

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MINUTES AUGUST 20, 2018
APPROVED**

BOS Members Present: Alison S. Manugian, Vice Chair; John R. Giger, Clerk; Rebecca H. Pine, Member
Members Absent: Barry A. Pease; Joshua A. Degen
Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Jack Risdon said that Pepperell Road was flooding in various spots due to all the rain and wondered what was going on with Squannacook Hall.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that the Cultural Council had recommended that the Select Board appoint Berta Erickson to the Council. He said that this would be for a five-year term, ending in 2023. He respectfully requested that the Board consider making the appointment.

Ms. Pine moved to appoint Berta Erickson to the Local Cultural Council term to end June, 30, 2023. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Mr. Haddad said that as directed by the Board at their last meeting, and in consultation with the Fire Chief, he had prepared a memorandum providing a recommendation to hire two (2) additional Firefighter/EMT's in FY 2019. Mr. Haddad said that he and the Fire Chief had met with the Finance Committee about this right before the Board's meeting and thought that the issue spoke for itself. Mr. Haddad said that the cost to the Town for January through June was \$75K and would come out of ambulance receipts. He said that the Chief was pretty confident that they were taking in approximately \$29K/month in ambulance receipts. He said he thought they could fund the \$75K out of that number and still replace ambulances and other EMS related items if needed. He said that the Finance Committee voted 4-0-3 in favor of moving forward with this in FY19.

Ms. Pine said that the Chief had made a compelling case of the current problem they had. She asked how this would help a current problem if the new personnel didn't start until January. Chief McCurdy said that they could start them earlier but added this was an annual problem not just a summer problem. Mr. Haddad said that Town Meeting had to appropriate the funds and that there was a recruitment period. Ms. Pine asked what they were doing about the current situation. Chief McCurdy said that they have some personnel that just received certifications but they couldn't work a lot of shifts moving forward due to work schedules. Ms. Pine asked if there was any legal way to say that when they invest in training that they have to stay a minimal amount of time with the Town or pay back some of the cost of training. Attorney Paul DeRensis said that was something that had to be bargained for. Mr. Haddad said that they could reach out to the Union and see if they could add a side letter to the agreement. Mr. Giger said that he would like to see if other departments used this approach or have tried it.

PUBLIC HEARING - 2018 FALL TOWN MEETING WARRANT

Mr. Haddad read the public hearing notice into the record.

Mr. Giger moved to open the public hearing. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Pine moved to defer the public hearing to the conclusion of this discussion. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – Cont.

Ms. Pine said that they had a presentation a year ago from the firm that conducted the strategic plan adding that the focus was on recruiting on-call personnel. Chief McCurdy said that the final report recommended that they hire four

additional FF/EMT. He said that the recommendation for the additional on-call staff was in the draft report. He said that they would always work to recruit on-call staff and had been recruiting more now than in previous years but only getting 1 or 2 additional call members with each recruitment. Ms. Pine said that she was torn adding that they obviously had a problem, but thought their process had been muddled and left asking what the task force had left to do. Mr. Haddad said that the Task Force was looking at the future of the department which could lead to a recommendation to move toward a 24/7 department or not. Mr. Green said that the Finance Committee voted in support of this plan to add 2 additional personnel with 3 of them deferring because they were looking for some additional financial numbers. He said that there was a problem that needed to be solved in the short term but still the need to understand the future needs. Mr. Haddad said he would be getting the Finance Committee the information as soon as he could. Mr. Giger said that the reason they were where they were was because they had been understaffed for the past few years. He said that creative ways to find solutions had been used but that he didn't want to see this kicked down the road adding he wanted to see current staffing potential achieved right now. Ms. Pine asked if those coming back from a paternity leave and or the long-term injury would help. Chief McCurdy said that 6pm-8pm was a huge problem for them adding that those people coming back would not help that. He added that none of their personnel had attended a class for additional training in over a year due to shortages. Mr. Giger said that history was history and didn't see the relevance to where they were now. Ms. Manugian agreed. She said that Ms. Pine brought up solutions that could help things but that they were only one more injury/illness away from a bigger problem. She said that this would also show the existing personnel that they hear them and want to help them. She said that this would put an end time on the superhuman effort. Chief McCurdy said that they were providing less service with more demand. Mr. Giger said he thought the Chief had done an excellent job advertising for additional volunteers as least 3 times using banners, postcards, advertising in the Groton Herald, etc. He said it was more effort than he'd ever seen. Mr. Haddad said that the call department was still crucial in this operation.

Mr. Giger moved that they move forward on hiring on 2 additional fulltime fire fighters subject to Town Meeting appropriation. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING - 2018 FALL TOWN MEETING WARRANT

Ms. Pine moved that they reopen the public hearing on the Special and Fall Town Meeting Warrants. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad started with the Special Town Meeting Warrant. He explained that Article 1 updated the wage and classification schedule as shown in Appendix A by the 4% that the Supervisor's Union agreed to. He added that the bylaw employees would be going to 30% on health insurance. Mr. Haddad said that Article 2 was to update the FY19 operating budget. He said that increase to various line items would be made based on collective bargaining adding he would be showing the original budget voted on at the Spring Town Meeting and the proposed budget at the time of the Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad said that Article 3 was an amendment to the marijuana bylaw to ban certain uses of marijuana except for testing, laboratory and cultivation. He said that the Planning Board held a public hearing on this but did not take a position. He said that the Select Board needed to be prepared to meet after Town Meeting on October 1 or the next day to vote to call for a Special Election to place the marijuana questions on the ballot.

Mr. Haddad said that Article 1 of the Fall Town Meeting Warrant was to vote on \$1,400 in prior year bills. He said they would have a list of those bills within the motion at Town Meeting. He said that Articles 2 and 3 were enterprise fund placeholders adding they may or may not go forward with them. Mr. Orcutt said that positions would be taken on both of these within the next 2 weeks by the Water and Sewer Commissions. Mr. Haddad said that Article 4 was to transfer money into the capital stabilization fund adding he thought they would need to transfer about \$508K out of free cash. Mr. Haddad said that Article 5 was to transfer money into the stabilization fund adding that about \$58K was needed to reach their policy of 5%. Article 6 was to transfer money into newly created GDRSD stabilization fund. Mr. Haddad said that they would need about \$450K to fund their capital plan if the Town wanted to meet their capital needs.

Mr. Haddad said that Article 7 was requesting engineering money to renovate the existing DPW garages and construct new garages for a total of \$3.8M. Mr. Delaney explained the floor plans of the existing garages the proposed renovations/new construction for a new garage to house the trucks. He said that these plans would bring them to where they should be but was

not a fluff and buff like originally thought. Mr. Giger asked if the garage for the trucks would be heated. Mr. Delaney said it would be minimally heated to help with ice melt in the winter. Mr. Giger said that having visited this location over the years he thought this made a lot of sense. Mr. Delaney said it was not cost effective to add to the original building. Mr. Haddad said they would be looking for \$223K to design this adding that exact costs would be brought to the Spring Town Meeting. He said that the engineering money needed would come out of free cash. Ms. Manugian said she was convinced of the need but was having trouble digesting this.

Mr. Haddad said that Article 8 was requesting \$60 to design and put out to bid a new roof for the library. He said that estimates to replace the roof were in the \$1M range. Ms. Manugian said that they had received a very comprehensive report from the Trustees. Mr. Mark Gerath said that they were asking to seal the building envelope including roof, walls, gutters and drainage. He said they hired an architectural firm to do an evaluation and provide a preliminary estimate. Ms. Manugian asked if they had considered CPC money or grants. Mr. Gerath said that community preservation money could be obtained for the historic portion adding they received money from CPA to fund the study for that portion. He said that they would continue to have more discussions on that with the CPC. Mr. Gerath said they were advocating for a slate roof because of its nature and longevity. Ms. Manugian asked how that decision would be made. Mr. Haddad said that it was a decision of the Trustees, the Select Board and the Finance Committee.

Mr. Haddad said that Article 9 was on there to potentially offset the tax rate. Article 10 was a placeholder to extend the Center Sewer District. Mr. Orcutt said that the Sewer Commission would be taking a position on this on Thursday. Ms. Manugian said that the parcel requesting sewer was a sizeable parcel. She said she assumed there was capacity. Mr. Orcutt said that capacity was what they were working on. Mr. Haddad said that Article 11 was to add 2 residential properties to the Four Corners Sewer District. He said that the developer would pay for all costs. Mr. Haddad said that Article 12 set the bylaws for the Four Corners Sewer District and allowed for both residential and commercial property. He said that the Board would be holding another rate hearing at their next meeting. Mr. Haddad said that Article 13 was amending Chapter 13 of the code for the Finance Committee into the bylaw to match the changes made in the Charter. He said this was a housekeeping article. Article 14 was to change Selectmen to Select Board in all bylaws. Article 15 was a zoning amendment to change the zoning bylaws from Selectmen to Select Board. He said that the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on September 13th. Mr. Haddad requested that the Board remove Article 16 from the warrant. He said that they wanted to create a Capital Planning subcommittee who would bring back a potential bylaw in the future.

Ms. Pine moved that they remove Article 16 from the draft warrant of the 2018 Fall Town Meeting. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad said that Article 17 was a request by the Historical Commission to amend the demo delay bylaw to increase the demo delay period from 6 months to 18 months. Mr. Bob DeGroot, Chair of the Historical Commission said that the current bylaw allows for a 6 month delay period for historic structures. He said they were asking that this be changed to 18 months. Mr. DeGroot said that the Commission did not have a budget to research historical significance and because they were all volunteers, they were just looking for additional time to complete their due diligence on structures 75 years or older. He said that they looked at other surrounding communities adding that most of them had 12-18-month delays with a couple with as much as 24 months. Ms. Pine asked if there would be instances where the Commission would agree to finish earlier than 18 months. Mr. DeGroot said they would not be required to take the full 18 months. Ms. Pine said she was very much in favor of this.

Mr. Haddad said that Article 18 was to accept Amelia Way as a town road. Mr. Takashi Tada laid out the process moving forward. Mr. Giger said there was good reason for them to remain cautious on this one. Mr. Haddad said that Article 19 was to vote to rework the intersection on Farmers Row and Peabody Street in conjunction with sidewalks being installed by Groton School. Mr. Haddad said that Article 20 was a Citizen's Petition requesting a fee policy. Mr. Jack Petropoulos, a proponent of this article said that this could be withdrawn if the Board developed a policy prior to town meeting. Mr. Haddad said that in order to withdraw an article, they would need the same 10 signatures to do so. Mr. Haddad said that Article 21 was also a Citizen's Petition. Mr. Tada said he was not sure the applicant would be ready for a public hearing of the Planning Board on September 13th. He said he was not a well-defined enough amendment.

Mr. Haddad said he had been working on a lease with the Friends and wanted to thank everyone involved for all their work on it. He said that they had accomplished a lot in a short time. Mr. Haddad said that the lease was structured so that the Friends would be self-sufficient in the third year. He said that he and Mr. Robertson had met on Friday morning to go through the budget in great detail. He said they thought they would need \$25K in addition to the \$32K already appropriated. He said that it was their recommendation that the Board open the warrant and add an article relative to this additional funding required. He asked the Board to consider making this motion to add this and only this article. Mr. Green asked if this would cover money needed for all 3 years. Mr. Haddad said it would adding they estimated needs an additional \$25K to cover all three years of the lease to cover the Town's costs. Mr. Robertson said that if the Friends model was correct they would not need this money. He said this could cover them for 3 years should Friends not succeed. Mr. Giger said he would feel better if there was wording in the article that said Friends would pay their rent before paying for other things. Mr. Haddad said that the lease was very specific that they had to pay their rent.

Ms. Pine moved that they open the warrant for the 2018 Fall Town Meeting. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Giger asked if the lease would be available to the public. Mr. Haddad said that they could post it once it was adopted.

Ms. Pine moved that they add a new article for operational funding for the Prescott School to the October 1, 2018 Fall Town Meeting Warrant with permission for the Town Manager to place it. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Pine moved that they close the warrant for the October 1, 2018 Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to continue the public hearing on both warrants until next Monday, August 27, 2018 at 7:15pm.

Ms. Manugian made the motion. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – Cont.

3. Mr. Haddad said that Select Board Member Giger updated the Fee Waiver Policy based on feedback from their last meeting. He said he provided the Board with a copy of the proposed policy and asked the Board to consider adopting the policy. Mr. Giger said that they may want to add a part 4 that make clear there could be differences between state and federal law. Ms. Pine said she thought this was a lot cleaner and clearer. She suggested that it be made clear that there was a past practice that fees between entities of the town were always waived.

Ms. Pine moved that they adopt the Reduction, Deferral or Waiver of Town, State and Federal Fees Policy as amended in their discussion that evening. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Mr. Haddad said that residents Kevin Lindemer and Jack Petropoulos had requested time on a future Agenda before Town Meeting to make a presentation on Groton's economic development potential. He said that they had been working on a project to study Groton's potential for commercial development They had presented the results of their work to the Board of Assessors, Economic Development Committee, the Groton Business Association and the Planning Board adding that their objective was to provide a valuable and fact-based asset to the Select Board and ultimately to the Town for use in future planning. Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Pease asked that the Board determine if this was something they wanted to schedule. Ms. Manugian said that speaking as a member of the EDC, Mr. Petropoulos and Mr. Lindemer had come before the EDC. She said that they presentation was interesting adding that the EDC wanted to hold to do a workshop on their own to discuss key development. She thought it made more sense for Mr. Petropoulos and Mr. Lindemer to work with the EDC and then bring it forward to the Select Board. Mr. Petropoulos said that the presentation was about setting the Town's expectations on economic development. He said if the public could be better informed they would make better decisions. He said they would like to work with the EDC but wanted to present to the Select Board before Town Meeting. Mr. Giger said he would like to see it

before Town Meeting. Ms. Pine said she also would like to hear more. Mr. Haddad said that he would work with the Chair to schedule this.

5. Mr. Haddad said that the Board was in receipt of an Open Meeting Law Violation from Jack Petropoulos. He said that the complainant was asking that the Board discontinue the practice of listing the On-Going Issues on the agenda as well as Votes May Be Taken from that section. He said that the original complaint dated August 3, 2018 had the Chair and the Town Manager taking OML training as one of the remedies adding that was removed in the revised version dated August 4, 2018. Mr. Haddad said that he asked Town Counsel to draft an opinion which he had done. He said that Town Counsel's opinion was that the Board's practice did not break the OML and that they were not in violation of the OML. Mr. Giger said that the determination by Town Counsel was very thorough. He said he was very comfortable with it as written. Ms. Pine said it was always good to find that they were not breaking the law. She said that the list was for informational updates and thought they might be better served to label list as for informational updates and questions only. Mr. Haddad said that he and Ms. Manugian had a long conversation that morning about this. He said he was glad they were not in violation of the OML adding he was very careful when drafting agendas to list vote may be taken after everything. He said that some committees use standard language to say votes may be taken at the end of the agenda as a footnote instead of listing it after every agenda item. He said he was happy to change my practice and do that. Mr. Giger said that this list on the agenda helped him to remember what items they have out there adding he was comfortable making the discussed changes.

Ms. Manugian moved to authorize Town Counsel to send the decision. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ON-GOING ISSUES

A: Mr. Haddad said he would bring the lease to them next week.

B: Mr. Haddad said that he wanted to leave this on until construction was completed.

C: Mr. Haddad said that the project was going really well. He said that the goal of the contractor was to have building up by November 1st. Mr. Giger commented o the fencing. Mr. Haddad said that it was needed because of security and the turtle protection plan which requires fencing.

D: Mr. Haddad said he had nothing to report.

E: Mr. Haddad said this was with Mr. Degen.

F: Mr. Haddad said he would have a summary on this in mid-September.

G: Mr. Haddad said he provided an update earlier.

H: Mr. Haddad said he had nothing to report.

I: Mr. Haddad said they were changing the name of this.

J: Mr. Haddad said that this was underway and ongoing adding he hoped to be done by the end of September.

K: Mr. Haddad said that Town Meeting would act on this on October 1.

L: Mr. Haddad said that no meeting dates had been set yet.

M: Mr. Haddad said that this would be coming off. N - yet to come back

O: Mr. Haddad said he talked about that earlier.

P: Mr. Haddad said he hoped that this would come off next week.

Q: Mr. Haddad said that they had discussed this earlier.

R: Mr. Giger asked that R be added to say highway department garage

MINUTES

Mr. Giger moved to approve the meeting minutes of August 6, 2018 as amended by Ms. Pine. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved: _____
John Giger, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 9/4/18