

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN – REGULAR SESSION MINUTES – 12/3/01**

**"MINUTES APPROVED"**

**Present:** Chairman Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk Dann Chamberlin and Administrative Officer Jean E. Kitchen.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

**BOARD OF ASSESSORS**

Assessors Ed Kopec, Hugh McLaughlin and Sylvia Sangiolo, and Assistant Assessor Connie Rogers were present for the discussion. The Board of Selectmen expressed a need for additional hours in the Assessor's office. Mr. Kopec said the Assessors had not gotten together to discuss this yet. They realize they need to make some decisions. When the new Assistant Assessor comes on board the Assessors will find out what his/her desire would be. The Assessors didn't have a definite answer regarding what Ms. Chalmers plans to do.

Mr. Cunningham asked for some background to describe what the office coverage is currently. Mr. Kopec said there was an Assistant Assessor and a clerk. 10 years ago there was a 20-hour per week clerk. Mr. Cunningham asked if they have continued to function with 20-hour positions. Ms. Rogers said they were working with 2 34-hour positions. When Rena Swezey left, Ms. Chalmers took her hours and Ms. Chalmers' old position was not refilled. Mr. Kopec noted that they did not have computer systems in place back then. Ms. Sangiolo said DOR is requiring more in its reports.

Mr. Chamberlin said there were cuts 10 years ago, which is when the office started closing on Fridays. Ms. Rogers said the office previously was closed on Wednesday afternoon. Mr. Chamberlin said he supported getting the office open on Friday. He also supported adding a ½-time clerical position.

Mr. McLaughlin said there have been discussions about additional requirements of the office, i.e. GIS, public interface, coordination of financial departments, etc. With these additional loads, within 2-3 years the Assessors will be looking at adding 1 full-time equivalent position. When Ms. Chalmers decides to end her career, that is when the Assessors will decide whether to replace her with the same amount of hours or reduce the number of hours. Mr. McLaughlin's recommendation is either in the interim or in next year's budget to hire a 34-40-hour position for a high level clerk under the Assistant Assessor. This person will be taught everything the Assistant knows to free up the Assistant Assessor to do field work.

Ms. Kitchen said that if the Assistant Assessor is freed up to do field work, that means the office could do new growth and save money with Patriot. She added that they needed to coordinate with the committee that is looking at the reorganization of the financial depts. (Tax Collector/Treasurer, Assessors, Accountant). Mr. McLaughlin said the Board was reviewing changes at the Assistant Assessor level and function above noted. The goal was to get the recommendation to the Spring Town Meeting for short-term and long-term. The Assessors planned to get back to the Selectmen in February.

Ms. Sangiolo said she put together an outline taking into consideration Mr. Chamberlin's concerns regarding transitioning, Town growing, etc. Mr. Chamberlin wants to be supportive of changes in the office structure.

Mr. Cunningham likes the idea of doing some of the work in house vs. patriot doing all the new growth. Ms. Sangiolo said Patriot could be used for revaluation (every 3 years). The

Town would need to hire a Certified Mass Appraiser if it does not use Patriot every year.

Mr. Cunningham encouraged the Assessors to work on this. Mr. Chamberlin noted that a smooth transition was very important. He said the Selectmen would be as supportive as they could. Both Selectmen thanked the Assessors for coming in for this discussion.

**LANDFILL CAPPING UPDATE**

Landfill Capping Committee Chairman Jamie Greacen said the landfill capping was still on schedule to be closed by October 2002. The last time he was in he spoke about dredging the pond over the winter. The permit application was revised for winter dredging. The Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) decided that dredging would have an adverse impact, i.e. trout eggs downstream. So it rejected the permit application over the winter.

Mr. Cunningham said that was very disturbing in light of the fact that DFW was under DEM who wanted the Town to restore

the pond. The pond was dry in the fall. Hibernating was not going on because the pond was down. Mr. Cunningham was extremely frustrated.

Mr. Greacen said the Town just could not dredge in the winter. He said he asked Little Environmental (LE) if the 2 projects could still be combined. Maybe the closure could be scheduled so LE could use the fill. Mr. Greacen said he has a request into LE to revisit the pond dredging to see if it can do it in the spring or early summer and what the requirement would be. Mr. Chamberlin reminded him that spring is the high water season and asked if that was an issue. Mr. Greacen said July 15-August 15 was the original dredging date. That seems to be the ideal time, although DEP speaks of times of low water being the best time. Mr. Greacen said he could ask the State if the Town could do it earlier. Mr. Cunningham asked if soil needed to be drained once it was dredged. Mr. Greacen said that the more time, the better.

Ms. Kitchen asked what cost factors were involved. Mr. Greacen said there was enough available to repermit. Ms. Kitchen suggested that the Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA) assist in putting pressure on DEM.

Mr. Cunningham said there was a drop-dead date for closure. Mr. Greacen said that was 2002. Mr. Greacen said LE needed to set up its schedule so the Town could coordinate. He said he would like to come back with a letter from LE to dredge the pond. Donna Naval said Carl Canner was an eloquent spokesperson. She asked if more help could come from the neighbors. Mr. Cunningham said they needed to let the State know the importance of the project. The Selectmen were supportive. Ms. Kitchen said the Selectmen needed to award the contract to LE.

Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell said the NRWA continues to be supportive. She was encouraged to see that the Town was looking at doing the dredging in the spring. If the contract had to be awarded, she suggested letting LE know that NRWA was interested and enthusiastic about the dredging. Mr. Cunningham said that Mr. Greacen had continued discussions with LE and it was aware of the Town's support for the dredging. He noted that there was some point in time where the Town needed to cap the landfill. He asked the neighbors and NRWA to express their views.

George Moore asked if the Town could entice Rep. Hargraves' expertise. Mr. Cunningham supported that idea and added Sen. Panagiotakos.

Carol Canner said that if the contract gets signed for the capping, maybe the State would

lessen its pressure. Mr. Cunningham said DEP was capping and DEM was dredging.

Mr. Chamberlin asked why the Town wasn't awarding the contract this for a lesser amount, using the Town's dredged material. Mr. Greacen said that the Town could apply pressure, but it is put in the position to accept the landfill capping at a higher amount and can do a change order if we are able to use our own material. He added that he believed the permitting would be easy. Carl Canner said DEM was offering another grant in the amount of \$25,000 that we could use for pond dredging. Mr. Canner offered to write the application.

Mr. Chamberlin moved to sign the contract dated December 3, 2001 with Littleton Environmental Services for the Town of Groton Landfill Closure Construction in the amount of \$643,525. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

### **350TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE – Space Needed**

Donald Black, 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Chairman, said the committee needed a place to store materials and to disseminate information. He asked if the committee could use one of the offices at Legion Hall. Mr. Cunningham said that sounded doable. Mr. Black said that, looking long range, the committee would also need a computer, etc. Initially it would need a fireproof cabinet and telephone. Mr. Chamberlin said the Board would give a heads up to the Legion. Mr. Black noted that the committee met in the afternoon.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Minutes**

Mr. Chamberlin moved the approval of the Regular Session minutes of November 19, 2001, as written. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. Chamberlin moved the approval of the Executive Session minutes of November 19, 2001, as written. The motion was

seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. Chamberlin moved the approval of the Regular Session minutes of November 26, 2001, as written. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

### **Housing Partnership Appointment**

Mr. Cunningham said the Housing Partnership needed a Selectmen's representative and he was willing to serve in that capacity. This would first require expanding the partnership to 5 members.

Mr. Chamberlin moved the expansion of the Housing Partnership from 4 to 5 members. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

Mr. Chamberlin moved the appointment of Peter S. Cunningham as the Selectmen's representative on the Housing Partnership. The motion was seconded and voted unanimously.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:25PM the Selectmen adjourned by unanimous vote.

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

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jean E. Kitchen  
Administrative Officer