

Town Of Groton, Vermont – Selectboard Minutes May 19th, 2016 (Draft)

The duly warned meeting of the Groton Selectboard of May 19th, 2016 was held at the Groton Community Building, 1476 Scott Highway.

Attendance for the meeting included: Lisa Hart, Carrie Peters, Brent Smith, Dan Robinson, and Alex Nuti-de Biase (JO).

The Following Selectboard Members were in attendance: Mary Grant, Andrew Dorsett and Wade Johnson

The Meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM

Review/Approve Minutes:

Lisa asked that an adjustment be made to her comment on page 3 of the May 5th minutes (reference the new Fire Department member's payroll forms) Andrew moved that the minutes be approved as amended, Wade seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Wade moved that the May 9th minutes be approved as written, Andrew seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Financials/Budget Update:

Mary asked Lisa if she had any updates, Lisa reported that Community Building repairs was over at this point. Mary said that was expected but once estimates were in on the design work, that they could look for grant money to bring that back under. Lisa added that B&B septic informed her that the Community Building septic did not need to be pumped. Based on usage and the amount of solids, it would be a waste of money to pump it now. It should only need to be pumped if Powers was going to work on it, then it could be coordinated between the two. Mary said that they should check on usage because there is basketball, floor hockey, Tai kwon Do and yoga in the gym all winter. Lisa replied that she had mentioned that, but B&B Septic said those groups should not produce a heavy amount of solids and they aren't showering or doing laundry, which are typically hard on a septic system. Wade wanted to mention that during the budget planning cycle, departments that typically send purchases out to bid, they should plan that in their budget and perhaps send out RFP's for anticipated contracts to get more accurate figures. Mary added that the Capital Plan will help with that process as well. Lisa also mentioned that the Fire Department was at 61% but some of their expenses are billed in a cycle or are only billed twice a year that artificially inflates their monthly figures.

Department Updates:

Lisa reported that she has all of the new Fire Department personnel payroll forms and are in the folder to be signed. Lisa reported that she had a check for \$731.00 to present the Board from the Town Clerk. This was the funds raised from the Spring Bazaar held in the Community Building gym and was to be donated to the Community Building repair fund. Mary asked Lisa to express her thanks to Linda. Lisa reported that the internet conversion to Charter is complete. There hasn't been a true test because Linda has been on vacation, but everything seems to be working fine. Dan reported that he and Dave Spencer were still working on the email change-over but the Town's website hosting service offers 100 free email accounts with their hosting package, so we are looking into that further and would notify everyone when they can begin switching over.

Mary asked if anyone knew if Linda had received a reply from the State Fire Marshall in reference to the "yellow" building. No one had heard, so Mary asked that to be moved to the next meeting.

The Board reviewed the letter from the Tree Warden to the residents on Harv Orr Road. Mary asked the Secretary to put it on file and send a copy of this letter and the original to Harry so he would know the Select Board is aware of the Tree Warden's decision. Wade made a motion to accept the Tree Warden's letter as the report and send Harry a copy. Andrew seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Andrew made a motion to ratify the cemetery mowing contract with CK Lawn Care for five years, Wade seconded, with no discussion, the motion passed unanimously. Mary asked the Secretary to contact Aaron Smith to see if he is having any luck finding nominations for replacing the Commission members that resigned. Wade mentioned the responsibility for maintaining cemetery stones. Lisa remarked that it was the Cemetery Commission that was responsible for overseeing perpetual care. Wade said that family members also had a say in caring for headstones. Not just anyone could go in and clean headstones because of the chance of damaging a headstone. Carrie said that Gandin Brothers had been contracted in the past and his business is insured.

Mary asked for a motion to support the Groton Community Club's Fall Foliage Day activities. Andrew made the motion that the Groton Selectboard endorse and authorize as a town function, the Groton Community Club annual chicken pie supper along with the day-long Fall Foliage Festival activities to be held on Saturday, October 1st 2016. Such an endorsement and authorization to include the preparatory activities of September 30th, 2016 and October 1st, 2016 and give permission for the use of the Groton Community Building and grounds for these activities. Motion seconded by Wade and the motion passed unanimously.

Mary reported that she had the Washington Electric Coop ballot. Andrew moved that Mary complete the Ballot and submit it to WEC, Wade seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Mary added that there was a US Census form that the Secretary would complete and return. She also passed along a training opportunity to Lisa for employment law. Andrew asked that the Board formally recommend that the Zoning Administrator attend this year's update training. The Board concurred.

Mary asked the Board to review the access and right of way permit application for Rodney Road. Brent explained where the access was going in and the reason Rodney had requested it. The access would give him a clear access onto County Road. The access partially there, Rodney would be cleaning it up and finishing it up. The Board approved the application and signed it.

Andrew addressed a request for price differences in real estate that is sold at tax auction. Mary said that there haven't been any tax auctions lately. Andrew recommended sending it to the Town's attorney to review. Mary said to send it to the Delinquent tax collector to review and forward as needed.

Nathan Bartlett Property: Mary briefed an email received for Nathan Bartlett in reference to a property issue. Wade said that they needed more information before moving forward. Mary said that she had asked the Listers, but had not heard back yet. Mary asked to have this put on the next agenda and either have Mr. Bartlett forward his documentation for review or attend the next meeting.

Wade reported that the Composting issue was still being reviewed and burning an issue because of weather and the types of materials being. Wade mentioned the cost of re-establishing a stump dump and the requirements that the Town would be put under. Wade also mentioned that some municipalities are contracting companies that have a "grinder" to chip wood and clean wood building materials. There is a quantity requirement and this isn't cheap.

Mary briefed that there is an inspector that will be taking a look at the Community Building boiler.

Brent wanted to ask the Board to authorize him to buy culverts at the State low bid. Andrew asked him what he planned on buying for culverts this year. Brent answered whatever \$5000 will buy. Andrew made a motion to allow Brent to buy culverts at the State bid price to purchase culverts in accordance with our Policy, Wade seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Lisa wanted in the minutes that she was paying the PO for the Fire Department front door invoice from the Fire Department reserves. Andrew made the motion for Lisa to pay the PO out of the Fire Department Reserve fund, Wade Seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Brent reported that the GMP land transfer looked good and may happen at no cost to the Town. They were hoping to have a thumbs up from the Recreation Committee so the land could be utilized as recreation.

Mary Wanted to know if the Board was ready to enter into executive session so they could review the contract for Batchelder's services.

Alex mentioned that someone had asked earlier about the yellow building and he had noticed that there was a dumpster down there and some of the roofing was missing. Mary said that the Fire Marshall had been notified so maybe someone had taken steps to get started.

Brent asked if there was a status on the sidewalk project. Andrew said that we are still waiting on the access permit. They said maybe next week.

Mary said that she had spoken with Peter Lyon and he and some volunteers wanted to use the Town truck and loader on Saturday to finish up the Memory Wall so it would be ready for Memorial Day. Brent said that Fred can't volunteer because he's an employee. Mary said that was fine, he would donate it back to the town. Mary said that they had also got Robert Farquaharson and possibly Fred Braymann and were going to meet at 8:00 am. Brent asked where the material was coming from. Mary said the Town, and that would finish up the back wall and it would be all cleaned up. The lot would be dragged and graveled because if the kitchen is going back there, then there is no need to grass seed it. Andrew made a motion to hire Fred Grant to allow him to use Town equipment and gravel to backfill the memory wall. Mary said that she wants to ensure that a lot of townspeople have donated time, money and materials into building this wall and deserve to be recognized. Brent asked where the funds were coming from for the material and he felt it was a misappropriation of funds. Mary said ok, put together a bill and we'll raise the money. Brent said that he would like to drive his truck, Mary responded that she would like him to and was he offering. Brent said that it felt kind of strange to come to a meeting on a Thursday and find it all planned out. Mary said that she just found out the previous night that volunteers would be available to do the work on Saturday. Andrew added that they have relied on volunteers to save money on the project and it has been a pet peeve of his to see the project stalled and just sit there. We now have volunteers ready to finish up the job and if Brent has some time to donate on Saturday, that would be great. Brent said he needs to know what they plan on using for material, he would like to know what the plan is. Brent went on to say he has plans for that gravel and that he believes this is inappropriate. He believed that he should have been a part of the process. Mary said she understands and that she had short notice herself and was trying to get things coordinated the best she could under those circumstances. Andrew said that if there are volunteers ready then they should do what they can to make use of them.

Brent said because of his status as an elected official, he can volunteer and not be paid which isn't the case with an employee. Wade wanted to add that communication is a key factor in planning process. Andrew added that he agrees wholeheartedly. But there is a gaping hole back there that needs to get finished so that we can move on to other town business, there has been so much time and money donated for this project that it would be a shame not to see it through. And now we have an opportunity to do that. Wade said that this should be the lesson on communicating with the other departments and would hope to see more from here on out. Andrew made a motion to have Brent get together with the volunteers Saturday morning and as much as possible, cap the memory wall with the materials on hand. Wade seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Mary briefed that the Library negotiations are in the hands of the town's attorney. She is still waiting to hear from them. And then the final decision will go to the voters to decide.

Brent presented the Selectboard a copy of a petition for a special town meeting he has been circulating. The question to the voters is: Shall the voters of the town of Groton instruct the Selectboard to make improvements to the sidewalk and entrance adjacent to the Community Building and Fire Station that would further help safety, aesthetics and drainage without the use of any type of curbing and to remove all curbing in this area if the project has been completed before this meeting. Brent said that there was no real effort by the board to address it so this will take it out of the Boards hands and give it to the voters. Mary said that the petition appears to have the right number of signatures so we will warn a special Town Meeting. Andrew expressed his concerns that the project was going to be delayed again over a short section of curbing. Wade made the motion to schedule a special town meeting not later than the week of June 20th to allow the voters to answer the question on the petition. Mary seconded the motion. In discussion, June 23rd at 6:30 pm was decided as the date and time of the meeting. Mary and Wade voted yes for the motion, Andrew abstained.

Wade moved that the Board go into executive session to discuss the Batchelder contract, Andrew seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve. The Board entered executive session at 7:50 pm

The Board came out of executive session at 8:45 with the following, Andrew moved to have Mary contact Batchelders to discuss a partial year contract to reduce the amount for their services to date and establish an end date for their services. Also to discuss the items on Lisa's list. Wade seconded and motion passed unanimously. The Board concurred with the Treasurer's request to negotiate a contract with a CPA for training not to exceed \$2490.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm

Minutes prepared by Dan Robinson, Select Board Secretary