

January 20, 2015 Select Board Minutes, Groton Community Building (Approved)

Select Board: Peter Lyon, Gary Lamberton, Nathan Puffer

Fire Department: Leonard Doscinski, Frank Lapham, Dave Sperry, Phillip & Lynne Palmer, Dorothy & Wayne Knott, Joseph Lourenco, Ryan Curtis, Shawn Stetson, Wade Johnson, Carrol Joy, Auditor: Debra Johnson, Martha Crown, Resident: Mary Grant, Dave Spencer, Highway: Brent Smith, Treasurer: Roberta Dana, Clerk: Lynda Nunn

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM

Peter reported that he talked with members of the Ryegate Board about the potential of the Groton and Ryegate Boards meeting to discuss working together funding R1 (Ambulance). They were very supportive of meeting. We agreed to get together after we both have completed our budgets and preparation for Town meeting with a goal of getting together in February.

Peter also reported that he met with Deb Jurist to see if there was any interest in the Cemetery Commission loaning some of their funds toward the purchase of the new fire truck with the understanding that they not only get paid back but also would receive a significantly higher rate of interest on their money. Deb looked into the legality of lending the Cemetery's Perpetual Care funds and consulted with the other Commissioners. The restrictions for this type of fund (Perpetual Care), are very strict and they found that this type of action would not be allowed.

Peter reported that he had talked with members of the Library with the same question as the Cemetery Commission. They asked for an understanding of the legal restrictions on this type of activity. It was agreed that once that understanding was in hand they would discuss the request. Roberta reviewed a message that she had received from VLCT that stated that it would require voter approval to completed this type of transaction.

Frank Lapham pointed out that what has been called R1 and also an Ambulance is really a support vehicle and that there is no need to replace it with an ambulance style vehicle. Both Frank and Len Doscinski provided examples of what was needed such as a crew cab pickup or a van or even a suburban. All of these options would be a much lower replacement cost.

General discussion took place on the funding for the new fire truck. There is \$122,000 in the reserve fund that can be used toward the purchase of the truck. The annual town plan budget payments into the fund over the last few years has been \$20,000 per year. The cost of the chassis is \$105,924. The total cost of the truck when totally assembled and ready for delivery to the Town is \$282,344. There are four bids to provide lease/purchase funding: 1) Municipal Asset Management, 2) Spafford Leasing Associates, 3) Municipal Leasing Consultants, and 4) Leasing 2. (the bids are on file in the Town office). Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve a ten year contract with Municipal Leasing Consultants with an annual payment of \$20,401.65 contingent (1) on the contract containing a non-appropriation clause which specifically states that it requires an annual voter approval of this line item in the budget at town meeting, (2) that all annual payments will occur no sooner than March 10th of any calendar year, (3) that the town can execute a principle pay down at any time using town funds such as the Library, and (4) all fees associated with this Lease Purchase agreement will be paid by Municipal Leasing Consultants.

The Board requested Debbie (Town Auditor) to determine how this truck was ordered without receiving the proper signoff. Debbie agreed and stated that she also had this same question.

The next item to discuss was the Highway truck RFP. Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to table this item.

The following non-profit/donation request were reviewed and approved:

Northeast Kingdom Learning Services: current year is \$200, proposed is \$200.

Northeast Kingdom Youth Services: current year is \$200, proposed is \$200.

Umbrella, Inc.: current year is \$650, proposed is \$650.

Northeast Vermont Areas Agency on Aging: current is \$700, proposed is \$700.

Northeast Kingdom Human Services: current year is \$920, proposed is \$920

Caledonia Home Health Care: current year is \$1,350, proposed is \$1,350.

Little Rivers Health Care: current year is \$2,000, proposed is \$2,000.

The Board had created an information questionnaire to be completed by all requestors providing financial and town related operational information for consideration prior to deciding whether or not to include the request in the warning. The Board also decided to make the completed forms available for everyone to review and provide comments if desired prior to voting on each item at Town meeting.

The Board approved \$100 for Green Up Vermont, (current year is \$100). Nathan volunteered to be the Green Up Vermont coordinator for the Town this coming year. The Board thanked Nathan for his generous offer of support.

The following Reserve funds were reviewed and approved:

Computer & Office Equipment: Proposed 0 (current year is 0)

Community Building: Proposed \$15,000 (current year is \$15,000)

Emergency Services: Proposed \$5,000 (current year is \$5,000)

Reappraisal and Tax Map: Proposed \$2,000 (current year is \$2,000)

Recreation: Proposed 0 (current year is \$250)

Emergency Services Equipment: Proposed 15,996 (current year is \$20,000)

The current tax collector is proposed to be \$269 (current year is \$5,306) which covers the spending to date in 2015. Following State Statues, this role is planned to be added back into the Treasurers duties which will require an article to be voted on at town meeting.

The Board reviewed a proposed Highway Reserve Fund of \$97,445 (current year is \$59,757). Brent explained that the road surface management software we have would project the deterioration of the roads and that those reports are being used for planning purposes. The board or Brent did not have them at the meeting to review. Gary and Nathan recalled prevues presentations on paving plans. Peter did not support placing more money into the paving fund until a plan was available for review and approval. \$100K of town money had been spent on the Boulder Beach intersection and another \$100K of town money had been spent on Powder Spring road without a multi-year plan being in place. Examples of where there is need to complete work is on sidewalks, the highway salt shed, the highway storage building, and the power lines hanging close to the sand pile, Ricker Mills Road, and Branch Brook Road. Peter also felt that the Highway buildings should be included in with the Building Committees efforts as there are detailed plans for the Community Building and currently there is no planning in place for the highway buildings. Brent pointed out that including \$30,000 for paving in the

new budget with the \$5,000 that is left in the fund from last year will allow the town to receive up to \$175,000 grant funds to do additional paving on Minard Hill Road. Gary wants to continue to add to the paving fund to preserve the opportunity to receive matching funds for paving Minard Hill Road. Brent proposed issuing a RFP for a new 10 wheel truck to be purchased this year. Brent shared with the Board two reports to answer questions about truck issues, "2015 truck history and pros and cons". Brent also shared that Ryegate ordered their truck in the spring of 2014 and they have not received it yet. Brent explained that even if the truck manufacturer delivered the truck in a timely manner, the body and plows still needed to be installed and that took months to do. Peter felt that it could be done sooner than that and reported that he had contacted two truck suppliers and that both said there was no reason to have to issue a bid request prior to town meeting as they could deliver new trucks in a few weeks and no later than June/July. Peter also felt that, since the next purchase in the capital plan is a 6 wheel, not 10 wheel that we should first have a detailed plan discussion to determine if we want to make changes. Nathan felt that a 10 wheel truck would be a better purchase as it would be more productive when hauling material and also would be a better truck for plowing as it would be significantly heavier. Nathan moved and Gary seconded a motion to issue an RFP for a 10 wheel truck. Nathan and Gary voted in favor and Peter voted against. The motion passed.

Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the 1/8/15 minutes
Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the 1/13/15 minutes
Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the 1/15/15 minutes
Peter moved, Nathan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to adjourn (at 12:30 AM)

Gary Lamberton, Chair

Prepared by Peter Lyon