

**SELECT BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES JUNE 18, 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

Mr. Pease called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

The Board held a workshop to discuss questions to ask respondents to the RFP for Town Counsel services scheduled for July 16<sup>th</sup>. The Board reviewed and discussed the proposed 17 questions provided to them in their packet.

The workshop ended at 6:47pm.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORTS**

1. The Board discussed and agreed upon Liaison Assignments for the upcoming year (Primary – Alternate).

Police: Pease - Pine	CC: Manugian
Fire/EMS: Pease - Giger	Library: Pine
BOH: Pease	Park: Pease
Planning Board: Manugian - Pease	Tax: Pease
Zoning: Manugian - Degen	Assessors: Pease
Cons Com: Pine - Giger	Accountant: Manugian
Building Commissioner: Degen	Finance Committee: Pease – Pine
CPC: Pine	Human Resources: Pease
GDRSD: Manugian - Pease	IT/Cable: Pease
NVTHS: Degen - Pine	MRPC: Burke (PB) – Degen
Highway: Degen	MJTC: Burke (PB) – Degen
Groton Electric: Degen	MPO: Degen
Water/WG Water: Degen	Affordable Housing: Degen – Pine
Sewer: Giger	MBTA Advisory Board: Pease
COA: Degen	

Barry reviewed the agenda for the public at 7:02pm.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Pease explained that in order to avoid any OML violations via email the Board would be BCC now so that those potential violations would not be allowed to happen.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Mr. Tom Orcutt reminded folks that there was a water conservation ban in place; watering only on odd/even days and not on Mondays. He said that the Four Corners Sewer installation was complete. Mr. Haddad added that Shaw's was ready to talk about connecting which was good news. He thanked Mr. Orcutt and Ms. Collette for staying on top of this and for all their hard work.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – Cont.**

2. Mr. Haddad said that Town Treasurer Michael Hartnett was at the meeting to request that the Board sign Short Term Bond Anticipation Notes for various Capital Projects, including Whitney Well, Highway equipment and the first half of Senior Center Construction money. Mr. Hartnett explained that they went out to bid last Thursday on \$3.689M of which most was for the Senior Center project. He said that interest rates a couple of years ago were at 1.2% adding that these rates came in at 2.25%. He said that after meeting with their Bond Advisors, they would short term borrow at 2.25% and see what the market was going to do in November. Mr. Haddad said that long term

rates were more favorable right now according to their Bond Advisor adding he didn't want to permanently bond the Senior Center right now in hopes that the potential donations coming in would lower the final amount they borrow. Ms. Manugian asked if they didn't spend it all, could they borrow a lesser amount later. Mr. Haddad said they would be on the hook for the amount borrowed regardless. Mr. Degen asked about the potential for the Feds to raise the rates two more times as he had heard. Mr. Haddad said that long term interest rates didn't react to the raising of the rates as much as short-term rates did from what they had been told. Mr. Degen said he didn't agree and thought they were risking a major interest rate hike.

Mr. Degen moved that the Select Board authorize the bonding of \$3,689,175 plus applicable interest. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. Ms. Manugian offered a friendly amend this to include the 3 named projects, Whitney Well, highway equipment and the Senior Center. The friendly amendment was accepted. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Mr. Haddad asked if it would be okay to defer the IT audit discussion until the next meeting. The Board was fine with the request.

### **POLICE CHIEF APPOINTMENT CONSIDERATION**

Mr. Haddad said that he thought the Police Chief interviews conducted by the Board the week before had gone well along with the assessment center. He said that all Board members either attended the assessment center or watched the videos. Mr. Haddad said the candidates were rated on a scale of up to 100 adding 6 assessors evaluated the candidates. Mr. Haddad said that Chief Lavoie received a score of 86.5%, Lt. Luth received a score of 88.1% and Deputy Chief Cullen received a score of 76.6%. Ms. Pine explained what the assessment center entailed.

Ms. Manugian said she was thoroughly impressed with all 3 candidates and had never felt so confused by having to make a decision. She said she thought the candidates were all standouts in their professions but was ready to make a decision. Ms. Manugian said that Deputy Chief Cullen's tenure in Groton was an asset. She said that Chief Lavoie had a decade of being a Chief but that she was most impressed with Lt. Luth. She said she was impressed with his attitude around leadership and modeling behavior but that he could admit mistakes. She said he brought to the table a strength of communication and knowledge of the community. Ms. Pine said that Deputy Chief Cullen was committed to the department and residents but that based on public interviews and the assessment process she didn't think he was the right choice to lead the department right now. She said they were very lucky to have him and the support he would bring was invaluable. Ms. Pine said she felt as though Chief Lavoie had some significant setbacks such as getting up to speed on Mass Law coming from NH. She said he also lived quite a distance away and would be leaving a larger department to come to Groton which concerned her. Ms. Pine said that Lt. Luth projected energy, integrity and confidence. She said she supported Lt. Luth and was excited to have him become their next chief. Mr. Giger said this turned into a difficult decision for him. He said that Chief Lavoie didn't rub well on him adding that many of his concerns were identical to Ms. Pine's. He said that it appeared as though he had an assistant for everything something they didn't have. He said he had known Deputy Chief Cullen for a number of years and high respect for him. He said he thought he did well adding it was hard for someone who was here already to go through role playing decisions while thinking about his own community. Mr. Giger said that Lt. Luth did well on the activities adding he had a persona around him that was outgoing and enthusiastic. Mr. Giger said that his vote was for Lt. Luth. Mr. Degen said that Chief Lavoie was a very knowledgeable chief but that his concerns were the same as the others. He said that Deputy Chief Cullen was an asset to the department adding that this had been a very difficult decision to make. He said that he liked going with a known quality adding that the transition would be smooth especially because the officers and community knew him. He said he hoped Deputy Chief Cullen stayed on but thought that Lt. Luth had all the qualities he wanted to see in their next chief. Mr. Pease said he too discounted Chief Lavoie shortly during the assessment center. He said he wrestled with the decision. He said he thought the best candidate would be a combination of both the Deputy Chief and the Lt. He said he was choosing Lt. Luth to be the next Chief of the Groton Police Department and hoped that he and the Deputy could build a strong working relationship together.

Mr. Haddad said that if the Board was going to make a motion that night, he asked that it be contingent on a successful background check and successful negotiations. He said he contracted with Chief Ryder of Boxboro to do the background check adding it would take 2 weeks to complete.

*Mr. Degen moved that they offer an appointment to Michael Luth as the next Chief of Police for the Town of Groton pending a successful background check and contract negotiations. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT TASK FORCE**

Mr. Pease said there had been a request to change the way their selected candidates to a committee. He reviewed the process the Board had used in the past. Mr. Degen said that if they were going to change the process they had used for years, they needed to adopt a policy on how to appoint when they had multiple people applying. He said that using different standards was not a good way to conduct themselves as a Board. Ms. Pine asked if they had a written policy on how they did this. Mr. Pease said that there was no written policy but rather a lengthy history. Ms. Pine said she had been thinking about this and thought they would end up with a better and more diverse committee if they were to rank the 5 candidates and add the total. She proposed they use this format that night and write a policy for the future. Ms. Manugian said she was a little surprised they were having this conversation. Mr. Giger asked that they proceed with how they had historically done things.

Brooks Lyman introduced himself as resident for over 30 years. He said he had served on the Town Hall Building Committee among others over the years. He said he was concerned as a citizen for operational concerns. Mr. Degen asked what his financial background was. Mr. Lyman said he would mostly use his intelligence but that on the Housing Authority and the Building Committee they did a lot of that.

John Reilly said he had been in Groton for 3 years adding he had been on the Mass State Police for 30 years. He said that no matter what community he had been in, he had always put everything into that community. He said he was a call fire fighter in town and had a long line of fire fighters in his family. Mr. Reilly said he had been assigned to Massport fire adding he had an extensive network within the fire service and would use that to evaluate this. Mr. Reilly said he had also been involved in cruiser bids for the State Police and had been involved in budgeting. He said his main interest in serving was for the safety of his neighbors and community. He said he thought he could look at this with respect to the cost to the taxpayers and wanted to find a balance.

John Kane said he had been in town for over 30 years and recently had a taste of this environment as part of the Audit Committee. He said he thought this was an important item for the Town adding everything seemed to be working fine and didn't appear broken. He said he was concerned about Indian Hill moving forward and didn't if that changed the need for a call to fulltime department. Mr. Kane said that he was a finance major in college.

Ryan Monat said he had been in town since 2013. He said his family was from the Lost Lake area and had been for a long time. He said even though he was raised in Littleton, he felt as though he had a strong connection to the Town. Mr. Monat said he was a fulltime FF/Paramedic in Westford where he had been for 14 years but had started his career in Littleton. He said he was outside of the financial aspect of his department but had a good understanding of how it worked within public safety.

An Hee Foley said she was asked to consider applying to serve on this committee. She said she thought the independent audit done on the Fire Department had covered this. She said she wanted to better understand this adding she too worked on the Municipal Audit Committee. Ms. Foley said she moved to town in 2015 and wanted to build her roots here as did her husband. She said she was the CFO of a \$20M organization and had experience in cost analysis, price analysis, etc.

Jenifer Evans said she had been in town for 29 years and served on the Board of Assessors. She said he had been involved in NASA Studies studying the cost benefit analysis of how much money one should spend on asteroids and saving the world from them. Ms. Evans said she was an engineer with a statistics background.

Andrew Saball said he didn't have a financial background but was a 4th generation resident of Groton and was looking to get involved in the Town. He said he had a house fire last year and owe the Fire Department for saving his house. He thought this was a good way for him to give back.

Jack Petropoulos said he had started this project 6 years ago with Fire Station construction project and thought that being involved in this put an end to that project for him. He said that the Town Manager and Fire Chief could tell them what they need but thought it would be about the individual skills they would all bring forward. He thought that they should take their time making such a big decision. He said that at work he was asked to determine if a certain initiative was worth doing and thought this was exactly what he did every day.

Ms. Pine brought forth her initial proposal again adding she preferred that they rank the individuals. Mr. Pease said it was up the Chair to decide the rules of order. Mr. Haddad asked why they were changing the process that the Board had used for years. Mr. Robertson agreed with Mr. Haddad adding that the process used had been a fair one. Mr. Pease said he was moving forward with the process they had always used.

After a few rounds of voting due to ties, the Board selected An Hee Foley, John Kane, Peter Myette, Ryan Monat, and Jenifer Evans to serve on the Task Force. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to make a motion to appoint those 5 individuals to the Fire Department Task Force Committee.

*Ms. Manugian made a motion. Mr. Degen seconded the motion.*

Ms. Pine said that if someone were to drop out, they should offer that spot to Mr. Petropoulos. Mr. Pease said that they had a Committee Vacancy Policy and should continue to follow those practices.

*The motion carried unanimously.*

#### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – Cont.**

4. Ms. Manugian briefly explained the Goal Compilation spreadsheet she drafted. She explained how she tried to align the goals of the Board, Town Manager and Department Heads but that some didn't have similar categories. She said she wasn't sure what the desired outcome was at this point. Mr. Giger said he struggled with this a bit adding it was really important in the beginning to determine what the outcome that was expected was and how they would know when they got there. Mr. Degen said he had struggled with this for 12 years adding they needed a better format where they could measure metrics in terms of success as a goal. He said that there had to be a better way to doing that adding that Ms. Manugian certainly showed the struggles with getting there. Mr. Pease said that the document highlighted the items that were not lining up and understood the challenges. He said this was not going to be solved tomorrow but should be looked at further. Ms. Manugian agreed that they could continue to work on it.
5. Mr. Haddad said that Town Counsel had updated the Town Manager Review Policy to reflect the recent SJC decision. He asked the Board to consider adopting the revised policy that night. Ms. Pine said she didn't see anything about the compilation and them being allowed to comment on that compilation. Mr. Degen explained where the Board members would have an opportunity to bring up that issue and if it could be added. Mr. Haddad said that the compilation had to be reviewed and debated at a public meeting.

*Mr. Degen moved that they approve the amended Town Manager Review Policy. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

6. Mr. Haddad said that he reached out to Town Counsel and requested that he draft a zoning amendment to reflect the Board's position on a partial ban of Recreational Marijuana. He said he specifically asked that Town Counsel draft a zoning amendment that would amend the Article approved at the 2018 Spring Town Meeting, by disallowing 5 of the eight categories. He said he asked for an article that would allow, by Planning Board Special Permit, only Cultivation, Research Facilities and Testing Facilities in both GB and I Districts and ban all others in all districts. He said he also asked that the total facilities be increased from 1 to 3. He said he was also researching whether or not they would still need an election for a partial ban. He said he was concerned regardless of a partial ban, or an all-out ban, that they would still need to follow the two-step process.

Ms. Pine asked for some clarification on one of the items on page 2 adding it appeared to be in conflict. Mr. Pease asked that they table this until they could clarify with Town Counsel.

7. Mr. Haddad said it was time for the Select Board to make their annual appointments.  
Mr. Degen said that Stuart Schulman had been serving on the Affordable Housing Trust as the Board's designee but because one of the members would not be seeking reappointment, he thought they should make Mr. Schulman an at-large-member thus opening the door for another Select Board member.

*Mr. Degen moved to appoint Stuart Schulman to the Affordable Housing Trust as an at large member term to expire June 30, 2020. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 1: Ms. Manugian moved to appoint the individuals listed on page 1 with the exception of the Board of Registrars. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 2: Ms. Manugian moved to appoint the individuals listed on page 2. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Page 3: Ms. Pine moved to appoint the individuals listed on page 3. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Mr. Haddad asked the Board to consider ratifying his appointment of Connor Campbell as Pro Shop Staff at the Country Club. Ms. Manugian made the motion. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### **ONGOING ISSUES**

H: Mr. Haddad said that he had signed a contract with project low bidder for the Senior Center adding they would hold their kick off meeting in the next couple of weeks.

J: Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Bouchard was expediting the Charter through Representative Harrington's office.

O: Mr. Haddad said that the School Committee had asked that he sit on the Flo Ro Feasibility Committee adding they had decided to pick their own Committee members and would not be asking for recommendations.

*Mr. Degen moved that the enter in Executive Session pursuant to MGL, c30A, §21(a)(2) – “to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel” for the purpose of discussing the Police Chief’s contract and with the intent to enter into a second Executive Session at the conclusion of this Executive Session. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. Roll Call: Giger-aye; Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Pease-aye.*

Mr. Pease adjourned the meeting at 10:21pm.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
John Giger, Clerk

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

Date Approved: 7/9/18