

Groveland Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2015

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

Absent: Selectman Michael Wood

Others Present: Denise Dembkoski (Finance Director)

Recorder: Melanie Rich

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

RESIDENT/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Jack Willett (111 School Street) talked about dumping leaves. He said it is great for the residents but only open one day a week. He asked if the board thought about charging a fee for residents and contractors so it could open be more than one day. Ms. Dembkoski will follow up with the Road Commissioner.

Mitch Kroner (3 Cannon Hill Road Extension) asked if there was a way to get newspaper coverage for Groveland; he does not like getting town information on Facebook. Both Chair Dunn and Ms. Dembkoski have made several attempts to get coverage for the town with no success. Chair Dunn suggested Mr. Kroner contact the newspapers.

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

Selectman D'Amore voted to approve PW#16-21 in the amount of \$153,608.85; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman D'Amore voted to approve DW#16-19A in the amount of \$23,795.46; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman D'Amore voted to approve BW#16-20 in the amount of \$2,550.00; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman D'Amore voted to approve BW#16-21 in the amount of \$393,162.42; Chair Dunn seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

APPOINTMENTS:

Selectman Watson made a motion to appoint Michael Fornesi as a Reserve Police Officer/Lock-up Keeper effective November 16, 2015 to June 30, 2016; Selectman D'Amore seconded; voted 4-0-0.

Selectman Watson made a motion to appoint Jacob Wallace as a Reserve Police Officer/Lock-up Keeper effective November 16, 2015 to June 30, 2016; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE:

Tracy Gilford (Employee Recognition Program) – Mr. Gilford asked the board to consider an employee recognition program for the town. He said there are some very hard working and deserving employees. The board thought it was a great idea. Selectman D'Amore said to put a committee together to be approved by the board and recommended surveying the departments and projections since it is a budget issue. In addition, Mr. Gilford asked that any retirement be noted in the Annual Report.

Finance Committee (FY17 Budget Planning) – Chair Dunn said he would like a program/plan put together with the Capital Improvement Committee and the Finance Board to come up with a budget number for

forecasting maintenance in the town where needed for infrastructure maintenance (building repairs, renovations at the Pines, etc.); things that have not been included in the budget. Mr. Cook said we keep growing and there are many items that were not thought of. Jeff Pappas said at one time there was someone who watched over the town complex and buildings and would report back; since he left it is not being done. He said managing those assets does not fall under the purview of the Capital Improvement Committee; the Capital Improvement Committee focuses on capital assets of \$10K or more. Ms. Dembkoski and Bob Arakelian discussed the possibility of the new custodian/facilities person working full-time and be accountable for more facilities work (maintain the bathrooms at the Pines, check the physical structures of the building). Chair Dunn said we would have to build that into the budget. Ms. Dembkoski said if we do go that way, he could cut the grass at town hall, snow plow and shovel so the Highway Department can deal with the other matters. Selectman D'Amore said the board could draft a letter asking the boards and committees that are responsible for managing property or resources to come up with (by the end of this year), their best five year plan of what their resource needs will be. Andy Wildes (Finance Committee) doesn't think ongoing maintenance was ever addressed. He said the board needs to be careful going forward when we build/buy new things; the total cost has to be figured in.

Mr. Wildes thinks the major issue that will hit us in the spring is the increase in school costs; we are looking at a shortfall even with a 2.5% increase in taxes. Selectman D'Amore said we could possibly have an additional one million dollar assessment over the next two fiscal years. Mr. Cook asked why we are still with North Shore Regional Vocational Tech; we have one vocational school (Whittier). Ms. Dembkoski said legislation was put into effect back when there was farming; there is a caveat that says if we don't offer it at the vocational school, they are entitled to go to a school that does offer it. Mr. Cook said it's good to offer it but we can't afford to have two vocational schools. January is when we will see the hit for the open space we bought; people will see it on their tax bill.

Selectman D'Amore will draft a letter; Ms. Dembkoski and Chair Dunn will finalize it and notify all boards and committees that are in charge with the responsibility of monitoring property or equipment to come up with a five year projection of what their needs are, with a heavy emphasis on maintenance. He will also draft an addendum to the Capital Preservation Committee proposing that any proposal that the CPA promotes should have attached to it a five year projection for maintenance. CPA money cannot be used for maintenance, but the voters need to understand that if they approve a rail trail, park, etc., we need to know what we are looking at for maintenance costs going forward.

FY16 Salaries with FY17 Projections – Ms. Dembkoski said the increase for non-contractual employees needs to be discussed; Mr. Wildes said that is something the Finance Committee should do at a meeting. Mr. Cook's personal opinion is that you should stay the same across the board. He said by the time it is handed to them, it's done. Selectman Watson asked if duties, responsibilities and surrounding towns were taken into consideration; Mr. Cook said they are not determining pay raises; they look at the whole package. Selectman Watson asked if there was any thought to giving a dollar figure rather than a percentage raise. Selectman MacDonald said over 20 years it's been quite flat in terms of a linear progression; some budgets escalated 300%-400% over that period. Any department that wants more than a 2% increase in their budget should justify it because it is a subtraction from something else in the budget.

Fire Truck Discussion – Chair Dunn said it was put on as an agenda item so as to show the board is not trying to hide anything. He said Chief Lay asked the board for a new ladder truck; the reasons being that the truck was not safe, the men were not safe on the truck; it has been forecasted out for 12 years; and it does not meet safety standards. Chair Dunn said he believed he could get a truck for \$299-\$499K. The truck would be financed; the taxpayers are not going to pay for it; it will come out of the general fund meaning town hall budget will have to be trimmed. He said at that time that the truck is only used a few times a year; it will cost about \$79K a year; will be \$900,000 when paid for over ten years; and will be a million dollars when it is paid for over twenty years. The truck safety standards does not mean the truck cannot be used or deemed unsafe; it is certified yearly. The previous three member board voted \$750K t

on the truck. At that time the Selectmen asked for final discussion on the truck when it would be purchased. The Chief said they are looking at possibly a new truck which would be built to fit his station, eliminating the need for masonry work to fit the truck in; it would be certified as new and would need to be financed either through the dealer or the town. The truck was not finalized in the conversation; delivery would be in June. Originally we were going to buy a demo truck; it was going to be \$650K to \$750K tops. The Chief stated that thought he could get us in the \$650K range. We then heard conversations from some of the firemen that they wanted a certain tower, basket and apparatus.

Selectman D'Amore said the issue of buying the truck is an expensive item and believes the BOS should have oversight in the selection. Under State Law, the BOS does have legal authority over the purchase of the truck. Under the Strong Chief Law, the Fire Chief needs the approval of the BOS before he can purchase anything. There was a debt authorization to purchase a ladder; the language contained in the warrant was up to \$750K. The discretion to spend \$650K instead of \$750K legally under the statute is not within the jurisdiction of the Fire Chief; that jurisdiction is retained the BOS. Our job is to make sure the budget comes into play, that all criteria is intelligently looked at, and that the purchase process includes the BOS because under the law we have jurisdiction over that. Ms. Demboski thought approval had already been granted. Town Counsel reviewed the warrant and minutes and also reviewed the record on the subject. The BOS does in fact have power under the State Law to reconsider prior votes. The new board can vote to reconsider prior boards. What we can't do is go to \$800K on the debt authorization; that was the debt limit. We can't afford the debt service on this truck. Selectman D'Amore said safety is paramount but hasn't heard any argument that if we don't buy a truck for the maximum amount of \$750K that we are going to jeopardize the safety and lives of our firemen. He is not going to make a decision that will put anybody at risk, but it would be financially irresponsible of the BOS not to exercise their statutory power of oversight over the purchase selection and make sure it is properly budgeted for.

Selectman D'Amore shared a letter from town counsel. It is a 1981 truck; it is certified, therefore functional. The unsafe aspect is that it has an open cab; we need a 75' ladder; we do have mutual aid. We need a straight stick; a midmount bucket area is being proposed (the most expensive configuration). We need a truck and it has to be new; possibly a demo, not used. We want a new one, but one that costs \$150K less; they can do that with a 75' ladder straight stick, not a midmount bucket area. If we finance \$750K it will be approximately \$79K/year; where is that going to come from. Town Counsel's letter read in part...the Selectmen voted on February 10, 2015 to approve the appropriation of \$750K for the purchase of a new ladder truck "in accordance with the board's acceptance of Option 2, a proposal by Capital Improvement Committee with modification of the line item made from \$850K to \$750K". The fiscal 2016 capital budget and five year capital plan as adopted by the Groveland Capital Improvement Committee on March 24, 2015 identified a new aerial ladder truck priced at \$750K. On April 27, 2015 Groveland annual town meeting approved Article 11 of the warrant which authorizes the treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen to borrow \$750K for the purchase of an aerial ladder truck; all town meeting did was said to borrow the money. The board needs to understand the needs of the town before they we can approve an expensive purchase. At their customary meeting just before town meeting, the Selectmen voted approval of Article 11 and recommended favorable action. Town meeting passed Article 11 by the required 2/3 majority although the bond has not yet been issued. The Selectmen have inquired notwithstanding the Selectmen approvals of the fire truck acquisitions noted above, Selectmen nonetheless still possess the power to approve the purchase of a specific fire truck as opposed to the more general aerial/ladder approved at town meeting. For the reasons stated below, it is my opinion that under the circumstances described, the Selectmen as the town's executive body do possess the authority to approve the purchase of a specific truck. I would also note that the Selectmen would also have the power to vote to reconsider their earlier February 10, 2015 or April 27, 2015 votes. There are a couple of areas where we have this authority. There are number of sources for the Selectmen's power to approve the specifics of the fire truck. Article 4, Section 2-51 of our town's general bylaws states that the Selectmen "shall exercise a general supervision over all matters affecting the interest and welfare of the town". Section 2-57 grants to the Selectmen or the designated procurement officer the authority to enter into any contract to be exercised of the town's corporate power

“on such terms and conditions as are deemed appropriate”. The ladder bylaw wording in my opinion covers the question at hand in seeking to exercise their power to approve the purchase of a specific fire truck. The Selectmen would be exercising their power to approve a contract “on such terms and conditions as are deemed appropriate”. Moreover, Mass General Law Chapter 48, Section 42, the statutes governing the powers of a Strong Fire Chief states that the Chief “shall purchase subject to the approval of the Selectmen and keep and repair all apparatus used for and by the Fire Department”. This language too in my opinion would authorize the Selectmen to vote on the purchase of a specific truck. Should they see fit to do so, such a vote would be in my opinion clearly permissible, an exercise of the Selectmen’s powers of “supervision over all matters affecting the interest and welfare of the town”. Selectman D’Amore said that is what we are being charged with; a fiduciary responsibility for the welfare of this town. Nobody wants our men unsafe, but we do have fiscal responsibility and asked that they work with the board to come up with a suitable solution. He believes that a straight stick for \$150K less, brand new or demo will keep our men safe and put out all our fires. We can do it with mutual aid; we have a good system; got good leadership; great men. We just need the right truck and need it quickly.

Selectman Watson said he doesn’t like the idea of relying on another town for mutual aid for a ladder truck when we should have our own. He also thought that we are setting a bad precedent in voting against the town meeting vote. Selectman MacDonald said we are the checks and balances in the equation to make sure the Fire Chief did his due diligence and looked at reasonable alternatives to the risk assessment that he conducted that the current truck is inadequate; we are parties in doing the right thing for the town.

Chair Dun asked Ms. Dembkoski where we are going to get the \$79K/year for the truck. She said in the spring when discussions started with the capital items with the Finance and BOS she told both parties that if it is something you feel strongly that you want to support, we will have make sacrifices to cover these costs. She recalculated that it would be \$70K maximum at a 4.5% interest rate which would decrease \$2,000/year over the 20 year bond. We would have to make sacrifices whether that is over other capital items that have been coming down or whether in terms of budgets. Last year every budget was cut as much as possible in expenses; each department was asked to absorb their contractual increases in their budget and not increase; that would have to be done again. Chair Dunn said residents think their taxes are going up, but it is coming out of the general fund. Ms. Dembkoski said correct; whether we purchase the truck or not, taxes will not change as a result of this. They will change as a result of other debt excluded purchases.

Selectman D’Amore said the Fire Chief did his due diligence for the truck, but the diligence is incomplete because we did not get an alternative. There are brand new trucks, demos that are \$150K less that can get the job done. We are asking the Chief to provide an alternative lower cost solution.

Chief Lay said the truck was identified at \$850K; the costs go up 4%/year. He understands the fiduciary responsibility. He was disappointed with Selectman MacDonald’s comment that “he raced to the \$750K number”. That couldn’t be more untrue; the search was started eight months ago; they looked at used trucks; the entire marketplace; they did their due diligence. He said tomorrow he will take the ladder and Engine 3 off the road and eliminate the riding positions. They talked to many manufacturers and found a quint fire truck; his ladder truck will have water on it. He found a truck in the summer for \$651K. Rosenbauer came in September and showed them a dual wheel; they were told one is in production and it could be available next year. The Chief negotiated and got them down to \$750K (the worth is in excess of \$800K); the truck committee worked very hard. He said the board fully supported a platform. It has everything they want and deserve on the truck; mutual aid does not work in this situation; we should have our own; we did our homework and \$750K is a great buy for this piece of apparatus.

Rock Dower (107 School Street) has been in the fire service over 50 years and said going from a tower to a straight stick is a huge undertaking for fire fighters. They are all part-time people and working out of a tower is much safer.

John Giulfoilo (92 Seven Star Road) commended the board for their responsibility and their commitment to fiscal conservatism. He does not believe there is a fiscal crisis in Groveland. He cautioned the board against fiscal alarmism. Virtually all communities finance their fire trucks; it is a capital purchase and financed for a reason; it is sound fiscal practice to finance a large ticket item so the entire cost is not absorbed immediately. He also felt the Fire Chief should be commended for his process; it has been a 12 year process and he found in the confines of what town meeting and BOS voted on. Mr. Giulfoilo felt it is prudent to purchase the quint that has a bucket. In closing he said he is glad the BOS looks at budget and understands the budget, but the Groveland voter does as well.

Mitch Kroner (3 Cannon Hill Road Extension) asked what will we save per year in finance costs if we go with a \$600K truck instead of \$750K; \$10-15K. He said the intent of the law at town meeting is to honor what the voters requested. If you have capital improvements, volunteers, call departments, people volunteering their time and are not going with what they are recommending, you're not going to get volunteers to sit on a committee. Chair Dunn said he is not here to save \$100K. He was here to save \$350K. Selectman MacDonald said he will question whether we can come up with a lower cost solution and he urges them to explore and exhaust that remedy. He wants to see some scenarios, hire some independent consultants; have them project the number of opportunities. He said he's talked to people he respects.

Kurt Ruchala (16 Union Street) said Selectman MacDonald said he respects them for their expertise in trucks, but we don't know who "we" are. You respect them; not us. Selectman MacDonald said what he doesn't respect is his ability to finance the budget of this town. If someone is in the business and says you can get a truck to do the job for \$300K; are you saying that's a false statement? Mr. Ruchala asked who it was; Selectman MacDonald would not say because of attorney/client privileges. Mr. Ruchala said warranties on used trucks do not get transferred. The truck has been out of compliance since 1991; it's been on the plan since 2005 at \$850K; we have come off that plan by \$100K, not to mention all the other capital items they took off their plan. The Chief said \$800K has come off their capital budget plan in the last two years. They also wrote a grant for the tanker, saving the town \$200K. The firefighters save the town one million dollars a year; their budget is \$270K/year. He does not think a used truck is the wise way to go. They have done everything they were supposed to do with communication with all the boards.

Don Greaney said when he was on the BOS they never put a warrant article on that they didn't have the funding for. The truck they found was for the purpose if there were a limited number of people on during the day, this truck would make the calls. You don't have to change the station; don't have to raise the ceiling. A decision needs to be made; the money should have been appropriated. Ms. Demboski told the board in the spring that concessions would have to be made elsewhere in order to get the board's support of this project; we need to come up with \$70K/year. Chair Dunn asked where she saw the cuts coming from; every budget. There is savings, but town meeting didn't vote to use stabilization to pay for a fire truck. She said during the budget process in the spring they talked about starting a capital stabilization fund that every year we are putting money in so we have capital stabilization for specific reasons. Selectman MacDonald suggested possibly using some stabilization funds to get the interest down; he doesn't think it is fair to hit all the other budgets. Selectman MacDonald is opposed to raising taxes.

Lt. Credit talked about the truck from an operational point of view. The truck in the last 5 years was at 3 fire scenes and 6-7 chimney fires. He said you don't want to be climbing down the steps after spraying water in the winter; it is a safety issue for the type of department and paramount that they get a platform vehicle; not a straight stick.

Chair Dunn said he does not want to make a decision tonight; he wants both parties think about it and meet again. The truck is there; it is being built; the board has some valid points. He does not want to hear anyone from the Fire Department or BOS criticize each other; it's not what it is about; we should all work together. Selectman Watson said we really can't make a decision until we find out what all the finance options are. Chief Lay said the agreement was valid for 30 days at that price. Selectman D'Amore would like to see a

straight stick or demo; Selectman MacDonald would like to explore a used truck option; and within a week or two should have another meeting. Selectman D'Amore said the due diligence that the Chief and the department has done was excellent; we just need him to do the same with a couple of other options. There was a truck committee with seven members who spent hundreds of hours looking at trucks, driving them, reviewing documents and putting specs together. The board was asked to see what the number is if they bought a truck for \$450K today with a 4% increase every year for 15 years and refinanced again. Joseph Santapaola (75 Washington Street) said he was on the truck committee and takes exception that they went for the higher amount. He said a platform is a stable place to work from.

The board is not prepared to vote tonight; they will meet Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Dembkoski does not know the financing options or what departments are going to request this year. Chair Dunn wants to talk about how it will be paid for. She said there are alternatives but it depends on what the final numbers come in at. She read Selectman Wood's emailed statement on the issue. "I am not in favor of spending \$750K on a new state of the art fire truck. I think it is way more money and truck than the town needs. When the truck is finally paid off it will cost over \$1 million. That being said, I am not in favor of overturning the prior BOS approval or the town approval to move forward with the purchase. The appropriate process was undertaken and the town voted to approve the purchase. If the town wants to revisit the discussion with town meeting, I am okay with that."

Senator Bruce Tarr to make Citation Presentation to the Groveland Police Department – Representative Mirra and Senator Tarr congratulated and presented the Police Department with a citation for the work they did with the American Training Organization. They said they do an outstanding job of protecting us and we appreciate the feeling of security we get. Both were honored to be part of this presentation.

VOTES OF THE BOARD:

Selectman D'Amore made a motion to approve the October 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 4-0-0.

Selectman D'Amore made a motion that the board approves the Policy and Procedures for Health Insurance under the Federal Affordable Care Act; Chair Dunn seconded; voted 4-0-0.

OLD BUSINESS (Unfinished Business):

The Road Commissioner told Chair Dunn they will be removing and storing the Washington Park playground equipment at the Highway Garage; it should be done by December 4th. He has also been working with Ms. Murphy and a commercial realtor and will be meeting with him Thursday.

Chair Dunn met with Lt. Credit (Fire Dept.) and Mike Dempsey (Conservation) at the lower Center Street property. He gave Lt. Credit the recommendations of the board (a sign to be put on the trees, places where the fire pits could be, have the Boy Scouts and Highway Department blow out the leaves three times a year, call dispatch, and Fire Department permitting). He said we should vote and leave it to Conservation Commission to make their decision with the Fire Department since the board has no jurisdiction. He watched the Conservation meeting and taking the grills out was discussed, not voted on. The discussion was that if they didn't like it to go to the Selectmen. Selectman D'Amore complimented Selectman Watson, Chair Dunn, Lt. Credit and Mike Dempsey. He said we made a motion at the last meeting that we had wished all the stakeholders, especially those with overlapping authority, to work out a solution, and these are our recommendations. On November 18th the Conservation Commission will have to make the final decision, and thanks to all the input, we have a viable plan to put the grills back and have a plan that everyone is comfortable with. Selectman MacDonald made a motion to accept the joint efforts of the board that it is a viable option, compromised solution to a controversial issue and to accept it as a recommendation to Conservation and the Fire Chief; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 4-0-0.

Selectman MacDonald met with Mike Dempsey on preliminary project matters relevant to Strawberry Fields. He has some follow up questions and wants to know would the carved out land for town or industrial potential usage be buildable. It will be placed on the next agenda in order to meet the deadline for CPA project submission; it requires input from the board.

Selectman MacDonald thanked Ms. Dembkoski for the 20 year trend line spreadsheet; he looked at budgets from 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2015 and analyzed some of the increases. Twenty years ago the school budget was 57%; today it is 59%. Health care costs are up 340% from 1995; the library is up 500%. Selectman MacDonald wants the residents to be knowledgeable as to what is going on; how has it been spent; how is it being spent. He would also like to find out more about the Essex Aggie budget; seems like Essex Aggie is more expensive than Whittier. Ms. Dembkoski would have to figure out how many students are going to Essex Aggie now. It is not on the prior year's budget because it was taken off the Cherry Sheet; we have always been charged for Essex Aggie students. There is a state requirement that if our local vocational school does not offer a specific program, we have to allow students to attend there and we do have to pay for it. Only students that are enrolled in programs that are not offered at Whittier may attend Essex Aggie.

CORRESPONDENCE TO BE REVIEWED:

Minutes from November 2, 2015.

Mike Dempsey's recommendation regarding the grills at lower Center Street.

Information from Lt. Credit regarding the grills at lower Center Street.

Information from the Fire Department employee regarding the Groveland Fire Department's Basic Fire Training Program.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S TIME

The Police Department informed Ms. Dembkoski that there was only one call with one opioid overdose and zero deaths in the last twelve month period. The call was for a medication overdose, not heroin; the only heroin overdose call goes back to 2012. Detective Riley has been certified to instruct the officers on how to administer Narcan but they need funding to purchase it (approximately \$300/dose) and reminded the board that Narcan has a one-year shelf life which needs to be replaced annually. The Fire Department does carry it. Selectman MacDonald spoke to a pharmacist and it was recommended partnering with a local pharmacist; they administer the program. Selectman Watson asked if it could be reimbursed by insurance; Ms. Dembkoski did not know.

The tax classification hearing to set the tax rate is scheduled for November 30th. The Board of Assessors will be in attendance.

Selectman Watson asked the process for putting a lien on the Holly Lane property for filling in the swimming pool. Ms. Dembkoski said the Building Inspector is working on preparing a notice which then has to follow the legal process to be approved to be a lien.

Thirty-four tax titles were placed at the Registry of Deeds last week; there are no outstanding receivables except for the current fiscal year; the interest rate for those properties is now 16% and the cost of advertising and recording costs are passed on to those properties.

SELECTMEN’S TIME:

Selectman D’Amore had two future agenda items: (1) Groveland Fire Department website and Press Release dated 11/13/2015; and (2) discussion on the Strong Chief Law and the impact to our community.

Selectman Watson said the BOS should at some point visit all town buildings to take a look and be familiar to know what their needs are.

The use of the electric company building for the Council on Aging was briefly discussed; they have not come back with information yet.

Selectman Watson said it is time the BOS meet with Town Counsel to be brought up to speed on the litigation against the town. Ms. Dembkoski previously asked the board for dates; they need to identify their availability to meet.

Selectman Watson asked for a future agenda item to talk about the town’s deferred compensation plan; he said he doesn’t believe it was the intent of the law that someone who makes \$100/year has an amount taken out. The intent was for people who are getting a paycheck every week to be part of it. Ms. Dembkoski said it is federal law, not state law and required because we don’t pay into Social Security. It was suggested he draft a letter to our Legislative Committee for an opinion.

Selectman MacDonald asked for the Zoning Bylaw update. Ms. Dembkoski said a draft was sent to the Planning Board for review, he had items for clarification and when those questions are answered, Town Counsel will be ready with their draft to move forward. The final draft will be forwarded to the ZBA.

The board will meet on Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. to continue discussions on the fire truck. Selectman D’Amore will do research and make an attempt to get an expert opinion; Selectman MacDonald will call fire departments. The focus is on whether we can afford what is proposed. Selectman D’Amore said we received excellent due diligence, but it was one sided and just one item. Chair Dunn does not feel comfortable that we can come up with that money. Ms. Dembkoski will put together a safe estimate. She said that at the decision back in the spring we knew sacrifices would have to be made, understood that we may not be able to afford all the capital that might be proposed this year, and the board was committed to seeing the fire truck through and dealing with the necessary cuts. Selectman D’Amore said at the meeting we need to do a simulation of what those sacrifices will be in quantified terms so we can walk away with one goal accomplished; a feeling as to whether we can afford it. Chair Dunn asked if we could put it back to the taxpayers to pay for it and not use general fund. Ms. Dembkoski said a town meeting would be needed or wait until next spring. There were two things outlined in the vote: (1) the aerial ladder truck. If you choose to abandon the aerial part you have to go back to town meeting. You can’t say we are not going to get an aerial truck now because that is clearly against what town meeting voted; you can choose the truck and amount, but it has to be an aerial ladder truck. (2) If you use funds outside of appropriation or borrowing you would have to go back to town meeting. Chair Dunn always said he wanted town meeting floor to vote for this; it should be a ballot question; more people would show up.

The next regular meeting will be held Monday, November 30th at 6:30 p.m.

Selectman D’Amore made a motion to adjourn; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 4-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:21 p.m.

***** Approved on 12/14/15 by a vote of 3-0-1 – Selectmen Wood abstained *****