

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
NOVEMBER 12, 2002
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
“APPROVED”**

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:55 P.M.

The present Board welcomed newly elected member Tom Hartnett to the Board. Mr. Hartnett thanked the Board for their kind words and also took a moment to thank all of those “who put me here.” He was truly appreciative of all the voters who turned out on his behalf.

Appointment With Chris Long

The Board invited Reporter Christine Long from the Groton Herald and presented her with a proclamation proclaiming November 13, 2002, Christine Beckert Long Day. Chris thanked the Town of Groton for all they did for her. She felt Groton has contributed to her growth learning new things each day for the past 30 years.

Mr. Cunningham thanked Chris for “getting the facts straight” with all the reporting she did. He said that she would be missed and the Town was better informed because of Chris’ reporting.

Mr. Hartnett congratulated Chris and felt that she was easy to work with and was extremely fair with everyone.

Mr. Chamberlin noted that when he thinks of Chris, he conjures up a “keen mind, totally dedicated without an ego to get a story correct.” He felt that the Town was the beneficiary of Chris’ principles and would miss her a great deal.

Tax Classification Hearing

The Board of Assessors (BOA) called their meeting to order within the BOS meeting. In attendance were Ed Kopec, Hugh McLaughlin, Sylvia Sangiolo and Rena Swezey.

Mr. Hartnett suggested that the BOA consider a split tax rate. Both Boards discussed the pros and cons of a split rate (commercial/residential) and a single tax rate and after much discussion and deliberation voted for a single tax rate. The Board of Assessors unanimously recommends a single class tax rate of \$14.29. See attached Hearing Checklist.

Meeting With Finance Committee Re: FY04 Financial Outlook

Ms. Kitchen told the Board that she met with the Town Accountant, Treasurer/Tax Collector and Assistant Assessor to discuss collectively the anticipated outlook and the ensuing memo entitled “FY 04 Budget” attached is the result and, of course, is subject to change.

Mr. Cunningham weighed in that it was no secret of next year’s financial outlook. He felt the Board needs to brainstorm in order to be more efficient. He felt that we need to look at budget and decide what’s essential and what can be ruled out prior to the public hearing stage. He does not like to see cuts being made without good vision, judgment or thought.

Ms. Kitchen said that the state aid for town side is minimal and that the school portion of the budget is major.

Mr. Cunningham and Ms. Kitchen both agreed that there should be a Department Heads Meeting in order to inform all departments of some guidelines that will need to be followed. Mr. Cunningham added that they be informed to prepare level funded budgets and be able to identify areas that could be cut if necessary.

Discussion ensued regarding the deadline of budgets due and the timeliness of receiving them. Both January 15th and January 30th were discussed and ultimately January 30th was decided.

Jeff Wilson, Finance Committee Chair, suggested that department’s list of services that are being deleted in lieu of cuts qualitatively.

The Board requested the Administrative Officer notify all departments, committees, commissions and boards of a mandatory Budget Meeting next week.

APPROVE HIRE AO OFFICE ASSISTANT – Kathryn Fisher

Ms. Kitchen introduced her recommendation for this part time position. She stated that Kathryn would be flexible with hours, including nightly meeting minutes if needed, had some municipal experience and understood that this position was one that

was purely clerical.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that she seem wonderfully well qualified to work in selectmen's office; her legal background would be valuable for our office. Mr. Cunningham was concerned that according to her resume, being overqualified, Kathryn would become bored with the day-to-day operations.

Mr. Hartnett was impressed with Kathryn's resume, that she was well qualified and congratulated her on her education.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the hire of Kathryn Fisher as the Part-time Administrative Officer Assistant at Grade 5, Step 3 per the Personnel Board.

Local Emergency Planning Committee

Mr. Hartnett moved to appoint Joseph Bosselait, Martha Campbell, R. Thomas Delaney, Jr., Edward Doucette, John Hewitt, Leroy Johnson, Jr. Anne Lally, Frank Mastrangelo, Robert Mulhern, Thomas Orcutt, Kathy Puff, Charles Ramsay, Claudia Saball, William Shute, Lawrence Swezey, John Walsh, Lois Young to the Local Emergency Planning Committee for the term to expire on June 30, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Unanimous vote.

Trails Committee Appointment

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Victor C. Burton to the Trails Committee for the term to expire June 30, 2003.

Treasurer/Tax Collector

Mr. Hartnett informed the Board that he would be resigning November 29, 2002 as Treasurer/Tax Collector and will be appointing an Interim.

Minutes

Mr. Hartnett abstained, as he was not a member of the Board during this time.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the minutes of 8/26/02. Seconded by Mr. Chamberlin. Two in favor with one abstention. Mr. Chamberlin had an amendment to the minutes of 10/15/02 and it was so noted. Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the minutes of 10/15/02 as amended. Seconded by Mr. Chamberlin. Two in favor with one abstention. Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the minutes of 10/21/02. Seconded by Mr. Chamberlin. Two in favor with one abstention.

Town Accountant Search

Ms. Kitchen informed the Board that the Town Accountant search is proceeding well. The semi-finalists will be interviewed by the end of November and she hopes to have a finalist for the Board in order to have the Town Accountant on board by the second week of December.

Executive Session Minutes of 8/26/02

Mr. Chamberlin had one amendment to the minutes of 8/26/02 and it was so noted. Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of 8/26/02 as amended. Seconded by Mr. Chamberlin. Two in favor with one abstention (Hartnett).

Review/Comment on GELD Site Redevelopment

Ms. Kitchen noted that GELD has submitted this Site Redevelopment Concept in the event that there are problems with Station Avenue Development. GELD, however, is committed to working with the SADAC.

The Board reviewed the GELD Site Redevelopment Concept Plan (Attached) and offered the following comments:

- ❑ The "road" along the rail trail, between Broadmeadow and Station Avenue should be a through road per the Master Plan. Not having a through road would have the following negative impacts: It increases the traffic on neighboring roads such as Peabody and Higley Streets and no through streets are extremely difficult for the Police Department to enforce.
- ❑ Being mindful of the purpose for which the MacGregor Property was purchased at Town Meeting, perhaps including the MacGregor property for the redevelopment of the GELD could be an added value which offsets the inclusion of the through road.
- ❑ Per our agreement with the Department of Environmental Management, we agreed to place a water fountain, access to restrooms and additional parking for Rail Trail users in this area.
- ❑ The Board likes the mixed-use concept, the boardwalk link to the school and especially likes the "Gateway" Structure and concept for this area linking the town from the rail trail.

Mr. Chamberlin commended GELD for not only this Site Redevelopment Concept, but also for their overall willingness to work with the Town on this ongoing project for the better of all the citizens of Groton. Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Hartnett echoed this sentiment.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

Ms. Kitchen notified the Board of the following upcoming events as posted on their calendar in their packets: Boston Post Cane Presentation; Deaconess Nashoba pre-Public Hearing meeting, NRWA Rail Trail Maintenance Meeting.

Ms. Kitchen also informed the Board that the office was in receipt of a 40B letter of interest from Attorney Halls Office from Groton Residential Gardens, LLC. A meeting has been set for next week's agenda that is informational only and not a public hearing.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Approved: _____
Thomas D. Hartnett, Clerk

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Casey,
Administrative Secretary

Date Approved: December 9, 2002

Attached: Tax Classification Hearing Checklist
GELD Site Redevelopment Concept