

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Pine wanted to note the article in the Herald about the high school students and the records archive they worked on along with Michael LaTerz of the Historical Commission.

Ms. Pine said that the Non-Profit Council was meeting on Friday, September 20th from 9-10:30am at the Prescott School.

Mr. Degen said that they had a discussion last week about the release of the packet prior to their meeting. He said he had received a lot of emails and encouraged people to contact them with their feedback. Ms. Manugian said it would be on their next agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Art Prest said that on August 31st they lost one of Groton's finest, Lorraine Leonard. He provided some kind words about Ms. Leonard and her active involvement within the community and asked for a moment of silence.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that that warrant closed on August 29th adding there were 17 articles. He said that the public hearing would be held on September 16th at 7:15pm. Mr. Haddad reviewed the articles within the warrant.

He spent some time on Article 10 discussing the request for funding, whether it be an annual appropriation out of free cash or placed within the budget permanently, to conduct cyclical inspections, now that the full measure and list had been completed, and an update to the Town's maps.

Mr. Haddad said that he and Mr. Delaney put an article on the warrant to address the Municipal Separate Stormwater System Permit (MS4). He said that implementing this permit was a very expensive funding need. He said that they wanted to hire a consultant to help them come up with a strategy to fund this permit adding it could mean a surcharge on the tax bill to help fund this. He said that the cost could be between \$300-600K annually. Mr. Prest said that this would be an important thing to study citing the stormwater runoff they experience at the lake.

There was a brief discussion about Article 12 which was a proposed bylaw to ban plastic bags.

Mr. Giger requested that a map of the property the Conservation Commission was interested in purchasing as discussed in Article 13 be placed in the warrant. Mr. Degen asked for a priority list from the Conservation Commission of lands on their protection/purchase list.

Mr. Haddad said that Article 15 was to create a revolving fund for the new gym equipment at the Senior Center. He said that people would be charged a nominal fee to use the equipment which could then be used to maintain the equipment moving forward. There was a mixed initial reaction to this.

There was a discussion about Articles 16 and 17 and what it meant to accept and layout the roads.

Mr. Haddad said that the petitioners would be withdrawing their Citizen's Petition (Article 18). He said that he received a phone call that this would be withdrawn but that he needed the 10 signatures that placed it on the warrant to remove it by law.

2. Mr. Haddad said that they had received a request for a One Day Beer and Wine License for 3 Common Inc.; dba Bull Run Restaurant, for a Wedding to be held on September 14, 2019 from 4-10 p.m. at Sunset Farm, 154 Farmers Row. He respectfully requested that the Board consider approving this license.

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

3. Mr. Haddad said that when the Select Board approved the Charge of the Major Initiative Planning Committee last month, they requested that he forward it to the Finance Committee for their review and comments. He said that the Finance Committee met last week and have voted unanimously to propose changing the overall charge and name of the Committee to the originally proposed Capital Planning Committee. They are not in favor of the Major Initiative Planning Committee. The Finance Committee believes the part of the Charge that has to do with budgetary matters is not necessary and the focus of the Committee should be on capital planning only. Specifically, the Finance Committee believes that having them examine budgetary matters is a duplicate effort as it is the responsibility of the Finance Committee and Finance Team to oversee the preparation of the Town's Operating Budget. Furthermore, depending on the issue, there is no way of knowing what kind of expertise is needed on the Committee and it would be impossible to have a five-member Committee with the knowledge needed for all matters. Finally, the Finance Committee believes that the Committee, as currently proposed, is adding more bureaucracy to the Town which is not needed. The Finance Committee voted unanimously to propose a new Charge to the Select Board for your consideration. Mr. Haddad provided the Board with the Charge as approved by the Board and the redlined Charge as provided by the Finance Committee.

Mr. Haddad said that they had received 11 applications to serve on the Committee as approved by the Board. He said that depending on what the Board decided, they may want to re-advertise the openings because of the differences.

Mr. Robertson said that the Finance Committee asked themselves what the charge was trying to accomplish and what problem they were trying to address. Mr. Robertson said that the Charge recommended by the FC was essentially the original Capital Planning Committee. Ms. Manugian said that they wanted to prioritize anything that affected their funding mechanisms. Mr. Robertson said that the Capital planning process was different than the actual budget process. Mr. Robertson said that they wanted to see the directors add a new 5-year initial page into the capital budget. He said that the department directors were the only ones that knew what they were going to need moving forward. He said that the process exists today adding that they just didn't have that page within their budget. Mr. Robertson said that didn't see the need to have another Committee to talk with the department directors about what they needed adding they needed to utilize the process they already had better. He said that a Capital Planning Committee could assist in looking at current buildings and inventory of vehicles to determine needs, turn in timeframes, etc.

Ms. Manugian said that her concern was the need for an entity that was looking at all these demands coming out of the citizens pocketbooks. She asked who would look at the priorities. Mr. Robertson said that it was the job of the Town Manager, Select Board and the Finance Committee. He said that companies had a capital budget and an operating budget and they only intertwined at the top. He said they didn't need a committee running around town trying to find out what was needed. Ms. Pine said she liked the idea of a five-year initiatives list but did not think they needed to change the approved charge in order to do that. Mr. Robertson said that it added another 5 people to solve an unknown problem adding it was a waste of effort of that they already had in place. Ms. Pine said that they needed to have an entity that didn't have a stake in things look at the needs of the departments. Mr. Robertson talked about different skillsets being needed for different requests (addition of personnel would be different than vehicle needs). Mr. Prest said that this would be adding another layer of bureaucracy that was not needed. He asked that the Board let the Finance Committee deal with the operating budget and the capital planning committee as an advisory committee only look at the capital budget.

Ms. Eliot said that she supported a planning committee but wanted to see that there be diversity on the committee. She said that there needed to be representatives from the diverse needs of the Town. She said that Strategic Planning Committee of the 80's was something they should refer to.

Mr. Giger said that he was where the Finance Committee was at. He said that the approved charge was going to take all power away from the Finance Committee and everyone else. He said that he would like to better define things to make sure things were clear. He said that they should support the Finance Committee's recommendation. Mr. Degen said that the Committee should not have the membership that Ms. Eliot suggested but instead independent people. Mr. Reilly said that he had an issue with \$30K limit from the beginning. He said that they would get bogged down in everything. Mr. Reilly said that they needed to use the process in place and allow the Finance Committee to do their job. Ms. Pine asked if there was a figure that would make more sense. Mr. Robertson said that they should get the best athlete but not make a list of those required. Mr. Degen agreed with Mr. Robertson. Mr. Degen said that this committee would be looking at new service proposals at the request of the Select Board. Mr. Degen said he didn't see how moving forward with what had been proposed would hurt. He said it would lay a framework for the future. He said that looking at additional employees and capital items, he didn't see a downside to this adding he respected the Finance Committee's perspective. Ms. Pine said she would like to see them proceed as they voted adding she would be willing to raise the amount they look at. Mr. Prest said that the \$30K threshold was within the operating budget and not the capital budget.

Mr. Giger said that he heard Mr. Degen and Ms. Pine say there was not downside, he said he saw no upside. He suggested starting from the bottom up and look at something they had not first. He said they didn't need a committee to look at the operating budget but should be looking at the capital budget. He said that they could look, as Mr. Robertson suggested, any significant operating expenditures that may be in the future.

Ms. Pine moved that they move forward with the original charge of the MIPC with one revision to change the impact from \$30K to \$50K. Mr. Degen seconded the motion.

Ms. Manugian said she was up in the air. She said she was comfortable if the Chair of the Finance Committee was ensuring them that they could get a better handle on the capital needs, to allow them a year or two to do that. Mr. Degen said that they had a goal to establish this committee adding that they voted unanimously to make this a goal, that they voted 5-0 to make this a committee, and because of some pushback from the Finance Committee they needed to remember they were the elected officials of the Town. He said that the Finance Committee were advisory to them and not the policy setters. Mr. Giger said that this initiative sat on their to do list for months and all of a sudden it became a crisis and needed to happen right away.

Roll Call: Giger-nay; Degen-aye; Pine-aye; Reilly-nay; Manugian-nay. The motion was defeated by a 2-3 vote.

Ms. Manugian suggested allowing her, Mr. Robertson and the Town Manager to look at the redline version and bring forward something for review. Mr. Haddad suggested re-advertising the new charge once finalized and reach out to the applicants in the meantime letting them know of the changes. Mr. Degen asked if he could sit down with Mr. Robertson and Mr. Haddad instead of Ms. Manugian as it was his goal.

4. Mr. Haddad said that they were in the process applying for Green Community Status with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. He said that one of the things they needed to do for their application was have the Select Board adopt a Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Policy which needed to be adopted by both the Select Board and School Superintendent. He respectfully requested that the Board consider adopting the Policy.

Mr. Haddad said that any vehicle over 8,500 in GVW being used for something other than an emergency that they would purchase an energy efficient vehicle. He said they would be looking at energy efficient dump trucks as an example. Mr. Degen said that there were trucks that were biodiesel. He said that they needed to adopt this in order to move forward with their Green Community application. Ms. Manugian said she didn't fully understand all the

things they needed to commit to. Mr. Haddad said he was not overly concerned with adopting this given some of the exclusions.

Ms. Pine moved to adopt the Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Policy for the Town of Groton. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Mr. Haddad said that he, Select Board Chair Manugian, Human Resources Director Melisa Doig, Executive Assistant Dawn Dunbar had begun the process of reviewing all Board policies. He said that they had begun by reviewing Town Counsel's proposed edits. Mr. Haddad said that he believed they would be ready for full Board review in the next couple of weeks. He asked the Board to consider picking a date to hold a workshop for this purpose.

Mr. Haddad provided the Board with a list of proposed meeting dates going through the end of the calendar year. Mr. Haddad suggested a workshop date of Wednesday, October 2nd beginning at 6pm. The Board decided on Thursday, October 17th at Legion Hall at 6pm.

ON-GOING ISSUES

A: Mr. Haddad said that the Senior Center Building project was still on target for October 22nd.

B: Mr. Haddad said that the Town Hall Renovations was moving along. He said that they hoped to be moved back in by Wednesday.

D: Mr. Haddad said that there was a meeting with DEP on September 25th adding he planned to be there for that. Mr. Degen said that they were talking about a \$7M project. He asked who it would be borne by. Mr. Haddad said that that would be borne by the rate payers as was his understanding right now. Mr. Degen said he would like to see that in writing. Ms. Manugian asked that the Water Commissioners be invited in to the October 7th meeting.

E: Mr. Haddad said that the Green Communities application date had been pushed off until October 31st but added that they were well on their way.

I: Mr. Haddad said he met with the GD Florence Roche project team today adding they reviewed the 8 firms who submitted. He said he would be attending meeting at the State House next Tuesday.

K: Mr. Haddad said that the Highway Building Committee met last Tuesday adding that the project was on schedule and moving along.

MINUTES

Mr. Giger moved to adopt the meeting minutes of August 26, 2019 as amended. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:26pm.

Approved: _____
John Reilly, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted:
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 09/23/19