

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
APRIL 12, 2004
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 and Administrative Officer Jean E. Kitchen and Kathleen Newell, Office Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 6:55 p.m.

Council on Aging RE: Volunteer Savings

Ms. Martha Campbell and Ms. Norma Garvin were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Dillon displayed a check in the amount of \$25,000 presented by the Council on Aging, which represented savings in wages for services performed by Senior Volunteers.

The Board thanked the Council on Aging for all its service and dedication to the Town.

Adopt-A-Road Thank you

Boy Scout Troop #3 - Al Collins - cleans roadway along Route 40 to the Westford town line.

First Parish Church - cleans roadway along Route 119 to Route 40. (Rick Muehlke accepted the certificate.)

Groton/Pepperell Rotary Club - cleans roadway along 119 from Old Ayer Road to the Littleton town line. (Elizabeth Holwech accepted the certificate.)

Groton Business Association - cleans roadway along Long Hill Road (Route 225) from the Lawrence Woods to the center of West Groton. (Elizabeth Holwech accepted the certificate.)

Groton Highway Department and Groton Transfer Station for assisting in the collection and disposal of trash.

Groton Conservation Trust - cleans roadway along Route 225 between Farmers Row and the Nashua River. (June Johnson and Rick Muehlke accepted the certificate.)

Groton Woman's Club - cleans roadway along Broadmeadow Road from Main Street to Pleasant Street. (Pat Bennett, Jan Dillon, Norma Garvin and Ms. Prendergast accepted the certificate.)

Financial Management Policies Adoption; Debt Management Policy Adoption; Investment Policy Adoption

Ms. Christine Collins was present for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Kitchen stated the Board had adopted the concept a few months ago and Ms. Jenkins, Ms. Collins and she had been working on the policies. Ms. Collins stated there were simple things that they have been doing, but it does help to have conformity from one department to the next and one year to the next.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adopt the Overall Financial Management Policies. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adopt the Debt Management Policy. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adopt the Investment Policy. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Fire/EMS Update

Chief Joe Bosselait, Mr. John Walsh, Ms. Susan Ragusa and Mr. Steve Webber were present for this portion of the meeting.

Chief Bosselait reviewed a handout with the Board. Chief Bosselait stated they had recently added the Town of Oxford to the list of comparable communities. Mr. Hartnett stated Chief Bosselait and Mr. Walsh had done a lot of work in the past six (6) months. Mr. Webber who had attended many joint meetings stated the Fire Chief and Mr. Walsh had done a lot of work on this project in addition to their regular work and their work on the Radio Committee. Mr. Webber stated the Chief should get more money. Mr. Cunningham asked if there would be a need to reprogram the billing software. Ms. Ragusa stated there may need to change the software for the identification number with Coastal. Chief Bosselait stated the advice they have gotten from other towns, which have merged is to take it slow and

give the sub-committees time to develop Standard Operating Procedures. Ms. Kitchen asked if the Board and Fire Chief would like to set a date for the next phase. Mr. Hartnett asked to wait until after Town Meeting. Chief Bosselait asked to wait until after Town Meeting and the opening of the Lost Lake Fire Station. Ms. Kitchen suggested August. Mr. Cunningham stated he would like to see the job descriptions. Mr. Dillon stated he would like to meet with Chief Bosselait to review the organizational plan.

Williams Barn Update

Mr. Vic Burton was present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Burton stated the Williams Barn was a public place and available for anyone to use. Mr. Burton reviewed the events held at the barn and stated there is a proposed Farmers Market to be held during the summer months from July 4th to September. Mr. Burton stated there would be an Open House on Columbus Day. Mr. Burton stated the Committee had drafted a formal agreement for anyone having a function there to have liability policy and clean up responsibility.

Ms. Wood asked Ms. Kitchen about the use of the barn for Weddings etc., as alcohol cannot be consumed on Town properties. Ms. Kitchen stated the Board needed to make a decision regarding a liquor policy. Ms. Kitchen stated she had just started looking at it as a total Town policy.

Chapter 61A Right of First Refusal - 347 West Main Street

Ms. Michelle Collette was present for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Wood moved that the Town not exercise its right under Chapter 61A to purchase property known as 347 West Main Street, shown on Groton Assessors Map 211, Parcel 55, owned by Charles Patenaude and Teresa Haire. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Unanimous vote.

Habitat for Humanity Update/Groundbreaking

Mr. Stephen Boczenowski was present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Boczenowski stated Saturday would be ceremonial ground breaking and hoped to have a work crew starting construction by mid to late May. Mr. Hartnett stated he had been asked to go to the ground breaking and invited the Board to attend.

Highway Department RE: Vacancy

Mr. Cunningham moved to authorize Tom Delaney, Highway Surveyor to fill the vacant position of truck driver/laborer. Seconded by Ms. Wood. Unanimous vote.

Community Preservation Act Discussion

Mr. Dan Emerson (Groton Housing Authority), Mr. Bruce Easom (Conservation Commission), Mr. Bruce Clements (Planning Board), Ms. Rena Swezey (Assistant Assessor), Mr. Eddie Kopec (Board of Assessors), Ms. Christine Collins (Treasurer/Collector) and Mr. Steve Webber were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Emerson gave a handout to the Board (enclosed herein). Mr. Clements stated it is the hope of the Committee that people will understand the CPA and it can actually save the Town money in the long run. Mr. Clements stated if the Town passes the CPA at the Town Meeting it would give the Committee more time to get more information and passing it at Town Meeting does not implement the CPA. Mr. Easom stated if the Town adopted the CPA surcharge it would receive \$450,000. Mr. Clements explained the Town would exempt the first \$100,000 of the property value. Mr. Clements stated there would probably have an exemption and there was a concern about potential burden. Ms. Kitchen asked if the CPRC would need to go back to the Town Meeting to create the Committee. Mr. Clements stated would and if the Town were to vote in 3% it could be amended if needed. Mr. Hartnett asked Ms. Swezey what the average home price was and what the cost would be. Ms. Swezey stated the average house s \$320,000. Ms. Swezey reviewed an example of a \$300,000 house at a tax rate of \$15.44 would be a tax bill of \$4,632, minus the \$100,000 would be \$92 on the remaining \$200,000. Ms. Swezey stated there would be roughly and additional \$100/year. Mr. Clements stated on Saturday from 1:00-2:30 p.m. there will be a taped presentation. Mr. Hartnett asked if the Committee had considered a 2% surcharge opposed to the 3%. Ms. Wood stated if the rate drops below the 3% the Town is not eligible for the second round of matching funds. Ms. Collins stated she was very uncomfortable with the handout stating the Town was spending 2,000,000/year. Ms. Collins stated most of the projects are bonded and part of the annual expenses and are already asking taxpayers to fund them. Mr. Kopec stated he was 100% against the CPA

and would not support it on the Town Meeting floor. Mr. Kopec stated the taxes have gone up and if the override passes the people cannot keep up. Ms. Swezey stated she had spoken with a woman in Westford and a problem they had encountered was people not wanting to disclose their assets for the exemption. Mr. Webber stated he was in favor of the CPA and thought it would in the long run reduce the taxes. Mr. Emerson agreed and stated that illustrated there is still confusion.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Recycling Committee Appointment

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Michelle Lerner to the Recycling Committee to fill the un-expired one-year term to expire June 30, 2004. Seconded by Ms. Wood. Unanimous vote.

Certificate of Registration Renewals - Fuel Storage

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the renewal of a Certificate of Registration for Fuel Storage for the following establishments/individuals:

A. L. Prime

Groton-Dunstable Regional School District

Groton School

Groton Highway Department

Hollingsworth & Vose Company

May & Hally, Inc.

New England Business Service

Peterborough Oil Co., Inc./(d.b.a.) Mr. Mike's

Certificates of Registration to expire on April 30, 2005. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Determine Presentation of Articles

Ms. Kitchen asked the Board to let her know which articles they would be presenting. Ms. Wood stated she would do the Conservation Article. Mr. Cunningham stated he would do Article 24.

Draft Policy RE: Health Insurance for Elected Officials

The Board reviewed the draft policy. Ms. Kitchen stated a letter should be sent to the Town accountant, that only one official is affording himself of the benefit. Mr. Cunningham read the policy and stated he had a question on 2c. Ms. Kitchen suggested she work on the policy and bring it back to the Board. Mr. Cunningham requested a definition of full time.

Mill Street

Mr. Josh Degen and Mr. Bruce Clements were present for this portion of the meeting. Mr. Hartnett stated Mr. Degen had approached him requesting to address the issue of the Mill Street realignment. Mr. Degen stated he was a member of the Planning Board. Mr. Degen reviewed the history of the property and its proposed uses. Mr. Degen stated the current proposed project was now a Chapter-40B Affordable Housing Project with a Commercial component. Mr. Degen was concerned regarding the frontage created by the discontinuance of the road and emphasized that everything be in writing. Ms. Kitchen stated the discontinuance or relocation of a road is a three-pronged process and until it is recorded it is not a process. Ms. Kitchen stated there was a meeting at which Mr. Degen had not been present; Attorney Mark Bobrowski had stated a Memo of Understanding would have "no teeth". Mr. Degen stated he did not want to see Mr. Walker's Chapter 40B jeopardized, but would like to have everything Mr. Walker has specified he would do put into a memo contingent upon his success with the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Cunningham stated the relocation had been in the works since the Hannaford deal and he believes there are safeguards in place in the Road Acceptance Policy, but if the Chapter 40B were to be pulled and become a B-1 project, the Planning Board would have the ability to review the site plan control. Mr. Degen stated that was true. Ms. Wood expressed concern that this has been an excruciatingly long process and would not want to get hung up on something, which would keep the owner from signing. Mr. Degen stated it would be easier to sell a bill of goods to the Town with a list. Ms. Wood stated she did not want to sell the Town a bill of goods, which will not hold water. Mr. Degen stated, "We need to get this done on someone else's dime; and what we are getting is what we expect and if issues come up at the Town Meeting this is what we are going to get but this is what Robert Walker says we are going to get." Mr. Hartnett stated he thought the list will put everyone on the same page and show Mr. Walker what the Town expects.

Ms. Wood moved to compile a list of all the things Mr. Walker has agreed to with regards to the laying out the Mill Street Development and the Chapter 40 B development, all things negotiated and signed. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Unanimous vote.

Dr. Susan Horowitz, Board of Health, addressed the Board stating she had watched the BOS meeting on Cable regarding the article in the paper on Westford composting. Dr. Horowitz stated the article on the Town Meeting Warrant was to allow the Board of Health to make the decision and she was asking the Board of Selectmen to do so. Mr. Dillon stated he had brought the article to the attention of the Board to make sure the Board of Health was aware of the situation and he had also spoken with Bruce Dubey and Highway Surveyor Tom Delaney. Mr. Cunningham stated he did not feel the Board was trying to intercede into the Board of Health territory. Dr. Horowitz stated if it works it would make money.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Ms. Kitchen stated there was an Eagle Scout Ceremony in May and asked which Selectmen would attend.

SELECTMEN LIAISON UPDATES

Mr. Hartnett stated and Information and Educational Seminar was going to be put on by the Town Clerks.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn at 9:37 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Dillon. Unanimous vote.

Approved: _____
John L. Saball, Clerk

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Newell, Office Assistant

Enclosures (2): Draft Community Preservation Plan for Groton, MA; The Community Preservation Act

Date Approved: May 3, 2004