

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MINUTES JANUARY 23, 2017
APPROVED**

BOS Members Present: John G. Petropoulos, Chair; Anna Eliot, Member; Peter S. Cunningham, Member

Members Absent: Joshua A. Degen; Barry Pease

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

Mr. Petropoulos called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Haddad said that the Groton Conservation Trust, Conservation Commission and Trails Committee was holding a Groton Conservation Forum on February 16, 2017 from 6:00-10:00 pm at Lawrence Academy's Multi-Media Center. He said that David Black would be talking about conservation issues facing Groton.

Mr. Cunningham said that he attended the MMA meeting on Friday and attended a couple of forums on controlling rising healthcare costs and senior services and healthy living for seniors. He said that he obtained good information that he would pass on to the appropriate people.

Ms. Eliot said that there would be a community dinner Friday night, January 27th at First Parish Church and encouraged people to attend.

Mr. Jeff Kubick said that the school choir trip organizer and superintendent had made arrangements for the choir to sing at the Basilica for a non-Easter related event while they are in Italy in April and thanked those who had made this happen.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Haddad said that he had invited the Moderator to discuss the potential for a lottery of town meeting warrant articles. He said that the Moderator had informed him that there were a couple of towns that ran their town meetings like this but that it needed to be done by means of establishing a bylaw. Mr. Haddad said that Hull one was Town that had a bylaw and had tailored there's to meet Groton's needs. He said that through language in the bylaw Town Meeting could vote at the beginning of each meeting on whether or not they wanted that meeting's warrant articles to be run by a lottery. Mr. Kauppi said that there were pros and cons to doing this. He said that it was possible it could lead to greater attendance or less even attendance. He said that it may not prevent an exodus of voters but could change when that occurs. He said that one issue he saw was that if a large article that involved a lot of discussion started later in the night, they may not be able to structure the meeting like they do now where they try to be mindful of the time. He said that if they were to have a lottery, there could be no motions to advance or postpone articles.

Mr. Cunningham asked if numbers would be pulled for example like bingo numbers are called. Mr. Kauppi said yes, adding that they would use a cage or a basket and pull numbers. Mr. Cunningham asked if they would still be able to combine articles. Mr. Kauppi said that they would still be able to use the consent agenda. Ms. Eliot said that if they were going to do this and adopt a rule it was not something they should do on a whim. She said that they should take the time, do the research and present it to town meeting for a decision. Mr. Cunningham said they should do the research on it before bringing anything forward for a discussion. Ms. Eliot agreed adding that the proponent should do the research and bring it back to them for further discussion.

Ms. Manugian asked about what kind of impact it would have on consultants, as an example being present at town meeting. Mr. Kauppi said that the consultants would have to wait the same just like everyone else for that article to come up. He said that budget articles would come up first if that was what was decided on. He said that his concern was that they protect the voters that are present and those not present. Mr. Petropoulos said he could think of a number of reasons to not move forward with this at this time.

7:15PM - GDRSD FUTURE OF LEASING PRESCOTT SCHOOL

Mr. Haddad said he thought it would be helpful to have members of the School Committee present to hear the boards concerns adding he provided the Board with a copy of the current lease. He said that Mr. Kubick and Ms. Manugian were present from the School Committee. Ms. Eliot said that it was Mr. Degen who asked for this to be on the agenda and suggested they wait until he could be there. Mr. Haddad said that he had a statement from Mr. Degen. Ms. Manugian said that the entire School Committee was not formally invited to attend and the reason there were only a couple of them there. Mr. Petropoulos agreed.

Mr. Haddad read a statement from Mr. Degen into the record. (see attached) Mr. Cunningham asked Ms. Manugian and Mr. Kubick where Prescott fit into their plans in terms of internal planning. Mr. Kubick said that they hadn't got to that point as a committee yet. He said that they were hoping to begin those discussions at their meeting that week. Mr. Cunningham said it would be good for them to know as they move through that process. He said that the Town was looking at potential sites for a senior center adding that space needs relative to enrollment had been discussed. Mr. Kubick said that without having looked at a master plan, he didn't see vast quantities of open space or empty rooms at any of their schools. Ms. Manugian added that Florence Roche was at or almost at capacity. Ms. Eliot said that she appreciated what Mr. Degen was trying to do here adding that this tied into their strategic planning goal. Mr. Petropoulos said he was in favor of the school's tenancy for a variety of reasons. Mr. Cunningham said that the school was a major part of the plan that was submitted by the Municipal Building Committee for Prescott School. He said that it sounded as though the School needed to work on their facility needs and was planning on doing that. He saw no need to push this or the need for an eviction notice right now.

Ms. Eliot said that the building had capacity to be revenue generating and wanted them to consider alternative uses of the building. Mr. Petropoulos said that as a Town Meeting, they decided this was a building they wanted to retain. He said that their goal right now was to retain the building with third party manager adding they should be moving toward that end. Ms. Eliot said that she didn't say they needed to sell the building but find a viable prospective tenant that would generate money for the Town. Mr. Haddad said he agreed with waiting so that the School Committee could do it work and to also let the Senior Center Committees do its work. Mr. Petropoulos said that they had already determined that there was enough room for both the district and Senior Center to occupy the building.

Ms. Manugian said it would be helpful to hear from the Board what they were thinking as far as timeframes. Mr. Cunningham said he would be in a better position to answer this when the Senior Center location committee finished its work. Mr. Kubick asked what the expected time frame was for the Senior Center committee. Mr. Cunningham said that they would be making a recommendation at the Spring Town Meeting. Mr. Petropoulos said he didn't see it that way. He said that whether or not the Senior Center went in Prescott School, he hoped to retain the schools as a tenant. He said he didn't think the decision was relevant adding that the longer the commitment the better. Mr. Cunningham disagreed with him adding that it was important for the schools to know how that may impact them. Mr. Haddad said that the Friends of Prescott RFP would be affected by their decisions also so it would be good to know the school's intentions by the end of May.

Ms. Pine said that the time to negotiate a lease also played into that time frame. Ms. Manugian said that she was concerned about preliminary decisions and short term vs. long term leases with so many unknowns. Mr. Sheldon said that there was a proviso for a two-year extension in the current lease. He thought it was important to keep in mind what the community would like while looking at their needs. Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Degen also wanted to add that he was concerned that continuing to lease the building to the schools was further subsidizing the Dunstable side. Ms. Manugian said again that it was a difficult decision to make with the unknown uses of the building. Mr. Cunningham disagreed adding that the other piece would fall into place. Mr. Kubick said that the administration likes the space at Prescott and there was not necessarily in a desire to leave quickly. Mr. Petropoulos said that he was certain they would operate around the schools needs. Mr. Cunningham concurred adding that the preliminary plans had shown that.

COMPLETE STREETS COMMITTEE UPDATE

Mr. Barringer called the Complete Streets Committee to order. He said that the Complete Streets Committee was formed in October. He said that the grant program worked in two phases, prioritization and funding of projects. He said that the Committee had been meeting regularly to form a draft priority list to which they had identified 12 projects around town. He said that their first deadline was April 1st which required them to submit their project plan list to the state for approval. He said that if the Town was selected, they would get up to \$400K for construction adding that the Town would have to fund engineering costs. They would have one year to complete the projects. He said that they were very fortunate to have Tom Delaney so they didn't have to outsource the prioritization list. Mr. Barringer said that they would be having a public input session on February 2nd at Town Hall. Mr. Haddad asked about the engineering funds that the Town would have to fund. Mr. Barringer said that many of the projects were easy to finish such as cross walk signs which didn't require engineering. Mr. Delaney said that because the State wants you to use the money in a year, that changed things a little for them. Mr. Barringer said that they may have to go back for another round to get these. Mr. Petropoulos asked what the cost to the Town would be if they did this in house after state grants. Mr. Delaney said that the costs would be his labor; \$4-8K in labor for one project. Mr. Petropoulos said that he was hearing none of this would hit the budget as an extra. Mr. Delaney said that was correct.

Mr. Cunningham said that they didn't include the sidewalks down to CVS and Mill Run Plaza because the State had done engineering on that but they didn't know when they planned to construct it. Mr. Cunningham said that the crosswalk signage at Lawrence Academy had been successful adding that he believed it was worth installing them at the other crosswalks on Main Street. Mr. Delaney said that they were also looking to make the crosswalks ADA compliant. Ms. Eliot complimented the work the Committee had been doing.

Mr. Barringer motioned to adjourn. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that he drafted a letter to all appointed Boards, Committees and Commissions about setting annual goals. He said that if the Boards was okay with the memo, he would send it out the next day. The Board was good with the memo.
2. Mr. Haddad said that they had received invoices from MIIA for \$20K which was their deductible for the call fire fighters suit (\$5K per claim). Mr. Haddad said that he spoke to their insurance companies counsel, Lenny Kesten who told him there was not settlement or action take so far. This was just the Town's deductible. He said that the insurance company had spent \$40-50K in legal fees so far. Mr. Haddad said that because they were not expecting this, he had no money in the budget for this. He thought they would bill the Town at the end of the case. Mr. Haddad said that they had two choices; they could put an article on the Town Meeting warrant or request a reserve fund transfer. Mr. Haddad suggested they put an article on the warrant adding that the Chair of the Finance Committee preferred a town meeting article also. Mr. Haddad said that he would hate to hit the reserve fund now. Mr. Haddad said that they could discuss it further on Saturday morning.

Mr. Haddad said that the Friends of Prescott had brought back their CPA application which was due on Thursday. He said that they did what they said they were going to do.

Mr. Cunningham moved that the Board support the application from Friends of Prescott regarding the Prescott School. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Mr. Haddad said that they would be meeting on Saturday to discuss the FY18 budget in joint session with the Finance Committee at Town Hall. He said that he had received questions on how he and the Finance Team developed the budget. He said that he wanted to reiterate that the Budget they presented provided for an increase of 2.29% total spending over the approved Fiscal Year 2017 Budget. He said that some believe that this was not a true reflection of the growth because excluded debt was included in the calculation. He

said that this similar concern was raised last year. Mr. Haddad said he developed a few additional spreadsheets for their review. Mr. Haddad said that he was confident that the budget was lean and sustainable as presented and thought the scenarios were good information. Mr. Haddad said that he and Mr. Robertson had met with the Sewer Commissioners who would be at their meeting on Saturday morning to discuss the history of the commitment.

4. Mr. Haddad said that the Municipal Modernization Act had made a change to the way snow and ice deficits were handled. He said that the Town Manager was not authorized under the law to declare deficit spending adding that it no longer needed a vote of the Board. Mr. Haddad said that he was still going to make the Board aware of when they were going to need to deficit spend and when the authorization to do so was going to be made. Mr. Delaney said that they were currently on the heavy half side of their budget. He said it had been material costs so far this season. Mr. Delaney said that he was going to let his shed run down and see where he is at some time mid-February.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Kelly had done a great job drafting the letter to the legislatures about the pipeline collaborative. He said that he received feedback from Mr. Degen and Mr. Pease. Mr. Kelly requested time to bring it back to his Board for final approval. Mr. Cunningham said that he'd like to wait to see the final draft voted on by the Light Commissioners. Ms. Eliot said that there was no mention of use of existing infrastructure. Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Degen asked that that be included. Ms. Eliot said that there was also no mention of using Massachusetts as a means for export. Mr. Haddad asked if the Board wanted something about that included. Mr. Cunningham said that whatever infrastructure was developed should be solely for the needs of the use. Mr. Petropoulos said that their letter would limit existing infrastructure and added that they should be careful what they were asking. Mr. Petropoulos said that they should also let Mr. Schulman know about this letter. Mr. Cunningham suggested that they let the letter be drafted and see what the final draft says before they act on anything as a Board. Mr. Petropoulos said that he had heard that the Chamber of Commerce was in favor of natural gas and asked if they should approach them to see if they want to be included in this. Mr. Cunningham said no, adding that if GELD wanted to take it on with them they could.
2. Mr. Haddad said that he and Mr. Pease had talked about the Town's bylaw that prohibits establishments from opening prior to 6am. Mr. Pease would like to bring forward an article at the Spring Town Meeting changing that time from 6am to 5am and asked if the Board was okay with him drafting an article. The Board agreed.
3. Mr. Haddad said that he asked Matrix Consulting Group if they do salary survey work to which they responded that they did not. Mr. Haddad said that the Collins Center out of UMASS Boston does. He said that they were a state organization so Groton wouldn't have to procure them. Mr. Haddad said he would be opposed to doing this in house adding that it would be nice to have an outside organization handle this. And asked permission to obtain a quote. Mr. Petropoulos said that this came about because of the Police Chief's salary survey and at the recommendation of the Sustainable Budget Committee. Mr. Cunningham said that the Bennett Study was done many years ago. Mr. Haddad said it would be useful for negotiations in the fall.
4. Mr. Haddad said that the operational audit would be kicking off next Tuesday. They would start by interviewing himself and Mr. Petropoulos at 8:30am on Tuesday. He said they would have the results by the summer.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Cunningham said that the Town Meeting Senior Center Study Group had met that morning to discuss their vision moving forward and to make sure everyone was on the same page. He said that it was a good conversation.

Ms. Eliot said that the Planning Board had approved the site plan for Indian Hill Music.

MINUTES

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Executive Session meeting minutes of December 22, 2016 and not release them. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Regular Session meeting minutes of January 3, 2017. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Petropoulos adjourned the meeting at 8:45pm.

Approved: _____
Barry Pease, Clerk

respectfully submitted,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 02/06/17