

October 2, 2014 Select Board Minutes, Groton Community Building (Approved)

Select Board: Peter Lyon, Gary Lamberton, Nathan Puffer

Tree Warden: Harry Chandler, Constable: Jim Downing, Building Committee: Kitty Diggins, Town Resident: Shawn Crown, Treasurer: Roberta Dana, Clerk: Linda Nunn

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

Harry Chandler presented a \$2,680.08 check to the Board for the logging completed by Chris Emerson that took place on Town property at the old dump site. This is the first check to be deposited into the new town emergency reserve fund. Harry reported that he was very pleased with the work done by Chris and Zack. Harry noted that the land was a good/developable lot. Peter pointed out that it also had been identified as a very good location for Solar Panels. Harry stated that his next project would be the town property that is known as the Boy Scout land at Lake Groton with his first step being working with the State to redefine the property lines. Harry noted that next the 63 acres at the gravel pit could be defined as a town forest working with the County Forester. Every town in the area, with the exception of Groton and Topsham, has a town forest and a sustainable plan could be created for its long term use.

Shawn Crown reported that North Country Road needs gravel on the section near where he lives commenting that it has not been graveled in the 13 years that he has owned his property. He also stated that he was not happy with all the water bars and the location of large rocks in the road. The Board agreed to add North Country Road for the next board meeting to discuss with Brent (Town Road Commissioner).

Jim Downing asked if the Board would be receptive to opening some town roads to 4 wheeling. It was agreed it would be best to place this on the warning for Town meeting to allow the Community to discuss. Jim also asked about the signs that are placed for the Fall Foliage parade. The Board explained that they were installed by the First Constable and to contact Milt Lamberton (the previous First Constable) to locate the signs for installation. Jim also provided a heads up that he would be working more hours in Oct due to training in Pittsfield and covering the Fall Foliage. The Board said that was fine as long as he stayed within his approved budget.

Kitty Diggins reported that Lise Shallberg obtained agreement from Steve Porter of Clearwater to attend the next Board meeting to review their proposal for the new water system.

Linda Nunn stated that she had talked to Trueline about the cost of creating a mylar of their prints for the Ernest Cilley property. The Board did not support spending the money until all questions on the property line were answered. Peter said that he had a nice conversation with Gunther Wernecke and Dave Darling. Gunther is having a survey done for his family and Dave is waiting for additional information from Linda so he can work on locating corner pins. Linda explained she was advised by an attorney here in the office not to do the research for them or the town could face a lawsuit if something was missing or askew (Linda did not want to identify the attorney).

Roberta Dana said that property & casualty insurance from VLCT needs to be renewed by 10/10/14 and health insurance renewals need to be done by December. The Board asked to meet with a representative of Blue Cross/Blue Shield at their next meeting to obtain a detailed understanding of the proposals. Roberta also reported that work is continuing on lease proposals for the fire truck. Roberta

stated that she and Debbie Johnson had attended a VLCT class on municipal budgeting and capital improvement programming that she thought was very good. The Board asked Roberta to schedule time on the next meeting for Debbie and her to review with the Board suggested improvements that could be followed.

Peter reported that he had attended the annual NVDA (Northeastern Vermont Development Association) meeting in Jay where items ranging from Economic Development to Planning were discussed. He reported that the NVDA staff has some excellent skills and resources available to help the town when desired.

Peter reported that the Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC) had again donated funds for the communities Fall Foliage Festival (the Community Club). The WEC donation has been a very big help with the ongoing operation of the Festival.

Peter also reported that he would be donating his Select Board pay along with expenses totaling a little over \$1,100 toward the purchase of additional decorative blocks. He also said that Fred Grant is donating his time and his truck to haul the blocks from the middle of New Hampshire which is very big savings.

Roberta reported that she has received some information from Annie (Collector of Delinquent Taxes) however her records do not match Annie's and is working on resolving the differences. Roberta is expecting an increase in the number of delinquencies and provided a heads up that by State Statute, delinquent tax warrants is required to be given to the Collector of Delinquent Taxes within 15 days after the Oct 10 tax due date but the State will not send the last download of State payments until Nov 1<sup>st</sup> so an amended warrant will probably have to be provided also.

Gary reported that he had attending a Blue Mountain School budget meeting. Examples of information provided was spending comparisons to other schools on a cost per student. Roberta said that when people come in to pay their taxes the feedback is their taxes are too high and they have a fear of losing their homes.

Peter mentioned that there has been a request from other communities to sponsor a resolution in the legislature to cap the state property tax. It was agreed to place the request on the agenda for the next board meeting.

Gary reviewed the year end schedule for 2015 budget preparation. Roberta was asked to report back to the board at the next meeting on a range of index (such as cost of living) for consideration to use as guidance that would then be sent out to all department heads.

Linda reported that she was being shadowed by a young person to assist with the building of workforce skills. Linda also reported that she had attended a meeting that was called to discuss options for hosting senior meals since Brown's Bistro will not be able to continue with the service. One option under consideration is having the meal in the Community Building kitchen however they need to understand if the required standards can be followed.

Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to adjourn (at 8:27 PM)

Gary Lamberton, Chair

Prepared by Peter Lyon