

Groveland Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
May 5, 2015

Present: Selectman Joe D'Amore, Selectman William Dunn, Selectman Daniel MacDonald, and Selectman Ed Watson

Absent: Selectman Michael Wood

Others Present: Denise Dembkoski (Finance Director)

Recorder: Melanie Rich

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

REORGANIZATION OF BOARD – ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:

Selectman Dunn publicly thanked Bette Gorski for her 15 years of service on the Board of Selectmen.

Selectman MacDonald made a motion to nominate Selectman Dunn as Chair; Selectman Watson seconded. Selectman Dunn said he would accept that nomination and serve in that role if elected. A vote was taken and motion approved at 3-0-1 with Selectman Dunn abstaining.

Selectman MacDonald made a motion to nominate Selectman Watson as Vice Chair; Selectman Dunn seconded. A vote was taken and it was approved 4-0.

RESIDENT/PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

Selectman D'Amore voted to approve PW#15-45 in the amount of \$126,539.27; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman D'Amore voted to approve DW#15-43A in the amount of \$24,101.91; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman D'Amore voted to approve BW #15-45 in the amount of \$916,360.63; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

APPOINTMENTS:

Selectman Watson made a motion to appoint Mark McCabe, 16 Bare Hill Road, Groveland to the position of regular Zoning Board of Appeals member through 06/30/2017; Selectman D'Amore seconded; vote was taken – Selectman MacDonald abstained – vote 3-0-1; motion approved.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE:

Several ideas/plans were discussed to attract more voters to the town meeting including changing the day to a Saturday (which would require a bylaw change), absentee ballots and mailing ballots. Ms. Dembkoski said mailing is costly, but the town may be able to use the Code Red notification system to make announcements to every registered voter.

Chair Dunn told the new members that the Building Inspector needs to be reappointed; the Fire Chief needs a new contract; and the board has been working on changing the Road Commissioner position to

appointed. They are also in process of creating a permit packet for the permit process. Selectman D'Amore will study the issue of a Saturday town meeting and report back. Chair Dunn would like to bring back the road study program. He would also like to look at the School Committee to see why Groveland's assessed amount is so high. Selectman MacDonald would like to work with Ms. Demboski on the accounting issues. He asked the status of outstanding taxes and was told they are still sorting through the past ten years and explained the process.

Richard Fields (Alyssa Drive) was present to talk about a resolution regarding ATV's and motorized bikes. He spoke with the Chief of Police and the Finance Department and is here before the BOS to see what the town plans to do with it. Whitestone Village is a retirement community and the noise is upsetting to everyone there. He said it is both a safety and noise issue and only a matter of time before injuries happen. Mr. Fields was told it is a budget issue; the police can't do anything because they don't have the funds. He also said there is an electrical easement. Mike Dempsey (Conservation Commission) said that particular piece of property is not an easement; it is owned by National Grid; it's not legal to do anything there. Selectman D'Amore doesn't agree that it is just a budgetary problem. There is some state-owned land; National Grid land; conservation land from Georgetown; land owned by Groveland and land owned privately. Chair Dunn will follow-up with National Grid; Selectman D'Amore will follow-up with the state. Mr. Fields will be kept informed. Chair Dunn asked Ms. Demboski to ask the Police Chief to go out more frequently.

Building Inspector's Position – Selectman D'Amore made a motion that the Building Inspector position be posted effective July 1st; Selectman MacDonald seconded the motion; all voted in favor; motion approved. Ms. Demboski will provide a draft job description for the board's review. Ms. Demboski will meet with the current Building Inspector tomorrow and make him aware of the board's decision.

Bagnall Roof and Brandolini Construction – Chair Dunn updated the board. Groveland was being billed \$60/hour while the other schools were being billed \$40/hour. Time records were requested; all that was received was a paper stating the names and what they were paid; not actual time records. Ms. Demboski asked for an estimate; none was given; the work was done; and a bill for \$59,000 was received. They were paid \$38,880 (the \$40/hour rate). Selectman Watson made a motion to again request payroll records from Brandolini Construction; Selectman MacDonald seconded the motion; Chair Dunn, Selectmen MacDonald and Watson voted in favor; Selectman D'Amore was not in favor. Selectman D'Amore said the Chair will have to authorize an unknown amount for Town Counsel's assistance.

VOTES OF THE BOARD:

1. Selectman D'Amore made a motion to accept the resignation of Planning Board Member Andrea Johnson effective April 21, 2015; Selectman Watson seconded the motion; all voted in favor; motion approved. She was thanked for her many years of service.
2. Selectman MacDonald voted to approve the one-day liquor license for a wedding at Veasey Park on June 6th between 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. with a detailed officer on the premises; Selectman Watson seconded the motion; all voted in favor; motion approved.
3. Selectman MacDonald voted to approve the Special Event Permit for the 6th Annual July 3rd event at Shanahan Field; Selectman Watson seconded the motion; all voted in favor; motion approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Minutes from April 21, April 27, and May 1 – Ms. Dembkoski said because the majority of the board was not present when these Minutes were recorded, the Rule of Necessity will need to be invoked to allow them to vote at the next meeting.

Dog Nuisance Complaint Information for Hearing to be held on May 18, 2015 – Ms. Dembkoski received a complaint from Richard Cochran, 12 Doris Street, that the neighboring dog bit his elderly father. There have been numerous complaints about this dog (see police reports). He requested under Mass Law that the BOS conduct a nuisance hearing. It is scheduled for Monday, May 18th at 6:15 p.m.

Letter Commending Assessing Manager, Debby Webster on Outstanding Customer Service – An email was received from a resident commending the service received in the Assessor's Office.

Letter from West Newbury regarding Preliminary Meeting on Whittier Concerns – The Regional Finance Committee is comprised of Selectman D'Amore and Ms. Dembkoski along with a Selectman and Finance Director from West Newbury and Merrimack. Several months ago there were some issues in the newspaper about Whittier. The Regional Finance Committee was questioning what was real and not real so the other communities that make up Whittier were asked to get together and have a discussion with Whittier to talk about these concerns and whether or not there is any truth behind them. The West Newbury Selectmen thought it would be proactive to have a pre-meeting. The actual meeting will be May 14th. The preliminary meeting is May 6th at 7:00 p.m. at West Newbury.

Letter from Jodi and Steven Diianni regarding Occupancy Permit for 2 Fairway Drive – The homeowner came to see Ms. Dembkoski and provided a letter and photos concerning issues on her property. She felt she was forced to pass papers on March 30th; she was told if she didn't she would lose her deposit. She said a significant amount of exterior work to her house is not done (no driveway, the front steps are not acceptable, and the only access is through a side entrance). She was concerned why she was able to get an Occupancy Permit when the work was not completed. George Hazeltine, Trustee of 7 Star Realty Trust, built the subdivision. He said they are in communication with the owner and they have a plan to start on the earthwork for the retaining wall. In order to complete the landscaping, the infrastructure needs to be completed. They will be there on Monday the 11th to start the grading and wanted it noted that one of the employees did approach the homeowner about putting something in there temporary but was turned away (they have documentation).

The American Legion Memorial Day Service will be held at the Town Hall, May 21st at 6:30 p.m. Members are invited to attend to say a few words during the service. If interested, contact Dave Tuttle, Commander at Post 248 of the American Legion.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S TIME: Nothing tonight

SELECTMEN'S TIME:

Selectman MacDonald would like to review financial statements and the budget once a month. Ms. Dembkoski said the Town Accountant can produce that report. He asked if we could get budget to actual and also comparative data from the prior year. Ms. Dembkoski said that would have to be produced manually and could be done quarterly.

Selectman D'Amore asked for the board's consensus for him to investigate a Saturday town meeting, and also allow him to continue to engage with state officials; all agreed. All are welcomed to attend the meeting at the Merrimack Public Library on May 14th at 6:00 p.m. regarding the Whittier school concerns. He asked if Selectman MacDonald will continue to serve on the ZBA; he will.

Chair Dunn said two positions will be hired (custodian facilities person and administrative assistant). Ms. Demboski said the custodian facilities person will be a 15-18 hour/week position; not benefit eligible. The administrative assistant position will also be a 15-18 hour/week position; not benefit eligible.

Selectman Watson asked the status of the bathrooms at the Shanahan Field and the Vito Hand Tub Museum. Ms. Demboski said the Shanahan bathrooms are being advertised tomorrow, bids are due May 27th and will be awarded shortly thereafter. It is the third time it has gone out to bid; it did not go out the first two years the town meeting voted on it. She started March 28th and they were out to bid by the end of April. The same is true regarding the Vito Hand Tub; no one acted on it for two years. It is a much more in-depth project where the scope and the RFP have to be put together. There has also been discussion with the Fire Chief about the project. She will wait and have him report back what his plans are, but at this point it is not ready to move forward.

Selectman Watson said the microphone system for the town meeting was embarrassing. Selectman D'Amore, being on the Cable TV Board, will propose buying their own equipment with the fees received from Comcast in order to control the quality. Ms. Demboski said the building is under the control of the Pentucket School District. The building request form was sent but the staff at Bagnall did not receive it. Jack Willett (111 School Street) said the request went to Greg Hadden.

Selectman MacDonald asked if the board has to meet on Mondays. Ms. Demboski said it is up to the board. Selectman MacDonald said the Finance Committee needs Ms. Demboski's presence as well as the BOS, and if they met on Tuesday night, she could attend the Finance Committee meetings. Ms. Demboski said the issue with that is that the Planning Board meets on Tuesdays in this room, the ZBA meets on Wednesday, and each board that uses this room has a different night of the week. She suggested speaking with the other boards about rearranging. Selectman D'Amore would support any night other than Friday, but will not support if we don't have the BOS meetings in this room. Chair Dunn agrees that Ms. Demboski should meet with the Finance Committee. Mr. Willett said BOS meetings were always held on Monday so that all the boards are available if needed. Ms. Demboski is extremely knowledgeable and Chair Dunn feels she is needed at the meetings.

Chair Dunn said the Building Inspector received a letter stating that he is required to attend ZBA Meetings.

Brian Cannizaro (27 Groveland Commons Way) asked about affordable housing and had questions about age restrictions. Chair Dunn said that project has been tabled; not moving forward.

The next meeting will be held Monday, May 18th at 6:00 p.m. Selectman Watson made a motion to adjourn; Selectman MacDonald seconded the motion; all voted in favor; motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Minutes Approved on June 1, 2015