

Town Of Groton, Vermont – Selectboard Minutes, October 8, 2015 (Approved)

The duly warned meeting of the Groton Selectboard of October 8, 2015 was held at the Groton Community Building, 1476 Scott Highway.

Attendance for the meeting included: Daniel Robinson, Phillip Palmer, Lynne Palmer, Dorothy Knott, Jim Downing, Dean Edson, Dave Spencer, Jim Cilley, and Shawn Crown.

The Following Selectboard Members were in attendance: Peter Lyon, Andrew Dorsett, and Mary Grant

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

Updates and adjustments to the agenda:

Update of Constable's radios

Fire Station Overhead Doors

Lake Groton bladderwort control

Jim Downing expressed concern that when the Sherriff's Department transition's to a digital communications system that his analog radios will no longer be able to communicate with them. He also indicated that the State Police are not interested providing dispatch services or in relaying communications between the two departments. He is hoping that the changeover will not occur until next year but wanted to make the Select Board aware of the impending change. He indicated that his current radios are in good condition and he would transfer them to the EMS/Fire Department once he has the digital system. The Select Board asked Constable Downing to research prices to have the information handy as we go into 2016 budget preparations. Mary Grant asked what effect that may have on the FAST Squad/Fire Department, Asking if they are upgrading as well. Jim answered that he didn't know and Phillip Palmer, Fire Department member, stated that he had not heard anything at this point. Mary said that they should keep in mind that those departments may also be going digital.

Jim Downing also wanted to know if there was a deadline for clean-up (referencing the letter that was sent out informing residents that were in violation of town ordinance to clean-up and remove junk). Andrew Dorsett said that they would have to check with the Zoning Administrator and perhaps have him attend the next meeting to report progress. Peter Lyon stated that he would add the Zoning Administrator to the agenda for the next Select Board meeting and would call him to give him a heads up.

Public to be Heard: None

Stump Dump Closing:

Dean Edson indicated that he uses the stump dump frequently for dropped tree limbs and brush that he picks up on and along the roadway into his property and on his property. He is concerned that with the amount that he collects, the unavailability of the stump dump creates an inconvenience. He wanted to inform the Select Board of how useful the stump dump was for him as well as other residents and wanted to ask what alternatives were available.

Peter Lyon informed Mr. Edson of the work that had been done coordinating with the Ryegate Recycling Center so that Groton residents could bring a reasonable quantity of brush and limbs as well as

unpainted wood construction materials there at no charge. They will not accept stumps however. Ryegate is operating it's normal hours, but a call ahead of time may be prudent. Mary Grant added that all stump dumps in the state are closing. No more permits are being issued for stump dumps. Groton no longer has a permit and cannot get issued one. Also operating a stump dump is a huge liability for the town. Mr. Edson voiced his concern that there may be an increase of residents dumping brush and leaves over the banks on the side of roads. Mary said that towns that have not had stump dumps have not reported that as a problem and as Groton's is closing, that activity seems unlikely. Most residents have been good about disposing of leaves and brush on their own property. Mary also indicated that it is illegal to dump leaves and brush over a bank so that it ends up on a neighbor's property. Andrew Dorsett indicated that an alternative was to request a burn permit from the Fire Warden to burn small quantities. Dave Spencer added that he hoped there was an effort to communicate the decision to close the stump dump to the community. Discussion closed with the recommendation to have the Board Secretary post notices at the Upper Valley Grill, Post Office and the Community Building as well as publishing it on the web site and in the Bridge Weekly Sho-Case. Andrew made the motion to post the stump dump closing on the web site, Bridge Weekly Sho-Case and posting signs, Mary Seconded, and the board unanimously approved.

Fire Station Overhead Doors:

Phillip Palmer spoke to inform the Select Board that the Fire Department, at their last meeting, voted to continue to pursue replacement of the fire house overhead doors. He reported that Dorothy Knott had informed them that there was a possibility of the department getting some more funds if they used their money for an addition instead of the doors. Phillip indicated that the door project has waited too long and they need to move forward with this before they can take on any more projects. The door replacement has already been engineered, and has been out for bid twice with no positive responses. One bidder asked if the RFP can be reworded listed again. Mary Grant asked what account they were using for funds, Phillip indicated it was their maintenance fund. Mary said that if the bids came in above what they had available, would the Fire Department be willing to kick in the balance from their own funds. Phillip said that it wasn't his call, but he could bring it up at their next meeting. His assumption was that if there was not enough money in their budget to do the work, they would not have the work done. Discussion continued surrounding the issues of previous RFPs. Dorothy Knott, Fire Department Treasurer reported that the Maintenance account had \$42,000 available. The Select Board asked why the current doors need replacing. Phillip explained that the doors aren't large enough. Vehicles have to be moved to get another vehicle in or out. The new fire truck will not fit through the current doors and mutual aid vehicles won't fit through the current doors. Further discussion surrounded listing a new RFP and including doors on it so that bidding contractors would be responsible for supplying doors that meet energy efficiency requirements. Mary moved to allow the Fire Department to submit A Request for Bid for the Fire Department door project. Andrew seconded. Continuing discussion included ensuring doors met energy efficiency ratings and outside lighting replaced with LED lighting and including the new doors in the price of the bid. Phillip indicated that Bigelow's had been awarded the door portion of the contract during the initial RFP a couple years ago. Mary amended her motion to specify the "R" value of the door to be R-17 as a minimum, Andrew seconded the motion and the board voted unanimously to approve.

Lake Groton Bladderwort Control:

Peter informed the Board that bladderwort is a non-toxic invasive species that actually cleans the lake. However it spreads and can take over portions of the lake. Allen Goodine, from the Lake Association said they can be issued a permit to harvest the bladderwort at a cost of \$175 similar to the milfoil clean-up. If the Town sponsors the harvest, there is no cost for the permit. The Lake Association would cover any

cost incurred. Andrew made a motion to sponsor the bladderwort harvest permit, Mary Seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Review/Approve Salt Shed Improvements:

Peter informed the board that the project is moving along and is under budget, however, there is some electrical work that needs to be done. The outlet for the fuel pump needs to be run under ground. Peter suggested getting a cost estimate before giving authorization to start the work. Andrew asked how far is it between points, Peter stated not far perhaps 15-20 feet. Phillip Palmer asked why it was not to code. Peter said according to the State of Vermont, the line has to be under ground. Andrew moved to continue with the work as long as it stayed under budget, Peter seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve.

Review/Discuss selling of old fire truck:

Phillip Palmer handed the Select Board a note with the results of the Fire Department vote in regards to the disposition of the old fire truck. In short the Fire Department will retain the old truck until adequate training has been done on the new truck. The funds from the sale of the old truck will go into the Emergency Services Vehicle Fund. The Fire Department is currently investigating sales options. A copy of the letter was entered into record.

Review/Approve RFP for Community Building Insulation:

This RFP would be announced in order to get an amount to put in the 2016 budget. Andrew asked if the RFP could specify a time extension so that the work could be done anytime during 2016. Peter indicated that was a good point. Peter also said that he has spoken to Efficiency Vermont to see if there were any funds that the Town could capture on the insulation project. Efficiency Vermont indicated that there was around \$1500 that would help offset the overall project cost. Andrew suggested researching a Community Facilities grant. He has had success in previous years. Peter asked if Andrew could follow-up with that, and he will work on getting the RFP out.

Review/Approve Ricker Mills Road paving and drainage improvements:

Bob Farquaharson, contractor, informed Peter that he can pave from where he is working down to Rte 232 at a cost of \$3200.00. If the town pays for the pavement, he can save the town \$1500.00, plus tax. Looking at the highway budget, there was \$11,000 in chloride, with \$7800.00 spent, leaving \$3200.00 available. Andrew wanted to clarify that this was for dust control not snow/ice removal and Peter said that is correct. Andrew suggested conferring with Brent to make sure those funds weren't already spent. Andrew moved to allow for the additional pavement with a limit on expenses of \$3200.00, and capture the \$1500.00 +tax savings by having the Town purchase the asphalt, pending verification that the funds were available in the Highway account. Phillip Palmer asked if this was a valid change in the bid. Mary Grant explained that this was a simple change order and an acceptable practice as the overall contract has not changed. Peter expanded the comments by adding that the town is saving taxpayer money by purchasing the material. Peter seconded the motion and the board voted unanimously to approve.

Review Railroad Street Drainage Issues and Discuss Next Steps:

Peter asked Phillip Palmer to give the Board some history/background of the Highway Departments repose to the drainage issue on Railroad Street. Phillip stated that Gary Lamberton and Brent Smith went over there on their own behalf and not as representatives of the town to try to assist Rose Wood with the drainage issues she has in her basement. They were able to open her basement drains to allow the water to go down and that seemed to take care of her problems initially.

Since then the drain has stopped working again and she is using a sump pump to keep the water out of her basement. The water initially traveled down the ditch, but now is running across the road and causing damage to the road and in the winter is an ice hazard. Andrew suggested that research be done in the town ordinances to see if there is one that addresses this issue. Typically water that originates on a property is the property owner's responsibility if it causes damage. Peter will check with VLCT to see if there is a letter/template that the town could tailor and send to the property owner to see what solutions can be made to satisfy the town and the property owner. The Board will also follow up with Brent to get his ideas on a mutually beneficial solution.

Availability of Rural Development Grants, Publish an RFP for an Architect:

Peter suggested pushing the RFP back through the Building Committee and have them submit it. The proposals will come back to the Building Committee who will present them to the Select Board. Peter will work with the Building Committee to prepare an RFP. The Board agreed by consensus to proceed.

Recreation Trail Update: None at this time.

Review/Discuss next steps for auditing:

Peter Lyon reported that Nathan Hawley is set for 7pm on October 22nd. Peter indicated that they would be covering the previous audits to ensure that corrective actions have been taken and that the Town is doing what they should be doing and to go through the steps of what a final audit will entail. Andrew wanted to know if there was a way for the Board members to get a copy of the findings from the previous audits. The Board Secretary said that he would scan them and email them to all the board members.

Update/Next Steps on the Memory Wall:

Peter Lyon reported that they recovered the line and the corner. We need Butch Gandin to put the Granite in. He will cut the knobs off the top of the concrete blocks. And on top of that, the finish blocks will be placed. Once that work is done, the side can be finished. This section requires about 36 blocks. Rather than go into the budget, Peter suggested using the remaining funds from the sale of stocks. That would raise \$3320.00. If we make that purchase, Fred Grant has again donated transportation. Andrew asked if this would be enough to establish the corner, Peter said this should do the trick. Andrew made the motion to use the \$3320.00 from the sale of stock to purchase 37 blocks. Mary seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion. Peter commented that the blocks weigh 2230 lbs each. Jim Cilley wanted to inform the Select Board that he followed the surveyor while he was surveying the lines for the community building and finding the back lines of the town property. He wasn't sure how he was able to find corners and accurate lines. The Select Board will follow-up with the surveyor when he comes back with his survey to ensure its accuracy and address Mr. Cilley's concerns. Phillip Palmer wanted to know what budget does the Memory Wall belong to. Andrew stated that it falls under un-expended budgetary funds. Mary Grant said that it will be listed under the Community Building when it is complete. The project began as a project to address a drainage issue, after that work was complete it became a project to clean up the drainage work.

Discuss Preparations for 2016 Budget:

Peter Lyon presented the other Select Board members a form he developed to assist departments with preparing their 2016 budget. The form will be sent to each department for them to prepare and submit to the Select Board the first of November. The Select Board set a budget increase goal of 1.75% for all departments. The Board approved sending out the form to all departments by consensus. Budget meeting was scheduled for November 7th at 9am.

Round table:

Andrew Dorsett talked about replacing the flooring in the Treasurer's office. Peter indicated that with monies that were allocated for the improvements to the Treasurer's office, there should be \$5000.00 remaining. Andrew made a motion to award Valley Floors the contract for replacing the flooring in the treasurer's office for the amount of \$1510.96 to come out of the remainder of the Treasurer's office improvement fund. Mary seconded the motion, the Board voted unanimously to approve, pending verification that the funds are still available.

Andrew also wanted the Select Board to think about find room in the budget for hiring a full-time Select Board Administrative Assistant. The Board Members all have fulltime jobs and having an administrative assistant would be an enormous help to the Select Board while taking away the added burden placed on the Town Clerk and Treasurer who are currently sharing administrative duties for the Board.

Approve Board Minutes:

September 24, 2015 Motion to approve by Andrew Dorsett, Mary Grant Seconded,

Changes/additions:

Add: to Stump Dump Status that both Tim Daily and Wade Johnson recommend closing.

Add: Board wants a note from the Fire Chief accepting the fire truck before final payment is made.

Add: \$35,000 grant with a 20% match from town

Board Voted to approve the minutes, Motion Passed unanimously.

The Board voted to approve the Minutes for the Harv Orr Road Special Meeting on Sept 28th 2015.

Select Board Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Minutes prepared by Dan Robinson, Select Board Secretary