

Town of Groton, Vermont - Selectboard Minutes, August 6, 2015

The duly warned meeting of the Groton of August 6, 2015 was held at the Groton Community Building, 1476 Scott Highway.

Attendance for the meeting included: Lisa Hart, Linda Nunn, Paul Berlejung, Phil Palmer, James Langlois, Janet Locke, Shaun Crown, Nathan Puffer, Brent Smith, Henry Knott, Dorthy Knott, Wayne Knott, Lisa Hart

The following members were in attendance: Peter Lyon, Andrew Dorsett

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM

Recreation Committee Update

Paul Berlejung, Chairman of the Recreation Committee addressed the Board, describing the Committee's activities and level of capacity for future projects. Discussion ensued.

Public Comment

Nathan Puffer presented information about progress on the Community Building. He updated the Board on installation requirements for a retractable basketball hoop. Paul B. noted that the BOS needs to ensure the meetings are posted on the Town's website. He also inquired about funding for the purchase of tables. Peter noted that Linda is taking donations. Paul then inquired about response to a recent zoning letters sent to notify property owners who were in violation of Groton's zoning bylaws. Linda indicated that letter went out and that she has received from all that were sent warning letters by the zoning administrator, and that each indicated they were taking steps to resolve their violations.

Chicken Pie Supper

Peter spoke about the chicken pie supper and indicated that the Groton Community Club annually requests the Selectboard endorse the event.

On a motion by Andrew, seconded by Peter the Board unanimously voted that the Groton Selectboard endorses and authorizes, as town functions, the Groton Community Club Annual Chicken Pie Supper along with the day-long Fall Foliage Festival to be held Saturday, October 3, 2015 such endorsement authorizes to include all preparatory activities prior to October 3, 2015 and give permission for the use of the Groton Community Building and grounds for these activities.

Review and Approve Tax Rate

The Board discussed with Treasurer the setting of the tax rate. Peter inquired about the calculation of delinquent taxes. Andrew indicated that deferred tax payments needed to be included in the calculation otherwise the Town runs an annual deficit. Discussion ensued.

Harv Orr Road

The Board discussed a report from Vtrans engineer Shauna Clifford. The report presented a design for Harv Orr road and estimated cost for upgrading the road from a class 4 to a class 3. Jim L. expressed his disappointment with not being invited to the Highway department and Vtrans meeting. Shawn C. inquired about specific costs and requirements of materials. Janet L. inquired about specifically when the road crew would be able to get to drainage at the intersection of Great Road and Harv Orr road. Paul B. spoke about his feeling that the BOS and taxpayers should pay to improve the road to a class three. Janet questioned the timeline of the installation of the culvert on Great Road. Andrew asked Jim if he could describe the drainage issue, discussion ensued. Brent indicated the work would be completed within the next few weeks. Jim indicated that residents of Harv Orr road have equipment (one dump truck, two excavators, one dump trailer and a bulldozer), and could provide the equipment and labor to improve the road under the direction of the road agent to ensure proper implementation but couldn't commit to residents paying all the expenses. Discussion ensued. Brent spoke about budgetary constraints for class 4 roads. Peter suggested that the Town commit the road crew to one week of work on Harv Orr with residents overseen by the road agent. He loosely described a partnership with property owners on Harv Orr to improve the road. Andrew said he would like to see a plan as required in Town's policy so that he could understand what is being proposed and to ensure the Town complies with any required State permits. He said he wasn't against the road being improved but stressed that he would like to see a plan so as to not burden taxpayers or the road crew from budgeted and scheduled maintenance. Peter suggested that the road agent and residents work to develop a plan for a project in spring or early summer and suggested that residents could potentially begin site prep including clearing the trees from the right of way this winter. Discussion ensued. Peter restated the culmination of the discussion. Brent will work with Jim and property owners on Harv Orr to develop a phased plan for the improvements with the first phase including the installation of a culvert on Great Road, and work with residents to address some poor conditioned spots on the road. Brent will begin marking trees in the right of way to be removed by residents on the road and will oversee Harv Orr residents road improvement work this winter and spring.

Ricker Mill Road

Brent presented the Board with a plan for Ricker Road drainage and surface improvements with much of the cost being contributed by the Better Back Roads grant funds. The project includes the installation of an 18" culvert 30' long and the addition of 10" of gravel surface estimated to be 500-600 yards of gravel, much of this gravel to be supplied by Catamount Forest Product Inc. a property owner on that road. Peter inquired about the North end of Ricker Mills and Brent's plan to improve the surface. Andrew asked if he could see an estimate for materials and cost. He also said that he would like to ensure that the project fit within the Town's project priorities. Peter volunteered to draft some specs and estimates for the North County Road. Brent inquired about an estimate provided by Chief Excavating.

Fire Station Doors

Henry Knott inquired about the status of a new RFP for the Fire Department doors. Peter indicated that the project would be pursued and since the Fire Department indicated that the new door project wasn't required to fit the new truck into the building that the time pressure

wasn't as big of an issue, but that it would be pursued. The Board suggested that an amended RFP altering certain construction time restraints, be considered at a future meeting.

Roberts Rules of Order

On a motion by Peter, seconded by Andrew the Board voted unanimously to adopt the Roberts Rules of Order.

Meeting Schedule

On a motion by Andrew, seconded by Peter the Board voted unanimously to adopt a regular meeting schedule of the 1st and 3rd Thursday at 7:00 PM.

Mowing

Peter asked the highway crew if they could mow the highway lot. Phil indicated that he could do this.

Memory Wall

Peter stated that the attorney Paul Gilles advised the Town to move forward with the memory wall project. Discussion ensued. Peter requested that it be noted for disclosure purposes that he is related to the Darling (an abutter to the town property) family through a siblings marriage. Peter explained that due to the potential confrontational aspects of the project with abutters, he felt that progressing the project may require having work done by contractors. He suggested a potential source of funding could come from excess revenues generated by the Town's sale of the Union Bank stock. Phil inquired where this would be charged. Andrew said he would look into which line item this would fall under.

Lisa spoke about the State's payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT). Dorothy spoke about her recent conversation with state officials who set values of state property used in the calculation of the PILOT and about the potential of undervalued structures and about a State owned structure in the Ricker Pond Campground that may be out of compliance.

State Salt Bid

Brent discussed the State salt bid which is open to municipalities. He indicated that only one company, Cargill, has submitted a bid that would be available for this winter season. Discussion ensued. The Board requested Brent get a per/ton price from American Rock Salt as well.

Board of Selectman Candidates

The Board read allowed the names of those who submitted letters of interest to serve the remaining term of former Selectman Gary Lamberton.

Daniel Robinson, Paul Berlejung, Kristian Connolly and Mary Grant.

On a motion by Peter, seconded by Andrew the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:55 PM.