

Groveland Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2016

Present: Chair William Dunn, Selectman Joe D'Amore, Selectman Ed Watson, Selectman Michael Wood

Absent: Selectman Daniel MacDonald, Denise Dembkoski (Finance Director)

Others Present: Cassandra Murphy

Recorder: Melanie Rich

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

RESIDENT/PUBLIC COMMENTS: There was no public comment tonight.

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

Selectman Wood made a motion to approve PW#16-37 in the amount of \$143,741.75; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman Wood made a motion to approve DW#16-35A in the amount of \$28,239.66; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman Wood made a motion to approve BW#16-37 in the amount of \$1,140,707.73; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

APPOINTMENTS: There were no appointments tonight.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE:

Fire Chief (to discuss proposed compensation changes) – Chief Lay said the compensation plan they operate under has been in place since 2001. The current line item for wages is \$97K; the call count last year was 527. The current plan pays a 2-hour minimum when called out. He is working with other chiefs in the area to standardize the approach on how call firefighters are compensated; we have one of the higher rates and double it during the day. He hopes to have a recommendation to the board before July but they are still working on data analysis. He thinks the plan going forward should focus more on training and certifications; the review of the compensation plan is well overdue. At the current run rate he is going to run out of money and is looking for some room between now and the fiscal year to pull back on the 2-hour minimum during the day and pay for other things. He is asking the board to allow him to suspend the 2-hour minimum during the day for the next few months; he would pay for only one hour. Selectman Watson asked if he anticipated people not showing because they are not getting double time; Chief Lay does not; he is hoping three months will allow him to measure it. This is a part-time job, but we need people to come out when we need them. He wants the firefighter to have incentive to train, get certified, and if they want to make more money, come to more calls. Chair Dunn asked if he sets the pay rate. The Chief said he does not set the rates; he only applies what is in place; he has not promoted or demoted anyone. Selectman Wood made a motion to accept the Chief's recommendation to drop from a 2-hour paid minimum to a 1-hour paid minimum for the daytime hours between 8AM-5PM until further notice from the Chief; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 4-0-0.

FY17 Budget Discussion (Fire Department) – Chief Lay agreed that he could do a better job of communicating what's going on in the fire department to the board and felt attending monthly with a report of the past 30 days would be a good idea. Chair Dunn agreed and said the more we talk, the better we understand each other and things will run smoother. Selectman Watson suggested he bring a breakdown of the calls for the month (the amount of calls, the type of calls and the number of firefighters on each call). He said the only discretion in his budget is equipment. In May and June he starts to plan his purchases and priorities but has to put off purchases. He did not have a specific number, but believes \$30K-\$35K (one-

third of his budget) is spent on the 2-hour paid minimum. Selectman Watson questioned the budget for the PR person (\$199/month) and in his opinion felt it could be eliminated from the budget. The Chief said he delivers a legitimate service to him as well as several other communities in MA; he hosts the website, handles all his social media and does a great job. Selectman D'Amore thought it was an added value and did not agree with Selectman Watson.

Portable Radio Quote –The Chief said they need them; it is incredibly important to what they are doing; it is about firefighter safety. He is not a high cost chief; he is only the Fire Chief that will tell you what he needs to keep his firefighters safe. Chair Dunn asked which he thought were in worse shape, the vehicle radios or the hand-held radios; the Chief thinks the portables; they are the single greatest need for communication. The cost is \$56,412 including the portable accessories. The board will take it under advisement.

Training and Certification - Chief Lay forwarded the release to the board; six people were in the class. We pay them a \$2,500 stipend; \$15K comes out of his budget to pay for certification; it is in the training policy to get certified. Chair Dunn said there is a policy in place where without certain training you cannot go into a burning building. The chief said that is not part of that policy; those who have been around and have sufficient evidence that they have completed the right number of courses and right type of courses, they will sign off and allow them to be interior firefighters; the job is too dangerous not to have a certain level of training. The Chief said we need to stay safe. Chair Dunn commented that we spend money training people, but there is no guarantee they will stay with us. Chief Lay said they have fine tuned the hire process; they know what they are looking for.

FY17 Budget Discussion (Water & Sewer Commissioners) – Tom Cusick (Water & Sewer Superintendent) said there are not many changes percentage wise from last year to this year. The biggest difference would be some of the capital projects they are proposing which total \$1.5 million. If voted, the bond increase will not take place until the next fiscal year. Chair Dunn said we will have to borrow it, and that bond payment would come from the general fund or the rate structure. Mr. Cusick said it is an enterprise fund account. Jim Sheehan reviewed the certified cash sheet and currently the amount in the budget is \$119,529; that money is consistently reinvested back. Selectman D'Amore said the money is generated at what they sell the water at; it is a commodity. The \$1.5 million will impact the rates approximately 15%. Chair Dunn questioned the 62% increase in the salary adjustments. Mr. Cusick said that number is actually a negative because they had a staff change and are paying somebody less money. Selectman Watson asked for an explanation on the Superintendent's salary increase request, the water side at 6% and the sewer side at 4%. He said the Superintendent received an increase last year more than any other town employee. Mr. Sheehan said that was a typo; it was supposed to be total of 4%. He said the water budget is detailed line by line and shows the 2% increase that Mr. Cusick will receive and explained the reasoning for the additional 2%; he hopes the board will support it.

Remote Participation Policy – Selectman Wood said for those of us who can't always make the meeting, allowing remote participation would be a good idea. Ms. Murphy said Ms. Dembkoski wanted the board to know that a policy is not required to be in place, they only have to accept what is written in the Open Meeting Law. The members agreed the full board should be part of the discussion and tabled it to a future meeting under the "Old Business" topic.

Sale of Town Land Discussion – Chair Dunn said he and Ms. Murphy met with Larry Marocco. Ms. Murphy will send a letter to the abutters of the properties on the list; the valuation will be determined. The town is owed \$1,800 on the off Main Street property (a municipal piece); how does the board want to handle it? We need to determine which way to go with the landlocked pieces. The parcel on Brown Island Road is being offered to the state. The town vacant landlocked land will be offered to the Department of Conservation. Uptack Road will be given to the state. Off Main Street and King Street will be offered to abutters; values are \$1,800 and \$2,400 respectively. We will send a letter. Market analysis was done for

894 Salem Street (the old Highway garage). Chair Dunn thinks it should be put out to bid on the state register. Salem Street (Uptack Road) is 6.95 acres and can be transferred collectively as one. The combined lots have 434' of road frontage and is a mixed use (commercial and residential) making it more valuable. There was consensus for the board to move forward. Selectman Watson made a motion to put out to bid Map 48, Lots 9, 10, 14, 15 & 16; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 4-0-0. Selectman Watson made a motion to put out to bid a parcel of land identified as Salem Street, Map 41, Lot 55 consisting of 3.9 acres; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 4-0-0. Selectman Wood made a motion to send a letter to abutters of Map 2, Lot 12 off Main Street and Map 26, Lot 29AKing Street; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 4-0-0.

VOTES OF THE BOARD:

Selectman Watson made a motion to approve the February 18, 2016 Meeting Minutes; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 4-0-0.

Selectman Watson made a motion to declare two pieces of Highway equipment (mower & sidewalk plow) surplus and to be sold via MuniBid; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 4-0-0.

OLD BUSINESS (Unfinished Business): No unfinished business tonight.

CORRESPONDENCE TO BE REVIEWED:

1. Minutes from February 22, 2016.
2. Executive Session Meeting Minutes from February 22, 2016.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S TIME:

Ms. Demboski was not present tonight. The Chair thanked Ms. Murphy for filling in.

The Cemetery Commissioners would like to ask relatives who have placed decorations on lots to please remove them by April 1st. All items left after that date will be removed. They will also start tagging unsightly shrubs that are overgrown or in poor health; that will start May 1st. If a shrub is tagged, it will be removed. People will have 30 days from the day the shrub is tagged to contact the Cemetery Commission with their concerns or intentions; they can contact Frank Bryan or any commissioner if there are any issues.

There are board and committee vacancies. Residents have until Thursday, March 10th to pull papers to run; they need to be returned to the Town Clerk by Monday, March 14th at 5PM. The boards with vacancies are as follows: Board of Assessors 3YR; Board of Health 3YR; Board of Selectmen 1YR; Cemetery Board 1YR; Light Department, Library has numerous vacancies; Planning Board has one 5YR and one 1YR; Water & Sewer Department Moderator; School Committee, Town Clerk, Road Commissioner and Tree Warden.

The last day to register to vote in the town election is April 12th.

There is a Planning Board Public Hearing on the proposed ZBA changes on March 22nd at 8PM.

SELECTMEN'S TIME:

Chair Dunn said they are continuing to work on the Bagnall School project; the well will be put out to bid soon. He believes it will stay on schedule and be completed on time. Ms. Demboski and the Chair are coordinating a time to meet with the Superintendent, Principal and Summer Program Director.

The Pines project boat ramp will be postponed until next year because construction of the planks are not completed.

Chair Dunn asked that the Vice Chair run the meeting in his absence.

Chair Dunn said the Route 97 reconstruction project will start in early to mid-April.

Selectman D'Amore asked that an item be placed on the agenda (the use of technology for private balloting at town meeting). He believes everyone should be given an opportunity to vote their consciences and also thinks participation at town meeting will be dramatically increased. The members agreed; Selectman D'Amore will complete his research and present it at the next meeting. Selectman Watson suggested contacting town counsel for his recommendation.

Selectman Watson said this week the MMA Legislative Update will be held at town hall from 8AM to 10AM.

The next regular meeting will be held Monday, March 21, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Selectman Watson made a motion to adjourn; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 4-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

*** Approved on April 4, 2016 by a vote of 4-0-1, with Selectman MacDonald abstaining ***