

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN-REGULAR SESSION MINUTES-7/16/01  
"MINUTES APPROVED"**

**Present:** Chairman Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk Dann Chamberlin, Member Thomas P. McCuin, Jr. and Administrative Officer Jean E. Kitchen.

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 PM.

**FIRE TANKER REFURBISHMENT**

The Selectmen viewed the fire tanker demonstration held at the Town Hall parking lot.

**FIRE CHIEF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Fire Chief Joe Bosselait reviewed last year and this year's accomplishments. He also submitted runs per month and by day of the week. The largest number of calls came from alarms. Following are some of the items he discussed:

- The Chief met with the architect at The Carell Group regarding the Center Station. If the Town bought property behind the station, it could be used for parking, or to add to the station to accommodate gear or longer trucks.
- The Chief noted that 90% of the firefighters are trained in operational haz-mat.
- The Chief is working with the Building Commissioner to identify unsafe buildings.
- He has a proactive hydrant replacement program in place - 11 hydrants coming from Groton Water Dept. and 17 from W. Groton Water Dept.
- Maps are being formulated which show the hydrants, cisterns and water holes for GIS purposes.
- He is working with the District Attorney's office regarding Jr. Fire Safety.

The Fire Chief will update his goals and objectives annually.

**LAND USE OFFICE ASSISTANT HIRE**

Mr. Chamberlin moved to hire Elizabeth DiMarco as Land Use Office Assistant at Grade 4. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

**RETIREES HEALTH INSURANCE**

Ms. Walsh explained that the rates to retirees increased by approximately 25% this year. Most of these retirees have modest pensions, which receive a maximum 3% COLA on \$12,000 of that pension.

Mr. Chamberlin noted that whatever the Board decides would impact the Town's finances in future years.

When asked, Ms. Walsh said there would be 5 or 6 retiring within the next 3-5 years.

The FY02 Health Insurance Budget can accommodate a 65% increase. Mr. Cunningham recommended going with the 65% and to gage the impact. He understood that it was an issue of fairness.

Mr. Chamberlin moved to increase the percentage of retirees' health insurance paid by the Town to 65%, effective September 1, 2001. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

**WEB SITE COMMITTEE**

Dave Hill recommended that the members of the Web Site Committee not have a residency requirement. Also, the draft of the committee profile noted that one member be a Computer Committee member. It was decided that this should not be a requirement either. Ms. Kitchen said there was a qualified Town employee who lives out of Town and wanted to be on the committee. Mr. Cunningham said the threshold for residency is lower for this type of committee, rather than land use type committees.

John Nojiem asked who would pay for web purchases. He was told that all purchases for the web would be through the Computer Committee, since the Web Site Committee is a sub committee of the Computer Committee.

Mr. Chamberlin moved approval of the creation of the Web Site Committee, as a sub committee of the Computer Committee,

as outlined in the profile dated July 16, 2001. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

### **LACOMBE / MOULTON PROPERTY - Informal Discussion w/ Atty. Collins**

Atty. Bob Collins, representing Bob Lacombe and Dave Moulton, was present for the discussion. He updated the Board on what is happening with the Lone Star property on Boston and Sandy Pond Roads. He noted that they previously submitted a concept plan for 250,000 sq. ft. of commercial land and 245 housing units, which was approved, but never acted on. Last year his clients were approached by GELD regarding the possibility of GELD relocating all or a portion of the department's operations at this location.

Mr. Lacombe and Mr. Moulton will be submitting a new concept plan for 130,000 sq. ft. of commercial space and 82 units of housing. There will be 38 units of single family, 24 units of senior (55 and older), 12 starter homes and 8 affordable units. Two sites would be provided for specific municipal uses. On Sandy Pond Road, an area would be created for a new GELD office, potentially a Water Dept. office, and potentially a future fire station. Approximately two acres of this site would lie to the east of the power lines, with a larger area to the West for the GELD garages. Another area of 20 acres would be set aside at the end of Nutting Road for a future GELD sub-station and power generation facility. The plan is to conserve 400 acres of land on the other side of the power lines.

The concept plan will be submitted to the Planning Board by the end of July for a hearing. Atty. Collins will meet with GELD on July 18, and the Conservation Commission July 24. The concept plan will be ready for approval at a STM prior to Sept. 23. The warrant articles needed would be for: the approval of the concept plan (1 or 2 articles); acceptance of the land for GELD; acceptance of the rest of the land; and elimination of the secondary aquifer zone (no longer good for a Town well site).

This site is not big enough for a school. When presented last year it was, but since then a portion of the property has been sold.

Mr. Lacombe and Mr. Moulton hope to have a national conservation organization involved in the 400 acres of conservation land and someone would hold a conservation restriction. There are no immediate plans or desires for the commercial land. The residential portion will need a special permit within 24 months. They were going to request 10 yrs. in which to develop the property. Mr. Lacombe owns the commercial property and Mr. Moulton the residential. Mr. McCuin asked if they would consider office space rather than commercial. Bob Pine said they would not rule out that possibility, but the application would be for commercial.

Mr. Chamberlin said the plan was sensitive and down scaled from the Lone Star plan. It seemed as good as could be hoped for.

Mr. Cunningham said he appreciated them addressing the needs of GELD.

Mr. Kopec asked if it would have sewer or septic. Mr. Pine said there would be a package plant and an on-site septic system. He added that there was public water.

Atty. Collins noted that the senior housing would be attached condo units aimed for those over 55 and would be priced at the market rate.

Planning Administrator Michelle Collette asked if Rosebud Properties would be included. Atty. Collins said it would.

### **CH. 61 - DARLING PROPERTY - Old Dunstable Road**

All Town departments were contacted regarding this property. On July 12 the Planning Board voted, with a 4 to 2 vote to recommend that the Selectmen not exercise the Town's right of first refusal under Chapter 61. The Housing Authority and Conservation Commission had no interest in the property.

Mr. Chamberlin moved that the Town not exercise its right under Chapter 61 to purchase the property located on 530 and 535 Old Dunstable Road owned by James and Mary Darling, shown as Parcel F121 on the old Assessors' map and #52 on the new map. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

### **ROAD OPENING - Keyspan Energy**

Philip Wells was present for the discussion. The line, which has already been put in, is off the pavement. Keyspan applied for a permit after the fact. The line was done 2 months ago.

Mr. Cunningham said there was no need to act on the application for a road opening permit at this time. He recommended

the Board send a letter to Mo Sarno, General Manager of Construction at Keyspan, to say that there is a need for better safeguards and protocols. Ms. Kitchen will check with the Highway Surveyor to see if the pavement is okay.

## **AGRICULTURAL PARADE**

The tentative date for the Agricultural Parade is September 16. Helene Cahen said she met with the Stagecoach Inn since the parade will end there. She asked if there was a way to accommodate detail officers for this event. The idea of the parade is to support the history of the Town and farming. Mr. Cunningham asked if it could be combined with Grotonfest. Mr. Chamberlin said that the parade was promoting existing agriculture. He said the Town should support this event if it becomes an annual event. Jane Bouvier said the parade could be the morning of the Grotonfest at 8:00-10:45. Ms. Cahen will get together with Ms. Bouvier. Combining the events would also be one way to get a better turnout. Mr. Cunningham said the Selectmen were in support of the project and would help make it work.

## **350<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE**

Irene Buck thanked everyone for their support at Town Meeting and for the \$30,000 from the Trust Funds for the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. She said there would be a gathering in September to kick off the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary project. The Historical Society hired Pat Freniere to research the last celebration and recommendations for the next anniversary celebration, which is the 350<sup>th</sup>. This committee should represent varied Town interests rather than just the Historical Society. The Historical Society underwrote the planners' document. Now it is time to get active leadership moving toward the goal of the celebration. This has to be a real working team to bring talented people together.

Mr. McCuin moved to accept the Committee Profile for the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee as presented. The motion was amended to say that it would consist of 7 members, 1 shall be the President of the Historical Society or his or her designee. The amended motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

The following were voted as members of the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, terms to expire June 30, 2006: David B. Alexander, Jane Bouvier, Irene Buck, Constance Sartini, Karen Tuomi, Eric Wickfield and Virginia Wood. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Trails Committee Appointment**

Mr. Chamberlin moved the appointment of Donald B. Torgersen, II as a member of the Trails Committee, term to expire June 30, 2002. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

### **Verizon License Agreement - Lawrence Academy**

Mr. McCuin noted that he would not take any action on this request unless the Park House was put back on the tax rolls. He noted that Lawrence Academy made an informal agreement with the Town and Rep. Hargraves that any new residency purchases would be on the tax rolls. The Headmaster will be living in the Park House and Lawrence Academy is considering it being used for educational purposes and say it should not be taxed. (Mr. McCuin realized this request had nothing to do with the Park House being taxed.) Mr. Chamberlin shared Mr. McCuin's concern, but he noted that the two issues were not connected. Mr. Chamberlin thought LA should have come to discuss the Park House with the Assessors and Selectmen. Mr. McCuin said LA hadn't lived up to its agreement with the Town, so he was not in a mind to approve another agreement with LA. Mr. Cunningham said that he hoped the issue of the Park House could be discussed at a future time. It was a separate issue than what was before them that evening.

Assessor Ed Kopec said he did not think the informal agreement was done correctly. According to DOR, LA was within its legitimate right to designate the property as educational use. The agreement should have been signed in black and white.

Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Cunningham agreed that the Selectmen should meet with LA and express their concerns.

Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Cunningham agreed that LA should get the line as outlined in the aerial license agreement between the Trustees of Lawrence Academy, Groton Electric Light Department and Verizon New England Inc. (The license will be signed by GELD.)

### **Appointment - Special Police Officers**

Mr. Chamberlin moved the appointment of Special Police Officers from the Towns of Ayer, Dunstable, Littleton, Pepperell,

Shirley and Townsend, as shown on the list dated July 16, 2001. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

### **Housing Authority / Housing Partnership**

The difference between the Housing Authority and the Housing Partnership were explained.

The Authority:

- identifies and addresses the need for affordable housing in Groton and develops policies and strategies to meet those needs
- is responsible for management policy and oversight of the Town's Elderly and Family Housing Programs
- negotiates with developers for affordable housing units in return for an increase in density of particular developments
- may receive title to actual housing units, parcels of land, or cash in lieu of units, or land, from developers

The members of Housing Partnership:

- consider the housing needs of the Town
- encourage the production and creation of affordable housing

The Partnership works with private developers and the various Town boards involved in the permit process (including the Housing Authority) to evaluate proposals and make recommendations, primarily for first-time home buyers.

### **Minutes**

Mr. Chamberlin moved approval of the regular session minutes of June 4, 2001. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. Chamberlin moved approval of the regular session minutes of July 2, 2001, as amended. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

#### **Legion Common Request**

Mr. Chamberlin moved approval of the Legion Common to be used for a yard sale to raise funds for the N.E. Valkyries on July 28, contingent on review by the Police Chief relative to the need for police detail. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

#### **Throne Hill Properties**

There will be a meeting at the NRWA with the District land agent on July 19 at 8:00 AM with regard to the Throne Hill Properties.

#### **Norris Property**

Mr. Norris does not plan to vacate the premises per the agreement with the Town, so the Town will need to charge him rent. Ms. Kitchen will find out what the going rate is.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:50 PM Mr. Chamberlin moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dann Chamberlin, Clerk

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jean E. Kitchen  
Administrative Officer