

The Town of Groton, Vermont Select Board Minutes, April 16, 2015 (Approved)

The duly warned meeting of the Groton Select Board of April, 16, 2015 was held at the Groton Community Building, 1476 Scott Highway at 7:00 PM.

The following members were in attendance: Peter Lyon, Gary Lamberton, Andrew Dorset

Attendance for the regular meeting included: Secretary: Linda Nunn, Highway: Brent Smith, Building Committee: Kitty Diggins, Mark Shallberg. Treasurer: Lisa Hart

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM

Background: \$15,000 was approved as a separate article at town meeting to be used to improve sidewalks. The Board would like to determine how to best use these funds.

Peter has contacted Doug Morton at NVDA and Doug has agreed to meet and help the Town identify the best approach to follow for sidewalk improvements.

Background: The Board would like to meet with the Select Board of our neighboring communities to look for and discuss potential areas where we could work together.

Peter has talked to Andy Smith of the Ryegate Board and they have agreed to try and come to Groton to meet with us at our May 7th meeting.

Background: A petition was submitted to the Vermont Library Board to name a mountain near Seyon Pond "Prosperity Peak". The Library Board asked the Town to provide its response to the petition.

Peter attended the Library Board hearing to present the Town's view that we could find no historical significance to the name Prosperity Peak and at our Town meeting no members of the Community supported the name. Gwendolyn Hallsmith and Michael Taub testified in support of the proposed name. After deliberation, the Board voted unanimously to deny the petition to name the mountain Prosperity Peak. Peter reported that the Library Board meeting was very professional and was well run. They provided a heads up that they were very willing to review a name that could be proposed by the town however they would also complete the due diligence and provided no guarantees that they would approve any one name that was submitted.

Background: Following the town's procurement policy, bids were sent out requesting proposals to supply calcium chloride. The selection criteria applied for the submitted bids was; Experience 15%, Qualification 5%, Rates 55%, and Past Performance 25%.

Two bids were received, one from All State Asphalt, Inc. with a .91 cents price per gal. and the other from The Gorman Group with a .879 cents price per gal. Brent reported that the two firms were equal in terms of experience, qualification, and past performance. Peter moved, Andrew seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the awarding of the contract to the Gorman Group due to the fact that their bid was the lowest price.

Background: Annually, Groton Community Housing, LP is required to publish their Consolidated Financial Statements. Their Chief Financial Officer, Glenn W. Von Bernewitz provided statements for the year ended December 31, 2014 to the town as prepared by Otis Atwell, Certified Public Accountants.

Peter agreed to review the statements and to follow up on the status of the \$50,000 loan.

Background: Annually the VAOT District Project Manager (Shauna Clifford) meets with the town to obtain a certificate of compliance to codes & standards and also review grant request that the town would like to submit.

The Board signed the certificate noting that Groton does not meet the State Standards which is the same position as recorded in the previous year. Brent pointed out that the water quality issues that the State is trying to control will ultimately require Towns to follow the State standards. The Board also reviewed and discussed the "Town of Groton – Municipal Road Erosion and Stream Crossing Inventory and Capital Budget (2015-2019)". Significant discussion took place on the importance of various projects, their cost, the probability of receiving grants, and the funds the town had available. Brent recommended submitting a \$5,000 grant request for engineering on the Boulder Beach culvert. Discussion also took place on whether or not to apply for paving funds however since Shauna had reported that there was a very low probability of being accepted the Board elected save the matching funds for other higher priority projects. Andrew moved, and Gary seconded a motion to apply for a \$5,000 engineering grant for the Boulder Beach culvert. Andrew and Gary voted in favor of the motion. Peter abstained as he believes that the funds should be used for a higher priority project. The motion passed. Gary moved, Peter seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to authorize Andrew to sign the application as the submission deadline is tomorrow. The Board agreed to review projects to apply for Better Back Roads Grant at their first meeting in May when more information is available noting that the Better Back Roads Grants must be submitted in May.

Background: Linda would like to move the start of the Select Board meetings to an earlier time, such as 6:00 P.M., to save both herself and Lisa from having to come back to the office from home to attend the meetings.

The Board did not feel that they could get out of work earlier enough to be able to meet at 6:00 and it was their consensus to continue with the 7:00 P.M. start. They also suggested that Linda and Lisa did not need to be at the first meeting of the month. That they could plan on only attending the second meeting (which would be the third Thursday of the month) which would significantly reduce the impact to both Linda and Lisa.

Background: The Board set the pay rates for most employees at the previous meeting (see April 2, 2015 minutes) however had a few open questions that required resolution.

Gary reviewed the budget for FAST/Firefighters and had determined that they had declined an increase and therefore it was not in the budget. Linda reported that she, as Town Clerk, had set the rate for Kitty Diggins as assistant town clerk at \$11.70 per hour. Linda also confirmed that this same rate would apply to Dorothy Knott and Roberta Dana when they worked as assistant town clerk. Linda Ide's rate was set by the Library Trustees at \$11.00 per hour. Tracy Puffer, as elected auditor, rate was set at \$11.04 per hour. Also discussed was the mileage reimbursement rate: Currently the Town provides 48 cents per mile, the State provides 56 cents per mile and the IRS accepted rate is 57.5 cents per mile. It was the consensus of the Board to continue with a rate of 48 cents per mile since that is what was planned in the budget. It was also agreed to review the rate again when preparing the 2016 budget. The Board signed the detailed pay rate matrix (on file In the Town office).

Background: Linda reported that Matt Puffer had requested the septic design the town had prepared for his land just east of the Highway garage when it was being looked at as a possible site for a new fire

station. Matt told Linda that he had a handshake agreement that if he dug the test pit at no cost to the town then the town would give him the septic design if the town did not purchase his land.

The Board is not aware of this agreement and asked Linda to invite Matt and the person who did the hand shake (Linda did not know who this person was) to a Board meeting to discuss. Linda said she did not find a septic plan but would try again to see if one was available.

Background: Peter received a letter from Green Mountain Community Solar stating that they had an application with the Vermont Public Service Board to install 720 solar panels that will occupy approximately one acre of land on Groton Timberworks property. The town has 30 days from March 30 to comment and request a hearing about this project.

The Board decided there was no need to comment nor request a hearing on the project noting that all the adjoining property owners would also be notified and be able to participate if they desired.

Background: The Board is in the process reviewing and adopting a set of Financial Policies that were created by the VLCT. The goal is to provide financial discipline, improve the operations and ensure that the town's processes are auditable.

The Board completed a final review of the Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting Policy (01.15.01) and the Cash Receipts, Petty Cash, and Returned Check Policy (03.15.01). Peter moved, Andrew seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve and adopt Policy numbers 01.15.01 and 03.15.01 as written. The Board signed the policies for file in the town office. The Board also reviewed the latest version of the Purchasing Policy (02.15.02) which included additions by the VLCT to cover conflict of interest which were required to satisfy the State audit on the repeater grant. Peter moved, Andrew seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve and adopt Policy number 02.15.02 as written. The Board signed the policy for file in the Town office and to send to the State to satisfy the audit requirements. The Board also completed a first pass review of Debt Management Policy (05.15.01) and the Capital Program and Budget Policy (06.15.01) with a goal of completing the final review of these two policies at the next Board meeting.

Background: As Financial Policies are adopted there is a need to create operating procedures for use by all members (appointed, elected, and/or hired) that are doing business for the town.

Gary has created a Groton Purchase Order Procedure (2015/03) which was reviewed for comments and suggested changes. The goal is to complete the final review and approval at the next Board meeting. Gary is next working on the creation of a Credit Card procedure with the plan for an initial review to take place at the next Board meeting.

Background: The new fire truck is under construction at Dingee Machine Company with \$105,924 and \$52,926 payments made to date.

Peter provided to Lisa a "Certificate of Origin for a Vehicle", a paid receipt for the \$105,924 payment, and a US Bank statement of the reserve funds. Since larger doors are required to be constructed on the Emergency Services building to support the new truck, the Board would like know the status of that project. Brent reported that Phillip was coordinating the construction of the new doors. It was the consensus to invite Phillip to the next Board meeting to review the status with focus on the project being completed prior to the delivery of the Truck.

'Round the Table;

Brent reported that he has posted some town roads and will be following the required State procedures loading the notification onto the State Web site. Brent also reported that they are patching gravel roads.

Kitty submitted her resignation from the Building Committee and the Board acknowledge its receipt.

Peter proposed allocating \$5,000 from the Treasurers Health & Insurance budget (since Lisa will not be using the Town's insurance) over to the building fund to use for improving the Treasures office to include bringing the insulation up to code and improving the wiring. Andrew moved, Gary seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to use the funds from Health & Insurance for improvement to the Treasurer's office.

Mark reviewed the Building Committee priorities for the Community Building with a goal to be under contract in the near future. The priorities are; Re-enforcing the roof, painting the roof, gutters for the roof, new ceiling inside the gym area, and insulation in the ceiling.

Peter asked the Board how they would like to select an architect for the design of the kitchen/meeting room and storage of the back on the Community Building. Did they want to use Black River or would they like to look for another firm. The consensus was to ask the Building Committee for their recommendation and then make a decision.

Lisa reported that she had a \$402 bill for legal support on the Fire Truck purchase and wanted to know which account to use to pay the bill. Gary suggested that it be paid for out of the Fire Department equipment reserve fund but would hold on a final decision to receive feedback from the Fire Department.

Peter moved, Andrew seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the 3/19/15 minutes

Peter moved, Andrew seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the 4/2/15 minutes

Peter moved, Andrew seconded and the motion passed unanimously to approve the 4/7/15 minutes

Andrew requested a correction to the March 3, 2015 Town meeting minutes where on page two it documents Andrew Dorsett being the only person nominated for Town Agent however it then documents Gary Lamberton as the person being elected. (Andrew was elected to the Town Agent position).

Andrew moved, Peter seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to adjourn (at 10:20 P.M.)

Gary Lamberton, Chair

Prepared by Peter Lyon

