

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MINUTES JUNE 3, 2019
APPROVED

SB Members Present: Alison S. Manugian, Chair; Joshua A. Degen, Vice Chair; John F. Reilly, Clerk; John R. Giger, Member; Rebecca H. Pine, Member

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

Mr. Haddad called the meeting to order at 7:00pm, welcomed Mr. John Reilly to the Board and Mr. Josh Degen to another term and reviewed the agenda.

BOARD REORGANIZATION

Ms. Pine nominated Ms. Manugian for Chair. The nomination carried unanimously.

Ms. Pine nominated Mr. Degen for Vice Chair. The nomination carried unanimously.

Mr. Giger and Mr. Degen nominated Mr. Reilly as Clerk. The nomination carried 4-1 with Mr. Reilly voting against.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Degen reflected on where they lived and about taking a moment to stop and do something different once in a while, while enjoying life around them.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that Deputy Police Chief James Cullen would be attending a six-month training course at the FBI Academy in Virginia adding they were all excited for the Deputy and the great experience he would bring back to the Town of Groton. During his absence, Police Chief Luth requested that he appoint Sergeant Ed Sheridan as Acting Lieutenant to assist the Chief with the various administrative functions that were the responsibility of the Deputy. Mr. Haddad said that he had made that appointment and would respectfully request that the Board consider ratifying the temporary appointment. Chief Luth said he couldn't be happier to have Sergeant Sheridan as the acting Lieutenant.

Mr. Giger moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Sergeant Sheridan as Acting Lieutenant while the Deputy was out of town. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Mr. Haddad said that the Board had requested some additional cost comparisons for legal costs which he had provided the Board. He asked the Board how they wanted to proceed. Ms. Manugian said that she emailed Mr. Haddad that afternoon and was struggling to make an apples to apples comparison. She said that they asked for input from other Boards and had not seen anything from them. Ms. Manugian said that she wasn't sure if the department heads would feel comfortable commenting recognizing their presence at the meeting. Mr. Degen asked what the litigation costs were for the previous year. Mr. Haddad reviewed the spreadsheets.

Mr. Degen asked Mr. Haddad to look at the previous 3 FY's and provide them with what was outside the retainer. He said to look at the current bills and do an analysis of what would have been covered under a retainer with current counsel. Mr. Giger said that they were billed for Indian Hill as litigation and wanted to know why while also asking for clarification on other litigation costs. Ms. Pine said that it was important to look at their sense of satisfaction with the services they were receiving also. Ms. Pine said she wanted to confirm that legal services would continue past June 30th. Mr. Haddad said that that was correct adding it would continue on a month to month basis. Mr. Degen said he was fine moving forward with month to month but thought they should ask both firms for costs estimates for both legal and labor and retainers. Ms. Manugian suggested waiting until they received the breakdown from Mr. Haddad. Ms. Pine mentioned the review of the policies and how important some of them would be to get done now. Mr. Degen asked Mr. DeRensis if he would be completing that in the meantime within the retainer. Mr. DeRensis said that they would.

GDRSD - MSBA PROCESS/UPDATE

Dr. Chesson said that it had been a while since the Town went through an MSBA process adding it was a lengthy process. She said that it was very difficult to get through the Statement of Intent (SOI) process the first time adding that Groton was fortunate to get through the first time because of the conditions of the school and the fact that Groton had students going to school in Dunstable. She said that the combination of schools had not been successful and didn't make it through the entire process. She said that they had hired an OPM and put out an RFS for designers. She said that they wanted to explain where they were in the process.

Ryan McLane, School Committee member from Dunstable, said that there was a strong desire to bring some of their 5th and 6th graders back to Dunstable. Ms. Pine said she was hearing that the MSBA wanted to see the Groton students educated back in Groton. Dr. Chesson said that that was how the SOI was written and not something that was dictated by the MSBA. Mr. Giger said he was concerned about the significant amount of money they were talking about. He said he was concerned with bringing the Groton students back together. Mr. McLane said that they were happy to have the Groton students in Dunstable. He said that the SOI was written that way. Mr. Giger suggested that they withdraw their application and start again. Mr. McLane said that they ran the risk of not getting into the program again and that costs and delays would be significant.

Dr. Chesson said that they would also potentially see a reduction in bussing costs. She said that they would also be looking at building classrooms for the preschoolers and moving them out of the current building they are. She said that they were exploring all options. Ms. Manugian said that the SOI already eliminated a huge category of alternatives. Dr. Chesson said that it eliminated one consolidated school. She said that Dunstable was not interested in a consolidated school. Mr. Degen asked what happened if Dunstable decided in 10 years that their school needed to be updated and the district lost their bite at the apple. Mr. McLane said that they needed to pass a project that was supported and in need. He said that the Dunstable side wouldn't be reimbursed at all. He said that another issue was that the residents didn't want to send their elementary children to another town to be educated. He said that this was across the Board and not a Dunstable issue.

Ms. Manugian asked how they looked at operating costs and educational parity between a school with 650 students vs something much smaller. She said she didn't remember this conversation as a former member of the School Committee. Dr. Chesson said that the School Committee would have had voted on this to submit it. Mr. Giger said that the SOI was written the way it was because someone wanted all Groton students pulled back into Groton. He said that Dunstable has said it didn't want to do something which made this a Groton thing. Dr. Chesson said that the feasibility study would be looking at the conditions of the Swallow Union School to determine what its life was. Discussion ensued. Mr. Giger said that Groton and Dunstable needed to work as a team and be together on this for the children.

ON-GOING ISSUES

A: Mr. Haddad said that the Senior Center had been moving along the last few weeks adding that fundraising had been going great also. Mr. Cunningham said that the finding for the emergency generator in the amount of \$92K had moved through the house and the senate and was waiting for the Governor to sign off on it which was really good news. Mr. Giger said that it was great news but still tentative. Mr. Cunningham said that the windows and glazing were being installed right now.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – Cont.

3. Mr. Haddad said that the Board requested a timeline for the implementation of 24/7 Full-time Firefighter Coverage. In consultation with the Fire Chief, he offered the following timeframe. Mr. Haddad noted that the timeframe was based on the hiring process of the two new firefighters approved at the 2019 Spring Town Meeting, and the completion of Fire Academy training by the two firefighters hired in January, 2019:

- June 3, 2019 Written test taken by all applicants for the two new positions
- June 10, 2019 First Round of Interviews
- June 17, 2019 Chief Interviews
- June 21, 2019 Conditional Offer of Employment made to two candidates
- July, 2019 Background checks, physical and Physical Agility Test for new candidates
- July 1, 2019 Firefighters hired in January attend Fire Academy (10-week course)

- August 1, 2019 Potential Start Date for two new firefighters
- Sept 15, 2019 Potential Return of firefighters from the Academy
- Oct 15, 2019 Implement 24/7 Full-time Coverage

Mr. Haddad noted that while all of this was going on, they would be in negotiations with the Fire Union to amend the Agreement with IAFF to implement this coverage.

4. Mr. Haddad said that the Board had asked him to get quotes on insurance to cover them with public safety injuries. He said that the cost for 111F coverage would be \$81K and the Town would be reimbursed \$1,000/week that someone was out injured. He said that there would be an additional \$40K cost to cover the salary (because \$1,000 would not cover an employee's salary) and recommended against this. Ms. Pine said she thought there might be other options they should be exploring. She asked about long term disability. Mr. Haddad said that they offered the employees policies at their own cost. Mr. Haddad said that it was the law that police and fire personnel when injured on duty were paid their full salary. Mr. Haddad said that in his tenure here in Groton, there had only been 2 individuals and unfortunately, they were both occurring at the same time right now. Mr. Giger said that they should ask the insurance company what the probability of injuries in the future was.

5. Mr. Haddad said that they had requested a summary of the new OSHA requirements on the DPW and the building facility. He provided the Board with an abridged version of the overall requirements on municipalities (taking out the school, police and fire department requirements and only included the DPW). Mr. Haddad said that the effective date of the new requirements was February 1, 2019. Mr. Degen said that it was so over the top but necessary. Mr. Haddad said that they were being proactive in meeting OSHA requirements adding employees had been sent to training and that they had constant meetings with their insurance company to make sure they were complaint. Mr. Giger suggested using the compliance list of goals with the department heads. Mr. Haddad said that the department heads were tasked with making sure compliance was being met.

6. Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Board approve a One Day Beer and Wine License for the Groton Conservation Trust for their Annual Sunset Event on June 13, 2019 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. contingent on receiving the insurance certificate.

Ms. Pine made the motion. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Manugian said that they had started to discuss the end time of Board meetings policy Mr. Giger brought forward at their last meeting. Ms. Manugian said she didn't think there was an issue to need to go there right now. Mr. Degen suggested that no agenda items start after 10:30pm but didn't include an executive session beyond that. Ms. Pine said she would support the Chairs use of potential powers to suggest other nights for executive sessions should agendas run over. Mr. Giger said he felt comfortable with what had been suggested.

Ms. Pine asked about the Building Commissioner and about Mr. Haddad's goal for a succession plan. Mr. Haddad said that the Building Commissioner had agreed to stay on for one more year and would be bringing that appointment forward at their next meeting.

Mr. Giger said he wanted to recognize the Veterans Service Office, the American Legion organization and those that supported the Memorial Day affairs. He said a lot of work went into the parade and had done a great job.

ON-GOING ISSUES

E: Mr. Haddad said that the Charter was expected to be approved by the end of June. Mr. Haddad suggested holding off on the Finance Committee appointments until the Charter was approved so that the new TROICA could appoint as per the Charter.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Giger said that the Master Plan Implementation Committee was still moving along.

Ms. Pine said that they were invited to a Housing Production Plan meeting and cited an email they received earlier that day.

MINUTES

Mr. Degen moved to approve the meeting minutes of April 22, 2019. Ms. Pine seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Degen moved to approve the meeting minutes of April 29, 2019. Ms. Pine seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Pine moved to approve minutes of May 6, 2019. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Degen moved to approve the minutes of May 15, 2019 as amended. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16pm.

Approved: _____
John Reilly, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted:
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 6/10/19