

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DECEMBER 22, 2003
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
“APPROVED”**

Present: Thomas D. Hartnett, Chair; George F. Dillon, Jr., Vice Chair; John L. Saball, Clerk; Peter S. Cunningham, Member; Virginia C. Wood, Member; Administrative Officer Jean E. Kitchen; and Kathleen Newell, Office Assistant.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Public Hearing – Ambulance Rate Increase

Mr. John Walsh, EMS Director and Ms. Susan Ragusa were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Cunningham moved to open the meeting at 7:01 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Saball. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Cunningham read the legal notice published in the Groton Herald on December 12, 2003.

Mr. Hartnett queried the audience for support of for the proposal. Ms. Kitchen stated there had been some questions from the Board regarding Medicare reimbursable charges. Ms. Ragusa stated the proposed rates are higher than Medicare allows, however the higher rates are needed so the maximum from Medicare can be collected. Mr. Saball asked what happens if an insurance company doesn't cover the full amount. Ms. Ragusa stated that the patient is responsible for the difference. Ms. Ragusa stated that the goal is to collect the maximum amounts allowed from Medicare and private insurers.

Mr. Cunningham moved to close the hearing at 7:10 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Wood. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the fee increases as follows:

	<i>Current Rate</i>	<i>Proposed Rate</i>
<i>BLS Base Rate</i>	\$242.37	\$395.00
<i>ALS Base Rate</i>	\$318.92	\$475.00
<i>IV</i>	\$ 95.66	\$110.00

Seconded by Ms. Wood. Unanimous vote.

Council on Aging Appointment

Ms. Martha Campbell and Mr. Frank Belitsky were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Frank Belitsky to the Council on Aging to fill the un-expired vacant three-year term, to expire June 30, 2005. Seconded by Mr. Saball. Unanimous vote.

Bob Collins representing Jim Patierno

Attorney Bob Collins, Mr. Bob Pine, and Mr. Jim Patierno were present for this portion of the meeting. Attorney Collins stated he wanted to acquaint the Board with the proposed project, which will be submitted on the V.H. Shea property on Cow Pond Brook Road. Attorney Collins stated the project under 218-27B zoning which Mr. Patierno is proposing consists of 44 units, 30 of which will be rental units, 22 age restricted units (as per by-law). Mr. Patierno is working with the Housing Partnership to make all rental units count towards the Town's affordable housing inventory. Attorney Collins stated that this project would be revenue positive for the Town. Mr. Pine reviewed a plan of the proposed project, stating that the project is beyond the built up section of town therefore the plan incorporates a common gathering area, around which all the units will face. Ms. Wood expressed concern over the proximity of the highway garage and shooting range and the project and potential danger for children. Mr. Patierno stated that the marketing would be towards the over 55-age group. Mr. Cunningham asked what covenants would be placed on the property ensuring it's remaining affordable. Attorney Collins stated the Housing Authority has draft language, which is part of the project requirements. Ms. Kitchen stated that this property was part of a town meeting article and the agreement needs to be signed. The Board reviewed its packets. Mr. Cunningham asked if Town counsel had received a draft of the agreement and if so has it been reviewed. Ms. Kitchen stated that Town Counsel had received a draft of the agreement, but she had not received anything from them.

Mr. Cunningham moved to schedule this appointment later in the agenda to give the Board of Selectmen time to review the material. Seconded by Ms. Wood. Unanimous vote.

The appointment resumed at 8:34 p.m. Mr. Tom Delaney, Highway Surveyor was present for this portion of the meeting. Mr. Delaney stated that when the first water had been installed, there had been a discussion between Mr.

Patierno and a former selectman that had agreed nothing would be done. At the time Cow Pond Brook Road was not a town road. Mr. Delaney stated that any further extension of waterlines would not be grandfathered. Mr. Patierno stated that if the road-opening permit required finishing the road, then he would be obligated to do it. Mr. Cunningham questioned Mr. Delaney regarding the impact of the project and its proximity to the Highway Garage. Mr. Delaney stated that there would need to be fencing around the entire facility and possibly surveillance equipment. Mr. Delaney stated that there will be a curiosity factor and people moving into the area need to be aware that they are moving into an industrial area, which will, especially during the winter months, be operating at all hours.

Ms. Wood moved to approve the document faxed October 6, 2003 contingent upon Town Counsel approval and Michelle Collette's concerns added in and,

1. *It is also understood that Mr. Patierno is planning to build an age-restricted development comprised of 44 units under Sec. 218-27B Zoning. This development will also have 30 of the 44 units deed restricted for a minimum of 30 years to meet state requirements for affordability. It is understood that those units will count towards the Town's affordable Housing stock.*
2. *It is understood that the applicant has offered to extend water and provide three Town hookups at the applicant's expense. Potentially those hookups will be the Dog Pound, Highway Garage, and Transfer Station. The applicant has also offered to provide a stub for an additional fourth hookup for the Town Fields.*
3. *Due to the safety concerns related to the location of the proposed development, the applicant has offered to provide fencing and directed lighting that will meet the security needs of the existing highway garage and shooting range. The Town also anticipates constructing a cell tower near this location, which will have its own fencing – but again, the Board of Selectmen is concerned about the security of the cell tower.*
4. *It is understood that any continuation of the waterline on Cow Pond Brook Road, as part of the road-opening permit, will necessitate the full repairs of the road, shoulder to shoulder.*
5. *It is understood that some of the items previously noted may change as the project undergoes approval and permitting through various town boards. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Unanimous vote.*

EMS/Fire Consolidation

Chief Joe Bosselait, Mr. John Walsh, Ms. Susan Ragusa, Mr. Frank Mastrangelo and Mr. Chris Kelley were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Saball stated the previously scheduled meeting had been postponed to allow Chief Bosselait and EMS director to review the potential consolidation. Chief Bosselait thanked the Board for the opportunity to review the potential of a departmental merger. Chief Bosselait stated the and Mr. Walsh had met numerous times with officers, joint EMS/Fire meetings; their summary found no compelling reason it cannot be accomplished. Chief Bosselait submitted a Fire/EMS Merger Meeting summation (enclosed herein), which he reviewed for the Board. Mr. Walsh stated he was in full agreement with Chief Bosselait. Mr. Dillon referenced the goal of providing daytime coverage with the possibility of going full-time; Mr. Dillon stated this was not necessary because of the merger. Chief Bosselait stated that it is a result of the workload he is currently carrying i.e. construction of Lost Lake Fire Station, Inspections and the considerable work putting together the merger. Ms. Wood asked what the time frame would be. Chief Bosselait stated that he what first wanted to see if the Board of Selectmen would support the proposal; the they would have to form subcommittees which would report back with time frames. Chief Bosselait stated with the recommendation of Steve Webber whom he had been working with, he was providing data to the Board and a number for the Finance Committee to consider for the town meeting in the spring. Chief Bosselait stated that there was a possibility of a grant, if signed by the President, which will phase in on-call firefighters; and there needs to be an article poised to go if the grant is approved. Mr. Dillon requested the reports be on a monthly basis as opposed to quarterly.

Mr. Saball stated it is important to note that this merger doesn't come from a deficient service to the Town now, "we have good service", but the Town needs to be proactive with the growth of the Town. Chief Bosselait stated that there has never been an instance when a call has not been answered because of lack of volunteers, however he wants to be able to guarantee service. Chief Bosselait continued to be concerned about a full complement of staffing on the fire trucks. Chief Bosselait stated he had merely presented a tip of the iceberg of information, which he had garnered from his many meetings with his officers, fire fighters and joint meetings with EMS.

Main Street Lighting

Ms. Doris Chojnowski, Chief of Police Robert Mulhern and Mr. Jim Patierno were present for this portion of the

meeting.

Ms. Chojnowski referenced a memo presented by Steve Moulton who had reviewed the lighting on MainStreet (enclosed herein). Ms. Chojnowski asked the Board if they had taken the list of lights and driven the route. Ms. Kitchen stated the board would do that. Mr. Hartnett asked if it would be possible to change the lighting in two or three locations so they could view the difference. Mr. Patierno stated the process was more extensive than changing a light, bulb, it could entail changing the ballast and there may not be any in stock. The Board agreed to review the lighting when Ms. Chojnowski notified them that the lights were changed. Mr. Saball asked if the process could be done in stages to prevent a parking lot effect. Chief Mulhern stated he had reviewed the areas with Mr. Moulton and agreed with Mr. Saball in phasing the lighting in.

Appointment Affordable Housing Task Force

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Ms. Wood, (BOS), Carolyn Perkins (Planning Board Rep.), Martha Campbell (Council on Aging Rep.), Alicia S. Hersey (Housing Authority Rep.), Craig S. Auman (Conservation Commission Rep.), Peter S. Cunningham (Housing Partnership Rep.) to the Affordable Task Force term to expire May 31, 2004. Seconded by Ms. Wood. Unanimous vote. Members at large will be determined at a later date.

Community Preservation Research Committee

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Bruce H. Easom (Conservation Commission Rep.), Al Collins (Historical Commission Rep.), Bruce Clements (Planning Board Rep.), Don Black (Park Commission Rep.), and Daniel Emerson (Housing Authority Rep.), to the Community Preservation Research Committee term to expire June 30, 2004. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote. Members at large will be determined at a later date.

Appointment Website Committee

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Kevin McElearney to the Website Committee and to the Computer Committee for a one-year term to expire June 30, 2004. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Road Acceptance – Policy or Regulation

The Board reviewed the Policy/Regulation. Ms. Wood asked if the Planning Board had reviewed this; and who would administer the money. Ms. Kitchen stated the Planning Board had not reviewed it. Mr. Hartnett stated the Treasurer would release the money. Ms. Kitchen stated it would be a non-interest bearing account and she had spoken with the Treasurer and Accountant. Ms. Wood requested tabling the item to have the Planning Board review it. Ms. Kitchen stated she would put it back on the agenda and run it by the Planning Board.

Fire Protection/Hydrant Fee Task Force Discussion

Ms. Kitchen stated the Planning Board does not want representation on the task force. Mr. Cunningham stated that there could be three (3) at large members. Ms. Wood requested there be a member of the West Groton Water Department and the Groton Water Department. Ms. Kitchen stated she will bring this back on the agenda.

Review Regular Session Minutes of December 1, 2003

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Regular Session Minutes of December 1, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Review Executive Session Minutes of December 8, 2003

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve and not release the Executive Session Minutes of December 8, 2003. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Administrative Officer Update

Ms. Kitchen stated the MacGregor House had come down today and should be finished tomorrow. Ms. Kitchen further stated there would be an Eagle Scout Ceremony on Saturday, December 27, 2003 and asked which member would be attending. Mr. Saball stated he would attend the ceremony.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn at 9:32 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Approved: _____
John L. Saball, Clerk

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Newell, Office Assistant

Date Approved: January 5, 2003

Enclosures: (2) Fire/EMS Merger Meeting, Report from GELD