

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SEPTEMBER 19, 2005
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
“APPROVED”**

Present: George F. Dillon, Jr., Chair; John L. Saball, Vice Chair; Robert W. Nordblom, Clerk; Peter S. Cunningham, Member; Mihran Keoseian, Member; Administrative Office Jean E. Kitchen; and Kathleen Newell, Office Assistant

The meeting opened at 7:01 P.M.

Frank Belitsky and Trust Fund Commissioners RE: Maria Belitsky Scholarship and Trust Fund

Mr. Frank Belitsky; Trust Fund Commissioners Mr. Thomas Hartnett and Ms. Patricia Hartvigson and Karen Tuomi, Trust Fund Administrator were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Belitsky reviewed his wife Maria's accomplishments in horticulture and stated the scholarship would be a \$500 stipend for a Nashoba Valley Regional High School graduate pursuing a horticultural/agricultural degree.

Mr. Hartnett and Ms. Hartvigsen thanked Mr. Belitsky for his generosity.

Mr. Saball moved to execute the Declaration of Trust establishing the Maria Belitsky Trust and Scholarship Fund. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

Valerie Jenkins, Town Accountant and Christine Collins, Treasurer/Collector RE: Year End Report

Ms. Jenkins reviewed the Accountant's Financial Report, Quarter 4 (enclosed herein). Ms. Jenkins stated that accounting is scorekeeping and she is also the internal auditor who tells how the game was played. Ms. Jenkins noted that in future years there will not be any windfalls.

Mr. Keoseian asked if there had been a budget freeze or slowdown last year. Ms. Jenkins stated that there had not been, and it was a good idea, but it would be hard to pinpoint a time of year that would be good to implement. Ms. Jenkins stated that the slowing down of a budget should start with department heads.

Ms. Collins reviewed the Tax Collector- Treasurer FY2005 Year End Financial Review (enclosed herein).

School Committee Appointment

School Committee members Chuck McKinney, Kim Cowie, Cindy Barrett, Karen Lofgren and Superintendent Dr. Alan Genovese were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Dillon stated that there were two candidates for the appointment to the School Committee and each would have two minutes to make comments and the Board and School Committee members would have an opportunity to ask the candidates questions.

The school committee convened its meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Mr. Cunningham moved to nominate Leslie Lathrop as candidate to the School Committee. Seconded by Mr. Saball. Unanimous vote.

Mr. McKinney moved to nominate Paul Fitzgerald as candidate to the School Committee. Seconded by Ms. Barrett. Unanimous vote.

Ms. Lathrop reviewed her credentials and stated that she has been actively working for better schools.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he had run for the School Committee position and would like to be appointed. Mr. Fitzgerald stated he would like to accomplish academic excellence with fiscal discipline.

Mr. McKinney noted that the School Committee requires more time than just the meetings with numerous subcommittees and task forces and asked the candidates if they had considered the time commitment. Ms. Lathrop stated that she was acutely

aware of the time commitment. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he worked his own hours and had flexibility.

Ms. Kitchen distributed ballots and tallied the votes: Fitzgerald – 8; Lathrop – 1. The members of the Board and School Committee gave a verbal vote.

Mr. Saball moved to appoint Paul Fitzgerald as School Committee member, term to expire upon the next Annual Town Election in 2006. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

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Public Hearing RE: Blossom Lane, One-Way

[X] 1. Hearing Opened at 8:35 P.M.

Mr. Saball moved to open the public hearing at 8:35 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

[X] 2. Read Legal Notice
Published September 9, 2005, Groton Herald

[X] 3. Query audience for support either written or in person.

[X] 4. Query audience for objection either written or in person.

[X] 5. Hearing Closed at 9:17 p.m.

Mr. Dillon stated the request had come in the form of a citizen's petition and subsequent traffic studies conducted by Sgt. Cullen.

Chief Mulhern stated he had become involved several months ago as residents had expressed concern regarding line of site issues with the cemetery gate at Chicopee Row/Hollis Street/Blossom Lane. Chief Mulhern explained that when the petition was received he requested that Sgt. Cullen perform an investigation. Sgt. Cullen stated the petition had requested that Blossom Lane be made one-way from Martins Pond Road to Hollis Street, but after researching crash reports of Blossom Lane, directed patrols, traffic counters, and the speed trailer, a review showed the primary safety issue of blocked view from Hollis/Chicopee. Therefore a recommendation was made to make the road one-way from Hollis to Martins Pond Road.

Numerous residents expressed concern regarding speeding, plowing, traffic numbers, and emergency vehicle access.

Mr. Saball stated he had mixed feelings because once you restrict traffic you are diverting it somewhere else, but the advantage of making the road one-way was to make the intersection safer.

Mr. Keoseian made an amendment from reviewing in 90 days to 120 days. Mr. Dillon agreed stating the situation needs to be monitored.

Ms. Penny Hommyer (18 Blossom Lane) asked how the public would be notified. Chief Mulhern stated via the website, press, signage and an aggressive police presence in the area.

Mr. Saball moved to close the public hearing at 9:17 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Saball moved to approve making Blossom Lane a one-way street with traffic flowing east from Hollis Street to Martins Pond Road contingent upon review of a 120 day period; consideration of speed control; and traffic counts. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

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Valerie Spencer, Groton Country Club RE: Audits

Ms. Spencer stated that a yearly audit needs to be conducted and the firm they had chosen was Goulet, Salvido & Associates. Mr. Nordblom stated the audit was a good step and a protection for the taxpayers. There was a consensus of the Board to go forward with the audit.

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OTHER BUSINESS

Mileage Rate

Mr. Keoseian moved to increase the Town Reimbursement Rate for Mileage to .405 cents per mile. Seconded by Mr.

Cunningham. Unanimous vote.

Certify Union

Mr. Saball moved the voluntary recognition of the SEIU, Local 888 as bargaining representative for the Town of Groton Employees, Unit A and Unit B. Seconded by Mr. Keoseian. Unanimous vote.

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Appointment – Election Worker – Michael Bouchard

Mr. Saball moved to appoint Michael Bouchard as an Election Worker for the one year term to expire June 30, 2006. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

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Minutes

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the Regular Session Minutes of August 22, 2005, as amended. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Saball moved to approve the Regular Session Minutes of August 29, 2005. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. 4 in favor, 1 abstention (Saball).

Mr. Saball moved to approve the Regular Session Minutes of September 6, 2005. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

SELECTMEN LIAISON UPDATE

Mr. Cunningham stated that he had attended along with Mr. Saball, a Park’s Commission meeting which had been productive. Mr. Cunningham stated he had represented the Board at a session of NIMS on the current standard of emergency response and found it to be very informative and timely. Ms. Kitchen stated the people had been taking the NIMS test on line. Mr. Dillon asked if someone could give an update at a future meeting.

Mr. Saball moved to enter into Executive Session at 9:50 p.m. in accordance with MGL Chapter 39, Section 23B, for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have detrimental effect on the Town’s bargaining or litigation position. Also, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel; and Will Not reconvene back into Open Session. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Roll Call Vote – Dillon – yes; Saball – yes; Nordblom – yes; Cunningham – yes; Keoseian – yes.

Approved: _____
Robert W. Nordblom, Clerk

respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Newell
Office Assistant

Enclosures (2) – Accountant’s Financial Report; Tax Collector-Treasurer’s FY2005 Year End Financial Review

Date Approved: November 14, 2005