

Town of Groton, Vermont - Selectboard Minutes August 4, 2016 (approved)

Selectboard Members in attendance: Mary Grant, Andrew Dorsett and Wade Johnson, Sr.

Attendance for the meeting included: Lisa Hart, Carrie Peters, Brent Smith, Kitty Diggins, Nathan Puffer, Debra Johnson, Linda Nunn and Barbara Johns.

The meet was called to order at 6:35 PM

Review/Approval of July 21, 2016 Minutes. Wade made the motion to approve. Andrew seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Health Officer Position - No one has applied yet. Linda posted the opening and called the Health Department and they told her that the chairperson of the selectboard is in charge until someone is appointed. So Mary Grant, the chairperson of the selectboard will be in charge for now.

Mary Grant stated that she needs all the open files that he was working on and needed to be reviewed. Barbara Johns case is pending. She needs to drill a new well due to having trouble with her water since January. Barbara needs a letter from the health officer so she can continue with the process of getting her well drilled. Linda is going to call the health officer to get any files that he has. The health officer had not picked up his paperwork at the town office. Mary stated that we need the health officer, Reginald Guertin, to come to the next selectboard meeting to see what he hasn't got done and find out exactly what it is that he does.

There is no funds to pay the health officer in the town. It was suggested to look at the budget about paying the new health officer in the future.

#### Financials and Budgets

Lisa stated that the town is at 58% in their budget. All departments need to look at their budgets and review them and if they need them in more detail that they need to let Lisa know. Mary told Lisa to make sure each department gets a copy of their budget to make sure if everything is posted correctly.

Lisa stated what is still due in delinquent taxes. In 2015 there is still \$32,656.67, in 2014 there is \$19,794.50 and in 2013 there is \$138.36. Jeff was in the office and he is hoping to have the tax sale in September and to have it done by November 4th when this year taxes are due.

#### Personnel Policies

Lisa discussed some of the VLCT policies. One is Town Meeting Day is a paid holiday and used as a float day or taking Bennington Battle day as a float. Also mentioned was paying a part time person getting paid for 20 hours per week holiday pay which would be the town chair Lister. Mary stated that there are new federal laws on paying employees. The town needs to make sure the Personnel Policy is written correctly and passed by the selectboard. Mary stated that the overtime policy has not been done. Andrew mentioned that it needs to be on the next agenda to finish. The town is using the VLCT

guidelines to establish requirements by law to cover full time/part time including elected officers. Andrew made a motion to approve Section 2 as amended, Wade seconded and motion passed. There was some discussion on Section 18 but will finish at next meeting. Section 18 Holiday & Vacation and another section will be finalized at the next selectboard meeting.

#### CPA update

Lisa stated that she is coming next Tuesday to finish the spread sheet and more due/to and to/from.

#### Tax Rate - Setting

Kitty said that on August 15 the changes to the Grand List (411) will be done and then the tax rate can be done. Lisa stated that the taxes need to be printed by August 29th and mailed out by September 2nd. There was some discussion on the tax rate. The Homestead rate is 2.0626 and the non-residential rate is 1.9791 as of now. There was a decision to set the tax rate at the next Select board meeting.

#### Groton Solar LLC

The public service board, Green Mountain Power did not accept our application because we do not have or utilize the power on the site or at the solar field at the dump site. It was appealed at the Public Service board. Mary talked with the public service board and they received our appeal. Mary will be talking with them. We are the only application that is not a business. We did appeal it and Mary is going to talk with the Public Service Board. Mary believes we have a very strong case and should hear within a week or so. Mary stated that we have been accepted as grievance and will be going to meet with the Public Service Board. We are the only town that applied.

#### Sidewalk Plans

Brent said he is working on the project with no definite date. It was stated to get it in writing that there are changes being made due to the pole being moved. There have been no bids on the sidewalk received due to the special town meeting. There was much discussion on this project. Andrew said that the pole removal is in the works, lines have been drawn that can be checked by the permit department and John is working with us to have an alternative scope. The pole is going to take Green Mountain Power 4 - 6 weeks to move. Brent is hoping to get some of this project done this year. He also said that \$4100 has been spent on this project already. Andrew said that the bid package is to be brought to the selectboard first. The project will go to bid when we have the final design and a permit issued.

#### Nathan Puffer-ROW

Nathan needs a different right of way by the dump road. What Nathan wants is the town to consider to deed the right of way up the dump road about 150 feet. Nathan has spoken to Bruce Genereax and it will not be in the way of the solar farm. Brent spoke up and said this would make it easier for the road crew. Nathan would be happy to meet with the selectboard to show them where it is. The right of way was looked at on the maps that were available at the meeting. Nathan's lawyer will be drawing up plans for the selectboard to view.

Also there was a letter received from Bev Stapel about the Solar Farm off Goodfellow Road. She has concerns on seeing the solar farm from her property and wanted to know where the Puffer land is. It was said that she will not see the Puffer land from her property. The town will respond to her in writing on this issue.

A motion for Nathan's attorney to draft up papers for the exchange and get papers from Bruce Genereaux about the equivalent value of the exchange, was made by Andrew and seconded by Wade and motion passed.

#### Boulder Beach

There were three bids received:

Austin Construction - \$96,398

Daniels Construction - \$92,715

Winterset Inc. - \$116,000

Andrew made a motion to accept Daniels bid for \$92,715, Wade seconded and motion passed.

The secretary is to look in the files to find all the paperwork on the engineering on the wall project, the well and drainage and file it in the office.

#### Park and Ride

Brent said nothing more has been done on it.

#### Open To Public:

Linda Nunn said that the fire marshal stopped to see her and said that the load capacity at the library for the first floor is 77 people and the second floor it is 21 people for a total of 98 people. He also stated that he sees the yellow building coming down very slowly and disappointed that it is taking so long. He said it should have been taking down by now. He said he is going to talk to his boss to speed it up. He said that maybe the Selectboard could contact OSHA or VOSHA being that it is a safety issue. Linda also got a call from Brian who was with the Post Office who had no water. Allan Gandin had been in the office and he had a leak by his driveway on his shed side and it goes down to the post office. Linda gave the fire marshal Allan Gandin's phone number so they could discuss that issue. While Linda was talking to him, she explained that the building was coming down slowly and the fire marshal said that he has broke the contract twice, supposed to have it down in 60 days. There was some discussion on this. Andrew said that the town has not been in the practice of enforcing the zoning laws. Andrew also said that there has been no follow up on the letter that was sent out a while ago to home owners to clean up their property. The Zoning Officer needs to come in and give us an update on our zoning issues. Mary mentioned to put the Zoning Officer on the next meeting.

Linda also mentioned that the selectboard is in charge of the health officer position until someone is appointed.

Linda also handed the selectboard a letter to sign on unlicensed dogs that she can't get anybody to pay attention to. What this letter will do is that our animal control person will pick them up and hold them until they are licensed or they can be either adopted out or put down. Mary stated that Jim Downing and Josephine Guertin should go together. Linda said that everything has been done and no response from them. Wade made a motion for the animals to be picked up and Andrew seconded and motion passed.

Lisa asked last week about the Security Camera. Lisa had asked Dan about the estimates that he did and said they were in the folder for Mary. Lisa said there was \$1500 set aside for the wifi booster. Lisa said the Farmer's Market people can't get on to do their transactions. Lisa is to ask Gary about this issue.

Lisa also discussed about the tax insert which has been revised. The hours were changed and an issue of cash coming in and not being able to make change. Lisa called VLCT attorney and he said it was fine to put cash payments will be accepted only in exact payment only. Lisa and Carrie also said there are two boxes on the tax forms that they can put notes. They are going to put this information there, too. Lisa is going to contact Gary about trouble with the booster box.

Agenda for next meeting:

approve minutes

prayer issue

financials/budget update

CPA update

personnel policy

tax rate setting

town report contract

Zoning update

Groton Solar LLC - Update

Sidewalk Plans

Nathan Puffer-ROW

Wade made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM, Andrew seconded and motion passed.

Minutes prepared by Debra Johnson, Secretary of the Selectboard

