

November 20, 2014 Select Board Minutes, Groton Community Building (Approved)

Select Board: Peter Lyon, Gary Lamberton

Visitors: Randy & Jennifer Oakley, Town Residents: Chris Wellman, Michael Giampietro, Mark Hood, Shirley Beamis, Eric Lang, Tracy Puffer, Bethany Ketchum, Larry Daniels, Darlene Schaif, Donald Bliss, Library Trustee: Alissa Smith, Recreation Committee: Paul Berlejung, Treasurer: Roberta Danna, Clerk: Linda Nunn, Road Commissioner: Brent Smith, First Constable: Jim Downing, Fire Department: Henry, Wayne, & Dorothy Knott,

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

Don Bliss requested approval to purchase a sidewalk salt sander to pull behind the tractor at a cost of \$555. The Board approved Don's request after confirming that Don has the funds available in his budget.

Randy and Jennifer Oakley explained that they are purchasing property (on Goodfellow Road) in Groton, and are attending this meeting to describe some of their planned activities for the property. They plan on building their home on the property and hosting competitive activities for snowmobiles, ATV's, and mud bogging. It would consist primarily of racing of which there would be two events per year for each of the activities. They have 9 years of experience in this business and also coordinate these type of activities in other locations noting that this would be the first time that they will be hosting the competition on their own property. They are planning on attendance ranging from 1500 to 1800 and do not want it to be larger due to the increase State regulations that would apply. They estimate that 28% of the attending population is under 12 and do not allow alcoholic beverages into the competition. They explained that Camping would be allowed on site and that they planned on clearing 15 – 20 acres for parking & camping. They also plan on a trail network being constructed containing 1 acre stations cleared out at various locations. They responded that there is a class 2 wetland on site that would need to be protected.

The Board expressed concern on the location of the proposed project and pointed out that that there would need to be a detailed traffic and environmental impact analysis completed to be able to respond to their proposal. The Board also recommended that they meet with Aaron Smith who is the one remaining member of the planning commission and told them that the current town plan has expired. Town residents expressed serious concern on the traffic and its negative impact. They are concerned that it would end up blocking their access or make it difficult for them to reach their homes. The neighbors were also concerned about the ability to control alcohol being brought in and the large number of cars that would be on what is now a lightly travelled road and how it would be managed.

Alissa Smith presented a proposed Library budget of \$28,650.20 (current year is \$27,460.80) which is an increase of over 5%. The Board asked that the proposal be reduced to a maximum of a 2% increase which Alissa agreed to support.

The proposed cemetery budget of \$10,575 (current year is \$10,570) was accepted by the Board.

The proposed recreation budget of \$1,520 (current year is \$1,490) was reduced by the Board to match the current year.

The proposed zoning budget of \$1,875 (current year is \$1,850) was accepted by the Board.

The proposed unemployment insurance of \$494 (current year is \$489) was accepted by the Board.

The proposed Fire Warden budget of \$1,599 is an increase of over 7% (current year is \$1,481) and was asked by the Board to be reduced to 2% or less.

Health insurance is proposed to increase by \$3,495. Detailed discussion took place on the possibility of employees contributing to their insurance (the Town currently pays 100% of the cost). The Board is still looking for the information on employee contributions for the neighboring towns, Blue Mountain Union School, and the State for comparison purposes. The Board also asked Roberta to obtain the comparable employee pay rates from the neighboring communities (Marshfield, Orange, Corinth, Wells River, Barnet, & Ryegate).

Peter reported that he has created a form for non-profits to use when asking for funding from the Town at Town meeting. As an example it request information such as what is their budget and how much is from donations, how many people from Groton volunteer for their organization, how many people from Groton are served by their organization, etc. The goal is to have this form available at Town meeting which then will help the voters understand the request.

The Board reviewed a request from Todd Powers for Blue Mountain Union School to use the Community Building for youth programs. Peter moved, Gary seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the use of the Community Building per Todd's request with one condition which is to require the installation of protective padding on the stage end of the gym.

Gary reviewed the status of the reserve fund description that are to be included in the Town report. It was agreed to add to the descriptions the year end dollars available in each fund and also include all other funds such as Cemetery, Library, and the food shelf.

The Board asked for the status of the increased billing by the State for the Boulder Beach Road. Brent explained that the State has increased its rate to \$70 per hour (it used to be \$40 per hour). General discussion took place on the need for the State to salt early for School and the Town sanding the road later on the dirt portion. It was agreed that the Town would change its rate charged to the State to \$70 per hour (from \$40 per hour) for work the town does on Seyon Brook road.

Gary reported that there are several issues with the Town systems. There are network issues, the NEMRC PC is crashing, and there is a need for additional internet connections. Gary has been working many hours (and often late at night) as a volunteer on the problems.

Peter moved, Gary seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the 11/14/14 minutes.

Peter moved, Gary seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the 11/6/14 minutes.

Peter moved, Gary seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to close the meeting (at 9:53 PM)