

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MINUTES SEPTEMBER 19, 2016
APPROVED**

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

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

Mr. Petropoulos called the meeting to order at 7:10pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Degen said that at 3pm on Wednesday at the Prescott School there would be a ceremony for the one year anniversary of Betsy Sawyer's passing and the Pages of Peace.

Mr. Pease said that Groton Fest would be held on Saturday with a rain date of Sunday.

Mr. Haddad said that there was one vacancy on the Finance Committee and encouraged anyone interested in obtaining an interest form.

Mr. Haddad said that he had put together, as requested by the Board a spreadsheet on free cash and how Groton related to similar communities as chosen by the Demographic Study Committee. He said that of the 14 communities looked at, the average was 4.65% as of FY15. He said that Groton was at 3.55%. Groton's average free cash amount was \$1.1M where the average was \$1.7M adding that Littleton was an outlier. He said that if Littleton was to be taken out, Groton was still below the average. Mr. Petropoulos said that this was a testament to good budgeting and thought this was a great example of good budgeting by Mr. Haddad. Mr. Degen said that Mr. Haddad had also put together a similar spreadsheet for stabilization. Mr. Haddad said that Groton was at 6.5%, based on their financial policies adding that others were at 5.8%.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Orcutt said that the Board of Water Commissioners would be holding a public forum on Tuesday, September 27th to discuss the drought and their capital program to help with this and the water rates.

COA BUILDING FEASIBILITY STUDY COMMITTEE

Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Pease at the last meeting had suggested having a presentation in the Committees work before the Board considered pulling the article for engineer funding.

Mr. Mihran Keoseian said that the Committee was before the Board last March seeking support for baby boomers moving forward. He said that the study committee was formed and included members Michelle Collette, John Amaral, Gary Green, Beverly Smith, Peter Cunningham, George Faircloth and himself. Mr. Keoseian said that Ms. Shelp and Mr. Haddad were non-voting members. He said that the Spring Town Meeting approved the \$40K warrant article. Mr. Keoseian said that they were committed to gaining the confidence of the board and public before moving forward adding it was never a good time to spend money. He thanked the Board for postponing the decision on whether or not to pull the article until hearing from the Committee. He said that they would not know all final costs until all facts are in. He said that their own board was split on how best to proceed. He said that they wanted to ask the Board to continue to postpone their vote until the Committee had a chance to meet again that coming Friday so that they have an opportunity to discuss their next steps.

Mr. John Macmillan of Reinhardt Associates, said that the study consisted of three (3) parts adding that the first step they completed was to meet with users and administration. He said that they then viewed the function, policies and programs and developed a space needs assessment. He said that the initial review came up with 15,500 sqft of gross sqft which included walls, mechanical spaces, etc. He said that they reduced this a few times and 12,990 sqft was where it was currently. He said that simultaneously, they looked at three potential sites; the Country Club, Prescott School and the current site. He said that their architects and mechanical engineers visited all sites and looked at the

conditions, accessibility, mechanical systems, and other things. He said that they listed the pros and cons and costs associated with updating buildings and sites. He said that the third step was to evaluate each site to which they created a matrix and scored each site including parking and accessibility as examples. He said that the scoring was applied equally to each site on a scale of 0-3. Mr. MacMillan said that the Country Club was ranked at 74, Prescott at 93 and the existing site was 115. He said that the availability of additional land added to the score of the existing site. He said that renovation costs were generally more adding that the other sites lacked land for additional parking. He said that they also looked at the Country Club as if the golf course didn't exist anymore and looked at the basement and first floor of Prescott and what it would be used for it. He said that there would be higher costs associated with the Center at Prescott because using the center would grow to 21K sqft.

Mr. Robertson said that he had not seen the report and asked if the analysis looked at timing in terms of finances. He said that everything seemed to be in the 1-5 year timeframe adding this was a big chunk on money that needed to be spent. He said that he didn't know what the reasons were that the Committee didn't chose Prescott besides parking but he thought it seemed liked they could be spending double the money. He said he was not sure how they could prioritize if those decisions were not made yet. Ms. Becky Pine asked if the engineer had access to the Prescott Committee's report. Mr. MacMillan said that he did see parts of it. Ms. Pine said that part of their report was to do some of the same things adding she saw mistakes in the evaluations. She said that the fire suppression system had been voted on already, that they did envision a larger parking area as well as an elevator. Mr. MacMillan said that his firm reviewed the report adding they had copied parts of it into their evaluation. He said that they looked at additional parking over the playing field adding they identified a cost to add additional parking for 60 cars. He said that he was not aware of the sprinkler project adding they looked at the conditions as they existed in evaluating the building. Mr. Haddad said that funding for the sprinklers had only been approved for the 3rd floor at this time. Ms. Pine asked if the final report would have specific or ranges of costs. Mr. MacMillan said that include cost estimates would. Mr. Cunningham said that secondary access at the Prescott site was questioned and asked if that was looked at. Mr. MacMillan said that they had discussed that and traffic concerns at Prescott exiting onto Main Street. He said that a secondary access at the rear of the property was discussed. He said that there were conservation issues including a flood zone adding he wasn't sure it was feasible. Mr. Takashi Tada said that certain criteria would need to be met if they were thinking about adding a secondary egress. Mr. Greg Sheldon said that weighted criteria was a personal objective adding he thought he would score this somewhat differently. He said that fire suppression should continue over the next 4 years. He said that he had serious questions about the evaluation in the draft report adding that one would have expected a more robust evaluation where two sites were so close. Mr. Degen said that he felt that work done thus far was very valuable. He said that the public was just beginning to see all the work that had been done. He said that the Board was aware there was a need and that this population needed to be addressed. He thought that secondary access may be an issue but it may be not adding he didn't think the chicken was ready to be hatched. Mr. Cunningham said that they could analyze this further and spend more money doing that but asked the Board to reflect on comments the Chair of the Committee made earlier. He said that there would be presentation at Town Meeting whether they were requesting money or not and wanted to point out that programming needs were solid based on survey work done. He said that the Prescott plan looked for business use also and if the Senior Center moved in to Prescott, business use might be off the table. Mr. Sheldon said that they were looking to spend a lot of money over the next five years to update the Prescott building adding that the addition of the Senior Center in Prescott could diminish business use there but thought that was something the town leaders needed to figure out. Mr. Cunningham said it would also diminish plans for art organization use also. Mr. Degen said that this needed more time to evolve adding his recommendation would be to wait until the Committee had an opportunity to discuss their plans more on Friday.

Mr. Bob Pine said because he thought there were a lot of things that needed to be addressed and suggested the article not be brought forward. He added that a presentation at Town Meeting in its place was important. Mr. Alan Hoch said that there were far too many moving parts and thought the Board would be well advised to not take definitive action by means of a warrant article. Mr. Green said that there was an outstanding RFP for the management of Prescott and asked if that change of use was reflected in the RFP. Mr. Degen said that it was not. Ms. Eliot said that they should maybe postpone this article but thought they needed to make the senior population a priority. She said she wanted the seniors to be given as equal consideration as they had their school children. Mr. Degen said he thought it was a good thing to have this on their goals and objectives.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that the Complete Streets Committee had resident vacancies that needed to be filled. Mr. Haddad said that Ms. Ellen Baxendale and Ms. Kristen Von Campe were present but Mr. John Llodra was not able to be present. Mr. Pease said he thought it was unfair to person not present to not be interviewed. Mr. Degen said that there was no harm in interviewing the two candidates present and ask Mr. Llodra to attend a future meeting.

Ms. Ellen Baxendale said that she was interested in the Town and had served on a couple of committees. Mr. Cunningham asked her what perspective she would bring. Ms. Baxendale said that at the Commission on Accessibility meeting that day she had been recommended by the Commission to be on this Committee because of my accessibility needs. Mr. Degen asked what her vision consisted of. Ms. Baxendale said that she envisioned something for cyclists, walkers and those with accessibility needs. She added that she had lived in Town for 28 years. Ms. Michelle Collette, Town's ADA Coordinator said that the Commission on Accessibility had not taken a vote because of lack of quorum but added that universal accessibility was important and they thought the group should be represented on this Committee.

Ms. Kristen Von Campe said that she lived on Lowell Road and had been in Town for 20 years. She said that she was a Library Trustee adding that one of their goals was to make the library more accessible for everyone. She said that she was a cyclist, and a walker and felt as though she had time to devote to this adding it was important. Ms. Eliot suggested enlarging the Committee to include all interested parties adding every one of them brought value. Mr. Cunningham said he had no problem expanding it. Mr. Petropoulos said that they had had unwieldy experience with expanding committees. Mr. Degen said it was an important committee adding that all candidates would be great members.

Mr. Degen moved that they expand the Complete Streets Committee to eight (8) members. Mr. Pease seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Degen moved that they appoint Kristen Von Campe, Ellen Baxendale and John Llodra to the Complete Streets Committee. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Mr. Haddad said that there were currently three vacancies on the Historic Districts Commission. The Commission had recommended that he appoint George Wheatley, Elaine Chamberlain and Greg Premru to the Commission. The terms would expire in 2017 (Wheatley), 2018 (Chamberlain) and 2019 (Premru). Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Board ratify the appointments.

Mr. Degen moved to ratify the HDC appointments with the terms as stipulated. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Mr. Haddad said that the Agricultural Commission had requested that he appoint Jessica MacGregor and Sally Smith to the Commission. He respectfully requested that the Board ratify the appointments.

Mr. Degen moved to appoint Jessica MacGregor and Sally Smith to the Agricultural Commission. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Mr. Haddad said that the Board had received three requests for One Day Liquor Licenses.

- a. First Parish Church: One Day License for Beer and Wine for "Liverpool Night Concert" on Saturday, October 1, 2016 from 6:30pm – 9:30pm.

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the One Day Beer and Wine License request from First Parish Church. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. First Parish Church: One Day License for Beer and Wine for “Russell Watts and Joe Foster Concert” on Saturday, November 5, 2016 from 6:30pm - 9:30pm.

Ms. Eliot made a motion to approve the One Day Beer and Wine License request from First Parish Church. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- c. Salt and Light: One Day License for Beer and Wine for a Live Music Event on Saturday, September 24, 2016 from 6:00pm – 11:00pm.

Mr. Degen moved to grant one day beer and wine to Salt and Light for a live music on September 24, 2016 from 6-11pm contingent on a tips trained pourer being present. Mr. Haddad said that both owners were tip trained. Mr. Pease seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Haddad said that the Conservation Commission had met with Mr. Collins again and voted to recommend that the Selectmen not exercise their right of first refusal on the Gilson property. Mr. Degen asked what would happen if the Conservation Commission was not successful in obtaining the language they wanted. Mr. Haddad said that they agreed to a 30 day extension if the declaration was not recorded. Mr. Cunningham asked if the Commission had reviewed the declaration. Mr. Tada said that they and Town Counsel had reviewed it adding that the Commission was comfortable with it. Mr. Tada said that the Town had a 30 day option to purchase land from Juskalian should the declaration not be recorded.

Mr. Degen moved that the Board of Selectmen not exercise its right of first refusal contingent on signed agreement being in possession of the Conservation Commission and having been approved by both parties. Mr. Haddad said that the Commission was comfortable with the agreement and asked you not to exercise its right. Mr. Cunningham agreed adding they needed to trust the parties involved.

Mr. Petropoulos asked how many entities came forward and said they should buy this land. Mr. Haddad answered two. Mr. Petropoulos said that some of them were ready to spend this money adding he found it to be remarkable that a deal could be done without spending town money. He said that they got this for free and it only took a couple of Selectmen to do it. He said that they were capable of spending money when they didn't need to and thanked Mr. Tada for making this happen. Ms. Eliot said that it took a lot of work to get here adding that the idea of conservation restrictions was not new. She thought they should be looking proactively to our 61A land for opportunities and thought Mr. Petropoulos made an inaccurate representation. Mr. Pease said that he thought the Chair needed to be careful with representing the thoughts of other Board Members.

TOWN MANGER'S REPORT

5. Mr. Haddad said that the Board needed to consider taking positions on the 2016 Fall Town Meeting Warrant articles.
- Article 1 – There was unanimous support.
 - Article 2 - There was unanimous support.
 - Article 3 – Mr. Cunningham said that he supported this article. Mr. Degen said that he could not support \$425,000. He said that he could support \$389,000. Mr. Petropoulos agreed with Mr. Degen. Ms. Eliot asked if they could compromise. Mr. Haddad said that he would have to make changes to the Capital Budget if they went with any amount lower than \$425,000. Mr. Cunningham said that they should take the recommendation of the Finance Committee. Mr. Robertson said that the Committee discussed hitting 1.5% on the button but thought having more cash was better at this time. Mr. Degen said that he understood why the amount was requested. He said that he would rather have what they need according to DOR guidelines and have the rest go back to free cash. He said he couldn't support anything above \$400,000.

Mr. Degen moved they amend article 3 to \$400,000. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. Mr. Petropoulos said he would personally would like to keep it at \$390,000 adding that points had been made. The motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Cunningham being opposed.

- Article 4 – Mr. Haddad said that the Finance Committee recommended adding no money and using \$50,000 of it to pay for the Chief’s vehicle. He suggested they remove article 4.
 - Article 5 – Mr. Haddad asked the Board to hold off for now.
 - Article 6 - Mr. Haddad said that this was going to be one article divided into 2 motions. Mr. Cunningham asked if the Water Commissioners had taken a position. Mr. Haddad said that they would be on the 27th and suggested they defer till Town Meeting.
 - Article 7 – Mr. Haddad said that they allowed the Committee one additional week.
 - Article 8 - There was unanimous support.
 - Article 9 – Mr. Haddad said that the Finance Committee recommended this come out of stabilization. Mr. Petropoulos asked what the public benefit of doing this now was. Mr. Degen said that they had made an agreement with the Police Chief during contract negotiations. Mr. Cunningham said that it only advanced a capital expenditure. Mr. Pease said that it still required a 2/3rds vote adding he thought it was a good use of resources doing it this way. The Board was 4-1 in support with Mr. Petropoulos voting against it.
 - Article 10 – Mr. Haddad said that the original estimate was \$5K per door for automatic openers. He said that Mr. Delaney said there was newer technology out there adding he could do both doors for \$5K. The Board was unanimous in their support of this.
 - Article 11 – Mr. Haddad said that they open the bids on the 13th. Mr. Petropoulos said that he thought they were doing this for political reasons and couldn’t support this. He said that their free cash and stabilization show they were in good shape. Ms. Eliot said that she was cautiously optimistic they would get the answer they want. Mr. Cunningham said that there was value to public perception adding that Mr. Petropoulos had been critical of this all along. He thought this was a good chance to have some of their questions answered. Mr. Degen said he was shocked Mr. Petropoulos was not supporting this. He said that there was always the possibility they would find money to cover this cost adding Mr. Haddad runs tight books. Mr. Pease recommended this article come from the Sustainability Committee. The Board was 4-1 in support of this with Mr. Petropoulos against it.
 - Article 12 – Mr. Haddad suggested they hold off until next meeting
 - Article 13 – Mr. Degen asked what it would take to nurse the boiler at Florence Roche along. Mr. Haddad said he wasn’t sure adding the Business Manager said it needed to be done before the weather got too cold and would work with whatever they do in the future in terms of renovations to the school. Mr. Degen asked if Mr. Delaney could get an independent company out to look at boiler and provide them with an estimate for a 2-3 year fix. Mr. Haddad said that he would talk to Mr. Delaney and Steve Byrnes. There was a brief discussion about an \$18M retro fit of Flo Ro in the future as part of the district’s proposed capital plan. Ms. Marlena Gilbert said that the capital plan had not been voted on or vetted yet. B
 - Article 14 - There was unanimous support.
 - Article 15 - There was unanimous support.
 - Article 16 - There was unanimous support.
 - Article 17 – Mr. Haddad said that he was still working on an answer for this article and asked the Board to defer action.
 - Article 18 – Mr. Haddad asked the Board to defer until after the public hearing the following week.
6. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to choose a date for their goals and objectives meeting. The Board chose October 13th at 5:30pm

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Degen said that in 2012 the hours at Town Hall changed to serve the public need. He said that he recalled a discussion at that time relative to Monday holidays. He said that hours would be paid at 8 hours and another night would be open later to make up for those other 3 hours. Mr. Haddad said that that was never agreed to and would have been enforced if it was voted on. Mr. Degen said that very few members of the public come in to Town Hall on

Monday nights. He said that he would like to request a tally of each department's usage on Monday nights. Mr. Degen thought there was a taxpayer equity issue where 11 hours for Monday holidays were being paid out and thought it was worthy of a study being done. Ms. Eliot asked if changing evening hours to another evening when there was a Monday holiday would remedy any issues. She said that whether or not the public used the extra hours, it was still available. Mr. Petropoulos said he liked the idea of moving to another night during the week. Mr. Cunningham said he felt there was a benefit to having night hours and asked what a survey would look like. Mr. Degen said a record of phone calls between 4-7pm in each office. Mr. Degen asked how a vacation request was handled if an employee wanted to take a Monday off. Mr. Haddad said that they employee would be charged 11 hours of time. Mr. Haddad said that 12 of the 17 Town Hall employees were salary or exempt employees. He said that Mondays were chosen because of the night the Board meets. He said that this was something that had been in place for 4½ years and didn't know why it was an issue.

Ms. Dufresne said that the ability to have an extra couple of hours on Mondays really helps with payroll processing. She said it was a benefit that didn't necessarily benefit the public but helps them. Mr. Pease said that they were looking to do an operational audit and didn't think this needed to be solved right now. He suggested they wait for the operational audit and get some real data from it. Mr. Cunningham said he thought that was a good suggestion. Mr. Degen said that this was an equity perspective adding they should stay open on another night. He said he was approached by other unions that don't work in Town Hall. Mr. Cunningham said that this was a rat hole adding he was concerned about side conversations with other bargaining units. Mr. Degen said he was just listening. Mr. Degen asked if they could agree in the short term to open on Tuesday nights when there was a Monday holiday. Ms. Eliot said she liked Mr. Pease's suggestion. Mr. Pease said he didn't want to see a lot of changes adding he thought this was a bigger issue that needed to be part of a broader discussion. Mr. Degen said he would give this sometime but wanted some resolution.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Pease said that he attended a Library Trustee meeting the week before. He said that they were always analyzing data and always looking to change things that were not working. He said that he learned that there was a lot of restrictions on the endowment and trust funds.

Ms. Eliot said that she attended Groton Commons 25th anniversary. She said that this was a first real initiative at providing affordable housing and wished there could be more.

Mr. Haddad said that with the help of Mr. Pease, they found a professional management course on Process Management for him to take as art of his goals. He asked the Board to authorize him to spend \$600 to take the course.

Mr. Degen moved to authorize the Town Manager's expenditure of \$600 for a professional online development course. Mr. Pease seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Petropoulos said that they had a great meeting with non-profit community members and thought it was shaping up to be nice initiative. Mr. Haddad said that they would also be applying for the Kenneth Pickard award because of these efforts.

MINUTES

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Regular Session Meeting Minutes of September 6, 2016. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Petropoulos adjourned the meeting at 9:47pm.

Approved: _____
Barry Pease, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 10/24/16