

Groveland Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
July 25, 2016

Present: Chair William Dunn, Selectman Ed Watson, Selectman William O'Neil, Selectman Daniel MacDonald

Absent: Selectman Michael Wood

Others Present: Denise Dembkoski (Finance Director)

Recorder: Melanie Rich

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

RESIDENT/PUBLIC COMMENTS: None tonight.

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

Selectman MacDonald made a motion to approve PW#17-03 in the amount of \$160,789.90; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman MacDonald made a motion to approve PW#17-01A in the amount of \$29,803.27; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

Selectman MacDonald made a motion to approve DW#17-03 in the amount of \$1,497,263.33; Selectman Watson seconded; all voted in favor; warrant approved.

APPOINTMENTS:

Selectman Watson made a motion to appoint Che Condon to fill a recent vacancy on the Groveland Recreation Committee through June 30, 2017; Selectman O'Neil seconded; voted 4-0-0.

Selectman Watson made a motion to appoint Kathleen Kastrinelis to fill a vacancy on the Finance Board through June 30, 2018; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0.

Chair Dunn made a motion to appoint Michael Neenan to the position of temporary, seasonal Cemetery Grounds Keeper effective July 26, 2016; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 3-0-1.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE:

School Building Committee Discussion and Vote on Groveland Members – Letters of interest were received from Kim Jackson (Construction spot); Bill Daley (Construction spot); John Osborne (Citizen-at-Large spot); Amanda DePalma (Citizen-at-Large spot).

Selectman Watson made a motion to appoint Selectman Bill O'Neil to represent the BOS on the School Building Committee; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0. Selectman O'Neil made a motion to appoint Ms. Dembkoski to represent the Finance Committee on the School Building Committee; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0. Selectman Watson made a motion to appoint Kim Jackson to fill the Construction spot on the School Building Committee; Chair Dunn seconded; voted 3-1-0. Selectman O'Neil made a motion to appoint Amanda DePalma to fill the Citizen-at-Large spot on the School Building Committee; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0. After further conversation of the knowledge and expertise Bill Daley can bring to the table, the members discussed reconsidering the previous vote for the Citizen-at-Large spot. Selectman MacDonald made a motion to reconsider the vote; Selectman O'Neil seconded; voted 4-0-0. Chair Dunn made a motion to appoint Bill Daley to fill the Citizen-at-Large spot on the School Building Committee; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0.

Ratification of the Library Director's Contract with an Effective Start Date of July 26, 2016 – Beth Burton (Board of Trustees Library Committee Chair) said Jan Voogd has been moved forward pending a successful contract. The contract has been signed by the Board of Trustees and has been reviewed by Town Counsel. Since Ms. Voogd's employment as Interim Director, they signed one of the state reports to put them back into certification; they are on target to be recertified in November. Selectman Watson made a motion to ratify the contract for the Library Director; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0.

Term Limits on Board and Committee Members and Annual Voting on the Chair – The Chair recommended 2-3 year terms for the Chair. Selectman Watson said we can suggest it, but an elected board does not have to listen to us. He thinks the way to do it is by town ordinance or bylaw voted at the town meeting but not sure how to move forward with that. Selectman MacDonald agreed that there needs to be term limits in all positions; possibly two consecutive years. Ms. Dembkoski will send an email to all 351 communities inquiring if they have a bylaw and also talk with Town Counsel. Selectman Watson would like to know what would happen if there is a Chairman beyond the term limits and nobody else wants to step up because they don't have the time, etc.

VOTES OF THE BOARD:

1. Selectman Watson made a motion to approve the June 27, 2016 Minutes; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0.
2. Year End Reserve Fund Transfers – Selectman MacDonald asked why there are transfers. Ms. Dembkoski said \$419.13 is for the Cemetery for parts for unforeseen expenditures. \$13.17 is also for the Cemetery for vehicle fuel. To close the books at the end of the year we can legally transfer within an expense line to cover a shortfall. Selectman Watson asked the purpose for the Plumbing and Wiring Inspectors. She said in the past they were paid a percentage of permit fees; there was no set salary for them. The new Building Inspector suggested they be put on a straight salary; there will no need for additional funding for either of them. Chair Dunn asked if the poll workers are built into our budget; yes. She did not know why the poll workers budget is over by \$1,320. The Town Clerk submitted it and informed the Finance Committee that she did not properly calculate her election budget. Chair Dunn said we can't get a true budget at the end of the year of people are not putting in the right numbers. Ms. Dembkoski said there are some things that are foreseen.

Chair Dunn questioned the Firefighters Wages \$1,000; Firefighters Inspector Wages \$1,500; Firefighters Salary Drills \$2,600. She said the Fire Chief told her he would be short in all the salary lines. She told him his overall budget needs to have that amount of money. He covered it in the expense side, but it can't be moved from expense to salary. Chair Dunn said if we are going to spend the money on training, we need to get a commitment from them; a signed contract for a specified period of time. Ms. Dembkoski said the board did a few things with the Police Department. First they implemented a contract with the police officers going into the academy. If we were paying for them to go to the academy, they had to sign a contract that stated if they left within a year, they had to pay us back. The board then decided instead of taking that approach, they would strongly recommend that any new candidate for appointment for a full time police officer position had to already be academy trained; we didn't want to be in the market to bring people in, train them, and have them go work elsewhere. She felt we could do something similar with the Fire Department. Town Counsel drafted it and it is very common in communities. She can reach out to Town Counsel and see if the same applies to the Fire Department.

Selectman MacDonald asked if the Chairman of the Finance Committee signed the reserves. Ms. Dembkoski said they met and voted them all unanimously. Selectman O'Neil said they had lengthy discussions. Ms. Dembkoski said if they are not voted, it sits as a deficit and would come off free cash at the end of the year. Selectman MacDonald asked where is the incentive to get your budget right.

Ms. Dembkoski recommended to the Finance Committee to keep that in mind when departments are looking for money when preparing the next budget. She conservatively sets the postage because you never know how much mail will be sent out during the year.

Selectman MacDonald asked why would there be a shortfall on Fire Inspector Wages; he thought they were getting a flat rate. Selectman Watson recalled the Fire Chief saying that some of the fees they were paying inspectors was more than what were received in the inspection. That would indicate that the inspectors were getting too much money or the wages were too high; the BOS should be setting the fee. Chair Dunn said we need to have a conversation about it because he thinks the way they are heading with the calls and the salary, they will go over budget. Ms. Dembkoski said many years ago that conversation came up before the then BOS and one of their options was that they went to the Police Chief who oversees dispatch and had him triage the calls first. The Police Department as first responders decided whether they needed the Fire Department or an ambulance; that was one way the then BOS tried to control costs on the firefighter wages. Selectman O'Neil asked why they abandoned that policy. Did the Chief give specifics that it wasn't working, was it cumbersome or too complex, or he just didn't want to do it anymore. Ms. Dembkoski did not know. Selectman MacDonald thought the Police Department was the first responders. Ms. Dembkoski said they are, but there is a new dispatch protocol that came out from the Fire Department that they want the Fire Department called on almost every call. Selectman MacDonald asked what is the reason; he doesn't understand the logic; there has to be a way to control costs. The Chief is due in for his monthly report; that topic will be added to it.

Selectman MacDonald asked why not let the budgets close with deficits and let the record show that they didn't balance their budget. Ms. Dembkoski said the budget would show they exceeded 100%. There a few things to make the budget balance at the year: we can make a special town meeting transfer, make a reserve funds transfer, or transfer under the Municipal Finance Reform Act, but can only transfer up to 3% of a budget. Selectman MacDonald doesn't want transferring out of the reserves to be the norm; Ms. Dembkoski agreed and said it shouldn't be. Selectman O'Neil said we need to examine the budget process better.

Selectman MacDonald is not comfortable (with the Fire Department) and said there was no attempt made to write down a reason; to him it is incomplete. The Chief should come in front of us to tell how it happened and that it can't happen again. Chair Dunn asked Selectman MacDonald if he wanted to send them back and get a better explanation; yes. Chair Dunn said we will get an explanation.

Selectman Watson asked if want to take action on the items that have adequate explanations. The board agreed. Selectman O'Neil made a motion to approve all but the poll workers and three fire related transfers; Selectman Watson seconded. The amounts are as follows: Cemetery for parts \$419.13 and vehicle fuel \$13.72. Postage \$1,392.91. Plumbing Inspector \$2,693.00, Wiring Inspector \$1,137.00; voted 4-0-0. Chair Dunn made a motion to table Poll Workers \$1,320.00, Firefighter Wages \$919.03, Firefighter Salary Drills \$2,501.00, Fire Inspector Wages \$1,458.00; Selectman O'Neil seconded; voted 4-0-0.

3. Selectman Watson made a motion to accept the resignation of Doug Demers from the Recreation Committee; Selectman O'Neil seconded; voted 4-0-0.
4. Selectman Watson made a motion to accept the resignation of Kathleen DeLisle from the Finance Board; Selectman O'Neil seconded; voted 4-0-0.

OLD BUSINESS (Unfinished Business):

Chair Dunn talked to Chief Lay regarding the retirees from the Fire Department. The Chief is planning to recognize them. He will contact Lenny Mirra and Senator Tarr to see if they can provide citations.

CORRESPONDENCE TO BE REVIEWED:

1. Minutes from July 11, 2016.
2. Enforcement Letter from the Building Inspector regarding Sunset Circle.
3. Nominations for the Volunteer Recognition program.
4. Complaint Letter from Arthur Clausnitzer regarding road work done in a conservation area.
5. E-mail from Jeff York regarding Fire Department retirees.
6. National Night Out Flyer.
7. Letter from the Board of Library Trustees regarding a sign.
8. Response from Conservation Commission regarding Arthur Clausnitzer complaint letter.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S TIME:

The National Night Out is Tuesday, August 2nd from 5PM-8PM at the Pentucket Regional High School. It is the first tri-town with West Newbury, Merrimac and Groveland Police Departments. Admission is free.

SELECTMEN'S TIME:

Selectman Watson asked for an update on the back of the Bagnall School. The Chair said the shed was delivered today; the compost given by the Highway Department was spread and reclaimed. The Highway Department will run the electric lines from the school to the new well. When that is complete, the well will be put in and wired. After grading, the sprinklers will be done and it will be hydroseeded. Ms. Dembkoski said the two baseball fields were done as well. They are looking to put up temporary fencing to keep people off the recently graded land until the grass starts growing.

Selectman O'Neil asked where we were with the Pines project. Ms. Dembkoski said the Recreation Committee put Mike Houghton in touch with the well installer who did the Bagnall wells to get some questions answered; it will then go back out to bid. A letter will be sent to the Recreation Committee asking how the progress is going since last meeting with the Selectmen. They will also be asked if they have done any advertising or have any revenue sources coming in.

Selectman MacDonald asked for an update on the sale of the land (Salem & Uptack Streets). Ms. Dembkoski said full proposals are due August 22nd; there have been 7-8 requests to date. The Highway Garage proposal will be ready to review at the next meeting.

Selectman O'Neil talked about the volunteer of the month. Currently there are two nominees, Claire Walsh and Joe D'Amore. A decision who to recognize will be made next meeting.

Debra Stewart (Cemetery Commission) reminded the general public that the Cemetery will be tagging overgrown shrubs, etc. They hope to have them tagged by August 31 with trimming started 30 days after that. There will be a fee that will be determined on a case-by-case. Telephone numbers to contact the Commission will be available. In addition, a sign will be posted at the Cemetery as well information posted on the town website. Chair Dunn asked about the progress of the CPA project for the restoration of the front entrance; a contract has been awarded and the work should start in September. The engineering for the drainage is ongoing project.

The next regular meeting will be held Monday, August 8, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Groveland Board of Selectmen Meeting – July 25, 2016

Selectman Watson made a motion to adjourn; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 4-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

*** Approved on August 22, 2016 with a vote of 4-0-1 with Selectmen Wood abstaining ***