

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SEPTEMBER 3, 2002
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
“APPROVED”**

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M.

Mr. Cunningham moved to open the Public Hearing on Town Meeting Articles. Seconded by Mr. McCuin. Unanimous vote. The Finance Committee was present for this portion of the meeting. The Board of Selectmen discussed and voted on the articles for the Town Meeting Warrant as follows:

Article 1 – Support

Article 2 – Support

Article 3 – Support

Article 4 – Support

Article 5 – Support

Article 6 – Support

Article 7 – Recommendation would be decided after this evening’s Executive Session

Article 8 – Recommendation would be decided after this evening’s Executive Session

Article 9 – Support

Article 10 – Support

Article 11 – Support

Article 12 – Support

Article 13 – Mr. McCuin recused himself, as his mother is an employee and eligible for Early Retirement Incentive. 2 Support, 1 Abstained.

Article 14 – Support

Article 15 – Support

Article 16 – Recommendation would be decided at Town Meeting.

Article 17 – Support

Article 18 - Recommendation would be decided at Town Meeting.

Article 19 - Recommendation would be decided at Town Meeting.

Article 20 - Recommendation would be decided at Town Meeting.

Article 21 – Support

Article 22 – 1 Support, 2 Not Support

Article 23 – 1 Support, 2 Not Support

Article 24 – Mr. Chamberlin recused himself, as he is a member of the Groton Conservation Trust. 2 Support, 1 Abstained.

Article 25 - Mr. Chamberlin recused himself, as he is a member of the Groton Conservation Trust. 2 Support, 1 Abstained.

Article 26 - Recommendation would be decided at Town Meeting.

Article 27 - Recommendation would be decided at Town Meeting.

Mr. Cunningham moved to close the public hearing. Mr. McCuin seconded. Unanimous vote.

Assessors Residential Exemption Analysis

The Board met with the Board of Assessors – Members – Hugh McLaughlin, Sylvia Sangiolo and Ed Kopec. Also in attendance was Associate Assessor Rena Swezey. Mr. McLaughlin was a proponent for the consideration of Residential Exemption Analysis and Ms. Sangiolo and Mr. Kopec were opposed. Mr. McLaughlin submitted copious information relative to this program and it is attached herein. The information is as follows: Email Memorandum Subject entitled Residential Exemption Analysis and 3 Charts relative to the same. Ms. Sangiolo also presented to the Board of Selectmen a memorandum entitled Residential Discount Initiative that is also attached herein.

Mr. McLaughlin explained his proposal and Ms. Sangiolo was also given time to go over her memorandum as submitted. The Board of Selectmen, at this time, does not have any burning desire to see this implemented in Groton. The Board of Assessors stated that in order for this change to implemented, if the Board of Selectmen so desired, they would need one year prior to implementation and thereafter prior to setting the tax rate. The Board of Selectman thanked the Board of Assessors for both of their proposals and relayed that this information provided was very beneficial. Mr. McLaughlin requested that should the Board of Selectmen change their minds on this initiative that they contact him.

Keyspan Road Opening – Townsend Road

Mr. Chamberlin both apologized and thanked Mr. Kish representing Key Span Energy for his patience with the delaying of his appointment time. Mr. McCuin questioned whether Kemp Road was Kemp Road or Street. For the record, it is Kemp Street. Mr. Kish said that this road opening permit was in order to replace the relay reinforcement, which dates back to 1930 and serves Hollingsworth and Vose, as well as infrastructure. This would also impact 2,400 feet of sidewalk which Keyspan agrees to replace with an asphalt sidewalk at an approximate cost of \$46,000 versus \$120,000 to replace the sidewalk with concrete. Mr. Kish has coordinated this with Highway Surveyor Tom Delaney. *Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Road Opening Permit for a cut of 4,700 lineal feet for the purpose of replacing 2” gas main with 8” plastic gas main on Townsend Road from Pepperell Road to Kemp Street work to be completed by November 15, 2002 or deadline to be extended if weather permits by the Highway Surveyor. Seconded by Mr. McCuin. Unanimous vote.*

Road Layout –Allen’s Trail

The Board of Selectmen was advised that the Planning Board did release the bond. *Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the laying out of Allen’s Trail, as further described in the “Order of Layout of Allen’s Trail” dated August 10, 2002. Seconded by Mr. McCuin. Unanimous vote.*

Appointment of Election Worker

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Harlan P. Fitch to Election Worker as Warden for the term expire June 30, 2003.

Election Signs

Mr. McCuin said that a constituent notified him that Town Clerk Bonnie Biocchi sent out letters to interested parties that the sign bylaw says that no signs are allowed on town property without express permission of the town. It further states that no unmanned signs are allowed at the Senior Center on Election Day. He stated that he did not recall this board making that decision.

Ms. Kitchen remarked that she had spoken with the Town Clerk and there were not any signs allowed in the past.

The School, however, does allow 3 unmanned signs on Election Day.

Mr. Chamberlin felt that it was not right to allow signs at the High School but not at the Senior Center.

Mr. McCuin felt that by not allowing unmanned signs, you penalize those who can’t put volunteers at the polling places.

Both Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Cunningham agreed that there should be equity among the polling precincts.

Mr. McCuin moved that pursuant to the town sign bylaw, we allow no more than 3 unmanned signs on road leading to Precinct 1 polling place on election day, Mr. Cunningham seconded. Unanimous vote

Historic Teardown Bylaw

Mr. Cunningham requested that a future agenda item be proposing a potential bylaw for an Annual Town Meeting regarding the demolition of historic structures.

A proposal that would consist of a 30 day “cooling off” period for the demolition of any historic structure to allow those interested to come forward prior to the demolition rather than coming forward at the last minute just as the demolition is due to come down

Mr. Chamberlin agreed and also added that not only should this be considered but also felt that the tearing down of older houses should be reviewed and considered now before there’s an epidemic whereby there are lots of teardowns of more affordable housing. He stated that he noticed in another community that these teardowns are marked with yellow police tape around the area. He felt that the social implications are that there will be less affordable housing. He would also like to research bylaws in place proactively before we are faced with an epidemic in this town in the interest of affordable housing and keeping a good mix.

The Board requested Ms. Kitchen set up a Joint Discussion with the Planning Board regarding a teardown bylaw.

West Groton Pond

Mr. Cunningham requested that a letter be sent to Conservation Commission to allow for the emergency repair of the lower level gate to be operable again. He stated that the repair to the mechanism is not complicated. It now appears as though an emergency situation now exists that would require a formal request to do the repair.

Mr. Chamberlin was in favor as well as added that this repair would enable the water levels to be kept up during good times.

Building Maintenance/Building Open for Evening Meetings

Ms. Kitchen met with Building Maintenance John Estabrook. They will be advertising for a replacement of “Fonzie” and have

changed the schedule in order to allow for that position to be available at 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday to open and then to secure the building for evening meetings. This should alleviate any inconvenience to boards/committees, who need access to Town Hall.

Mr. Cunningham moved to enter into Executive Session in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 39, Section 23B to consider the purchase of real property and collective bargaining and to not convene into open session. Seconded by Mr. McCuin. Roll call vote: Cunningham – yes; McCuin – yes; Chamberlin – yes.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn at 9:33 p.m. McCuin seconded. Unanimous vote.

Approved: _____
Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Casey
Administrative Secretary

Date Approved: October 7, 2002

Attachments (5)
Residential Exemption Analysis Memorandum by Hugh McLaughlin
Residential Discount Initiative Memorandum by Sylvia E. Sangiolo
3 Impact Charts regarding Residential Exemption Percentage