

**SELECT BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES JUNE 11, 2018  
APPROVED**

**BOS Members Present:** Joshua A. Degen, Member; Barry A. Pease, Member; Alison S. Manugian, Member; John R. Giger, Member; Rebecca H. Pine, Member

**Also Present:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 6:05pm. Mr. Pease arrived at 6:15pm and took over as chair.

The Board started by reviewing the interview questions that were provided in their packets. Mr. Degen suggested that the last question they ask each candidate be what they thought made them the best candidate for Chief of Police in the Town of Groton. Mr. Degen also suggested giving the candidates a time limit to answer questions, longer time on harder questions, to see how they handle time constraints and to keep them on their one-hour time limit. Mr. Giger referenced a question submitted by Anna Eliot about police reports and what they thought should be included in them. Ms. Pine provided a version of that question she wanted to ask. Mr. Giger said that Leslie Lathrop on behalf of Virginia Wood suggested asking what their policy was on firearms permits. Mr. Haddad suggested asking each candidate what they hoped to accomplish in the first 30 days and your first 100 days as chief. There was a discussion about asking about financial experience, budgeting, overtime, and how they would address their department's needs. There was a discussion about providing the candidates with the questions upon arrival to help with time management where each interview was only scheduled for an hour. Ms. Pine asked if they wanted to ask a question about their thoughts on gun violence. Ms. Manugian said she thought that was a slippery slope. Ms. Pine asked if they could ask about the opioid crisis and their feelings on it. Mr. Pease said he preferred to leave as many questions open ended as possible to allow the candidates an opportunity to expand on them. Mr. Haddad reviewed the questions that had been agreed upon along with specialized questions to be used depending on the candidate.

The workshop ended at 6:58pm.

Mr. Pease called the regular meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Pine said that she and Mr. Giger had attended a program on Saturday for newly elected board members. She said that they were provided with an excellent amount of information and learned that Groton was being run well. She said that they were already following best practices and that she felt like they were in good shape. Mr. Giger added that there was a good section on finances also that they attended.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Ms. Connie Sartini said that the Groton Garden Club had received an award from the Mass Federation of Garden Clubs for plantings around the 911 memorial at the Center Fire Station.

Mr. Jack Petropoulos read a brief statement regarding his feelings on a resident that had been ignored at a meeting the week prior.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. Mr. Haddad reviewed the Matrix Audit recommendations for the Finance Departments and the Team's responses to those. Mr. Haddad said that they were in good shape overall in their finance offices and for reporting. Mr. Haddad said that the one area they needed guidance from the Board was on all in one software. Mr. Haddad talked about software called Munis that was being recommended by the Audit and how it was a lot of money. He said that this was not a major priority adding he wasn't sure he wanted to spend that kind of money on it. Ms. Pine asked if anyone had worked with Munis. Ms. Doig said she had. She said that she liked the software and how it could be used by multiple departments but that it was very expensive. Mr. Haddad said that the person that would benefit the most from it would be the Town Accountant. Mr. Haddad said that they would not reduce staffing because of the software. Mr. Degen suggested that they look at a payroll system independent of other departments. Ms. Doig said

that Munis was an in-house payroll system where they would also do their own taxes, etc. where that was a service provided by Harpers.

2. Mr. Haddad said that he had provided the Board with a copy of the charge of the Planning Board Master Plan Implementation Committee. He said that the current Master Plan expired in 2021. The new Committee would be meeting on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month. Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Giger had been kind enough to volunteer to serve as the Board's representative on the Committee and asked the Board to consider appointing him.

*Ms. Pine moved that they appoint John Giger as the Select Board representative to the Master Plan Implementation Committee. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

3. Mr. Haddad said that he and Ms. Manugian had discussed how to proceed with the results of the Non-Binding Recreational Marijuana Questions. He said it was their opinion and recommendation that the Board submit a Zoning Amendment to the Planning Board that would ban all Recreational Marijuana Uses in the Town of Groton. He said they both felt that since none of the votes were emphatically in favor of allowing any one type of establishment and because the work to draft multiple opinions and present them was excessive, that this was the best course of action. Mr. Haddad said that Town Counsel had drafted language which was enclosed in the Board's packet.

Mr. Haddad reviewed a timeline for the Fall Town Meeting and 2018 State Election to have this included. Mr. Pease said he had a conversation with the Town Clerk about the possibility of needed to hold an additional election. Mr. Haddad said it would cost an additional \$6K to hold an additional election and an additional \$5K for printing, mailing costs and the like to hold a Special Town Meeting. Ms. Manugian said that it would require a 2/3 majority vote at Town Meeting and a majority vote at the election. She said that the date of Town Meeting was close to the election and might not be enough time. She asked if there was an option for a Special Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad said there was adding they could hold the Town Meeting on say October 15<sup>th</sup> and call for a Special Election on the 16<sup>th</sup> which as 35 days from the State Election as an example. He said that the Charter required the Town to have 2 town meetings per year adding it also said that the Fall Town Meeting had to be on the third Monday of October. He suggested that the Board consider voting to move up the Fall Town Meeting to October 1<sup>st</sup> and hold a Special Town Meeting within the Regular Town Meeting. He said his only concern with doing this was their ability to have things like free cash, growth rate, etc. certified by Town Meeting.

Mr. Giger said that he thought the voters were duly notified on this subject and those that were interested came out and voted. He said he thought the Town should be given a chance to implement those 2 licenses in the Town adding he thought there should be a question to allow the 2 licenses the ballot question showed there was interest in and one that bans everything. Mr. Pease said he concurred with Mr. Giger. Mr. Degen said he too agreed. Mr. Degen proposed adding the cultivation piece to the allowable list of licenses because it was a close vote and allow it in O and RA districts.

Ms. Manugian said that the Planning Board, through conversations she had had with them, didn't have any interest in offering this or moving it through. She said that all drafting and decision-making would be on them. She said that it would get incredibly complicated and why they suggested to default to ban everything. She thought that they needed to stop talking about it and make a decision. Ms. Pine thought that limiting the proposal to research, testing and cultivation seemed to make things a little more straight forward. Ms. Pine also suggested limiting the number of licenses to 3 licenses (one for each or a combination thereof). Mr. Giger said that he had no problem adding cultivation as it was only a 7-vote difference. He said that only retail sales would generate revenue for the Town. Mr. Degen suggested allowing cultivation on open space under town ownership and collect revenue fees from the lease. Mr. Giger, Ms. Pine and Ms. Manugian said they could not get comfortable with putting cultivation in RA. Mr. Degen said that Groton was known for agriculture and they needed to look at opportunities to keep as much land as possible open for agriculture. Mr. Pease said he wasn't comfortable with O either.

*Ms. Pine moved to redraft the zoning by-law to ban marijuana in all districts except research, testing and cultivation which would be allowed by the Planning Board by a Special Permit in "GB" and "I" and for up to 3 (total facilities). Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Haddad further suggested that the Town Meeting be held on October 1st based on this discussion adding that because of the Columbus Day Holiday, the second night, should a second night be required would be on October 15th.

4. Mr. Haddad said that Section 3-2(d) of the Groton Charter stated that the Select Board shall appoint a Police Chief consistent with paragraph (d) of section 4-2. Mr. Haddad said that section 4-2(d) of the Charter stated that whenever a vacancy occurs in the office of Police Chief, the Town Manager shall "select and present at least 2 qualified candidates to the Select Board for appointment by the Board to the office". Mr. Haddad said that he had completed his search and was presenting to the Board for consideration of appointment 3 candidates, James Cullen, currently the Deputy Chief for the Town of Groton, Jason Lavoie, currently the Police Chief in Hudson, NH and Michael Luth, currently the Lt. for the Town of Lunenburg. Mr. Haddad said that the Board would be holding their public interviews of the candidates on June 13<sup>th</sup> followed by an assessment center on June 14<sup>th</sup>.
5. Mr. Haddad reviewed the updated charge for the Fire Department Task Force. He said he did his best to incorporate all changes suggested by members. He said it would be a 5-member voting committee with the Town Manager and Fire Chief sitting as non-voting members. Mr. Giger suggested leaving it as a 7-member committee and just differentiate between the voting and non-voting membership. Ms. Manugian asked why they wanted to conduct a salary survey of the call department and not the entire department. Mr. Haddad said that they had a union contract which covered the full timers adding that the Fire Chief wanted to survey call departments. Mr. Giger said he didn't think they could get their hands around the cost of the alternatives without the cost of the on-call members. Mr. Degen argued for leaving the survey of the call department salaries. Mr. Giger agreed adding that call members would be needed no matter what and therefore the compensation of those members should be reviewed. After a brief discussion, it was decided to remove this from the charge.

*Mr. Degen moved that the Personnel Board be asked to conduct a study on call firefighter compensation. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Mr. Degen moved to adopt the charge as amended, removing item #6 (salary survey for the call members) and including language about the voting and non-voting membership. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

6. Mr. Haddad said he had provided the Board with a copy of the RFP for Prescott School and asked that the Board consider voting to allow him to issue it. Mr. Haddad said that the big change from the last RFP they issued was the description on the first page that talked about allowance of use code B by the Building Commissioner. Mr. Pease said that he still an issue with referencing the strategic blueprint of the school. Ms. Pine said that there was a sentence that said the school district was moving out. Mr. Prest asked if there was any requirement for a business plan. Mr. Haddad said that the business plan would be part of the lease negotiations adding the Select Board would not sign a lease without a business plan. Mr. Degen said he didn't want to see this as part of any budget moving forward. Mr. Haddad said that they needed to fix the ramp in the basement, add a chair lift if they couldn't get a waiver and install fire rated doors for the gymnasium. He said he was hoping the CPC might consider allowing them to reallocate some money already appropriated but they needed to ask them. Mr. Manugian asked when they could get those costs. Mr. Haddad said he was working on that now.

Mr. Jack Petropoulos said that the comment about not wanting this to cost the town money was an interesting comment. He said that no one had the authority to declare such a thing adding the decision must be left up to the voters. Ms. Mary Jennings said that as an organization that would be responding to the RFP they wanted to see this move along as quickly as possible. She said that the Town had a certain obligation to put money into that building to make it a 2-way street.

*Mr. Giger moved that they approve the RFP for the Lease of Prescott School as written. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### **TOWN MANAGER'S ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS**

Ms. Pine asked how they were to understand whether department heads being brought forward for reappointment were doing excellent work. Mr. Haddad said that he reviewed them annually and if he didn't think they were doing a good job, he wouldn't bring them forward. Mr. Haddad said he endorsed everyone on the list and wanted to have them reappointed. Ms. Pine asked if they could hold off on the department heads until the next meeting. Mr. Degen said that as Select Board members, they were allowed to review the performance evaluations. Mr. Haddad said that he was very upset by this adding the Board was given notice on May 22nd of the annual appointments and asked to respond by the end of May. He said that no one reached out to him and thus he generated the list based on that. Mr. Degen said he was comfortable moving forward that night. Mr. Giger said he could move forward but also thought it wouldn't be a problem holding off. Mr. Haddad said he would bring back all appointments next week. Mr. Degen said that no department heads had changed since that list was sent out in May. He said he thought this sent a bad message to their department heads adding he didn't want to go down that road.

*Mr. Degen moved that they approve the Town Manager's appointments on a page by page basis that evening. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-1 with Ms. Pine opposed.*

*Page 1: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 1. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Ms. Pine said that she was very unhappy to be put in a position of voting against a group of people. The motion carried 4-1 with Ms. Pine opposed.*

*Page 2: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 2. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 3: Page 2: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 3. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 4: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 4. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 5: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 5. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 6: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 6 with exception of new police chief. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 7: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 7. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 8: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 8 with exception of new police chief. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 9: Mr. Degen moved that they approve the appointments of the Town Manager as read on page 9. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Mr. Degen moved that they authorize the Clerk to sign a document authoring the Town Manager authority to sign documents on behalf of the Board. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### **ON-GOING ISSUES**

C. Mr. Haddad said that the Board would be meeting at 6pm the following week to discuss Town Counsel interview questions.

H. Mr. Haddad said that the asbestos report came back showing asbestos around the foundation of the senior center. He said they were in the process of getting quotes to have that removed. Ms. Pine asked if they had a demolition date. Mr. Haddad said that they were still working on obtaining the required number of quotes.

J. Mr. Haddad said that Mike Bouchard was working on the Charter still.

M. Mr. Giger said he attended the public hearing on sidewalks adding they would be getting started at the end of August and run through October.

S. Mr. Haddad said there would be an executive session the following week on union negotiations.

**MINUTES**

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the meeting minutes of June 4, 2018 as printed. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Pease adjourned the meeting at 9:25pm.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alison Manugian, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ respectfully submitted,  
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 6/25/18