

July 17, 2014 Select Board Minutes, Groton Community Building (Approved)

Select Board: Peter Lyon, Gary Lamberton, Nathan Puffer

Tree Warden: Harry Chandler, Zoning Administrator: Brad Houghton, Treasurer: Roberta Dana, Town Clerk: Linda Nunn, Road Commissioner: Brent Smith, First Constable: Jim Downing

Harry provided an overview of forest use across the State discussing both product and recreation uses and their relative importance noting that in particular recreation use is a very high revenue generator for the State. Harry then reviewed three parcels of Town owned property: the first being 9.1 acres on Goodfellow Road with the goal of a harvest taking place in the next few weeks, the second being the 67 acres surrounding the gravel pit with a goal of looking for value for up-coming years, and the third being the 18 acres at Lake Groton with a goal to harvest this winter. Harry suggested that there was some additional interesting possibilities associated with the 18 acres such as renting the camp, allowing its use as a gift for something special, conducting a raffle or other options that could generate income for the Community and provide lots of positive publicity. Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to move forward on Harry's recommendation on the 9.1 acres by issuing an RFP, posting a notice in the three public places in Town informing folks of the plan to harvest timber on Town property to allow feedback to the Board, and applying all revenue obtained from Harvesting to the Town's Emergency Reserve fund.

Jim reported that he has shown the yellow building to folks that know of someone that may be interested in taking the building down.

Brad reported that he had been asked to review the zoning bylaws as they apply to the excavation behind the Community Building and had several items that should be considered. Brad highlighted the need to be in compliance with rear yard and side yard minimum distances, the maximum grade of slopes and the definition of structure. Brad noted that both the wall and well might be considered structures and that there could be a need for a building permit and/or a variance. Brad recommended holding off on further work and find out where the property lines are and then decide on what the next steps should be. Brad noted that he is missing some pins on his property however does know of some on Rt 302 and would be glad to show them to the Cilley family to assist with their research.

Gary reviewed the status of the request to obtain definitions for all the Towns reserve fund noting that some were still missing. Gary asked Linda to contact the folks that still had not provided their definitions with the goal, once they are all in hand, of publishing them on the Town's web site and also in the Annual report.

Brent reviewed the roadside mowing RFP and recommended hiring Harold Wilkins at \$70. Per hour. Harold did a very good job last year and had the best price and also has the State contract. Brent expects the mowing to start in August when Harold is in the area working on the State contract. Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to support Brent's recommendation to hire Harold Wilkins at \$70. Per hour.

Gary reported that a bus load of Lyndon State College freshman will be doing 3 hours of volunteer work for the Town on August 24th. Gary was extremely impressed with the work that the students had done last year and based on that experience expects that this will be another great year and wonderful support for the Community.

Gary reviewed Linda's recommendation to place warnings around the construction area behind the Community Building to keep children out of the area. Gary is going to pick up yellow hazard tape, signs, and grade stakes to install around the area.

Roberta provided detailed worksheets on anticipated town receipts and approved budget amounts to use for discussion on setting the current year tax rate. Roberta reviewed and explained each line item and provided the background leading up to the current year baseline. Roberta also explained that the town has the option to apply a late filing of Homestead penalty. The board chose to waive this penalty last year because of the changing back to annual filing of homesteads. Nathan moved and Gary seconded to charge a 3% late filing penalty of the education tax if a person fails to declare their homestead with the state tax department by the required date. Nathan and Gary voted in favor, Peter voted against and the motion passed. Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to set the town tax rate at .3098, the highway tax rate at .2013 for a total municipal tax rate of .5111 and the local agreement rate for the Veterans exemption at .0030.

Linda presented a warrant to pick up unlicensed dogs. Nathan moved, Peter seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the warrant.

Peter reported that Gary Crane would like to use the ball field next to his home for anniversary celebration. Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to Gary's use of the field. It was noted to let Gary know that there is a restriction on Sunday use.

Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to close the meeting (at 9:43 PM)

Gary Lamberton, Chair

Prepared by Peter Lyon