

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020
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.

Mr. Robertson called the Finance Committee to order at 7:00pm. Present were members Bud Robertson, Gary Green, Scott Whitefield, Colby Doody, David Manugian and Mary Linskey.

Michael Hartnett, Jonathan Greeno, Melisa Doig and Patricia Dufresne were present for the Finance Team.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Giger said that the Christmas Tree Bonfire was scheduled for Friday, January 10th at 7pm at the Town Field.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that he had sent out to the Select Board their proposed goals a few weeks ago adding he had received no changes. Ms. Pine said that she thought the Green Communities goal was still a goal. Mr. Haddad said that it was on their goals list that was still in effect until June 30.

Mr. Degen moved to approve the 6-month duration goals of the Select Board through June 30, 2020. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Mr. Haddad said that Ms. Pine came forward today with 2 additions to the complaint portion of the Anti-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy to add the Town Manager under the jurisdiction of Select Board and the words, 'as appropriate', at the end of the same sentence.

Ms. Pine moved to approve the Standard of Conduct and Anti-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity Policies with changes received today. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad said that he had received positive feedback on the Select Board Operational Policy he and Mr. Giger worked on. Mr. Giger explained the intent behind what the Board had in front of them. Ms. Pine asked if the wording about the Chair not serving in that capacity for more than 2 consecutive years was something new or in the existing policy. Mr. Giger said that wording was in the previous policy.

Ms. Pine moved to approve the Select Board Operational Policy as presented. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Pine said that the Board had questions about their Parks & Commons Policy and the process for naming them. She said that she received a very thorough and detailed list from the Park Commission. She suggested that they put this on an agenda for later in January to invite the Park Commission to work out the naming portion of the policy.

Mr. Haddad said that all policies would be added under eCode so that everyone had access to them.

BLOOD FARM EARTH REMOVAL PERMIT APPLICATION PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to open the public hearing on the Blood Farm Earth Removal Permit Application and read the public hearing notice into the record.

Ms. Pine moved to open the public hearing on the Blood Farm Earth Removal Permit Application. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to continue the hearing January 13, 2020 at 6:15pm.

Mr. Degen moved to continue the hearing until Monday, January 13, 2020 at 6:15pm. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Degen left the meeting at 7:15pm.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT-CONT.

3. Ms. Laurie Smigelski introduced herself and explained the Hazel Grove Agricultural Association's (HGAA) summary application before the CPC. She said that a couple of older buildings on the property needed some work. She said that the request was for \$9,200. She explained the proposed work. She said that she was there to request a letter of support from the Select Board. Ms. Pine said she would like to see some more information about Hazel Grove Agricultural Association before she voted to support this request. Ms. Smigelski said that they had formed themselves as a 501(c)3 as of last year adding that the Fairgrounds had been used for years. Mr. Giger said he wholeheartedly supported this. He said that labor was being donated to support this adding it was important. He said that several things concerned him about public safety that should be attended to at these buildings. Mr. Reilly said he supported this also. Ms. Manugian said she did also. She asked when the project would be done. Ms. Smigelski said that the final application would need to be to the CPC with any letters of support by January 27th. Ms. Emma Newman, of the HGAA said that their website had a lot of information and explained some activities that Hazel Grove held. She said that they also submitted an annual report yearly. Mr. Giger said he wanted to see them not push this out adding it was pretty straightforward.

Mr. Giger moved to authorize the Town Manager to draft a letter of support for the HGAA CPC application. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

FY 2021 TOWN MANAGER'S PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mr. Haddad said that this was the 12th budget he had put together for the Town of Groton. Mr. Haddad said that they had anticipated a deficit of \$500K when the working group met over the summer to delve into the upcoming FY numbers. He said that he was asked to provide 2 budgets; a level services budget and a balanced budget. He said that the FY20 budget was \$279,639 under the levy limit. He said that new growth was certified at \$28.3M adding that FY21 new growth was being estimated at \$15M. Mr. Greeno said that plans for new construction and additions to existing homes was not something they were anticipating. Mr. Greeno said that the only factor for the high new growth this year was because of the full measure and list that was done which generated about \$8M in additional growth.

Mr. Haddad said that they changed the way they looked at local estimated receipts based on the anticipated deficit. He said that they were using the 5-year average when looking at local receipts. He said that this resulted in an 8% increase in local receipts adding they included an increase of \$100K in meals and local room occupancy tax. Mr. Haddad explained three significant savings in FY20 that would not be repeated in FY21. Mr. Haddad said that the School Districts were in the process of developing their budgets adding that the school numbers were preliminary. He said that the GDRSD was estimating an assessment of \$1.6M or 7.78% for FY21. He explained how strong the collaboration was between the Town and the School District. Mr. Haddad said that the number of students enrolled at NVTHS decreased by 6 students adding that he was unable to reduce the assessment because of a couple of factors. He said that he had level funded this assessment.

Mr. Haddad reviewed revenue projections and the estimated levy.

Mr. Haddad said that there were no new service offerings in the level services budget and no reductions in personnel adding that expenses were examined in an effort to consolidate costs. He explained what performance incentives were calculated at and debt service. He said that the OPEB request was for \$177K. Mr. Haddad defined a major initiative; a new item in the budget this year. He said that 2 additional dispatchers had been requested at a cost of \$171,937 and that the hydrant rental fee of \$75K be reinstated under major initiatives. He said that both were worthy of funding but could not be done under the

level services budget. Mr. Haddad said that the total increase to the municipal budget to provide level services was 3.05%, exclusive of debt service. He said that the level service budget showed a projected deficit of \$564,827.

Mr. Haddad said that the following reductions were made in budget #2 to cover the deficit:

- Reduce snow and ice by \$100K
- Eliminate Select Board minor capital of \$25,683
- Eliminate cyclical inspections of \$21,600
- Eliminate police and fire communications wages by \$150K and use grant income to cover the cost. Mr. Reilly pointed out that this was a one-time reduction. Mr. Haddad said that was correct.
- Eliminate water safety expenses by \$28,000 which would eliminate the lifeguards at Sargisson Beach.
- Eliminate weed management expenses of \$15,000 which would not allow for maintenance of weeds at Baddacook.
- Eliminate \$5K out of employee benefits

He said that the total municipal reduction was \$245,283. He said that the GDRSD assessment reduction was \$219,544 as part of the shared deficit. Mr. Robertson said that he was opposed to some of these reductions. Mr. Haddad said that should funding become available, he had proposed in his budget message a list of items to be restored. He reminded the Board and Finance Committee that should funds become available, 50% would go to the town and 50% to the schools.

Mr. Haddad reviewed a list of proposed capital items to be funded and the anticipated funding sources.

Mr. Robertson adjourned the Finance Committee at 8:30pm.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT - CONT.

4. Mr. Haddad said that the last item was whether the Board wanted separate goals for the Town Manager. Ms. Pine said it was a good idea to have some goals. She said that things had been going well adding these goals were nothing new. She said she talked with Mr. Haddad about these in advance. Ms. Pine read her proposed goals. Ms. Manugian said that number 5 was already on their goals list. Ms. Manugian said that at a higher level did they want to talk about adding separate goals. Ms. Pine said that separate goals were not decided on last year and inadvertently fell upon shared goals. Mr. Reilly said he didn't see #3 as a goal adding he didn't see any goals on this list. He said that they should be working on goals together. Mr. Giger said he was hung up on smart goals and wondered if they could be turned into smart goals. He said that #3 for instance was judgmental. He said he did believe there should be separate goals but that they needed to spend significant time discussing them. Ms. Manugian said that she would generally believe that there should be separate goals for the Town Manager but that most of Ms. Pine's were expectations that they already had. She said that goals needed to be measurable and tangible things. Mr. Haddad said he appreciated the goals that they wanted to discuss for him. He said he would like to continue on with the Boards goals for now and thought that come spring they could discuss future goals for him.

ON-GOING ISSUES

A: Mr. Haddad said that he was working on the final accounting for the Senior Center and would bring it to the Board at a future meeting.

C: Mr. Haddad said that they would be meeting with the Water Commission next Monday to discuss the draft Consent Order received.

D: Mr. Giger asked for an update in the next month on the MS4 permit process from the Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee.

F: Mr. Haddad said that the Green Communities application was still being reviewed and suggestions had been made to get the Town to the 15% it needed to qualify.

H: Mr. Haddad said that the Library Roof was completed and would be bringing them a final accounting.

MINUTES

Ms. Pine moved to approve the meeting minutes of December 16, 2019 with one correction. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Manugian adjourned the meeting at 9:14pm.

Approved: _____
John Reilly, Clerk

_____ respectfully *submitted*:
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 1/13/2020