

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 26, 2021
APPROVED

SB Members Present: Rebecca H. Pine, Chair (via remote participation); Alison S. Manugian, Vice Chair; Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk; Joshua A. Degen, Member; John F. Reilly, Member
Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant;

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cunningham reminded folks that the fireworks were that evening commencing at dusk behind the Library at Town Field.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that he had appointed Stephen Jones to the Golf Staff and Kathryn Paveglio as a Lifeguard at the Groton Country Club. He respectfully requested that the Select Board consider ratifying these appointments.

Mr. Degen made the motion to ratify the appointments. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Cunningham-aye; Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-aye

2. Mr. Haddad said that he was very pleased to report to the Board the Fiscal Year 2021 Final Budget of the Groton Country Club. He said that in Fiscal Year 2019, for the first time in over 20 years, the Club returned a profit of \$48,291. He said that they had expected that trend to continue in Fiscal Year 2020, however, the Pandemic hit and they had to shut the Club down, essentially eliminating the two biggest revenue months of the Fiscal Year (May and June). Mr. Haddad said that due to this, instead of returning a profit, the Club lost \$147,770 (total expenses of \$471,481; total revenues of \$323,711). He said that thanks to the excellent planning and adaptation of Pandemic Protocols, their General Manager, Shawn Campbell was able to turn the Club around in one year. He said that in Fiscal year 2021, the Club made a profit of \$149,741 (total expenses of \$514,967; total revenues of \$664,708). He said that they were able to balance the budget with no taxpayer subsidy over a two-year period. Mr. Haddad said that over three years, the Club had actually returned a profit to the Town of \$50,262. He said that they would continue to manage the Club in the most cost-effective way to the benefit of the taxpayers and residents of Groton. Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Campbell had done an outstanding job and the Town was extremely lucky to have him as their General Manager/Head Professional.

Mr. Degen congratulated Mr. Campbell and thanked the public for supporting the club. Mr. Cunningham shared the same sentiments.

3. Mr. Haddad said that even with the pandemic, there was nothing but good news FY21 budget wise. He said that expenses were frozen as well as a hiring freeze put into place early in FY21. He said that they didn't fill positions in the highway, police department and library due to the hiring freeze. He said that departments had done a great job limiting their spending as directed. Mr. Haddad said that on the revenue side, there were three categories where they took in more money than they anticipated; motor vehicle excise, even though they scaled back the revenue projection; local meals tax, they took in \$44K more than what they had anticipated; PILOTS, a couple of PILOTS came in in FY21 and not FY20; building permits were higher than anticipated; GELD made 5 payments in FY21 toward their share of expenses and the country club revenue was more than they ever imagined. Mr. Haddad said that their free cash position would be higher than last year because of these factors.

Mr. Robertson said that this was a great report for many different reasons and provided his interpretation of the report.

4. Mr. Haddad reviewed the Board's schedule for the next few weeks.

SELECT BOARD ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to formally vote their goals for FY22 and reviewed the proposed goals.

Mr. Cunningham moved that they adopt the proposed goals for FY22. Mr. Degen seconded the motion.

Mr. Cunningham asked about including marijuana on goal #4 having to do with promoting economic development. Ms. Pine said she didn't remember having the conversation specifically about marijuana. Mr. Cunningham said it

was something he thought the Board should consider as a potential warrant article. Mr. Degen said that if they had a warrant article drafted to review, they should consider adding it. He said that people were going to the neighboring towns and didn't think they should dismiss the possibility of allowing this in Groton as a source of potential revenue. Ms. Manugian said she thought it made sense to talk about it but wasn't sure there was going to be enough time to present it to the Town this fall but was worth talking about it. Ms. Pine said she thought the way the goals were written; it could be included as a means of finding potential revenue means.

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

2. Mr. Haddad said that the Zoning Board of Appeals had three vacancies for full members. He said that the ZBA was recommending that the Board elevate the three alternates on the ZBA to full member status. Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Board make the following appointments (with the term expirations as designated):

Jenepher Spencer - Term to Expire on June 30, 2023

Dan McLaughlin - Term to Expire on June 30, 2023

Jack Petropoulos - Term to Expire on June 30, 2024

Mr. Haddad said that they now had four alternate vacancies on the ZBA that they would have to fill. He said that they would advertise them and hope to have them filled as soon as possible. Mr. Degen asked how the terms were chosen. Mr. Haddad said that the members chose the terms.

Mr. Cunningham moved to appoint Jenepher Spencer - Term to Expire on June 30, 2023, Dan McLaughlin - Term to Expire on June 30, 2023, Jack Petropoulos - Term to Expire on June 30, 2024 as full members on the ZBA. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Roll Call: Cunningham-aye; Degen-aye; Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye

REPORT FROM SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Ms. Alison Dolbear said that their latest project was a pollinator project at the Senior Center. She said that they started it last year and hoped to finish it next year. She said that they recently joined the Climate Change Committee and were now part of 11 towns who had joined, which made them eligible for possible grants for climate change. She said that they were busy working on the garden and were concentrating their efforts of that for the summer season.

Mr. David Southwick said he had joined the Committee and attended his first meeting. He said that he thought that the Sustainability Commission and Recycling Committee should be joined together as an idea he had. He said that sustainability started with the youth and should be promoting that. He said he thought it was an important committee and was excited to be involved.

Ms. Manugian said that some feedback from the Commission on projects would be helpful. Mr. Degen suggested talking to the Recycling Committee about merging to see if it made sense. Ms. Pine asked if the Commission asked for and/or received money from the Town budget. Mr. Haddad said that they did not receive money. Ms. Pine said that mosquito spraying alternative(s) might be something the Commission wants to work with the Board of Health on.

REPORT FROM GREENWAY COMMITTEE

Mr. Adam Burnett said that last year was a tough year for them. He said that Riverfest had been cancelled for the last two years adding it was their biggest yearly event. He said that they had four members currently and were certainly looking to add more or merge with another, as had been suggested under the last report with a committee, with someone like the Trails Committee. He said that Riverfest was a huge effort and required a lot of volunteers to plan it and run it. Mr. Burnett said that the old Nod Road dump had never been closed correctly but had been thinking of things they could do with that parcel. He said that trees had grown on top of the cap which had caused trash to be exposed and, in some cases, end up in Nod Brook. He said that they would like to work with the Trails Committees on possible opportunities as well as homeowners along the river front and possible vernal pools.

127 MAIN STREET - BEER AND WINE LICENSE APPLICATION PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Haddad read the public hearing notice into the record at 7:45pm.

Mr. Degen moved to open the public hearing and continue it to the conclusion of this agenda item. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-aye

REPORT FROM GREENWAY COMMITTEE – Cont.

Mr. Degen said that the Nod Road dump was an important issue adding they should maybe look into a green communities grant or state/federal grants for doing an analysis. He said that this was an important issue. Mr. Degen said that they should reach out to Mass Fish and Game to identify habitats. Mr. Reilly said he appreciated the work that both the Greenway Committee and Sustainability Commission were doing. He said that they would keep advertising for help.

127 MAIN STREET - BEER AND WINE LICENSE APPLICATION PUBLIC HEARING – Cont.

Mr. Degen moved to reopen the public hearing. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-aye

Attorney Paul Alphen was present with Mr. Patel and Mr. Roma. He said that Indralock, Inc. was interested in selling beer and wine adding that their client had inquired about the sale of alcoholic beverages. He said that his clients would be TIPS certified and said that he had provided his clients with a copy of the ABCC regulations. He said that there was plenty of parking at the rear of the property.

Mr. Haddad said that the Board received comments from the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Building Commissioner in their packet relative to this application.

Mr. Cunningham asked that they would be doing inside the store to accommodate the inventory. Mr. Patel said that he wasn't going to renovate right now but instead use the existing coolers. Mr. Degen asked what percentage of the store would be dedicated to beer and wine. Mr. Patel said around 20-25%. He said he would get rid of some of the items that don't sell to make room for wine. Attorney Alphen said that Mr. Patel would also purchase a new cooler at some point too. Mr. Reilly asked if either had experience selling alcohol. Mr. Patel said he had worked in a store that sold beer and wine before. Mr. Cunningham asked if they had considered how many different types of beer and wine they would carry. Mr. Patel said that he was planning on starting off slow. Mr. Cunningham asked if the sale of alcohol had picked up, if he would change his business model. Mr. Patel said he was not sure what the future was going to mean. Mr. Haddad said that all employees needed to be TIPS certified as a point of order. Ms. Pine asked how long Mr. Patel had been the owner. Mr. Patel said he had owned the store since 2014 and had worked their prior. Ms. Pine said that one of the neighbors expressed concern with loss of grocery items and asked what he was going to stop selling. Mr. Patel said that he had dog and cat food that were not selling and would cut down on some of the candy he sold. Ms. Pine said that the license was going to list Mr. Roma as the Manager. Attorney Alphen said that Mr. Roma was the director of the business but would be the manager listed. Ms. Pine said that Mr. Roma would only be there 25% of the time and asked who would be there the other 75% of the time. Mr. Patel said he would be there the rest of the time. Mr. Roma said he had not been involved in the retail sales of alcohol before. Ms. Pine asked about the hours of operation. Mr. Patel said they would be open from 6:00am-9:30pm. Ms. Pine said she assumed they would like to do this to increase their business and asked about their parking expectation. Mr. Patel said that the parking would be enough adding the beer and wine customers would be after 4pm at which time the other businesses slowed and closed down. Mr. Cunningham said that there was also parking on the street and along the side of the building. Mr. Degen pointed out that if granted, the license would be limited to the area they occupy only.

Mr. Russ Harris said that Mr. Patel was a resident of the Town, had a child(ren) in the school system and thought it was important to know that a having a good solid convenience store in the center of town was important. He encouraged the Board to help a local businessman to offer a solid service.

Ms. Manugian said that the size of the building was her only concern but had no issue with trying this out. Ms. Pine said that increased litter was raised at a prior hearing and asked the applicant what their plan was for proper disposal. Ms. Manugian said this was no different than debris from Dunkin Donuts. Attorney Alphen said that drinking on the premise was not allowed.

Mr. Cunningham moved to close the public hearing. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-aye

Ms. Pine asked if the letters of objection would be included in the record. Mr. Haddad said that they would include them with the minutes.

Mr. Cunningham moved that they grant a license for a new wine and malt off premise package store license for Indralock, Inc. with Mr. Romulo Roma as manager. Mr. Degen seconded the motion.

Mr. Reilly asked that extra care be given to not selling to underage children from the local schools that travel there on their bikes.

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

Ms. Pine's connection was interrupted at 8:12pm.

Mr. Cunningham offered an amendment to the previous motion to include hours of operation set as Monday-Saturday 8am-9:30pm and Sunday 10am-9:30pm. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-not available for this motion

Mr. Cunningham re-moved that they grant a license for a new wine and malt off premise package store license for Indralock, Inc. with Mr. Romulo Roma as manager with the hours of operation set as Monday-Saturday 8am-9:30pm and Sunday 10am-9:30pm. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-not available for this motion

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Cunningham said they had heard that the EPA might be able to provide some remediation to the GEMS site.

Ms. Pine reestablished her connection.

MINUTES

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve minutes of regularly scheduled meeting of July 12, 2021. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-aye

Mr. Degen moved to approve minutes of workshop meeting of July 19, 2021. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Degen-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-aye

Ms. Manugian adjourned the meeting at 8:16pm.

Approved: _____
Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted:
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 8/9/2021