mr. Hewitt said that Ledge Rock Fields was looking for \$41,000, the balance of their FY14 requested amount. He said that they would like the money to come from the current fiscal years budget so that the project can start utilizing the funds right away.
- He said that the Committee decided not to fund the Baddacook Pond Herbicide Treatment application.
- Mr. Hewitt said that they recommended that the Mile Stone Restoration Project be funded in its entirety for \$23,000 out of the Historic Preservation bucket.
- Mr. Hewitt said that the Conservation Commission had requested \$200K. He said that the Committee was able to recommend that they be funded \$100K.
- Mr. Hewitt said that Sargisson Beach had requested \$170K to restore the beach. Mr. Hewitt said that the Committee agreed to fund them as much as they could which was \$107K.
- Mr. Hewitt said that the Groton Pool and Golf Center had requested \$57K to repair the driving range. The Committee voted to recommend \$47K.
- Mr. Hewitt said that the recommended that the Housing Coordinator position be funded in its entirety out of the Housing bucket.

Mr. Cunningham thanked the Committee for vetting the applications. Mr. Easom said that according to the Blue Book receipts were down 16.5% from this time last year adding that it was still possible for them to receive an additional \$26K in unallocated funds with an additional State match. Mr. Hewitt said that the Committee was happy with the process and the fact that even though the applicants may not have been happy, they were willing to take lower amounts to that they could try to fund all projects.

Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Petropoulos, Mr. Schulman and Ms. Eliot were all in favor of supporting all the articles. Mr. Degen was in favor of all except the Pool and Golf Center application.

A motion made by Ms. Haberlin to adjourn the CPC meeting was carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT CONTINUED

4. Mr. Haddad said that he was in receipt of a letter from Gregg Yanchenko regarding the Prescott School and asked the Board to hold off on rejecting anything until the appraisal was completed. He said that Mr. Yanchenko had agreed to install a municipal parking lot at his cost and to allow for certain community uses of the property. Mr. Haddad said that he was also in receipt of a letter from the GDRSD notifying the Board of their intent to vacate the building in August. Mr. Haddad asked for permission to work with the School Committee to see if they will consider staying in the building for the next year until they finalize use for the building. Mr. Cunningham thought that made sense. Ms. Manugian said that the School Committee would be open to talks adding that moving incurred costs and thought a central office was good. She said that they needed to have a plan in place adding that the summer was the best time for them to move. Mr. Degen said that he also would entertain a discussion with the School Committee. Mr. Degen added that the Prescott School Reuse Committee had voted unanimously not to support the bid. Mr. Cunningham said that they should look at the additional information before they accepted Mr. Yanchenko's withdrawal letter. He added that they needed to be clear of their vision for the building otherwise it would hurt their credibility. Mr. Petropoulos said that he was pleased they were getting an appraisal adding that they couldn't do it before without a proposed use. Mr. Haddad said that all the information was sent to the appraiser including the RFP and Mr. Yanchenko's bid adding that they were trying to get the highest and best use.
5. Mr. Haddad said that the Board needed to take positions on a couple of articles still. He said that the first was article 7. Mr. Haddad said that the total line item transfers equaled \$258,550. The Board was unanimous in its support of the article. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to hold off on taking a position on articles 21 and 22 until Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad asked the Board for permission to start negotiations with the top proposal for the sale of the center fire station. Mr. Haddad said that Mr. John Carver was interested in talking to the Board about the sale of town property. Mr. Carver said that he was a resident in Town and also a local real estate agent for over 20 years who felt that the current offer to purchase the center fire station was inadequate. He said that he was familiar with the property and assessed values. He said that 130 total transactions had taken place in Groton over the last 12 months with a 99.5% mean assessed value. He said that when the first RFP was issued one bid came in which was clearly inadequate adding that he thought the media had helped out when the second RFP was issued. Mr. Carver suggested that the Board reissue the RFP and market it with a realtor. He said that Chapter 30B said that the Town can use a realtor to assist in the marketing of the building. He thought the chances of success could be improved adding again that he thought the offer for \$100K was inadequate. Mr. Haddad said that it would require 2 RFP's. Mr. Carver said that all the bids were from Groton residents adding that MLS is accessible throughout the State. Mr. Cunningham said that it would be a 2 step process where as a broker would need to bid also adding that they were also confined by the process in the central registry. Mr. Cunningham said that they had a recent RFP process which vetted a viable interested person and was concerned about pulling the rug out from underneath that person now. Mr. Degen said that the Town was not in a position to accept a fee from a broker adding that he too was concerned about revoking a deal now. Mr. Petropoulos said that he agreed with the presenter adding that he too felt as though there was a larger market out there. Mr. Petropoulos suggested forming a small committee made up of Mr. Carver and himself as well as another broker to see if a better job can be done in the future to market town buildings.

Mr. Petropoulos made a motion to establish a committee on how to market properties in the future. Mr. Degen seconded the motion.

Mr. Cunningham said that he wasn't sure a motion was needed to do it. Mr. Petropoulos said that he had only heard what they can't do not what they can do. Mr. Cunningham said that he would support this but wanted to fine tune the make-up of the working group. *The motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Degen, Mr. Schulman, and Ms. Eliot supported the article. Mr. Degen added that there should be a condition that the P&S be tied to the stated use. Mr. Petropoulos did not support the article.

6. Mr. Haddad said that they were in receipt of a \$25,000 check from the Groton School to be used to purchase equipment at the new Fire Station. Mr. Haddad said that he greatly appreciate their generosity and asked the Board to vote to accept the gift and authorize Mr. Haddad to sign off on the expenditure of the money.

Mr. Degen moved to accept the gift from the Groton School. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Cunningham said that he would entertain a motion to authorize the Town Manager to expend the money gifted by the Groton School. Mr. Schulman moved the question. Mr. Petropoulos seconded the motion.

Mr. Degen asked what the money was going to be spent on adding if it was going to be spent something in planned for or enhancing something. Mr. Haddad said that it was going towards enhancing what was already planned for. *The motion carried unanimously.*

7. Mr. Haddad said that it had been brought up that the FY14 3rd quarter report was something that they were not in compliance with adding that he had provided the Board with a report as discussed at their previous meeting. He said that he met with his Finance Team monthly. He explained that it was a report that showed each line item as that was how it was voted on at Town Meeting. He said that the 4th quarter report would not be available until August due to when the books have to be closed.

MINUTES

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the regular session meeting minutes of March 24, 2014. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Schulman abstaining.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Eliot asked if refreshments would be provided at Town Meeting by the Boy Scouts or some other organization. Mr. Cunningham said that they would also like to make babysitting available too. He said that they were trying to find a group that would do it at the school.

Mr. Cunningham said that he had an opportunity last Tuesday to attend the Celebration of Troop 3's 90th birthday.

Mr. Degen moved to adjourn at 9:04pm. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved: _____

Anna Eliot, Clerk

Date Approved: 5/12/14

respectfully *submitted*,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant