

Town of Groton, Vermont - Selectboard Minutes November 3, 2016 (approved)

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

Attendance for the meeting included: Lisa Hart, Carrie Peters Debra Johnson, Brent Smith, Shaun Stetson, Jim Downing, Phillip Palmer, Lynne Palmer, Dorothy L. Knott, Kitty Diggins, Tim Dailey, Dan Webster, Brent Abare, Bruce Genereaux, and Steve Genereaux.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Review/Approval of October 6, 2016 and October 15, 2016 minutes. Wade made a motion to approve the minutes, Mary seconded and motion passed.

Financials and Budget Update was done at the end of the meeting due to having a lot to go over.

Kathleen Lamberton from the Community Club was not present due to no communications.

Tim Dailey from the NEKSW said there are new proposals for the Northeast Kingdom Charter changes. Tim wants to know how the Selectman want him to vote on the changes. One change is the budget that we vote on at town meeting will be voted on by the board supervisors. They are going to change how we generate revenue for the district which is a per capita charge which is one option and the other is a fee for collecting the recyclables at the facility. There was much discussion on this issue. Tim said the three options are \$1 per head, \$1.64 per head and then the \$30 flat fee for hauling out of the facility. The sale of recyclables is down so the market is down. NEKSW have had to take out a line of credit which they have never had to do before. Their only source of fee is from the tipping fees from the haulers and they pass that on to the consumers which people are getting sick of paying more money for their garbage.

Andrew made a motion to authorize Tim Dailey to vote on the charter changes of the NEKSW board of supervisors, Wade seconded and the motion passed.

Bruce Genereaux was at the meeting to discuss the possibility of putting a solar farm on the town's land off the Goodfellow Road. The first lease option expired due to not getting a permit. He tried to get another permit for the solar farm. The new rules for 2017 is being restricted to encourage people to put them on non-productive land. The old town dump did not qualify because it had preexisted before the state monitored these areas. Due to the new rules and regulations, Bruce Genereaux said that the Green Mountain Solar will not pursue this project any further.

There was a letter that Green Mountain Solar received from a person complaining how the solar farm looks in town, which is located at the field across from the Chester Mace's resident. Steve Genereaux spoke on this and said it is now in front of the service board. Matt Puffer was hired to clean it up and put top soil down and planted trees. Steve Murray also put some cedar fence in. They are now taking care of it and keeping it looking nice.

Mary said that the town is working on their town plan and they should think in the future about solar farms. There was some discussion on solar farms.

Andrew and Brad need to get together on the information that Andrew has put together to help him with the ordinance in town. Mary stated that the town needs to make sure permits are posted, if this is not done correctly, it makes the town not in compliance with the state.

Mary said that the library is still working out the rent issue and have not been able to meet with Rural Edge.

Danny Webster, the Health Officer, said that the Clark's Landing chicken issue has been taken care of. The well issue in W. Groton is an ongoing situation. Danny has been in contact with the state. He has not had contact with Barbara Johns, the well owner. The consensus that he is getting is that in her deed it says that she is allowed to have a well and to maintain it. Danny also said that he measured it and it is in the right of way. He doesn't know what is going to happen with this case. Danny said that there is a problem at the Bistro with dogs and chickens. Danny does not know how many dogs are there. There are between 5 and 12 dogs with maybe only 2 that are registered. Danny said that the town needs to do a dog census since there have been some trouble with dog bites recently. Linda Nunn said that as of December 31st, Josephine Guertin, our animal control officer and pound keeper is retiring and the town needs to be looking for someone to fill this position. Mary said the issue of appointing a new animal control person needs to be put on the next agenda. Danny is working on the waste water issue with the state. With Brent's help, the town now knows where the water is coming from. It is from the dry well that is in a wet spot between the fire station and Grant's house. Danny Webster mentioned that there have been six dog issues recently and Mary said that he has nothing to do with dogs being the Health Officer. On this issue, Mary said that Josephine Guertin needs to be contacted about these dog issues. Danny got a letter about doing a budget, so he asked what the budget is and what the compensation is. At this time, there is no compensation for the health officer. Danny needs to bring a budget to the budget meeting.

Linda has a copy of the letter that we sent to Brown's Bistro and Chuck Gallagher, the owner will be here at Thanksgiving time to deal with this issue. Linda has a copy of the ad that will be in next week's Bridge Weekly for the Special Town Meeting on Prayer on Thursday, November 17, 2016, at 6:00 pm. Mary also mentioned the special budget meeting on Saturday, November 19, 2016, at 9:00 am - 3:00 pm and said that she has a list of all the people and their times and they all have been notified and Lisa has sent reminders and told them if they can't come to the meeting, to send us their budget in detail before the budget meeting. Linda said that Todd Powers is asking to use the gym for BMU basketball and he wanted the selectboard to give him a price and also asked if it is going to stay at \$5 per hour. Linda said that the charges are \$7.50 per hour for in town people and \$10 per hour for people out of town. Mary said that this is the policy so the school will have to follow these new rules. Linda also said that she had a new webinar on land records scanning. It's \$250 which is a one-time fee for this module. She will be able to scan them into her computer and each night they will be backed up off site. For

lawyers, Linda needs a computer set up for them to use so they can bring up the document and print them. Linda stated that this money could come out of her restoration and preservation budget. Andrew made a motion to take \$250 out of the Restoration and Preservation budget for this land records scanning module, Wade seconded and motion passed.

The Fire Department had some issues with the Selectboard minutes of October 6, 2016. Dorothy read them. A copy of what was read by Dorothy Knott will be with the minutes. Mary said that the Community Club is not here and these issues need to be taken to them. Mary said that in the last 50 years there hasn't been an issue but this year there was an issue. Mary has spoken with a police department and they said that the town needs to put people in a line somewhere where there is a roped off area, then the vehicles will be able to get through. There will be some new rules to follow for the Chicken Pie Supper next year. Mary said that the Community Club Committee needs to meet with the Fire Department to discuss how these issues will be handled. Andrew asked if there was an Emergency Operations Plan for the community building and there is not one. Andrew mentioned that FEMA needs to be contacted to see if there is a possibility of getting a grant to help with this. Mary said that every town building needs this Emergency Operations plan. There was some discussion on this issue.

Andrew made a motion for the Community Club, Fire Department, Emergency Management Planning and Insurance Company to get together to get the Emergency Operations Plan Done. Wade seconded and motion passed. Mary said that they need to work with Brent Smith and Peter Lyon on this.

Jim Downing asked if he could have an article again on the ATV issue. He said there was a meeting a week ago with Danny Hale attending with no selectboard member present. There was some discussion on this issue. Jim Downing was told by the selectboard to bring an article to the town with a couple of alternative routes and then the voters will choose the one they want at town meeting. This article will be in the 2016 Groton Town Report.

Kitty said that she had sent the selectboard members a copy of the RFP which is for a reappraisal. Andrew has taken some time to go over it and Kitty has asked him to help her for another hour to finish it. So Andrew, Kitty and Cartographic will be meeting to work on the RFP which needs to be done by the end of December.

Nathan Puffer was not present and Mary said she has heard nothing on the right of way issue. Nathan had dropped off a map of the right of way that he is asking for. There was some discussion on this. Andrew made a motion to except the right of way as presented in the drawing dropped off by Nathan and at no cost to the town and have his lawyer draw up the deed. Wade seconded and motion passed.

Brent discussed the contract with Matt Nunn to get the pump house upgraded. The selectboard signed the contract. Brent said the water issue needs to be fixed now that is between the fire department and Grant's house. The state wants it done now before colder weather which creates a hazard. The selectboard thanked Brent and Phillip for all the projects that they have done this year. Brent gave the

Winter Operations Plan to the selectboard. Andrew made a motion to adopt the Town of Groton Winter Operations Plan, Mary seconded and motion passed. It was discussed that the Plan should be posted and this year put it in the Town Report.

Mary said that there was a special meeting on the Town Policies. The selectboard had not reviewed the changes that were made to the policies. So the policies will be reviewed and signed at the next selectboard meeting on Thursday, November 17, 2016 after the Special Town Meeting on Prayer at 6:00 pm.

Lisa said the budget now is at the end of October and should be at 83% and will be reviewed at the next selectboard meeting that will be right after the special prayer meeting on Thursday, November 17, 2016 which starts at 6:00 pm. There was some discussion from the last budget that was handed out that was at 75% which that selectboard meeting on Oct. 20th was cancelled. Lisa stated that she wants no spending after December 10th if possible.

Lisa asked where the money should be put that is coming in from the Welton Bridge Project. There was some discussion on this issue. Andrew made a motion to put the money that is coming in for the Welton Bridge Project, be put back into the Highway Infrastructure Reserve Fund. Wade seconded and motion passed.

Lisa said that the Tax Sale is on December 3, 2016 at 10:30 am. Brent said that in years past there has been a selectboard member there. The selectboard decided that Mary Grant will be the selectboard member present.

Lisa said that Blue Cross and Blue Shield will need to be discussed due to the renewal coming up very soon. Andrew mentioned that he would like to see all the options that are available for the insurance.

Lisa said it is time to renew the Tax Anticipation note to borrow money for 2017 year.

Lisa said it is time to discuss the Secretary's Administration wage. There was some discussion on this. At this time, Mary said that the selectboard needs to look at all the pay scales in the town. Andrew said that there needs to be an analyses of the pay scales done of some of the similar towns in Vermont. Mary said that Lisa can call VLCT to get this information. Mary made a motion to pay the Secretary Administrator \$65 per selectboard meeting and \$16 for any other administrative work done, Andrew seconded, and motion passed. Wade abstained from voting.

Lisa said the pump under the office is acting up. Powers is coming to fix it. While Powers is there fixing the pump, Powers wondered if he should clean the boilers while he was here which is usually done every year. Lisa said there are 2 of them at \$170 each and there is also cleaning done in the highway and fire department building. Lisa said it will be over \$500. The selectboard told Lisa is was okay to get this done.

Lisa said that the budget should be completed by December 29th to be able to get everything done for the end of the year and the work done for the town report.

Andrew made a motion to check with VLCT on the wages of other towns in the state similar to Groton, Wade seconded and motion passed.

Agenda for the next meeting will be :

Meeting called to order

Review/Approve Minutes

Financials/Budget

Town Personnel Policies

Department Updates only if there is a emergency.

Wade made a motion at 8:13 pm to adjourn, Andrew seconded and motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra Johnson
Selectboard Secretary

Mary Grant (chair)

Andrew Dorsett

Wade Johnson, Sr.

