

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
APRIL 18, 2006
“APPROVED”**

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

Absent: Robert W. Nordblom, Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m.

350th Anniversary Committee and the Women’s Club RE: Presentation of Town Report

Ms. Maria Casey was present for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Casey presented the 2005 Annual Town Report to the Board. Ms. Casey stated that this year’s town report was a limited edition and contained a color collage of pictures from the 350th Anniversary Celebrations held throughout the year. Ms. Casey reviewed the photo collage and then acknowledged and thanked the contributors of the photos. Ms. Casey acknowledged and thanked the Women’s Club Quilters who had designed and created the anniversary quilt which is featured on the cover.

Ms. Kitchen stated that a copy of the Town Report would be submitted to the Massachusetts Municipal Association for its annual contest.

Ms. Casey stated that the 350th Anniversary Committee may be printing a copy of the photo collage for distribution.

Mr. Dillon acknowledged and thanked the members of the 350th Anniversary Committee and the Quilters.

Adopt-A-Road Recognitions

Mr. Dillon thanked the groups and individuals who participate in the major cleanup of designated roads.

Mr. Dillon presented certificates of appreciation to the Groton Conservation Trust, the Groton’s Women’s Club, and the Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club. Mr. Dillon noted that the certificates of appreciation would be sent to those participants not in attendance.

Michael Tusino, Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer RE: Local Inspector Vacancy

Mr. Michael Tusino and Mr. Stuart Shuman were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Tusino stated that Mr. Herget the current Local Inspector had accepted a position in Clinton and he (Tusino) would like permission to advertise the position.

Mr. Dillon asked what step and grade the position was rated as well as how many hours Mr. Herget had worked. Mr. Tusino stated the position was a grade 6, step 4 and scheduled for 28 hours per week. Mr. Tusino reviewed the duties and inspections that the Local Inspector had performed.

Mr. Shuman (resident Martins Pond Road) citing budget constraints and stating that there had been a reduction in building permits, asked that the Board postpone filling the vacancy or reduce the number of hours.

Mr. Cunningham stated that this position was mostly supported by fees. Mr. Cunningham stated that there had been an increase in zoning enforcement issues, with the potential of litigation.

Ms. Kitchen asked Ms. Collette if the proposed zoning amendment changes would impact the Zoning Officer/Building Inspector.

Ms. Collette stated that the amount of development being done under the auspices of Chapter 40B supersedes local zoning, but does not supersede the Building Code. Ms. Collette reviewed the various projects either under construction or soon to be constructed. Ms. Collette stated that there would be many units which would need to be inspected in the foreseeable future.

Mr. Tusino indicated that the number of building permits were 99 thus far in 2006, 75 in 2005 and 100 in 2004. Mr. Dillon stated that there did not appear to be a reduction in the volume of work in the Building Department.

Mr. Shuman asked if the Board needed to approve the position and also if the notice should not have been posted. Ms. Kitchen stated permission had been given to post the position internally and it had not been advertised in the paper.

Mr. Keoseian stated that he could not support any dilution in the hours or scope of the position.

Mr. Saball moved to allow the Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer to advertise the position of Local Inspector. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

Beaudane Properties LLC, Local Initiative Project – 14 Station Avenue (cont.)

Mr. Joshua Webber, Ms. Michelle Collette and Ms. Fran Stanley (Court Street) were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Webber stated that he had not been able to get an engineered plan completed in the week since the previous meeting. Mr. Webber did however have a similar plan which had been previously proposed for the lot with the same footprint. Ms. Stanley reviewed the plan and thanked Mr. Webber. Mr. Cunningham stated that he would support the Option B plan. Mr. Saball asked Mr. Webber what his options would be if the Option B was not supported by the State. Mr. Webber stated that he would review the numbers to see if Option A was a possibility or if it may be more economical to construct a duplex with two (2) market rate units.

Mr. Dillon reviewed comments submitted by Town departments. Ms. Kitchen asked what waivers would be requested for the project. Mr. Webber stated that the setbacks and frontage waivers have already been recorded with the registry of deeds.

Ms. Collette stated that during the renovations at the Town Hall, the idea of an affordable unit on that lot which could be rented or purchased by an on-call fire fighter had been raised by former Fire Chief Chris Kelley. Ms. Collette stated that the Housing Authority had been asked if priority could be given in the lottery to firefighters. Mr. Dillon stated that he would support that if it were possible.

Mr. Dillon asked for a consensus of the Board to support Option B as amended to include approximately 1400 square feet. The members concurred.

Ms. Kitchen stated that she would prepare a letter of support.

Groton-Dunstable Regional School District School Committee RE: Resolution for Adequate Public Education Funding

Ms. Karen Lofgren, Ms. Alberta Erickson, and Ms. Cynthia Barrett were present for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Lofgren asked the Board to take action to support the resolution which had been drafted and approved by the School Committee. Ms. Lofgren stated that there would be a rally held on March 26, 2006 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Boston and invited the Board to attend.

Mr. Dillon commented that the resolution was well articulated. Ms. Lofgren stated that the Committee was trying to offer a solution to the financial and education crisis. Mr. Cunningham commended the members of the School Committee stating it was productive to offer specific solutions to the problems. Mr. Cunningham asked if the resolution was part of a bigger action, by other communities. Ms. Lofgren stated that the resolution was specific to Groton, but they were willing to share it and the potential was incalculable.

Ms. Kitchen asked if the Committee wanted the Board to send the signed copy to the Governor. Ms. Lofgren stated that she had the copy signed by the Dunstable Selectmen and she would send them. Ms. Kitchen suggested that the Committee contact the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

The Board reached a consensus to support the resolution.

Public Hearing RE: Proposed Change of Fire Department Rates and Fees

Chief Joseph Bosselait and Ms. Susan Ragusa were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Saball moved to open the public hearing at 8:05 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

Mr. Dillon read the Legal Notice, published on April 9, 2006 in the Lowell Sun.

Chief Bosselait stated that every year the Medicare rates change and the ambulance rates are set at the Medicare rate.

Chief Bosselait stated that he wanted the carbon monoxide detector inspection fees to mirror the smoke detector inspection fees.

Mr. Keoseian proposed that the fees be increased to the maximum allowed by the State. Ms. Kitchen stated that would require another public hearing. Mr. Keoseian asked for a survey of like communities.

Mr. Dillon asked how many open air burning permits have been issued. Chief Bosselait stated that 600-700/year.

Mr. Dillon stated that the Communications Union during negotiations had noted that they had to have additional personnel during the burning season. Mr. Saball stated that the fees should be commensurate with the burden it places on Dispatch. Mr. Dillon suggested getting a report from Communications showing the total number of permits and the impact on the dispatchers and how it translates in to additional personnel. Ms. Kitchen stated that she would contact Ms. Moulton.

Mr. Saball moved to close the public hearing at 8:25 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

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

	<i>Ambulance Rates</i>	
	<i>Current Rate</i>	<i>Proposed Rate</i>
<i>BLS Base Rate</i>	<i>\$425.00</i>	<i>\$475.00</i>
<i>ALS Base Rate</i>	<i>\$615.00</i>	<i>\$635.00</i>
<i>Airways</i>	<i>\$125.00</i>	<i>\$140.00</i>
<i>IV</i>	<i>\$125.00</i>	<i>\$140.00</i>
<i>Defibrillation</i>	<i>\$125.00</i>	<i>\$140.00</i>
<i>Oxygen</i>	<i>\$ 50.00</i>	<i>\$ 50.00</i>

	<i>Permit and Inspection Fees</i>	
	<i>Current Fee</i>	<i>Proposed Fee</i>
<i>Residential Smoke Detector (1-2 Family)</i>	<i>\$25.00</i>	<i>\$ 25.00</i>
<i>Residential Smoke Detector (3-6 Family)</i>		<i>\$ 50.00</i>
<i>Residential Smoke Detector (6 units or more)</i>		<i>\$100.00</i>
<i>Residential Carbon Monoxide Detector (1-2 family)</i>		<i>\$ 25.00</i>
<i>Residential Carbon Monoxide Detector (3-6 units)</i>		<i>\$ 50.00</i>
<i>Residential Carbon Monoxide Detector (6 units or more)</i>		<i>\$100.00</i>

Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

Uncollectible Ambulance Bills FY03, FY04, FY05 & FY06

Town Accountant Valerie Jenkins was present for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Jenkins stated that the uncollectible ambulance bills from FY03 and FY04 are mostly cleared up and the amount of uncollectible bills had dropped dramatically when the billing was transferred from totally manual to the billing agency. Ms. Jenkins stated that the Collection rate with Coastal Billing had been 90%.

Mr. Saball moved to authorize the Town Accountant to abate \$296.62 on behalf of the Groton Fire Department Ambulance bills for FY03. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

Mr. Saball moved to authorize the Town Accountant to abate \$576.19 on behalf of the Groton Fire Department Ambulance bills for FY04. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

Mr. Saball moved to authorize the Town Accountant to abate \$4,697.79 on behalf of the Groton Fire Department Ambulance bills for FY05. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

Mr. Saball moved to authorize the Town Accountant to abate \$3,059.32 on behalf of the Groton Fire Department Ambulance bills for FY06. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

ALS Agreement with Townsend

Chief Joseph Bosselait and Susan Ragusa were present for this portion of the meeting.

Chief Bosselait stated that he had spoken with the Fire Chief of Townsend and come back with three-year contract with at 60/40% split. Chief Bosselait noted that the contract was similar to the previous contract with the exception of the stipend which had been removed. Ms. Kitchen asked how the change in fees would affect the ambulance receipts paying for additional personnel. Chief Bosselait stated that the stipend had been built into the contract and the burden was being taken off the taxpayers.

Chief Bosselait stated that he was also going to renegotiate with Coastal Billing. Ms. Kitchen asked if that would need to go out to bid. Ms. Jenkins stated that she would check there law as there are some exceptions.

Mr. Saball moved to execute the Ambulance, Emergency Medical and Advanced Life Support Services Mutual Aid and Billing Agreement made by and between the Town of Townsend Emergency Medial and Advanced Life Support Services, and the Town of Groton. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

Greenman Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) RE: Addendum to Agreement

Mr. Jeff Howie was present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Howie had stated that GPI had been the engineer for the whole design for the Four Corners project and done the oversight for the construction by Mass Highway.

Mr. Dillon stated that the original agreement was for \$5,500 and GPI was asking to increase the fee by \$8,500. Mr. Howie stated that project went into production in 2004 and Ms. Kitchen had requested a construction services agreement. Mr. Howie noted that GPI's contracts normally run from \$20,000 to \$25,000. Mr. Howie further stated that the initial \$5,500 was to try and get the project advertised and work with that number. Ms. Kitchen asked if the project was complete. Mr. Howie stated that a punch list had been created and there was very little remaining to complete the project.

Mr. Howie stated that the magnitude of the project not the complexity which had run up costs i.e. calls from Mass Highway and the Town.

Mr. Saball stated that he had been unaware that the \$5,500 was only an initial amount. Mr. Howie stated it was not intended to be as they had hoped to keep the costs down, however the amount of work was weighty. Ms. Kitchen stated that initially they were unaware that Mass Highway would require the Town to do the oversight and GPI was the clerk of the works on the project.

Mr. Keoseian stated that he was concerned for the Town's reputation, but he was having difficulty approving the request for additional funds after the fact. Mr. Keoseian did not discount the fact that the work was done and done well.

Mr. Cunningham asked if there was a way to allocate some funds, but not the full amount requested. Mr. Cunningham suggested \$4,500. Mr. Howie stated that GPI would appreciate any compensation.

Mr. Saball stated that he appreciated the need for a good working relationship, but he was not inclined to change the original agreed upon amount.

Ms. Kitchen stated that there had been initial discussion that the \$5,500 would get some services for the Town, and

there was the possibility of a request for more. Mr. Dillon stated that normally there would be a request for changes. Ms. Kitchen stated that she had asked for backup. Mr. Howie apologized for not communicating with Ms. Kitchen as he should have.

Mr. Dillon recognized that the job had been well done.

Mr. Cunningham moved to amend the motion to not exceed \$4,500. Seconded by Mr. Saball. 2 in favor, 2 opposed (Saball and Keoseian), 1 absent (Nordblom).

OTHER BUSINESS

Fuel Storage Registration Renewals

Mr. Saball moved to approve the renewal of a Certificate of Registration for Fuel Storage for:

*Groton School – Farmers Row
Highway Department – 500 Cow Pond Brook Road
Hollingsworth & Vose – 219 Townsend Road
Groton-Dunstable School District – 342 Main Street
Mr. Mike’s, Peterborough Oil Co. – 6 Boston Road
New England Business Service, Inc. – 500 Main Street
May & Hally, Inc. – 40 Court Street
A.L. Prime Energy, Inc. – 619 Boston Road
PGI Realty LLC – 318 Main Street*

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Amend Policy on Posting of Vacancies

Mr. Saball moved to amend the Posting of Vacancies (92-01) adopted November 16, 1992, by deleting Squannacook Hall and adding the Senior Center. Seconded by Mr. Cunningham. 4 in favor, 1 absent (Nordblom).

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SELECTMEN LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Cunningham stated a site walk of the Surrenden Farms property was to be held on Saturday, April 22, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. rain or shine.

Approved: _____
George F. Dillon, Jr., Chair

respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Newell
Office Assistant

Date Approved: May 8, 2006