

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MINUTES JULY 24, 2017
APPROVED**

BOS Members Present: Joshua A. Degen, Chair; Barry A. Pease, Vice Chair; Alison S. Manugian, Clerk; John G. Petropoulos, Member; Rebecca H. Pine, Member

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

Mr. Degen called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Neelkanth Mishra of NESSP Temple explained that the construction of the new temple was going very well and hoped to open at the end of October. He said he was there to let the Town know they were doing a good job working to make people feel welcome. He said that the NESSP Temple wanted to sponsor one of the All Are Welcome stones and presented a check for \$450.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Ellen Baxendale asked what the status was on meeting notification emails. Mr. Haddad said that it was on the IT Director's schedule to be released within the next month. Ms. Baxendale asked about the possibility of forming a committee to explore reopening the Give and Take Shop. Mr. Haddad said that they had looked into moving it to the basement of the Prescott School but there was a reason the Commissioners of Trust Funds did not want to relocate it. Mr. Degen suggested that Ms. Baxendale reach out to the Commissioners.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that Board of Registrar's appointments were made by the Board and with Jane Fry's term having expired on June 30, 2017 they needed to look to fill that seat. He said that Ms. Fry filled an unexpired term adding that the Town Clerk recommended she be reappointed for a full 3-year term. Mr. Degen asked about the current political enrollment. Ms. Pine said that the statistics said it should be 2 democrats and 1 republican adding she would support the Town Clerk's recommendation of giving Jane Fry a full term.

Ms. Pine moved that they appoint Jane Fry to the Board of Registrar's for a 3-year term. Mr. Petropoulos seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-1-1 with Mr. Pease voting no and Mr. Degen abstaining stating he had had it with both the democratic and republican parties.

NASHUA RIVER WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STUDY COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

Present: Al Futterman And Robert Pontbriand

Mr. Pontbriand introduced himself and Mr. Futterman and explained that there were eight towns involved in this effort. Mr. Futterman explained what a wild and scenic river study was and what it took to determine eligibility and designation. He said that Nadia Madden and Tim Newman were Groton's representatives on the Committee and that they meet on a monthly basis. Mr. Pontbriand said that this was a great opportunity for all eight towns to work together on shared resource adding this was completely voluntary and locally driven. Mr. Pontbriand said that this study would not lead to federal acquisition of land along the river and would not force any changes in land use decision making. He said it would also have no impact on existing dams, would not effect on hunting and fishing laws, and would not restrict the river access. Mr. Futterman said that their next steps were to have all eight towns vote on a draft management plan and vote to place this on an annual town meeting in 2018 for designation. Mr. Degen commented on the great work they had done adding he was happy they had an organization working on protecting the riverfront. Ms. Pine disclosed that her husband was a Director of the Nashua River Watershed Association and asked if this needed all Board's to support it. Mr. Futterman said that only the member towns that were in the middle needed full support. Mr. Petropoulos asked where the funding would come from and it could potentially

look like. Mr. Futterman said that it would come out of the National Parks budget but he was not sure how much adding he had seen other towns receive about \$100K.

FIRE CHIEF STEELE MCCURDY - FIRST DRAFT REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE FIRE DEPT

Also Present - Bob Craig, Consultant

Chief McCurdy said that he wanted to provide the Board with a preview of the department's strategic plan. He said that this was a two-phase project and this first draft represented phase 1. He said that a majority of recommendations included in the report were all things they could include within the budget schedules.

Mr. Bob Craig introduced himself and reviewed his resume. He said that he worked with a company called Municipal Resources, Inc. out of Meredith, NH and had been hired to conduct an in depth strategic plan for the Fire Department. He said that Phase 1 involved conducting interviews, and obtaining information about the Town and the Department. He said that they collected data on response times, calls, etc. adding that the Chief was currently working on short range goals. He said that the future of the West Groton Station and staffing were longer range goals that had come out of this. Mr. Craig said that they looked at recruitment adding that the issue was a universal issue. He said that one of their next steps was to send out a citizen survey so they could hear from the residents. He said that they would also like to see the Town form a committee to discuss how to move forward with the information they had obtained.

Chief McCurdy said that they had received 22 recommendations in this report adding he had provided the Board the five recommendations they needed guidance on. He said that they could handle the other within the organization. Chief McCurdy said that there were no personnel in West Groton to staff that station and the reason closing the station had been recommended adding that they still needed a place to temporarily house equipment should West Groton be cut off by flood waters again. Mr. Degen asked what would happen with apparatus. The Chief said that the older equipment was being decommissioned as part of the fleet reduction program and would be replaced with one single truck, as an example with the ladder truck. The Chief said that they would surplus the building within the Town for town use not get rid of it totally.

Chief McCurdy said that recruitment of on call personnel needed to continue to be a priority adding that the other three recommendations were related to this topic. He said that they needed more call firefighters and EMT's and would like to have one Board member work with them to look at recruitment and retention. He said that they would be holding an informational session on August 30th and he thought it would be important to have a couple of Board members present for that. He said he would also like to hold a workshop with the Board so that they could further discuss in more detail the report.

Ms. Pine asked about the history of the strategic planning and urged the Chief to look at the survey that was sent out by the Audit Review Committee. Chief McCurdy said that this was part of a multi-year plan he had requested when he started. The Chief said they would use that information to drive further questions. Ms. Manugian said that they should also be looking at regional considerations as far as expanding, coverage, etc. Chief McCurdy said that one of the recommendations was to use mutual aid more aggressively. Mr. Petropoulos said that he sensed they were going to be looking for money and possibly a full-time department adding that if that was the case, he would want to know if they were going to increase response times and how many lives they were going to save. He said that if they were going to say they were going to save one additional life over 10 years of tripling a budget, that would be something he would want to think about more. Mr. Degen said that he saw nothing there that said that Chief was asking for a 24/7 department at this time. The Chief added that care of patients was moving out of the hospitals wherever possible adding that EMS would need to provide much more home intervention.

Mr. Degen and Mr. Pease volunteered to work with the Chief on this. Mr. Degen said he would like to see EMS be expanded to paramedic.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT- CONT.

2. *Mr. Petropoulos made a motion to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Corey Pierce as a Swim Instructor at the Country Club. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*
3. Mr. Haddad said that he provided the Board with the old and proposed new 40B Policy and asked the Board to consider adopting the new policy that night.

Ms. Manugian said that she had reviewed the updated policy and was concerned with not replacing apples with apples. Mr. Haddad said that the old policy was outdated and not the direction the Town was going. Ms. Manugian asked about community involvement during the process. Mr. Haddad said that abutters had to be notified adding they could add a requirement to hold a public hearing. Ms. Collette said that a Friendly 40B policy talked about what the developer needed to do prior to meeting with the Board. Mr. Degen said that any presentation made to the Board could trigger that an abutter be notified. Ms. Manugian said she thought it was reasonable to hold a public hearing. Ms. Manugian commented on the number of departments the developer had to meet with. Mr. Haddad said that whenever a developer brought forth a proposed project, it automatically hit all those departments. Ms. Collette said that the Land Use Departments had been holding department meetings with developers since 2008. She said that the developers liked this approach adding they knew ahead of time what they should expect when meeting with various Boards and Committees. Ms. Collette said that the policy in front of the Board was the process that took place prior to a developer seeking final approvals from Boards and Committees. Ms. Collette added that if a developer didn't want to go with a LIP, they could go to the ZBA for a traditional 40B. Mr. Degen asked for the proposed policy to be updated and brought back to the next meeting.

4. Mr. Haddad said that one of the Board's goals was to develop a Town Government Mission Statement adding that Mr. Pease had been assigned with that task. He said that Mr. Pease reached out to employees, Board and Committee members to request that they submit proposed language. He said that once the entries were received, they scheduled a meeting with the Department Heads where Mr. Pease led a discussion to narrow the submitted entries down to the following proposed mission statement:

"The Town of Groton strives to provide our residents, businesses and visitors with quality municipal services delivered in an effective, professional manner and to enhance the quality of life through collaborative planning, personal dedication and community involvement."

Mr. Pease said that this was the first stage in setting governance structure. He said that the mission statement was to be viewed as why select people, volunteers, etc. did what they did. He said it was a collaborative process and thought they had received some great responses.

Ms. Manugian said that she was having trouble with the grammar and structure of the mission statement adding she was not sure the Town of Groton could do this. Mr. Pease said that this was the Town of Groton's mission statement and included a number of people. He said it was tough to wordsmith and keep it vague. Ms. Pine said that the concept of the Town having a mission statement was something she had not considered adding she found it unusual but was fine with it. Mr. Pease said that they were about 20 years behind the times.

Mr. Petropoulos moved to accept the mission statement as written. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-2 with Mr. Degen and Ms. Manugian opposed.

Mr. Pease said that the next step was to work on a strategic plan but needed help with analytical research. He said that he wanted to ask Ms. Manugian for her help on this. Ms. Manugian said she was glad to help but was not sure what she was committing to.

5. Mr. Haddad said that he was looking to get the Board's authorization to allow him to advertise for clerical help; more specifically for minute taking for Finance Committee, Planning Board and Conservation Commission

meetings. Mr. Degen said he didn't want to see them spend money if they could take it from another line item. He said that the other boards and committees needed to work it out so that the Clerk wasn't stuck taking the minutes at every meeting. He said they should institute a policy that the minute taker switch on a month by month basis. Mr. Haddad said that the estimated cost was for \$8,100 for FY18. Mr. Petropoulos said that he was not in favor of this adding they should take minutes as they did that day and maybe take less detailed minutes. There was a brief discussion about audio minutes. Mr. Haddad said that they would not be in compliance with the OML if they didn't have a written record.

Mr. Degen moved that they authorize the Town Manager to hire clerical assistance for Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Finance Committee meetings for the remainder of the fiscal year for an allocation not to exceed \$8,100. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Petropoulos opposed.

6. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to approve the temporary absence of the Town Manager from Tuesday, August 8th through Monday August 14th and appoint Mike Bouchard as Acting Town Manager during his absence.

Mr. Petropoulos moved to approve the temporary absence of the Town Manager and wish him great vacation. Mr. Pease seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Mr. Haddad said that he received an email from Greg Sheldon which made him rethink the name of the Prescott School Development Committee. He proposed calling it the Prescott School Oversight Committee with their main charge to oversee the lease and report back to Board of Selectmen. He said he also didn't think that a member of the Board or the lessee or designee should serve on the Committee. He proposed a three-member Committee to oversee the lease and report back and asked the Board to consider adopting the charge. Mr. Petropoulos suggested that the Board be the ones to appoint this Committee. Ms. Manugian asked if this Committee was needed. Mr. Degen said that Board members were in different camps on this but thought that taking it away might create potential conflict. Ms. Manugian said she didn't disagree but thought since the Committee would be advisory anyway, the Board would still be left making the decisions. Mr. Pease agreed with Ms. Manugian but said that having three individuals provide expertise and advice would be important and it would eliminate any biased positions the Board may have. Mr. Petropoulos said he would like to see the charge reference the fact that the Committee would be advisory. Mr. Degen said he thought that having individuals with real estate and financial backgrounds was important. Ms. Pine, Mr. Degen and Mr. Pease asked that the three members be left as citizen at-large appointments.

Mr. Easom said that an earlier version of the charge showed the Committee applying for grants. Mr. Degen said he didn't think a Committee should be writing a grant for a nonprofit adding they could review it and provide their feedback. He said that there was a fine line and they needed to let the child spread its wings. Mr. Pease agreed adding that oversight had a very specific meaning and role.

Mr. Petropoulos moved that they approve the charge as read with the changes made. Mr. Pease seconded the motion.

Mr. Sheldon said he wanted to reinforce that this was a town project adding that they Board accepted the report submitted by the Municipal Building Committee. He said that a development committee may be needed in the future to seek funding to bring it up to ADA compliance, etc. Mr. Degen said he might be right adding that it was premature at this point. He said that they needed to see some measure of success first.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to authorize the issuance of a Letter of Intent to the Friends adding that the Board was proposing a 5-year initial term with up to three (5) year lease extensions for a total of 20 years. He said that milestones would be established and a business plan submitted by Friends by February. He said that the financial wherewithal would also need to be provided within the first year of the lease.

He asked the Board to ratify the vote taken in executive session. Mr. Petropoulos said he had trouble talking about the lease before it had been negotiated. Mr. Degen said that this was a Letter of Intent that explains some parameters.

Mr. Petropoulos made a motion to authorize the issuance of a Letter of Intent to the Friends. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Mr. Haddad reminded the Board about the groundbreaking ceremony at Four Corners with Secretary Ash on Wednesday at 1:45pm.
9. Mr. Haddad reminded the Board of its meeting with the School Committee on Wednesday at 7pm at Prescott School.
10. Mr. Haddad said that he had intended on coming to the Board with a consolidation plan on August 7th but wanted to discuss it next week if okay with the Board. He said that there were positions he needed to fill and couldn't really wait. Mr. Petropoulos said that he would like to review Matrix's report prior. It was decided to leave it for the August 7th meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Petropoulos said he wanted the Board to consider a policy for recruitment of senior managers. He said that they had followed a couple of different patterns lately. Mr. Haddad said that he had followed the same procedure on all senior positions adding if he needed to deviate away from that procedure, he always brought it to the Board along with a reason why. He said he didn't believe a policy on this was necessary. The Board asked for Town Counsel's opinion on this matter.

MINUTES

Ms. Manugian moved to approve all regular session meeting minutes listed on the agenda (6/15/17, 6/19/17 and 6/26/17). Mr. Pease seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Manugian moved to approve the executive session meeting minutes of June 19, 2017 and not release them. Mr. Pease seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Degen adjourned the meeting at 9:36pm.

Approved: _____
Alison Manugian, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 8/28/17