

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES NOVEMBER 26, 2007  
APPROVED**

**Present:** George Dillon, Jr., Chairman; Joshua A. Degen, Vice Chairman; Stuart Schulman, Clerk; Peter Cunningham;

**Absent:** Mihran Keoseian

**Also Present:** Jeff Ritter, Interim Administrative Officer; April Iannacone, Office Assistant

*Mr. Dillon called the regular meeting of the Board to Order at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda for the public.*

**Public Hearing with the Board of Assessors, RE: FY08 Property Tax Allocation among Classifications (Set the Tax Rate)**

*Mr. Degen moved to open the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

Mr. Dillon read the posted legal notice. Sylvia Sangiolo, the Chair of the Board of Assessors, informed the Board of Selectmen (BOS) that an evaluation of the Town's Assessments took place in 2008. This was the first in house evaluation done in Groton and there were many corrections and balances created based on the calendar year 2006. Adjustments have not occurred yet, but she gives congratulations to Rena and her staff for their help in this evaluation. The estimated new growth figure was \$29 million and the actual figure was approved at \$23 million. The increase that is being proposed is .06 cents per \$1,000 over last year. The Board of Assessors is recommending a single tax rate for all since there is no benefit to having a commercial tax rate over the residential tax rate. The Board consented that there was no real benefit to a split tax rate for commercial and residential. Mr. Degen stated that it was nice that evaluation was done in house and was not needed to be outsourced.

*Mr. Degen moved to maintain a single tax rate and establish the rate at \$13.83 per \$1,000. Mr. Schulman seconded.*

*Mr. Degen moved to close the public hearing at 7:22 p.m. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

**Elizabeth Currier, Personnel Manager and Patrice Garvin, Administrative Assistant RE: Employee Newsletter**

Elizabeth informed the BOS that she and Patrice had partnered on a project to produce an employee newsletter to offer to employees. One goal they wanted to accomplish is to communicate Town news to employees and the 2<sup>nd</sup> is to create unity among employees who are across town daily. She believes this will be a useful tool to create unification, communicate everything going on, and an opportunity for people to learn. Some topics they were looking to include are an employee spotlight, various employee workshops, service awards, new hires and a calendar of events and meetings. She would like to produce the newsletter twice a year. Patrice informed the Board that the Employees were given the chance to suggest a name for the newsletter, and the name they chose was "Employee Connection". This name was submitted by Becky Babcock in the Assessors Office. She also stated that there would be a Bulletin Board section for employees to post important events. Mr. Dillon asked who was putting this together. Elizabeth stated that she was, and then Patrice would be doing the layout with her knowledge on publisher. Mr. Ritter gave congratulations to both for taking this initiative, and stated that Patrice's participation in this will not take away any time from the Selectmen's Office. Mr. Cunningham stated that he thought this was a great idea. There is a newsletter where he works and it is a great thing if there is an opportunity for people to submit stuff. Elizabeth stated that to save paper this will not go out to each employee through paychecks or to each department by paper. It will be emailed to all who have access. Mr. Dillon wished them the best of luck and he appreciates their efforts in creating this. The Selectmen all gave thanks to both.

**Elizabeth Currier, Personnel Manager, RE: Team Building Workshop and Computer Survey**

Elizabeth then informed the Board that she was working on employee development and training. The next workshop being offered to employees is a Team Building Training next Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. All employees in departments and board members are invited. The goal is to help employees and teams become more productive and efficient, and help to recognize how to reach team goals. This program is being offered through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The goal is to show and create a positive environment. This will work along with the employee evaluations. She encourages the BOS to attend if they can. The plan is to start with the staff and

managers, and then she and Martha Campbell have teamed to offer a team building workshop for department managers that will continue for the next couple of months. She then informed the Board that she had met with the Information Technology (I/T) Committee in September looking for ideas and help to create a computer needs survey. She wanted to focus on helping employees to become more efficient in their jobs. The survey would determine where they are in terms of skills, where they need minor support and where they need more help. She is hoping to first create an informal internal employee computer support network so that someone who is proficient in a program can help those who need quick, simple 5 – 10 minute help. The Town doesn't have an I/T manager which it desperately needs, and the I/T volunteers don't have time to offer day to day support. She is also researching providing computer trainings to employees. There are a couple of employees who have done trainings before, or possibly committee members that might be able to help. Mr. Dillon asked if these various programs that MIAA offers affect the Town's insurance premium and she replied that it does. Last year the Town did really well and had over \$10,000 in credit because employees participated in these workshops and trainings. The Selectmen all wished Elizabeth the best of luck and thanked her for coming in.

**Patrice Garvin, Administrative Assistant, RE: Review License & Permit Fee Survey**

Mr. Ritter informed the Board that he had asked Patrice to go and list out all of the Town's licenses granted each year and look at comparable communities to Groton. In doing this they have found that Groton is at or near the top of the revenue that can be raised. Patrice then informed the Board that the fees Groton is charging are pretty straight forward and in line with most other towns. The only 2 differences are that some towns charged administration fees for licensing of businesses and small fees for burn permits. For Common Vic, Class 1, 2, and 3 and Entertainment Licenses the Town is in line with other areas. After some discussion between the BOS, Chief Joe and Mr. Ritter about issues that had arisen in the past regarding the implementation of a fee for burn permits, it was agreed that Mr. Ritter would continue to look into this and discuss with the dispatchers and Police Chief Palma.

**Patrice Garvin, Administrative Assistant, RE: All Alcohol License Renewals & Update on the Status of other License and Permits Issued by the Board**

Mr. Ritter informed the Board that before them is the first step in the Board's annual renewal of licenses. He then informed them that they need to finish this before the end of December. This week they are renewing the Alcohol and Beverages Licenses. Next week they will renew the Class 2 and Common Vic. Patrice did the leg work in making sure that places are within compliance. Patrice then informed the Board that she did research with the Treasurers Office to make sure all businesses were current on their taxes. The Chief of Police and Board of Health have signed off on all businesses that there are no issues for the business, but all will need to be contingent upon the approval of the Building Inspector and Fire Chief inspections. She then stated that the reason they were making their votes now was because the deadline for filing with the State is before the end of November. Mr. Dillon asked Patrice if she was sure that the Liquor License renewal for Currier and Chives was still to be done rather than transferring to the Country Club. He stated that as far as he was aware they had given up their lease. Patrice replied that Michelle Sticklor had informed her that it would be renewed as Currier and Chives. The Country Club had submitted payment for their license but Currier and Chives had not. Mr. Dillon stated that they would have to vote contingent upon their payment. Mr. Dillon gave thanks to Patrice for all of her hard work and efforts.

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the renewal of Common Victualler Licenses, to serve All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages, for the following establishments:*

*Gibbet Hill Grill LLC d/b/a Gibbet Hill Grill Restaurant and Gibbet Hill Grill Function Hall, Thomas Totman, Manager and R.C. Kimball d/b/a Oliver's Grille & Pub, Cheryl Hryniewich, Manager; licenses both to expire December 31, 2008.*

*Contingent on approval from the Fire Chief and Building Inspector. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the renewal of Retail Package Goods Store Licenses for the sale of All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages to the Groton Market, Inc., John M. Madigan, Manager, and to Denis H. Marchand and Estelle C. Marchand d/b/a Craven's Package Store; licenses to expire December 31, 2008. Contingent on approval from the Fire Chief and Building Inspector. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the renewal of General On Premise Licenses for the sale of All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages to the Groton Country Club & Recreation Authority, Brad Durrin, Manager, for the Snack Bar/Lounge,*

license to expire December 31, 2008. Contingent on approval from the Fire Chief and Building Inspector. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Degen moved to approve the renewal of General On Premise Licenses for the sale of All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages to LPM Holding d/b/a Currier and Chives, Shana Adams, Manager for the Function Hall at the Groton Country Club, license to expire December 31, 2008. Contingent on approval from the Fire Chief and Building Inspector, receipt of fee and a valid certificate of insurance. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Degen moved to approve the renewal of an Innholder License for All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages to be drunk on the premises for the Groton Stage Coach Inn & Tavern, Inc., George Pergantis, Manager, license to expire December 31, 2008. Contingent on approval from the Fire Chief and Building Inspector. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Degen moved to approve the renewal of Retail Package Goods Store Licenses for the sale of Wine and Malt Alcoholic Beverages to Nine West Main Properties, Inc Janice Hurst, Manager d/b/a Clover Farm Market to expire December 31, 2008, as amended to remove the approval of the Fire Chief and contingent on approval from the Building Inspector if he requires. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Degen moved to approve the renewal of a Retail Package Goods Store, Wine and Malt License for the Groton General Store, Vimuben Patel, Manager to expire December 31, 2008. Contingent on the fulfillment of the verbal agreement between Mr. Patel and the Tax Collector, and as amended to be contingent on approval from the Building Inspector if he requires.

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#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Contract Document 2007-12, RE: Affordable Housing Implementation Plan**

Mr. Ritter explained to the Board that this was a new process that the CPC is rolling out. All Boards and Committees who have received funding at the Fall Special Town Meeting are being asked to look at these contracts and sign. This contract codifies the agreement between the BOS and the CPC for the funding. Mr. Dillon stated that the one thing he would like to see on all of the project contracts is a name attached to it as a contact. Mr. Ritter will volunteer for this project.

Mr. Degen moved to approve and sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Board of Selectmen and the Community Preservation Committee for CPA 2007-12 application, RE: "Groton's Affordable Housing Implementation Plan." Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.

##### **Community Preservation Committee Contract Document 2007-01, RE: Historic Documents Preservation**

Mr. Dillon stated that Onorina Maloney has been working on this project and this is the second year. There is one change on this Memorandum of Agreement which is that the CPC will appoint Bob DeGroot as contact.

Mr. Degen moved to approve and sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Board of Selectmen and the Community Preservation Committee for CPA 2007-01 application, RE: "Groton's Historic Documents Preservation Plan." Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.

##### **Community Preservation Committee Contract Document 2007-03, RE: Squannacook Hall Feasibility Study**

Michelle Collette informed the BOS that the Building Committee had submitted an RFP and after receiving quotes back they have selected Kang Associates. They have received the contract and it has been sent to David Doneski for review. A public hearing has been scheduled for Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. at Squannacook Hall for the public to give input and suggestions on renovations.

Mr. Degen moved to approve and sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Board of Selectmen and the Community Preservation Committee for CPA 2007-03 application, RE: "Groton's Squannacook Hall Feasibility Study." Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.

### **Board of Selectmen Facilities Taskforce Appointment**

Mr. Degen stated that in the Committee Charge for the Facilities Taskforce there were to be 2 Groton and Dunstable Selectmen on the Taskforce. Mihran is unable to attend meetings any longer do to other obligations so they need to appoint one of the remaining 3 Selectmen. The Taskforce holds one meeting a month to assess the needs of the school facilities for the future.

*Mr. Degen moved to appoint Stuart Schulman to the Facilities Taskforce 3 Committee. Mr. Dillon seconded. Voted 4 in favor (F.D., J.D., P.C., M.K.) and one abstained (S.S.).*

### **Review Request from Townsend to Utilize Fire Truck**

Mr. Cunningham stated that he had talked to Chief Joe about a month ago about the serious need in Townsend for another truck and they had not done any capital planning to rectify the situation. The Town of Groton has a truck next to the Fire Station that is not in use. In the spirit of mutual aid they felt that the Town could lend the truck until they get one of theirs repaired or get a new one. Mr. Dillon stated that he had no problem helping them out but asked why we were not looking to just sell it to them. Chief Joe responded that he had offered to sell it to them at a nominal fee, but that due to the age of the vehicle and the inability to come up with the money they really had just wanted to borrow it. Mr. Dillon stated that however it gets done, we need to be able to protect the Town from a situation that could cause potential liabilities. He also stated that the legal costs for them to have K&P write up an agreement would cost them more than to purchase it. Mr. Degen suggested that they liquidate the truck and then offer it to them as is and where is. Mr. Ritter stated that they could make a motion to declare the truck as surplus and sell it to them for \$1.00. The Board consented that Mr. Ritter would contact Greg Barnes in Townsend and let him know what the Town would be willing to do and then place the item back on next weeks agenda.

### **Squannacook Rail Trail Environmental Engineering Assessment Contract with FST**

Mr. Ritter informed the BOS that this was the final CPC request for Memorandum of Agreement. Mr. Cunningham stated that the Squannacook River Rail Trail Committee had met last Monday night and did recommend that the BOS identify this firm for the Assessment. The original amount quoted was \$10,000 and they agreed to meet the price of the competitor of \$9,000. Mr. Dillon asked who would be the project proponent and Mr. Cunningham replied that it would be Bruce Easom.

*Mr. Degen moved to authorize the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to sign the contract with Fay, Spofford & Thorndike for engineering and site assessments work on the Squannacook River Rail Trail project in an amount not to exceed \$9,000. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Degen moved to approve and sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Board of Selectmen and the Community Preservation Committee for CPA 2007-11 regarding the Squannacook River Rail Trail. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

### **Michelle Collette, Town Planner, RE: Designate Point of Contact for 43D Application**

Michelle stated that after Town Meeting had adopted the Station Ave. overlay mixed use district, and article 16 to designate this site as a priority development site, she began to put together this Chapter 43D application for technical assistance. The tasks that will be funded by this assistance will be for the streamlined permitting system. The work would be done by the Planning Board and the MRPC. Everything has been reviewed by Kopelman & Paige for legality. There would be multiple steps to this process. Tom Delaney has already done some of the work necessary, but it would also be necessary to apply for a public works economic grant. The application is due November 29<sup>th</sup> which is 14 days before the next meeting on December 13<sup>th</sup>. If it was not turned in this week then it would not be processed until the next meeting in January. She then thanked all of the members of the Station Ave. Committee, the Planning Board and everyone else who has helped through this process. If this application is successful the Town has 180 days to put the permitting into place. She would like to request approval for the submission of the grant and to designate her as the point of contact because it needs to be a staff person. Mr. Dillon gave thanks to Michelle for all of the hard work and the excellent job she has done pulling all of this together. He then stated that he has heard that there were 4-5 communities listed as prime areas for Biotech areas. He noticed that the one common thread is that they have expedited permitting and asked her if she had heard of this. She replied that she had not but she would look into it. Mr. Schulman asked if we typically get all of what we ask for with these applications. Michelle responded that typically we do. She talked with April Anderson and asked her if we are not approved for all of the

funding, could we choose what we want to keep and what we want to take off of the application since extras like the software are not necessary. She was told that when the Inter-Permitting Board meets we are invited to attend and are asked for input on what we feel is important. Mr. Degen stated that the application, scope of tasks, and overall package was extremely thorough. The Selectmen then thanked Michelle for coming in and her hard work putting this all together.

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the submission of the Chapter 43D Expedited Local Permitting Application for Technical Assistance. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the appointing of Michelle Collette, Groton Town Planner, as the municipal "Point of Contact" for the Priority Development Site. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

Mr. Ritter informed the Board that the Annual Report needed to be done by January and he would begin to create a draft for the Board to review. There will be a Jenkins Road meeting on Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. regarding the house in the front of the property. The Affordable Housing Consultant advertisement went out to 21 firms with a response date of December 27<sup>th</sup>. Currently 7 have responded looking for a full set of specifications. The Board would begin to review FY-09 budgets next week to try to get through as many as possible before the end of the calendar year. He then informed the Board that they were scheduled to take the weeks of Christmas and New years off unless there was an emergency need for a meeting. There would be a meeting on Thursday from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. with Dr. Eger and Bob Collins regarding the docks. There is a Department Heads meeting scheduled for Wednesday morning. Lastly, he reminded the Board that they would be walking the bounds on Saturday morning.

**SELECTMAN LIAISON REPORTS**

Mr. Cunningham stated that the Squannacook River Rail Trail Committee would be meeting on Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 at the Nashua River Watershed for continued planning.

Mr. Dillon stated that he had talked with Jeff and Val about her and Jay attending the meeting next week to hopefully have a presentation on the basis for the 3 year projection assumptions that were made and what the Town is faced with financially. Mr. Cunningham stated that he saw that there was a memo which explained the exercise request for new staffing and requests for hours. He thinks it is a good idea to get that out there and make it available. Mr. Ritter agreed to change the letter. Mr. Cunningham also felt that it was important that the townspeople understood what the Town is facing. Mr. Degen requested that this agenda item take place early because he would be leaving early to attend a Selectmen's meeting in Chelmsford.

**MINUTES**

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 1, 2007. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 15, 2007. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

**ADJOURN**

*Mr. Degen moved to adjourn at 8:53 p.m. Mr. Schulman seconded. Unanimous vote.*

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stuart Schulman, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ *respectfully submitted,*  
April Iannacone  
Office Assistant

Date Approved: February 4, 2008