

Town of Groton, Vermont – Select Board Minutes of October 18, 2018 (approved)

Select Board Members in Attendance: Wade Johnson, Sr., Deborah Jurist and Aaron Smith

Attendance for the meeting included: Debra Johnson, Lisa Hart, Carrie Peters, Mark Shallberg, Brent Abare, Tim Dailey, Sr., Brent Smith, Linda Nunn, Judy Murray, Bobbi Beck, Mark Gleicher and Carrie Bogie

Wade called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Deborah made a motion to accept the Oct. 11, 2018 minutes with corrections, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

### **Adjustments to Agenda**

Act 46 was moved to the beginning.

### **Act 46 – Judy Murray**

Judy Murray said that the State Board of Education has voted to provisionally, until final approval of the entire State Plan by November 14<sup>th</sup> or the 28<sup>th</sup>, to keep BMU an independent district under the umbrella of Orange East SU with an 8 to 0 vote. She also said that this means that BMU will not merge with Bradford, Newbury, and Oxbow. Bradford, Newbury and Oxbow were merged together.

Dan French fought for BMU not to merge.

Judy Murray said that BMU will not lose their school building and will not have to incur the other school districts debt.

Bobbi Beck said that BMU will only vote on their budget.

### **Highway/Brent Smith**

Brent said the town has the opportunity to apply for the Better Roads Grant which ends on Friday, Oct. 26. Brent discussed the possibilities for the grant.

Patrick Ross who is an engineer told Brent there is \$40,000 grant for culverts and no one has contacted him for this grant. Brent met with Patrick Ross and put a package together with designs for a culvert on Heath Brook Road which would be replacing a 3 ft culvert with a larger culvert. Wade Johnson said he will sign the paperwork when it is ready for the Culvert Grant.

Brent brought up that there is a personnel issue that he would like to have an Executive Session on at some point. The date was set for Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>.

Brent said that the Better Roads projects are done on Goodfellow Road and Fuller Hill Road.

On Harv Orr Road, which is a class 4 road, there has been a complaint with somebody asking that there needs to be 2-3 loads of gravel on to put on it. Brent said it does need the gravel. Wade said the road needs to be fixed to make the roads passable for Fire and FAST.

Brent mentioned that the 10-wheeler has been fixed all but one item which is a cylinder that needs to be replaced due to a leak.

### **Financials/Lisa – BC/BS & HRA Renewal, Check Acceptance Policy, Food Shelf/Reserve**

The BC/BS Insurance is up for renewal. There is now only one person on the plan. It is grandfathered in as a two-person plan. The insurance is going up \$70 a month. The Select Board signed the document that said the BC/BS Insurance will continue to be grandfathered in as a two-person plan and the employee will pay his share of 10 percent.

On the HRA Renewal, Lisa would like to table it and discuss this at the next Select Board meeting. The Treasure Check Acceptance Policy was signed by the Select Board.

Deborah made a motion to approve the new Treasurer Check Cashing Policy, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

This new Treasurers Check Cashing Policy will be included in the notifications that are included when mailing out property tax bills.

Wade had a few questions on the budget.

#### **Discussion of Reserve Accounts:**

Lisa spoke to the Accounting firm on the Food Shelf account and she said to leave the Food Shelf Reserve Account as it is. It is classified as a Restricted Fund Account. At the next Select Board meeting, the Recreation Reserve Fund and the Town Emergency Reserve Fund will be discussed.

Lisa spent a lot of time checking with Attorneys at VLCT on the Conflict of Interest that Aaron Smith and Wade Johnson had with the Highway Budget and Fire/FAST budgets. With the voters having final approval of the budget at town meeting, the voters can make changes then. Lisa also asked Linda the CPA who just did the town audit who had the same answers as VLCT.

Lisa handed out the final copies of the 2017 Audit to the Select Board members. Wade thanked Lisa and Carrie for all their hard work with the audit.

Lisa met with the Recreation Committee and discussed the VT Forest and Park Grant that is available to apply for. Lisa said the committee decided to pass on this opportunity at this time as we are only a committee of 3. There were too many things to look into and not enough time.

#### **Linda Nunn – data on renting tables & chairs**

There was a question whether or not the town or Community Club own the table and chairs. The town carries the insurance on them and uses them at town meetings and other events and also have purchased tables and chairs in the past. There was discussion on how to manage the renting of the tables and chairs.

A policy needs to be written up for renting the table and chairs with a \$50 deposit, same as rental of the gym. If the table and chairs are all returned in good condition, the person will get their \$50 Deposit back. Deborah made a motion that the table and chairs currently stored in the community building belong to the Town of Groton, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

#### **Tim Dailey - NEKWM**

Tim handed out the 2019 Draft Budget which is going up 8.49% from last year. There is going to be 90 cents per capita charged to the town, approximately \$900 using the 2010 census, added in 2019. There was discussion on the budget.

#### **Civil Ordinance update**

Lise had looked into information on frivolous complaints that was brought up at a previous Select Board meeting. St. Johnsbury has a code compliance officer to deal with these complaints. The Select Board will discuss this issue further at the next Select Board meeting.

#### **Nathan Puffer – sign agreement for Right of Way**

Wade was not able to get in contact with Nathan Puffer. Wade has an issue with the power line access that he did not see in the agreement. Wade read a part of the minutes from May 3, 2018 Select Board meeting that stated the power line access would be given to the town. Wade needs to try to contact Nathan Puffer before the next Select Board meeting.

**Act 46 – Brent Abare**

Brent stated that at tonight’s School Board meeting, the two letters received from the Groton Select Board were read and Angeline Alley will be sending a response to the letters.

Brent’s assessment said that the State outcome was good (previously said under Act 46) but it wasn’t the outcome that the communities wanted. BMU will be losing their unified union school district status. BMU is now a district within the OESU. There will be some loss of local control.

Deborah said it would be better for the three towns to own the building together in case of a possible merger in the future.

Brent mentioned two things that need to be done in case of a merger happening again.

1. Have the property in an estate so it can’t be sold.
2. Have the goals for what the Community wants.

**Open to Public & Other Business**

Deborah said there is a new lawyer working with the Slayton/Darling Family on the selling of the Cilley Property.

**Sign Orders**

The orders were signed.

**Set Agenda for next Select Board meeting, Nov. 1, 2018**

Meeting called to order

Review/Approve Minutes of Oct. 18, 2018

Adjustments to Agenda

Nathan Puffer – agreement for Right of Way

Department Updates:

Financials/Lisa – HRA renewal, Recreation Reserve Fund, Town Emergency Reserve Fund

Zoning – Brad Houghton

Civil Ordinance Update

Bell – adjust the motion

Open to Public & Other Business

Sign Orders

Set Agenda for next Select Board meeting, Nov. 15, 2018

Adjourn

To Do List: Library Trustees – elevator, Cilley Property, and Railings

Deborah made a motion to adjourn at 9:10 PM, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Johnson

SB Secretary

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Wade Johnson, Sr., Chair

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Deborah Jurist

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Aaron Smith