

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 31, 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.

Employee Recognition And Commendations

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) recognized the following employees for various milestone years of service: Adrian and Kathy Morin, Michelle and Stephen Collette, Joseph Bassett, Troy Conley, Donald May, April Melvin, Irm Pierce, Don Delorey, George Brackett, Karen Bolduc, Bruce Dubey, Tom Delaney, Fred O'Donnell, Karen Tuomi, Roy Johnson, Owen Shuman, James Babcock, Eileen Beaton, Paul Coss, Ed Doucette, Brian Downes, James Emslie, Brian Alcott, Clarence Jefferson, James Judge, Jeff Lex, Bob Mignard, Henri Montanari, John Flanigan, Gil Dupre, John Walsh, Anne Lally, Helen Gingras, Frank Mastrangelo, Elizabeth Reeves, Catherine Lincoln, Janet Shea.

The BOS also read proclamations for the following retiring employees: Jane Chalmers, Charlotte Boston, Beth Montgomery and Doris Wheeler.

The BOS read a letter of commendation for Volunteer Larry Swezey for his efforts assisting the Fire Department, Police Department, EMS, etc.

Register of Voter Appointment

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Dale A. Martin as Registrar of Voter for the three-year term to expire March 31, 2006. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote. This appointment was recommended by Ellen Hargraves on behalf of the Republican Town Committee.

Special Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Cunningham moved to open the Special Town Meeting Warrant and close it Friday, April 4th at 4:00 P.M. for the submission of articles. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Selectmen Representative to Station Avenue Committee

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Thomas D. Hartnett to the Station Avenue Directions Advisory Committee term to expire June 30, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Chamberlin. Unanimous vote.

Emergency Management Appointment

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Lawrence E. Thompson, Kathleen Mersereau, R.N. and Steven F. Mickle to the Emergency Management Agency for the term to expire June 30, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Temporary Position in Tax Collector/Treasurer's Office

The BOS was in unanimous consensus to support Christine Collins' request to offer 15 - 20 hours per week to current town employees, approximately for one month, to cover the office during the interim situation with the Tax Collector/Treasurer position.

Minutes

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the regular session minutes of February 24, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Chamberlin had a change and it was so noted. *Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the regular session minutes of March 3, 2003 as amended. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.*

Cable Access Coordinator

Cable Advisory Committee members in attendance were Russell Harris, John Ellenberger and Dorothy Davis to present Mr. Bob Colman to the Selectmen for hire as Cable Access Programming Director. The CAC received over 100 applications for this position and Mr. Colman stood out from the rest. He is well qualified and has extensive experience in cable. *Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the hire of Bob Colman as the Cable TV Access Programming Director at Grade 8, Step 1 with an effective start date of May 5, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.*

Minutes

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve and not release the executive session minutes of February 24, 2003, Session 1. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve and not release the executive session minutes of February 24, 2003, Session 2. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve and not release the executive session minutes of March 3, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve and not release the executive session minutes of March 18, 2003, Session 2. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

One-Day Liquor License

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve a one-day all alcoholic license for Stephen Boczenowski for Habitat for Humanity at Lawrence Academy on April 5th from 6:00 P.M. - 9:30 P.M. contingent upon receipt of a Certificate of Insurance. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Administrative Officer Report

Ms. Kitchen inquired who would be presenting the Proclamation to the Groton Grange on Tuesday, April 8th. Mr. Cunningham stated that he would.

Ms. Kitchen announced that Charter Communications informed us today that on Tuesday, April 1st between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. there would be a disruption of the Internet Service while work is being done at the headends.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Cunningham moved to reopen the Annual Town Meeting Warrant for the submission of: ARTICLE: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or borrow a sum of money to purchase Police, Fire and EMS Radio Replacements or take any action thereon.

Sponsored By:Board of Selectmen; And for the removal of

ARTICLE : To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or borrow a sum of money to purchase an intermediate truck for the Highway Department or take any action thereon.

Sponsored By:HIGHWAY SURVEYOR; And close it immediately.

Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Selectmen Discussion

Mr. Cunningham was upset by the editorial in the Groton Herald regarding the Municipal Lien article on the warrant and wanted to clarify it for the people. He felt the article was "morphed" by a resident letter. He felt the editor did not research this issue more carefully and should have contacted any member of the BOS to obtain the history and correct context of this issue. He stated that there were omissions and errors. Mr. Cunningham wanted it made clear that the Town is not looking to chase anyone that cannot afford ambulance service and that there were protocols in place for the collection of outstanding ambulance bills. The article also did not state Mr. Hartnett's position. Mr. Hartnett was opposed to this article. Mr. Cunningham felt this article was a real "misrepresentation of the facts."

Public Hearing Taxi Regulations

The Board held a taxi hearing to considering adopting taxi regulations and the hearing checklist is enclosed herein.

Groton Country Club Budget

The BOS met with the Country Club. In attendance were Howard Hersey, Joan Hutchinson, Janet Healey, Dan Forbes, Jay Rider and Manager Brad Durrin. The Country Club presented their budget, a copy of which is enclosed herein.

BIKE RACK @ TOWN HALL - Barbara Scofidio of NOA

Ms. Scofidio and Ms. Parker-Roach of NOA Gallery met with the BOS. NOA received a grant from the Local Cultural Council to create a sculptural bike rack for Town Hall. The BOS had a portfolio from the sculptor Gage Prentiss to design the bike rack.

Ms. Lorayne Black of Garden Gate Landscape designed the Wharton Park pro bono and was in attendance also. She stated that she has reservations regarding the proposed placement of the bike rack near or in the Wharton Park. She added that the Wharton Committee was not in favor of placing a bike rack near the sitting space. The Committee was of the opinion that this design and placement would distract from the fountain and park.

The BOS recommended that these two groups meet, along with the Historic District Commission, to come to some consensus to be presented.

STM ARTICLES - Josh Degen

The BOS met with Josh Degen regarding his proposal for an article for the Special Town Meeting to hire a consultant to perform a

Long-Term Growth Impact Study on town infrastructure. Mr. Degen, the Planning Board Chairman, came in as an individual, a resident and business owner, not on behalf of the Planning Board. A copy of the details Mr. Degen presented is enclosed herein.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that Mr. Degen was providing a “real service bringing this to the forefront” and added that another article, which may assist in support of this effort, is the Capital Planning Article changing Capital Planning’s scope.

Mr. Cunningham was not in favor of this article at this time due to the financial constraints the Town is experiencing. He felt that it would be a worthy exercise to do; however he felt that an impact study could be done internally.

Mr. Hartnett was in full support of this article and felt it was “long overdue.” He suggested however that rather than raise and appropriate the money to take it out of stabilization or free cash.

Mr. Cunningham moved to put a place an article on the special town meeting warrant for a long-term growth impact study. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE - Town Meeting Article

Representatives from the School Committee (SC) -- Judy Converse, Karen Riggert, Jane Allen and Peter O’Sullivan, were in attendance for this portion of the meeting. The SC

Requested that the BOS sponsor the following article, as it is highly unlikely that the students of Dunstable would be attending this proposed elementary school and thus the SC cannot sponsor this article:

ARTICLE 12: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or borrow a sum of money for costs associated with the acquisition of land, such land being described generally as follows:

Property in the Town of Groton off Gilson Road, Groton Assessors’ Map 135, Lot 38 and Map 253, Lot 2, adjacent to the Littleton town line.

for the purpose of use as an elementary school site, or take any action thereon.

Sponsored By:

Summary: \$ 75,000 This article is for costs associated with acquisition of property, approximately 30 acres known as the Gilson land, adjacent to the Littleton line, to ascertain its viability as a site for an elementary school. Land appraisal, engineering studies and exploration of legal costs need to be undertaken in order to make a recommendation on the purchase or taking of the property.

Mr. O’Sullivan stated that the District shares operating expenses for all of the schools. The \$75,000 is made up of \$50,000 for the legal fees for a “friendly” eminent domain, \$10,000 is the cost of engineering and \$15,000 is the cost of surveying.

Mr. Cunningham questioned why the SC was not using the land held available at the school site. Mr. O’Sullivan replied that the District is still in need of two additional buildings as well and does not want to lose this opportunity for this site. Ms. Riggert stated that the SC has searched for over two years now for land.

Mr. Hartnett questioned the change from the philosophy of keeping all schools in close proximity to having “satellite schools.”

Mr. Chamberlin questioned the precedent that this would set regarding regional schools.

The BOS was in unanimous consensus of this change in article.

The SC also updated the BOS on the proposed override. With the uncertainty of any of the Chapter 70 and monies for FY04, as well as mitigation, the District is proposing an override. Should the state aid come through, the override monies would not be encumbered and the money would go back to the Town.

Mr. Cunningham moved to enter into Executive Session at 10:20 p.m. in accordance with MGL Chapter 39, Section 23B for the purpose of considering discipline or dismissal or to hear complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual and will not reconvene in open session. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Roll call vote: Chamberlin - yes; Cunningham - yes; Hartnett - yes.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hartnett. Unanimous vote.

Approved: _____
Thomas D. Hartnett, Clerk

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Casey
Administrative Secretary

Date Approved: May 12, 2003

Enclosures - Taxi Regulations Checklist
Groton Country Club Budget
Statistics for Long-term Growth Impact Study