

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MINUTES NOVEMBER 30, 2015
APPROVED**

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

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

Mr. Petropoulos called the meeting to order at 7:06pm and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Eliot said that the Groton-Dunstable Youth Cheerleaders had placed 2nd at their recent competition and could advance to National in Florida in December.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to consider appointing John Wiesner to the Local Cultural Council with a term to expire on June 30, 2021.

Mr. Degen moved to appoint John Wiesner to the Local Cultural Council with a term to expire on June 30, 2021. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad said that they received a request from the Town of Northfield to join their Municipal Coalition Against the Pipeline. He said that where they were already part of one did they want to be part of another. Mr. Schulman said that the Coalition had not taken a position yet. He said that he was not sure it made sense for Groton to join another coalition. He said that geographically it didn't make sense. Mr. Cunningham suggested they write to the Town of Northfield. Mr. Haddad said that he would draft a letter for their approval. Ms. Eliot suggested having Mr. Schulman review it.

Mr. Haddad said that he and Mr. Degen attended a meeting of the Tri-Board that afternoon to talk about the financial impact of the school budget and look at the current FY. He said that the current FY budget was right on track adding it looked like their E&D would increase from \$300-800K. He said they spent a bulk of the meeting discussing the anticipated FY17 impact. He added that he and the Finance Team had great meetings that day with department heads.

Mr. Haddad said that the school department told them two things; one – the roll over costs to maintain status quo would mean they would require \$1M or a 2.74% increase to meet contractual obligations and health insurance increases. He said of that \$1M, Groton was responsible for 77.61%. He said that the second things they discussed was that the School Committee was doing a needs assessment and in order to meet their needs assessment they would be looking for \$3.5M total increase. He said that this was a preliminary estimate adding that Groton would be responsible for \$2.7M. He said that in looking at preliminary budget estimates Groton would have between \$500-700K for available funds under proposition 2 ½. He said that this would require a \$2-2.2M override to fund their request. Mr. Haddad said that he was required to put together a balanced budget and that only the Board of Selectmen could put an override vote on the ballot. He said that he was thinking about giving them two budgets, a balanced budget and a budget that would show what an override would look like. Mr. Degen said that the School Committee just received a 94 page needs assessment document and were in the process of digesting that information themselves. He said that document would be reduced to a 4-5 page executive summary and everything would be available online once they have digested that. He said that they still needed to put together their technology plan, OPEB plan, E&D plan and capital plan.

Mr. Cunningham asked what the theme of the increase was. Mr. Degen said that they were looking to level funding roll-over costs and address staffing reductions over the last 5 years adding that staffing needed to be meet for the needs of the children. He said they were talking about many hirings. Mr. Cunningham asked if enrollment was going up. Mr. Haddad said it hadn't been discussed at this meeting but in previous meetings they stated it had leveled.

Mr. Schulman said that this was a big bite to swallow and thought they should advise the School Committee that residents might consider this but think they need some sense that this won't be an annual affair. Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Robertson spent a lot of time on that point. Mr. Robertson said that they need the why we are doing this. Was it because test scores and metrics were going down and they don't want to be there. He said that he told them this was what the town wanted to hear. Mr. Degen said that one of the other points brought up was Mr. Haddad had always set 2 ½% which was arbitrary and didn't meet the needs. He said that this had been the threshold for many, many years. Mr. Haddad said that he told the School Committee that they controlled the narrative and the narrative needed to come from them. He said that he was impressed with hard work Dr. Rodriguez and Mr. Stanton had done. Mr. Petropoulos said that their revenue grows 3% and could support up to that point.

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE – PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY

Mr. Manugian called the Charter Review Committee meeting to order at 7:28pm. He said that when the committee started out they discussed and decided to refer those things that don't belong with Committee to the appropriate boards. He said that they drafted a working draft which was in front of the Board based on a suggestion from a resident. He said that he wanted to suggest that the Board consider adopting a policy like this. He said that he hoped to have 3 answers to questions by the end of the presentation. He said that one of the issues was who was responsible for this policy and thought it was important for the public to know who authorizes a policy. He said that the policy covers who is responsible for administering the policy, what the repository and the records facility looked like. He covered how the town handles emails and redactions and also charted out the time in which records should be available, etc.

Mr. Cunningham said that he heard a lot of these discussion and thought that realistic issues needed to be addressed when doing a policy. He said that there were some constraints with emails for all volunteers after speaking to the IT Director. He suggested setting up a working group to look at this to include Mike Bouchard and someone from Charter Review Committee. Mr. Degen said that he thought the draft was great and thanked the Committee for bringing forward anything their Board was not responsible for. Mr. Degen asked if making the Town Manager the record administrator would be burdensome on him. He asked if this would require additional administrative support. Mr. Manugian said it was quite possible extra support would be required. He said that getting the records online would take administrative support. Mr. Degen said that he agreed and support this but wanted to know what financial ramifications there were. Mr. Schulman said that providing a service that didn't exist before won't always be able to save money adding that they sometimes needed to spend some and thought this was worth it. Mr. Manugian said that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had one of the poorest records polices.

Ms. Eliot said that she thought the Town Clerk was keeper of the records. She said that she wanted to make sure the designation was clear. Ms. Eliot said that this wasn't just us trying to dictate how records would be accessed by the public but also involved all other departments and could have ramifications. Mr. Cunningham said that he didn't see any issue in considering this and any other ideas that come from other suggestions. He said that he would also consider the Committee's help as offered but would like to see a working group set up to tease out some of the details and work with other departments on how it could be implemented. Mr. Petropoulos said that he agreed. Mr. Haddad suggested that the initial working group consist of himself, IT, Town Clerk, member of Board, and Charter Committee member. Ms. Jane Allen said that the discussed

putting something in the charter but it came up that its state law and they didn't want to be redundant. Mr. Petropoulos suggested they also include Lauren Goldberg. Mr. Giger said that the Statute didn't specify that the Town Clerk was responsible for records retention. He said that someone had to accept the responsibility of records maintenance. Mr. Petropoulos said that it tends to come back to the clerk always. Mr. Degen said that he wasn't sure how they were going to figure out costs for this FY and would maybe need to push adoption of a policy out 18 months possibly. Mr. Cunningham said that he was interested in working on this and maybe it could be done in stages.

Mr. Manugian thanked the Board and adjourned the meeting of the Charter Review Committee at 7:50pm.

PROCLAMATION – ART CAMPBELL DAY

Mr. Petropoulos said that it gave him great pleasure to read the proclamation and designate November 30, 2015 as Art Campbell Day. Mr. Petropoulos read the proclamation.

ABSTAINING FROM VOTES OF THE BOARD

Mr. Petropoulos said that he wanted to discuss when it was appropriate for them to abstain from votes. Mr. Haddad said that an abstention was usually when there was a conflict to vote. He said that a no vote should be voted as no. Mr. Petropoulos said that they should probably be specifying why they are abstaining from a vote. Ms. Eliot said that the statute does not specify that you have to vote. Mr. Degen said that there are a lot of reasons to abstain using meeting minutes as an example. Mr. Schulman said that you can abstain on things you're not informed about. Mr. Degen asked Mr. Petropoulos what prompted him to put this on the agenda. Mr. Schulman stated that if it was because of a discussion at the Charter Review Committee meeting. Mr. Cunningham said that at the end of the day they were responsible to take a position in fairness to the voters adding it was seen as polite to abstain from a vote so as to not hurt feelings.

TOWN MANAGER OBJECTIVES

Mr. Haddad said that the Chair and Vice Chair, as had been done in the past, sit down with Town Manager to set his goals and objectives for the upcoming year adding he assumed he should sit down with them and they would bring it back to the Board for approval. Mr. Petropoulos suggested they all come back to the next meeting with some suggestions for objectives. Mr. Haddad said that his annual review was based on annual objectives and suggested that they be done some time in December for implementation in January. Mr. Degen agreed adding he would like to see them adopted by December 31st. Mr. Cunningham suggested placing this for discussion and approval on their December 21st agenda.

GD SOCCER PROCLAMATION

Ms. Eliot said that she asked to have this added. She said she would like to see them issue the boys soccer team a proclamation as they came in second in the state. Mr. Petropoulos said that it might not be practical for two groups to be done at the same time speaking about the GD Youth Cheerleaders and the soccer team. Mr. Schulman said that he was not a fan of this adding he thought it diluted the whole process. Mr. Petropoulos said that they should develop a policy for proclamations or they could wind up offending someone. Mr. Petropoulos asked if they wanted to have a proclamation for the soccer team. Ms. Jane Allen suggested that the Board wish them congratulations as a group. Mr. Degen thought it was a good idea.

Mr. Schulman moved that they issue their heartiest congratulations to the cheerleaders and soccer team for their outstanding accomplishments. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Cunningham said that the recent Talk with Tom at senior center was a lot of fun and interesting.

Ms. Eliot said that the Economic Development Committee was putting together a guide to permitting in Groton.

MINUTES

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Regular Session meeting minutes of October 19, 2015. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Regular Session meeting minutes of November 2, 2015. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Schulman abstaining.

Mr. Schulman moved to adjourn at 8:12pm. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved: _____

Stuart Schulman, Clerk

respectfully *submitted*,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 12/21/15