

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – REGULAR SESSION MINUTES – 11/26/01

"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 7:00 PM.

ALCOHOL LICENSE RENEWALS

Mr. Chamberlin moved to approve the renewal of a Liquor Innholder License for the Groton Stage Coach Inn & Tavern, Inc., license to expire December 30, 2002. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. McCuin moved to approve the renewal of a Common Victualer License, to serve All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages, for the following establishments: Ralph D. Kelly, Inc. d/b/a Groton Lounge; Amesbury Restaurant Corp., d/b/a Groton Jade Restaurant, Raymond Chun Ng, Manager; and Brenker Inc. d/b/a Beef 'n Ale Restaurant, Kerri Hilberg, Manager, licenses to expire December 30, 2002. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. Chamberlin moved to approve the renewal of a Retail Package Goods Store License for the sale of Wines and Malt Beverages to Norman & Rena E. Gagne d/b/a Groton General Store, license to expire December 30, 2002. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. McCuin moved to approve the renewal of Retail Package Goods Store Licenses for the sale of All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages to Groton Market, Inc., John M. Madigan, Manager, and to Denis H. Marchand and Estelle C. Marchand d/b/a Craven's Package Store, licenses to expire December 30, 2002. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. Chamberlin moved to approve the renewal of General On Premise Licenses for the sale of All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages to the Groton Country Club & Recreation Authority, Brad Durrin, Manager, for the Snack Bar/Lounge, Pavilion, and Function Hall, licenses to expire December 30, 2002. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

SUNDAY ENTERTAINMENT RENEWALS

Mr. McCuin moved approval of a Public Entertainment on Sunday License for the following establishments, all licenses to expire December 31, 2002: Amesbury Restaurant Corp. d/b/a Groton Jade Restaurant for disc jockey, piano player, folk singer, and small band; Groton Country Club & Recreation Authority for live entertainment and disc jockey; Ralph D. Kelly, Inc. d/b/a Groton Lounge for 1 pinball machine, 2 video games, 1 juke box and 2 pool tables, occasionally live band and disc jockey; and Groton Stage Coach Inn & Tavern, Inc. for live entertainment (dinner music), small bands, and occasionally disc jockey. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

FIRE CHIEF

Fire Chief Joe Bosselait said there was an RFP out for the architectural work for the Lost Lake Station. The proposals are due on Dec. 6. Mr. Cunningham asked if there was a group of officers guiding the process. Chief Bosselait said that last year the officers made their suggestions to the Fire Chief and the input culminated in expansion plan for the Lost Lake station and improvements to the center station.

Lost Lake Station

Chief Bosselait said that he planned on adding the following: 2 bays, additional parking, a bathroom and shower. Ross Associates donated time to lay out the septic system. There is plenty of room out back for septic. Chief Bosselait said he was also looking at a picnic area behind the basketball court.

Mr. Chamberlin said there needed to be a path to the Conservation Trust property. Chief Bosselait said he may want additional parking for the access to the Conservation Trust property. Mr. Chamberlin said there would only be a need for 3-4 spaces for cars for hikers.

Mr. Cunningham asked what this addition would do. Chief Bosselait said it would accommodate 2 larger trucks in the new bay and it would bring a truck that is being stored off-site back to the station. The generator would be relocated outside. It could be used for a shelter as well.

Mr. Cunningham asked if he had any estimates. Chief Bosselait said that Maintenance Supervisor John Estabrook thought it would be around \$485,000 before prevailing wage. Chief Bosselait added that the roof line, if supported, could be used as an area for training. The RFP includes 2 alternatives; trusses and rafters. Mr. Chamberlin said he hoped that the final design would improve the façade, one that the Lost Lake community could take visual pride in. Chief Bosselait said he would utilize the area residents for fund raising.

Center Station

Chief Bosselait said the plan for this station is to make the bays higher and add a second story. Mr. Cunningham asked if he had considered investing much in this station or looking at GELD Chief Bosselait said he had a discussion with the GELD Manager and he said that previously the Town had been offered the property and turned it down. Mr. Cunningham said it was not realistic to look at that property until GELD had a place to move. GELD is interested in maximizing the value of the property. He wanted to know if the current Center Station was worth the investment of these renovations or if it was worth looking at GELD as an alternative. The cinderblock facility might give the Fire Dept. more room. Chief Bosselait said he would look at GELD once he got the proposals back. Mr. Chamberlin said that the feeling from GELD charet was to develop the GELD site as mixed use with those in attendance envisioning smaller, attractive buildings and asked the Chief if he envisioned expansion in the next 15 years. Chief Bosselait said the Town would always have the Center Station. If there was a need to expand, there would be satellite facilities. Mr. Chamberlin asked if the Chief saw the equipment fitting in the larger bays in the future. Chief Bosselait said the last truck was adjusted to fit in the bays. If he went with the full height bays, it would fit the equipment. Mr. Cunningham asked if the new ladder truck had to be special ordered to fit the current building. Chief Bosselait said it was not custom built. He said he looked at the adjacent land behind the fire station and it could be used for parking if the Town could negotiate something with the neighbor. Ms. Kitchen said James Brook runs behind the Fire Station. Chief Bosselait said the second option was to have a parking lot further back. This would allow for public parking, but would cut the neighbor's property in half. Mr. Chamberlin said it would be a good thing to have parking for the Fire Dept. and Town Hall employees. Mr. Cunningham said that the Selectmen could explore the possibility or availability of land behind the station.

Winn Nordblom (Capital Planning) asked if the Selectmen wanted the Capital Planning Committee to look at the station renovations. Mr. Cunningham said it was premature until there were numbers available. Chief Bosselait said he would attend the Dec. 5 Capital Planning Committee. Former Fire Chief Chris Kelley said the last time something was done at Lost Lake was in 1963.

Update On W. Groton Service Station

Ms. Kitchen said the owners' insurance company would pay for the total clean-up.

7:43 PM Recess – Reconvened at 8:00 PM

JOHN ESTABROOK – Goals & Objectives

Mr. Estabrook reviewed the FY01 projects.

Dog Pound

Dog Officer Troy Conley is putting the sand coat on the floor. Mr. Cunningham noted that the dogs were at the new pound. A letter will be sent to the MSCPA. There will be a grand opening scheduled.

Senior Center

The coils on the roof and the gutters are installed at the Senior Center. The contractor was cleaning up the remaining bat guano at Legion that evening, as the clean up couldn't be done when the facility was being used. Mr. Cunningham noted his concern regarding the Senior Center generator. It was repaired last year and now Mr. Estabrook was recommending replacement. He said Mr. Estabrook needed to keep on to top of things before they become a problem. Mr. Estabrook said that he and the contractor recommended replacement. Mr. Chamberlin asked if there were changes in the exhaust system. Mr. Estabrook said the metal exhaust over the engine is very hot. Mr. Cunningham said he needed a back-up plan. Mr. Estabrook said he was going to the Finance Committee for emergency funds. Mr. Estabrook suggested installing an exhaust fan in the room. He asked if that would be a preventative temporary solution. Mr. Cunningham said this issue needed to be looked into and some contingency to continue to use the center as an emergency shelter. He suggested getting some people to look at this. Mr. Estabrook asked what the cost limitation to do this correctly would be. Mr. Chamberlin said there was a winter to get through. Mr. Estabrook said he had 3 quotes.

Mr. Chamberlin asked why the Board didn't hear about the Oct. 1 incident until weeks later. Mr. Estabrook said it was a misunderstanding between the Fire Chief and himself. The Fire Chief said he would help John push through replacement and talk to the finance committee. Mr. Cunningham said any time Mr. Estabrook encounters any major incident, to please notify the Board. He asked Mr. Estabrook to see that it as his responsibility to inform the Selectmen .

Mr. Estabrook said there was a non-static floor installed last year in the Police Dept. and the installation was not to his satisfaction. The company came back and fixed it, but had a different shade. The company did not get paid. Now the company wants to come and reinstall it. Mr. Estabrook said he would have to go back to the Finance Committee for funding, since the \$3350 was turned back in last year.

TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING – Continued

Mr. Cunningham wanted to know the impact on the Town departments if the residential exemption was granted. He also asked what the mechanics were of the exemption. Assessor Ed Kopec, Town Accountant Ann Walsh and Tax Collector Tom Hartnett met and after the discussion concluded, it was unanimously voted to wait another year because it would hold up the tax bills. It is more involved than first imagined. Mr. Cunningham asked if there was a value, beyond the mechanics of it. Mr. Kopec said only 11 towns have adopted this and it has been an exemption for 10 years. He wondered why more towns have not accepted this exemption. Mr. McLaughlin said a major concern was getting tax bills out in a timely manner. He said the Town needed to find out the consequences and where benefits occur. He recognized that the Assessors needed to do their homework. He said that the research will be completed by July 1 of next year. Mr. Cunningham said there is also a need for a public education process, i.e. public hearing. Mr. Chamberlin thanked Mr. McLaughlin for bringing the issue forward and said he was supportive of the concept. He said the Town owed it to the public to have their questions answered.

Mr. Chamberlin moved not to adopt a residential exemption. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. Hartnett said he was impressed with the way the Assessors handled themselves. He was glad it worked out and hoped they would find a way to implement this. Mr. Nordblom, speaking as a citizen, not a board member, said the Assessors were going in the right direction. He agreed that public education was important. He said he would have concerns on multi-family housing. He asked if it would have a negative effect on affordable housing. Mr. Cunningham asked if the Assessors were going to have a study committee. Mr. McLaughlin said he would get clarification from DOR about the mechanics and then the Assessors would show the demographics and the impact. The Assessors will compile the data after March. Assessor Sangiolo said the communities like Boston that have a lot of rentals and Nantucket that has large second homeowners have implemented this exemption.

OTHER BUSINESS

MINUTES

Mr. Chamberlin moved the approval of the Regular Session minutes of November 13, 2001, as amended. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. McCuin moved the approval of the Executive Session minutes of November 13, 2001, as amended. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Senior Volunteer Appreciation Event

Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Chamberlin will attend the Senior Volunteer Appreciation event on Friday.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:20 PM the Selectmen adjourned by unanimous vote.

Approved: _____
Dann Chamberlin, Clerk

Respectfully Submitted,
Jean E. Kitchen
Administrative Officer