

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JANUARY 13, 2003
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
“APPROVED”**

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

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

“Pay As You Throw” (PAYT) Public Hearing w/ Board Of Health

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) met with the Board of Health and held a public hearing. In attendance were BOH Chairman Dr. Susan Horowitz, Matt Waterman and Jodi Deuger. The Public Hearing Checklist is attached, as well as the Recycling Committee Presentation given by Recycling Committee members Mike Brady and Tessa David. Dr. Horowitz thanked the Recycling Committee stating that they are owed a debt of gratitude for all of the work they have done for PAYT, as well as Haz. Mat Days, Painting the Shed, etc.

Mike Brady stated that their timeline for the induction of the program has been just about one year consisting of several meetings, public hearings and being on “Around Town” Jane Bouvier’s show.

There was much discussion regarding the different options. Some residents thought it prudent to include these fees in their taxes in order for them to be able to write them off at the end of year as opposed to fees that cannot be claimed; however they did not want taxes raised. It was also pointed out that the amount of increase almost tripled for the “Seniors,” as opposed to only doubling for the “Primary.” In summary, both boards were going to review the price of the sticker fees; however there was consensus that the \$1 bag fee would be implemented.

Sewer Commission – Project Evaluation Report (PER)

The BOS met with the Sewer Commissioners – Karl Johnson, Jim Gmeiner and Harlan Fitch, regarding Project Evaluation Report (PER). The consultants, Bob Rafferty and Doug Reed, of Woodard & Curran were also in attendance. The PER was an article approved at Town Meeting in the amount of \$330,000. Woodward and Curran outlined the scope of services.

The PER will be comprised of two phases: Phase I - \$175,000; Spring, 2003, infiltration and inflow (I/I) investigation as part of a Capacity Management Plan that will include flow monitoring, flow isolation, TV inspection of problematic sewer lines, a manhole inspection program, smoke testing and installation of groundwater monitoring devices; the cost to be equally split between taxpayers and ratepayers.

Mr. Cunningham inquired if the state portion of this money for this program has been definitively dedicated? Mr. Rafferty replied that the draft fundable list is due out any day now and that he does not anticipate any problems with this funding as the money is leveraged federally, which has a powerful rate of return.

Mr. Johnson also added that if Groton wants to remain eligible for state funding, this scope of work has to be done. He also reminded the BOS and citizens that the state is allowing Groton to study the identified problem areas versus the whole town which would cost significantly more money and that is why the Sewer Commission thought it prudent to act expeditiously. The contract should be ready for signature by the end of this month for the BOS.

Country Club Audit

Howard Hersey, Chairman for the Groton Country Club Authority and Joan Hutchinson, board member were in attendance for this portion of the meeting.

The Authority wanted to apprise the BOS of their intent to secure Reagan and Company, LLP out of Fitchburg, MA to perform their audit. Mr. Hersey noted that it is a fixed price of \$4,000. This firm specializes in club operations, golf courses and the like and has more expertise with cash handling businesses. The Authority solicited four quotes. Some of Reagan and Company’s experience is Wallace Civic Center in Fitchburg, Petersham Country Club and Clark Memorial Arena in Winchendon.

The Board was in consensus agreement for the hiring of Reagan and Company to perform the audit for the Groton Country

Club in the amount of \$4,000. Mr. Cunningham suggested that the Country Club Authority make the necessary amendments to their legislation and present it to Town Meeting for approval in order to clear up many ambiguities that no longer exist in the Country Club's legislation and the BOS was in unanimous agreement.

Snow and Ice Deficit

Highway Surveyor Tom Delaney was in attendance.

Mr. Cunningham moved to authorize deficit spending for the removal of snow and ice for FY03. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Hartnett inquired of Tom Delaney if the Town could keep the front gate of the Cemetery plowed out. Mr. Delaney replied that Parks is responsible for the plowing inside but that he would do his best from the main road to not pile up the snow in those areas.

Mr. Cunningham mentioned that the potholes on Main Street were in rough shape. Tom stated that patching had been done today; however, any day that has precipitation, they are unable to patch, as it will not hold. Ms. Kitchen mentioned that she and Tom spoke today regarding the significant anticipated Chapter 90 cuts.

Personnel Board Appointment – Deb Nicholson

This appointment was tabled as Deb Nicholson was ill this evening and will come up for appointment at the next meeting.

Special Town Election – March 4, 2003 – 5-member Board of Selectmen

Mr. Cunningham moved to call a Special Town Election on Tuesday, March 4, 2003 for the following ballot question: Shall an act passed by the General Court in the year 2003 entitled "An Act providing for an increase in the membership of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of Groton to 5 (five members)" be accepted?"

Local Cultural Council Appointment

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Martha McLure to the Local Cultural Council for the term to expire June 30, 2004. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Extend Expiration Date of Fire Protection Study Committee

Mr. Cunningham moved to amend the Fire Protection Study Committee to change the length of term from six months to one year to expire June 30, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Comments to ZBA – Shaw's Special Permit

The Board had no additional comments regarding the Special Permit EXCEPT FOR the conditions that were forwarded to the Planning Board and Building Commissioner regarding Harmonious Development.

Approve Minutes

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the minutes of January 6, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Administrative Officer Report

Ms. Kitchen stated that the Governor has requested permission from the legislature (9C) to make a 10% cut in local aid this year. This would equate to approximately \$40,000 loss of aid on the town side and approximately \$400,000 for the schools, as well as \$150,000 in Special Education that is not going to be funded from the state for this year.

Ms. Kitchen stated that she met with Lt Governor Healey during the MMA Annual Weekend, and she stated that she was going to represent the municipalities. She is going to set up a meeting to meet with all of the communities to seek input. Ms. Kitchen stated that she was going to offer Groton as the host site if a regional meeting is requested for all area towns.

The Board would like to draft communication to the Governor regarding state mandates that leave the Town vulnerable to subsidize -- One being the ALS mandate which now is going to require 2 paramedics on the vehicle at all times; the other is regarding prevailing wages paid to subcontractors.

Mr. Cunningham stated that he sees some willingness in the legislature to let Governor Romney manage this budget crisis and he is inclined to think he'll get the approval to manage local aid (9C).

The BOS asks that Department Heads be notified of freezing this year's budget recognizing what we may be facing with

constraints in the this year. Ms. Kitchen added that we could also cut down on Town Counsel use, thus minimizing some of the costs associated, by all town departments. All Departments, Boards, Committees and Commissions must exhaust all resources prior to calling Town Counsel. The Board agreed.

Ms. Kitchen stated that she is going to meet with the Treasurer, Tax Collector and Assessors office to brainstorm ideas on proactive ideas for the budget, one of which is recruiting funds from other alternative sources, etc.

Mr. Hartnett requested a meeting, as soon as possible, to meet with the School's Superintendent, and School Committee both Groton and Dunstable to go increase communication and support. Mr. Cunningham stated that the School Committee would probably raise the user fees where they can to assist.

Ms. Kitchen stated that all Departments under the BOS will be meeting with them on January 27th prior to their budget submission.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Approved: _____
Thomas D. Hartnett

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Casey,
Administrative Secretary

Date Approved: January 27, 2003

Attachments (2) – Public Hearing Checklist (PAYT)
Recycling Committee Presentation dated January 13, 2002