

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MINUTES JANUARY 30, 2017
APPROVED**

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

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. Cunningham said that there would be a public hearing on the Complete Streets Initiative on Thursday at 7pm. He said that the priority list was available on the towns website.

Mr. Petropoulos said that nomination papers would be available on February 1st for the annual election and proceeded to read the list of seats up for re-election. Mr. Petropoulos asked Ms. Eliot and Mr. Cunningham if they were running again as a means of informing the public in an effort to start a new tradition. Mr. Cunningham and Ms. Eliot both said they had no comments at that time.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that the Great Ponds Advisory Committee had completed their CPA application for pond restoration at Baddacook Pond adding that their application was exactly what they told the Board a few weeks ago. Mr. Degen agreed that the application was exactly what was presented and thought it was a very thorough application. He said he thought this was the best alternative to move forward with. Mr. Cunningham concurred adding that the hydro raking application was more than the weed whacker approach and thought treatment was critically needed. Ms. Eliot said she believed they should move forward with it and thanked everyone for their efforts. Mr. Pease said that he would abstain from voting on this adding he didn't believe this would last a long time. He said he wanted to move forward with treatment but didn't think this would work. He said he would vote in favor for treatment if it was sonar. Mr. Petropoulos said that he supported the effort but was concerned about the amount of money being spent on a test. Mr. Luening explained that the cost structure ranged from over \$100K in the first year to just under \$100K by the end of the third year. He said that maintenance costs moving forward would be \$29,500 yearly minus any contributions. Mr. Petropoulos asked about the certainty that this treatment would work. Mr. Luening said that it was reasonably high. Mr. Petropoulos said that he was going to have to abstain because he was having trouble understanding it. Mr. McCaffrey said that hydro raking was the key here adding that it was a better solution than herbicides.

Mr. Cunningham moved that they support the Great Ponds Advisory Committee's 2016-2017 CPA application for treatment at Baddacook Pond. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0-2 with Mr. Pease and Mr. Petropoulos abstaining.

2. Mr. Haddad said that he provided the Board with a draft letter last week for gas pipelines. He said that the office had received an enormous amount of communication from residents. He said that after thinking about it he wondered why they were sending a letter at all adding there was no proposed pipeline. He said he thought they should be waiting until such time there was something to send a letter on and recommended the Board not send a letter. He said that if GELD wanted to send a letter they could. Mr. Petropoulos agreed.

Mr. Petropoulos moved that they retract their support to sending a letter drafted by GELD and not send a letter at this time. Mr. Pease seconded the motion.

Mr. Cunningham said he heard a presentation made by GELD on the crisis they, along with others, are facing with the closing of plants and thought this was an issue the Light Department needed to think about

moving forward. Mr. Degen said he agreed with Mr. Cunningham in many ways. He said that he was against an expansion pipeline that affected land values among other things. He said he thought the lines should be co-located and the reason he asked for that to be added in the letter whether or not they send it. Mr. Cunningham said that he thought they should defer to the Light Commissioners and take action if a proposed pipeline did come their way again. Ms. Eliot said that she agreed with the possibility of not sending a letter at this time. Mr. John Llodra said that he spent much of his early career in the energy field and commended the Board on holding back from sending a letter. He said that they had significant problems and commended GELD for working proactively on this.

The motion carried unanimously.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Michael Roberts said that their annual report was similar to last year adding they had retained the five (5) initiatives they had developed the previous year. He said that they had done more work with pollinator protection adding that the drought was a problem for them this past year. He said that they were monitoring highwater flows on the streams and were concerned about the increase in water flow due to climate change adding they would continue to monitor it. Mr. Roberts said that he was working on community wellbeing and the happiness initiative. He said that he was hoping to be able to have a comprehensive public hearing on this in the near future but would need some money in order to do that. He said that the final initiative they started last year was Groton as an agricultural community. He said that agricultural played a major role in town and felt as their role was to provide services to the Agricultural Commission. He said that they had had one meeting with them and looked forward to supporting them any way they could.

Mr. Roberts said that he had also sent the Board a draft report on a climate action initiative. He said that he was looking to follow Lexington's model adding he also had a warrant article he would like to bring forward to consider climate change initiatives. Mr. Haddad asked the Board if that was something they wanted to pursue. Mr. Cunningham asked if he was seeking an appropriation or linkage with the master plan. Mr. Roberts said that he would like to see that all departments in town recognize and consider climate change. Mr. Cunningham asked if they were asking for zoning changes. Mr. Roberts read Lexington's warrant article as an example. Mr. Cunningham said that he would be supportive of this but seemed like it should be more integrated in the planning process and asked if he had scheduled time with the Planning Board before Town Meeting. Mr. Roberts said that his plan was to meet with the Planning Board ahead of time. Mr. Degen said that he had no problem adding this to the warrant but agreed with Mr. Cunningham. He thought that some regulations might have to be modified in order to incorporate these changes. Mr. Roberts said that he was looking for a sense from the Town that this was important. Ms. Eliot said she supported these efforts. Mr. Pease said that he didn't want to see this on the warrant. He said that they didn't have a scientist on staff to tell them when they were running afoul. He said he recognized the idea and goal to be carbon neutral but didn't think they could put this town under the onus of this. Mr. Roberts said he agreed with Mr. Pease adding they needed to think about how this was implemented. He said that this was a process that would take a while. He added he was looking for something more like a non-binding resolution that said the Town agreed that this was a problem. Mr. Carl Canner asked the Board if they would entertain a modest budget for the Commission if submitted. Mr. Degen asked about trust funds or CPA funds. Mr. Roberts said that CPA money was project specific adding they had gotten money from the Trust Funds in the past but hadn't been before them yet. Mr. Degen said that the budget was before the Finance Committee now adding they could talk to them.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Haddad said that he had appointed a Green Community Committee two years ago to look into grants, and whether to make Groton a green energy community. He said that because of unknowns with the stretch code at that time, that was the reason they didn't move forward with it. Mr. Haddad said that he planned on bringing appointments back at a future meeting as he wanted to reactivate the committee. Mr. Degen suggested increasing the membership to five (5) members and add a member of Sustainability Commission. Mr. Petropoulos said that this designation could help their schools with grants and additional revenue. A woman from Dunstable said that green energy was a win-win. She said that upon designation they would be granted \$125K plus \$10K more depending on

population and income adding that \$9.5 million was given out last year. Mr. Cunningham said he also thought they might have to incur some upfront expenses but thought they should explore this further. Mr. Easom said it might also help to have a builder on the committee.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – CONT.

3. Mr. Haddad said that it was time for the quarterly financial update. He said that their finances were strong and that revenues and fees were way up partly because of the Groton Inn's building permit and the building permit for 120 Boston Road. He said that State aid was coming in as it should be adding that motor vehicle excise was going out in February. He added that PILOT's would come in closer to May and June. Mr. Haddad said that they were right on target where they were last year. Mr. Haddad said that the police department's expenditures were up a little bit but that was because of vacation coverage over the summer. Mr. Haddad said that he was very happy with where they were at so far. Mr. Pease asked what their typical heavy season for snow and ice was. Mr. Haddad said their 3rd quarter. Ms. Dufresne said that it had been a lot of material costs so far.
4. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with an update on where they were with their goals. Mr. Pease said that he was working on their mission statement. The Board talked about a subcommittee for developing their strategic planning. Mr. Degen suggested making it a seven (7) member committee to include the Town Manager, Land Use Director, Economic Development Committee designee, two (2) members of their Board, one (1) member at large and one other member. Mr. Pease said that he understood there were synergies but thought this was more visionary. Mr. Petropoulos suggested maybe a committee made up of the Town Manager, Mr. Pease and one other Board member. Mr. Pease said he didn't have time to take this on adding it was also not his vision to have an employee work on this. Ms. Eliot talked about the strategic planning committee she once served on and the projects they worked on. Mr. Degen said that the Economic Development Committee was working on some of this already and thought it might be worthy of a discussion with them. Mr. Pease said that they could engage people and ask for their feedback but didn't necessarily think they needed to be part of your committee. He added he wasn't sure they could do this until the mission statement was completed. Mr. Pease said that they all had different ideas on what this should be and thought it best to email the Town Manager who could compile a list.

Mr. Haddad said that he was having a meeting the following week to start the review of the Municipal Modernization Act. Mr. Degen said that the Charter Review Committee was making recommendations and suggested moving out the date for when the proposed charter changes were made by the legislature. Mr. Cunningham said that the charter changes didn't necessarily change the day to day operations. Mr. Haddad said that their website had been improved further as it related to better communication with the public. Mr. Cunningham agreed that there was much more information available now. Mr. Haddad said that he was asked that day to remove Mr. Pease from the cohesive working relationship goal. Mr. Petropoulos agreed to take this one. Mr. Haddad said he would work with Mr. Petropoulos to schedule a workshop. Mr. Haddad said he thought he had a strong working relationship with the School Committee adding he had a meeting with them on February 8th. Mr. Haddad said that they had had eight (8) new individuals volunteer for committees that had not served on committees before October 2016. Mr. Haddad said that the audit kickoff was tomorrow so he would revise the end date as such to be completed 100 days from tomorrow. Mr. Degen agreed that over the last 2 years there had been a much stronger working relationship between the boards and administration. Mr. Haddad said that he and Mr. Cunningham had participated in the Senior Center Committee's and Mr. Pease attended a workshop recently. He said that they were providing support for a Town Meeting recommendation. Mr. Haddad said that the free cash policy was being drafted and would be brought back at a future meeting for review.

Mr. Haddad said that as far as his goals went, he said he was going to continue to serve the COA and their committees. He said there were no issues to report on communication, that he would be taking a professional education course over the summer, that communication with the new Superintendent would be a high priority once one was brought on board adding he was enjoying working with the Interim

Superintendent, and that he was working with the Fire Chief of a couple of things to improve the responses to calls.

5. Mr. Haddad said that the Trails Committee recommended that Darcy Schultz be appointed. He said that he made that appointment and asked the Board to ratify it.

Mr. Degen moved to ratify the appointment of Darcy Schultz to the Trails Committee, term to expire on June 30, 2017. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Mr. Haddad said that there was nothing new to report on the budget adding he thought Saturday's meeting was a really good, productive meeting.
7. Mr. Haddad said that they had received a last minute one day beer and wine license from First Parish Church for an event on Saturday, February 4th and asked the Board to consider granting the license.

Mr. Pease moved to approve the one day license as described. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Mr. Haddad said that he had received an email from the School Committee looking for a Board member to represent the Town of the Superintendent Search Committee. He said that the first two meetings were scheduled for February 10th and 15th from 5:30pm-8pm at the Prescott school. He said that the designee must attend both sessions. Mr. Cunningham recommended they designate Mr. Pease. The Board agreed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Petropoulos said that the Town Manager evaluations was due back to him that day by Board members. Mr. Degen asked if they could extend the deadline to Friday, February 10th. Mr. Haddad was okay with the extension adding that he had met with 3 of the 5 members so far.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Cunningham said that the MMA had some initiatives before the legislature. Mr. Haddad suggested they make it part of their review of the Modernization Act.

Mr. Degen said that a local resident was considering speaking with the Trust about purchasing it to make it affordable or subsidizing it.

MINUTES

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the Regular Session minutes of January 9, 2017. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Petropoulos adjourned the meeting at 8:52pm.

Approved: _____
Barry Pease, Clerk

respectfully submitted,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 2/27/17