

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
VIRTUAL MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2020
UN-APPROVED**

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

Also Virtually Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant; Jason Kauppi, Town Moderator; Melisa Doig, HR Director; Patricia Dufresne, Town Accountant; Jonathan Greeno, Principal Assistant Assessor; Michael Hartnett, Tax Collector/Treasurer; Mike Luth, Police Chief; Bud Robertson, Finance Committee Chair; Tom Delaney, DPW Director; Shawn Campbell, Country Club General Manager; Takashi Tada, Land Use Director; Paul DeRensis, Town Counsel

Mr. Haddad called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

BOARD REORGANIZATION

Mr. Haddad asked for nominations for Chair.

Ms. Pine nominated Alison Manugian to continue as Chair for the ensuing year. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye; Manugian-aye

Ms. Manugian asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

Ms. Pine nominated Mr. Degen as Vice Chair. Mr. Degen said he would be willing to continue as Vice Chair. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-abstain; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye; Manugian-aye

Ms. Manugian asked for nominations for Clerk.

Ms. Pine nominated herself as Clerk. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye; Manugian-aye

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Haddad said that there had been some confusion with transfer station sticker purchases. Mr. Haddad said that they were selling stickers, allowing for construction debris from residents only along with other recyclables as of this past weekend. Mr. Haddad said that they extended the use of current stickers the month of July to obtain their stickers and thought this time period would allow for those to purchase their stickers.

Mr. Haddad read the following announcement from the Water Department.

“Good evening, the Groton Water Department is issuing the following Emergency Water Ban for all outside lawn watering until further notice.

“All irrigation systems and lawn watering must be turned off until further notice”

The extremely dry May and June and heavy pumping in the 1st two weeks of June coupled with the lack of any winter snow pack this past season and the winters since 2016, we are headed for a potential shortage of drinking water this summer.

The Water Commissioners want to be sure that there is an ample supply of drinking water for “essential” uses such as drinking, cooking and bathing as well as firefighting.

The Groton Water Department thanks you in helping us preserve and protect our valuable drinking water resources.

Mr. Degen asked for an update from Mr. Orcutt on irrigation for businesses. Mr. Orcutt said that irrigation for new shrubs or landscape businesses as examples could water under this ban along with those with newly installed lawns.

Mr. Haddad congratulated Mike Bouchard, Jason Kauppi, Dawn Dunbar, election workers and all department heads for a flawless Town Election and Town Meeting. He said that Groton showed the country how they run an election and town meeting. Ms. Pine added Mr. Haddad to the list of accolades adding this was a positive display of what could be done as a community.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that support staff had returned to work at Town Hall on June 15th. He said that protocols that had been put into place and had been working very well. He said that they had begun scheduling meetings with residents/individuals at Town Hall following the protocols. Mr. Haddad said that Board and Committee meetings would continue on Zoom for the time being.
2. Mr. Haddad said he was pleased to report that their Cares Act funding for FY 20 had been received. He said that they would continue to review and monitor expenditures and plan for FY21 COVID related expenditures. Mr. Haddad said that he had spoke to Representative Harrington last week and asked her to get them any available information on Cares Act usage.
3. Mr. Haddad said that Park Commissioner Don Black had expressed to him a concern with the Board's decision to install sanitary facilities at the various Parks approved for opening by the Park Commission. He said that Mr. Black had requested a delay in installation, but they had ordered them and they were being installed. Mr. Black said that they had been monitoring the field usage since opening them last week adding there was little to no usage so far. Mr. Black said that the Smith Pavilion had been getting use. He said that one of the basketball courts had been used by teenagers who had broken down the snow fences to play. Mr. Black said that he deferred to the Board's wishes on having the porta toilets installed. Mr. Degen said that he was happy the fields were open and that the porta toilets were installed. He said he was concerned about the basketball courts and the playgrounds. Mr. Black said that the porta toilets were being sanitized daily which was great adding that as far as the basketball courts went, the snow fence and signs should be enough to deter but thought it might be an unstoppable project. Mr. Black said that the only other thing to do was remove the hoops. Mr. Black said that Westford, as an example, never closed their courts adding the thought was there wasn't an issue with some social distancing. Ms. Manugian said that she had a lot of problems with use of the basketball courts and asked what enforcement they could initiate. Mr. Haddad said that with support of the Board they could ask the police to monitor and enforce. Mr. Haddad said he could talk to the Police Chief tomorrow.

Mr. Black said that without a crystal ball, they needed to think about delaying the July fireworks. He said he was thinking about maybe holding the Memorial Day parade, the fireworks and Muster all at once in August and would be reaching out to Chief McCurdy.

4. Mr. Haddad said that as voted by the Board last week they had allowed him to issue temporary outdoor liquor licenses. He said that he had approved a request from Ixtapa Mexican Restaurant for their outdoor seating. Mr. Haddad said that he had also granted permission to Johnson's Dairy Bar for BYOB at their outdoor seating area.
5. Mr. Haddad said that he did not have any new information from the Commonwealth.
6. Mr. Haddad said that as discussed by the Board last week, he was bringing back the discussion to reconsider opening the Pool at the Groton Country Club. He said that he had provided the Board with the revised Protocols, along with a Use Waiver drafted by Town Counsel for their review and consideration. He said that nothing was going to be perfect but recommended that the Board consider opening the pool for a 2-week trial period. Mr. Campbell said that they would target a July 1 reopening which would allow them time to get the pool certified and lifeguards in place. Mr. Campbell said that he would also be happy to provide the Board with a detailed weekly update once they did open. Mr. Giger said he spent some time with Mr. Campbell last week and was comfortable with the protocols in place. He said that a lack of cooperation by the users would be what would get them in trouble and cause the pool to be shut down again. Mr. Degen said he was happy with the waiver drafted and was okay with approving this. He also suggested that the Town Manager drop by the pool to check-in on compliance. Ms. Manugian asked about memberships. Mr. Campbell said that he would like time to think about that and come back to the Board next week. He said that memberships were cost effective to families that used the pool all the time adding the pool would be limited to Groton residents right now but wanted to make sure that the residents were happy. Ms. Pine asked about allowing food. Ms. Manugian said that food was one more headache she didn't think they needed. Ms. Pine asked about the possibility of allowing grandparents to bring grandchildren to the pool. Ms. Manugian said that the waiver

was limited to parents or guardians. Mr. Haddad said he was afraid that once they started to address every exception that might come up, their protocols would fall apart. He suggested remaining strict at the beginning and see how things go after the trial period.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to vote to authorize the opening of the Groton Country Club pool effective July 1, 2020 for a 2-week trial period subject to the protocols adopted by the Select Board that evening including the waiver and to have the General Manager report back to the Board 2 weeks after the opening to see how things were going.

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

Mr. Giger suggested adding language that anyone who uses the pool for the 2-week period and wants to purchase a membership to have those fees applied to their membership fee.

Mr. Degen made the amended motion. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion.

Ms. Manugian said that they should further amend the motion to say the pool could open when logically possible and not wait until July 1st adding that the trial basis be through July 12th.

Mr. Degen said he would further amend his motion to say that the pool could open as soon as it was physically ready and staffed to meet the protocols in place and additionally that the Board would reevaluate on July 12th. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion.

Mr. Campbell asked about the 23 non-Groton resident memberships that had already been refunded. Mr. Degen said it needed to be limited to Groton residents.

Roll Call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Degen-aye; Giger-aye

7. Mr. Haddad said that he had provided the Board with a copy of the Draft Housing Production Plan. He said that he had invited both Land Use Director Takashi Tada and Housing Coordinator Fran Stanley to the meeting to assist the Board in their review. Mr. Haddad said that the Plan would eventually need to be approved by the Select Board and Planning Board. Ms. Stanley said that she was glad they had a draft plan and thought that the MRPC had done a great job with it. Ms. Stanley reviewed some main aspects of the plan. Ms. Manugian said that she was looking for what the number of units they needed to have to meet residents' needs. Ms. Stanley said that that data needed to be extrapolated from the report based on cost burdened residents. Ms. Pine said that the change in demographics and age of population data stood out to her. She said it was clear that lower priced smaller housing was what they needed based on that data.

Mr. Haddad said that the Affordable Housing Trust and Planning Board would be meeting to discuss and review the plan and provide any comments to the MRPC for final adoption by the Board. Ms. Stanley suggested that the Board makes comments as soon as possible so that other groups may have a chance to consider those suggested changes. Mr. Haddad suggested discussing it again on June 29th for final adoption on July 13th. Mr. Giger said he liked the idea of getting this done by the middle of July.

8. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to approve their annual appointments as presented. Mr. Haddad provided an update on the committee vacancies based on all appointments made.

Ms. Manugian mentioned that one of their annual goals for the next year be to look at all committees and understand if they were working effectively, meeting their needs, etc.

Ms. Pine made a motion to approve the annual appointments of the Select Board as presented. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Giger-aye; Degen-nay

Mr. Degen said that he only voted no because they were not reading the names and expiration dates of the terms. Ms. Manugian said that packets were now available online and why she didn't feel they needed to read them all. Mr. Degen said he would change his vote to an aye but hoped that this practice would not continue in the future.

Degen-aye. The motion was approved unanimously.

9. Mr. Haddad said that the budget was approved as presented last Saturday at the Town Meeting adding there was no need for a 1/12 budget come July 1. He said that with all the information provided in advance, the consent agenda for the budget was something they should consider in the future. Ms. Pine talked about people liking the town meeting being held on a Saturday but cautioned people that the meeting went as quick as it did because they delayed a lot of articles that could wait until the fall. Mr. Degen suggested sending out a survey to see if people liked having town meeting on Saturday and in September this year. Mr. Haddad said that with all the unknowns with the pandemic, they may want to consider holding a fall town meeting in late September/early October and doing it outside.
10. Mr. Haddad said he issued a notice to proceed to Xcel Fire Protection today relative to the positive Town Meeting vote on Saturday in support of the sprinkler system at Prescott School. Mr. Haddad said that Bob Garside would be serving as the Clerk of the Works for the project adding he would split his time between his Building Inspector work and the Clerk. Mr. Degen asked if Mr. Garside would be working as the Clerk out of his current paid capacity of Building Inspector. Mr. Haddad said that he would be paid out of the sprinkler system project for those hours worked as the Clerk and out of the Building Inspector budget for hours worked as the Building Inspector. Mr. Degen asked if this was a potential conflict of interest. Mr. Haddad said it was not adding Ed Cataldo would be the one to sign off on the work.
11. Mr. Haddad reviewed the Board's summer schedule. He said that the Board would meet every other week for the next couple of months.

Mr. Degen made a motion to approve the Board's summer schedule as presented. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Giger-aye

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Haddad said that they had issued letters for PILOT payments. He said that in lieu of things going on, all payments had been made to the Town and thanked members of the non-profits for doing so. Mr. Haddad said that Lawrence Academy would be providing \$15K in a gift fund to be used toward a project as voted on by the Board. Ms. Manugian said that one idea for using the money generously donated by LA was toward training around social equity and racial injustice, books relative to the same, etc. Mr. Degen said he liked the idea. Mr. Reilly said he liked the idea for training. Ms. Manugian mentioned the SEED program that had been mentioned at their last meeting. Ms. Pine suggested some kind of an event involving the police department on how they operate and their community involvement. Mr. Giger said that he didn't have a strong feeling in any direction. Mr. Haddad said that he had been working with Chief Luth and would like to participate with Ms. Pine and Ms. Manugian in all discussions. He said that their police department was exceptional.

Mr. Degen said that they approved the budget on Saturday but asked how they funded GD's assessment in absence of Dunstable not having an approved assessment yet. Mr. Haddad said that the school district had to operate on a 1/12 budget until Dunstable approved their assessment. He said that Groton would only be charged 1/12 of their assessment also for the summer. Mr. Haddad said that should Dunstable not approve a budget, they would have to continue to operate under a 1/12 budget until such time they did or call for a super town meeting.

ON-GOING ISSUES

D: Mr. Haddad said that the bylaw for the MS4 permit was approved on Saturday which now needed to go to the Attorney General. He said that in mid-July early August he would schedule a public hearing to discuss funding the permit needs.

F: Mr. Haddad said that the Green Communities project was in the very capable hands of Takashi Tada and would need to start discussing their next application projects.

G: Mr. Haddad said that the State was reviewing the Flo Ro plans. He said that they were talking about how to fund this project. He said that the Town was in a great position with a AAA bond rating to help with low interest rates. He said that the school regional agreement did not allow Groton to bond a project alone. He said that they might want to consider revising the regional agreement. Mr. Haddad said that they were trying to get some information on what the interest rate difference would be between a AAA bond rating and an A1 bond rating.

H: Mr. Haddad said that the generator was being installed at the Highway Garage today adding this was the last thing they were waiting for.

Ms. Manugian asked for an update from the Water Department on manganese at their next meeting.

Ms. Manugian adjourned the meeting at 8:50pm.

Approved: _____

John Reilly, Clerk

respectfully submitted:

Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: