

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MINUTES MAY 9, 2016
APPROVED**

Members Present: John G. Petropoulos, Chair; Anna Eliot, Vice Chair; Joshua A. Degen, Member; Peter S. Cunningham, Member

Members Absent: Stuart M. Schulman

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

Mr. Petropoulos called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Petropoulos said that he would be holding Selectmen's hours on Saturday at 10am at Johnsons.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that the Police Chief asked him to appoint three new Reserve Police Officers, Joshua Grigg, Richard Rene and Caitlyn Murphy.

Chief Palma said that once a year they test about 40 people to select candidates to be added to their Reserve fleet. He said that this year, he wanted to bring three candidates forward for consideration. He said that Joshua Grigg began his career in 2013 with the Mass National Guard and done three tours overseas. He said that Richard Rene had a background in IT and recently completed his officer training in Boylston. He said that Mr. Rene was also a certified dive master. Chief Palma said that Caitlyn Murphy was a 2005 Groton-Dunstable graduate with graduated college with a psychology background. He said that she was employed by the Sheriff's department in Massachusetts and was about to graduate from the police academy. Mr. Haddad said that he had made those appointments effective immediately and asked the Board to consider ratifying them.

Mr. Cunningham moved to affirm the Reserve Officer appointments as made by the Town Manager. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Mr. Haddad said that he along with the Town's IT Director and Town Accountant had been working on providing a visual budget on Town's website in an effort to provide more information to the residents. He said that this was another step they were taking to make things more transparent. He said that Mr. Chiasson provided a presentation to the Finance Committee a month ago, who supported this, and wanted to provide one to the Board that evening. He said that if the Board liked this, they could go live with it the next day.

Mr. Chiasson explained that they were using open source software and demonstrated what the visual budget would look like. Mr. Chiasson said that they planned to place this on the budget section of the Town's webpage. Mr. Haddad said that he was very pleased with the efforts of Mr. Chiasson and Ms. Dufresne in putting this together adding that the departments were focused on transparency. Mr. Chiasson explained that some of how the budgets were laid out was different because the State had a different way of coding the budgets than the Town did. Mr. Dufresne said that the visual budget would be using the state codes because of how she had to report to DLS. She said that the Town's proposed budget numbers and departments looked different, using the Land Use Department budget as an example. She added that these would be actual budgets not proposed. Mr. Cunningham said that he liked this and thought it looked great. Mr. Degen agreed adding that it was a great way to look at trends year over year. He asked if they could work with the School Committee to see if they wanted to

do the same thing so that they would be able to look at the big picture. Mr. Haddad said that they didn't need a formal vote just an okay to add it to the website. Ms. Eliot said he assumed people could look at the budgets but not change them. Mr. Chiasson said that was correct. Mr. Petropoulos asked how many other towns had adopted this. Mr. Chiasson said that about a dozen towns had adopted it with more in process right now. He asked if there was a sense for how old this was. Mr. Chiasson said that the open source software was about 4-5 years old. The Board liked the idea and was enthusiastic to see if added to the website.

3. Mr. Haddad said that he had made various revisions to the proposed Charge for the new Prescott Committee. He said that one major change was the name of the Committee. He said that it was brought to their attention last week that the Town could not charge rent from the Regional School Department as it was illegal under Mass General Law. He said that he further found out that this was because it was not stipulated in the regional agreement. He said that if they wanted to charge rent, they would have to amend the regional agreement to state this.

Mr. Petropoulos said that the first thing was to discuss the recommendations of the Committee and vote whether or not to accept the recommendations and then discuss the charge. Ms. Eliot said that she had been asking that the report be distributed to the Finance Committee and Economic Development Committee adding she would like it to be reviewed by more than just them. She said that the Prescott Committee was asking for \$5M in future expenses and was not sure why they were rushing into anything. She said that the Economic Development Committee was interested in reviewing this. Mr. Petropoulos said that they should discuss whether or not they wanted to accept the recommendation adding he asked her last week if she wanted to make a motion to reconsider and Ms. Eliot declined. Mr. Degen asked Mr. Petropoulos what the benefit was to having the Board take a vote that night and why they couldn't wait until all parties have had a chance to review and comment on the report. He said he didn't see any harm in waiting a few weeks to vote on this. Mr. Sheldon said that they had worked very diligently on this and submitted the report a month ago. He said that there was some unfortunate misunderstanding of what this report represented and what the next step was. He said that the next step was to put together a business plan. He said that they were never charged with negotiating the terms of a lease. He said that they delivered what they were tasked to do and now it was time for the next phase to be implemented.

Mr. Cunningham said it was clear there were a lot of moving parts. He said that they need to nail down those loose ends and see what the different scenarios included. Mr. Degen said that they hadn't addressed an addendum that was produced last week to address the school districts concerns. Mr. Sheldon said that new information came forward that rent could not be charged to the district unless it was written in the agreement. He said that they met and heard the schools concerns. He said it was their recommendation that a non-profit, chosen through an RFP process, manage the property. He said that the school district could pay rent to a private or nonprofit entity. Ms. Becky Pine said that they were very sensitive to what the schools were looking for and they tried to correct the wording without rewriting the report. Mr. Degen said that he had a couple of the other concerns such as priority access to conference room on 1st floor, which had been addressed and how the construction schedule was going to work which had also been addressed in the addendum. Mr. Petropoulos asked if they could indicate whether or not they had spoken with the school district and if these changes addressed their concerns. Mr. Sheldon said that he had not connected with the Superintendent but believed these had addressed their concerns.

Mr. Petropoulos asked if they were talking about accepting a vision in keeping with discussion they had a couple of weeks ago. Ms. Eliot said that the vision assumed a great deal of expense to the town

and assumed a commercial entity had committed which was not the case. She said it was hard for her to envision that one third of the building was going to be used for commercial space and the rest for community use. She said that this needed to be revenue generating. She said that there was nothing in the vision or recommendations for the new committee about this. Mr. Sheldon said that was not true. Ms. Eliot said that the report called for two thirds usage for community or school use and was lacking professional commercial input. She reiterated her original comment about wanting the Finance Committee to take a look at this to see if it was viable. Mr. Cunningham said that he thought this might be a task of development committee and what they may do. He said that they had gotten a larger vision but actual plan had to come from the group that gets down to the nitty gritty. He said he was comfortable going forward with the committee charge. Ms. Eliot said that she would like to see other committees look at this. Mr. Petropoulos said that the vision was to keep the building and maybe how they do that. He said that the vision did provide for commercial use adding that the objective was not to make it a commercial benefit. Mr. Degen agreed with Mr. Petropoulos and Mr. Cunningham adding that they gave a charge to a committee and heard the will of the voters at Town Meeting. He suggested that they also wait to hear from the Senior Center Feasibility Study Committee before forming this new committee. Ms. Eliot said she wanted to be clear that she never said she wanted to sell the building.

Mr. Petropoulos asked for a motion to accept the recommendation of the Building Committee to retain the building. Mr. Cunningham made a motion to accept the vision. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0-1 in favor with Ms. Eliot abstaining.

Mr. Degen said that the first step in the new Charge should be to come up with a business plan. Ms. Pine said that according to the to-do-list the new committee wouldn't start until August adding that their committee was already charged with coming up with an RFP and seeking out a non-profit to run the building. Mr. Cunningham asked that they coordinate with the School Committee and Senior Center committee so that the August time frame would work well.

Mr. Degen asked if there was an issue that needed to be resolved in regard to the CY Pres petition. Mr. Haddad said that it would depend on use. He said that it was changed to reflect mixed use, housing and education. Mr. Degen said that a business plan should be vetted by the Finance Committee and Economic Development Committee. Mr. Petropoulos said that they could manage this as it comes. Mr. Degen said that he saw no issue with bringing this charge back in a couple of weeks so that the Economic Development Committee could look at the report especially since they would not be appointing a committee until July or August. He said he was okay with waiting a couple of weeks. Mr. Cunningham said that he didn't want to get bogged down. He said he was okay with the charge that night and was okay with waiting a few weeks too.

Mr. Petropoulos said that he would entertain a motion to accept the charge as written adding that number 10 (a business plan) of the charge would be moved to number 1. Mr. Cunningham made the motion. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0-1 with Ms. Eliot abstaining.

Mr. Haddad said that he thought the time was right to take on and start permitting the parking lot behind the Prescott School as suggested in the Committee's report. He said that they could use gift fund money that was going to be used for the parking lot behind the banks. Mr. Cunningham asked if the potential activity or design could influence anything. Mr. Haddad said that he was not sure what would change unless additions were being proposed. Mr. Degen said that requirements would be different for different uses adding the end use would dictate the number of spaces. He said he saw no harm in waiting. Ms. Eliot said that there was already a parking issue on Main Street adding it would

be a proactive gesture to other businesses that could benefit from off-street parking. Mr. Petropoulos said that there was plenty of parking at Prescott currently. He said that if there is a real demand, they could put up signs for public parking. Mr. Degen said that parking was a priority they had not done well with and appreciated Mr. Haddad bringing this up. He suggested they talk with the school district about putting up a sign for free parking. Mr. Petropoulos asked that some sort of a count be done before and after they put signs up.

Mr. Haddad said that he talked to Town Counsel about CPA funds for a Senior Center. He said that funds could only be used if renovate Prescott School for a Senior Center because of its historic designation but not for a new building.

4. Mr. Haddad said that the Charter Review Committee proposed that the Board consider a Records Policy. He said that he worked with the Town Clerk, IT Director, Charter Committee Chairman and Mr. Cunningham to review and draft a policy for the Board's consideration. He said that the majority of their time was spent on what should be included and where documents would be repositied. Mr. Haddad spent a few minutes reviewing Appendix A of the policy. He said he also wanted to make clear that the repository was not the town website but the town server. He said he believed they did a good job going through all documents. He said it was decided as a committee that email was too arduous a task to make available on a website.

Mr. Degen said that he reviewed the policy and there was not a single thing he would disagree with except for email. He said that his emails were not part of a repository. He said that if they until they made a rule that Selectmen conduct business through email server, if someone were to ask for his email, he didn't have to comply according to his attorney. Mr. Cunningham said that they did discuss this and there was difficulties in creating a platform where emails could be available like that. Mr. Petropoulos said that it would be a big task to add something like that adding they could tackle the email issue at a later date. Mr. Cunningham said that assigning everyone with a town email address would cost a boatload of money. Mr. Haddad said that a lot of the documents are already available adding they would be adding legal notices to the Town website in addition to the local newspaper. Mr. Cunningham added that some fiduciary information was available in the town report and not necessary to add to the website again. Mr. Petropoulos asked about paper documents. Mr. Haddad said that they were not getting rid of them totally. He said that they were going to try to move things along electronically as they move along.

Mr. Petropoulos said that he would like to wait a week out of good practice before they approve this. He said that he would vote in favor of it but would prefer to wait a week. The Board was okay with this.

5. Mr. Degen asked about reassigning Mr. Schulman's articles. Mr. Cunningham said he would move the capital budget. Mr. Petropoulos said he would move the line item transfers. Ms. Eliot said she would move Article 12. Mr. Cunningham said he would move the prior year bills. Mr. Haddad said that they reserved a bunch of nights for a third night of Town Meeting in the high school gym. He said that the PAC was not available. Mr. Degen suggested posting a meeting for May 19th also just in case. Mr. Haddad said that the School Committee was posted for the 18th and was willing to entertain a joint meeting.
6. Mr. Haddad said that the Board's summer schedule was printed in their packets and would be every other week beginning in July.

7. Mr. Haddad said that as of the previous Thursday, the Town no longer owned the Tarbell School. He said that they received a check that day which would be deposited into receipts reserved for appropriation. He said that they could use that money for capital projects should they so choose.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Degen reminded residents that voting was on May 17th 7am-8pm.

Ms. Eliot said that the Town of Groton received designation as Tree City USA and an Arbor Day tree was planted on Saturday. Mr. Degen said that he attended and presented the proclamation. He added that blue spruce seedlings were given away.

Mr. Petropoulos said that they were working with the non-profits and had reached out to all non-profits for a meeting on June 1. Mr. Haddad said that the response had been extraordinary so far.

Mr. Haddad said that the first meeting of Sustainable Budget Committee was this Thursday.

Mr. Cunningham said that they had a meeting with the Feasibility Study architect that day which went very well.

MINUTES

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the Regular Session Meeting minutes of March 28, 2016. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the Special Meeting minutes of April 20, 2016. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Petropoulos adjourned the meeting at 7:43pm.

Approved: _____
Stuart Schulman, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 6/6/16