

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES NOVEMBER 22, 2010
APPROVED**

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

Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Patrice Garvin, Executive Assistant

Mr. Schulman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda for the public. Mr. Schulman also announced many local activities and local businesses in town.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad stated that the Tax Classification Hearing is scheduled for 7:15pm. Mr. Haddad informed the Board that the Town has not received certification from the Department of Revenue on our revaluation. The Board will have to continue the Tax Classification Hearing.
2. Mr. Haddad explained that Tim Hess has resigned his position on the Planning Board. His term was set to expire May, 2011 election. According to MGL the Board and the Planning Board need to meet and fill the vacancy. A meeting has been scheduled with the Planning Board for Thursday, December 2, 2010 at 7:30pm.
3. Mr. Haddad stated that a new DPW Office Assistant Position to work for the DPW, Sewer and Water Departments has been established. A screening committee was appointed made up of Tom Delaney, Tricia DeFresne, Dolores Alberghini and Kathleen LeBlanc. Mr. Haddad stated that he has appointed April Iannacone to the position and asked the Board to ratify this appointment.

Ms. Eliot moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of April Iannacone as the DPW Office Assistant Position. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

4. Mr. Haddad requested that three individuals be appointed as Special Police Officer in the Town of Groton. These officers have recently worked details in the Town of Groton and need to be appointed as Specials so they can be paid.

Mr. Dillon moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of the following, terms to expire June 30, 2011:

Nathan Abdallah, Tyngsborough Police Officer who resides in Methuen

Patrick Colburn, Boxborough Police Officer who resides in Groton

Daniel Whitman, Tyngsborough Police Officer who resides in Tyngsborough

Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

5. Mr. Haddad stated that enclosed [**Document #1- Request for bonfire and Approval from Chief**] request for a bonfire on November 24th needed to be approved.

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the bonfire at the High School on November 24, 2010 at 6pm. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

6. Mr. Haddad stated that the department head budgets were due on December 1, 2010. Mr. Haddad has scheduled budget hearings with departments, boards, committees and commissions. Mr. Haddad distributed a copy of the budget meeting schedule. [**Document #2- Budget Mtg Schedule 2010**] Mr. Haddad also asked each selectman to choose which meeting they would like to attend. Mr. Haddad also informed the Board he would be sitting on the negotiation team for the teacher union contract, as requested by the Superintendent, unless the Board would prefer a member of the Board of Selectmen or another designee.

7. Mr. Haddad explained that George Wheatley has submitted a preliminary application to the CPC for an historic preservation grant to make various improvements at Squannacook Hall. [**Document #3- Preliminary CPC Application**] The CPC stated that since the Town is the owner of the building, the Board must submit a letter supporting the application. Mr. Wheatley stated that applications are due January 7th. Mr. Wheatley stated that he was looking to do a phased project and would be ready to go to the CPC with answers on the Septic. Mr. Cunningham wanted to know the purpose of the building if it was going to be restored. Mr. Wheatley stated that if the building was restored people would use it.

TAX CLASSIFICATION PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Cunningham moved to open the tax classification public hearing at 7:15pm. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Hearing opened.

Mr. Schulman read the legal notice.

Mr. Cunningham moved to continue the hearing until the Squannacook Hall discussion was completed. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Hearing continued.

Mr. Dillon stated that there is limited use of the building and noted its condition. Mr. Dillon thanked Mr. Wheatley for his efforts but was concerned with the 200k amount that did not correlate to the Kang study projections for the building. Mr. Wheatley is hoping to make the building functional and ADA compliant. Ms. Eliot stated that she has no problem supported the application to the CPC. Mr. Schulman appreciated the effort but needed to see all of the phases and costs of the project. Mr. Haddad asked Mr. Wheatley to come back to the board on December 20th with an updated report. Mr. Degen stated that given the history of the building he did not see a need to put any more money into it and that he would not support the CPC application. Mr. Wheatley stated that he would prepare a more detailed report with costs to the Board.

TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING Continued

Mr. Dillon moved to reconvene the Tax Classification Hearing. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Hearing reconvened.

Jennifer Evans, Assessor stated that the Department of Revenue has certified the Towns numbers but that the Board of Assessors supports a single tax rate for the town. Ms. Evans stated that a split rate did not make sense at this time. Ms. Evans stated that the Town was 93.3% residential and 4% commercial. Ms. Evans briefly discussed how a property was graded and assessment was determined.

Mr. Schulman stated that a split rate did not make sense for the Town. Ms. Evans noted that a booklet was being created and would be placed online so that residents could see how the tax rate was determined. Mr. Dillon asked what affect values going down had on the tax rate. Ms. Evans stated that it pushed the tax rate up. Mr. Schulman asked the public for comments. Mr. Dillon stated that the best way to evaluate the effect of the reval the taxrate was to compare year to year tax bills

Mr. Steven Webber asked if the tax rate was spilt if the commercial could be lower than the residential. Mr. Haddad stated that he would get back to Mr. Webber with an answer.

Mr. Cunningham moved to continue the Tax Classification Public Hearing until December 6, 2010 at 7:10pm. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Hearing continued.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT Continued

- 8. Mr. Haddad gave the Board of Selectmen a meeting schedule until the end of the year.
- 9. Mr. Haddad noted that he would be serving as a member of the negotiating team on the Groton-Dunstable Teacher Union’s contract, unless the Board would prefer a member of the Board of Selectmen or another designee. Mr. Haddad stated that he has received Town Counsel opinion of M.G.L. 150 sec1. Ms. Eliot asked if this was only the teachers union. Mr. Haddad replied that it was just the teachers union. Mr. Haddad noted that he would also be going into negotiations with the Town unions and serving on the schools team and this would help instill continuity.
- 10. Mr. Haddad informed the Board that the Town received USDA notice on the Town appeal. Mr. Haddad informed the Board that the Town would be appealing and income level ruling and will look to Woodward and Currant for assistance.
- 11. Mr. Haddad updated the Board of the Station Ave. RFP. RFP’s are due December 9th.

LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Eliot stated that she attended the Master Plan Forum, the Board of Trade and the Senior Dinner. Mr. Dillon thanked the Webbers for the Senior Dinner and Mark Lynch who initiated the Senior Dinner Program. Mr. Cunningham attended a Eagle Scout ceremony for John O’Brien. Mr. Cunningham also noted the ongoing development of the rail trail and optimistic plan for Groton. Mr. Degen stated that the Affordable Housing Trust adopted the edits to the declaration and submitted a CPC application.

MINUTES

Ms. Eliot moved to approve Regular Session Minutes of November 1, 2010. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried [Document #11-01-10 Draft Minutes]

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn into Executive Session at 8:10 p.m. not to convene into open session in accordance to MGL c.30A, Sec 21:

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares and

To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating potions of the public body.

Roll Call Vote Dillon-yes; Eliot-yes; Cunningham-yes; Degen-yes; Schulman-yes.

Approved: _____
George F. Dillon, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted,
Patrice Garvin
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

Date Approved: 12-20-2010