

Approved Minutes
BOS meeting 3.15.2021
Unanimous Vote

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 1, 2021
Groveland Town Hall Meeting Room
183 Main St, Groveland, MA 01834

TOWN OF GROVELAND
2021 JUL 14 PM 2:37

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place. This meeting of the Board of Selectmen will take place without any public present, but we will make every effort to ensure the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time.

This meeting was broadcast live on Groveland Public Access, Channel 9, as well as through Zoom. To join the Zoom Meeting, visit: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9231328711>

Members of the public are asked to send written comments to kworden@grovelandma.com or submit questions through the Zoom chat window.

PRESENT: Chair Wood, Selectmen Naves, Watson, Kastrinelis, O'Neil.
ALSO PRESENT: Kevin Paicos, Interim Finance Director.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Chair Wood called the Open Meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Chair Wood read the following:

- Pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) "[t]o comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements" ("Purpose 7"), citing to the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 22(f), (g). (Votes may be taken)
 1. Release of Minutes from Executive Session Meeting: August 7, 2020 – Timing amended and corrected.
 2. Release of minutes from Executive Session Meeting: October 22, 2020.

Roll call vote to adjourn the Open Session and enter Executive Session: Watson; Aye, O'Neil; Aye, Wood; Aye, Kastrinelis; Aye, Naves; Aye.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION: Chair Wood called the Open Session back to order at 6:00 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

APPROVE WARRANTS:

PW # 21-35 \$186,706.90

A motion was moved by Selectman Naves and seconded by Selectman O'Neil to approve Warrant PW #21-35 in the amount of \$186,706.90. Voted: 5-0-0.

BW # 21-35 \$1,539,740.14

A motion was moved by Selectman Naves and seconded by Selectman O'Neil to approve Warrant BW # 21-35 in the amount of \$1,539,740.14

21-35 Bills Warrant Breakdown:

Town:	\$ 122,365.17
W/S:	\$ 8,919.16
Payroll Withholding:	\$ 54,078.81
Health Insurance:	\$
Light Bills:	\$ 422,519.74

Grants & Revolving:	\$
Chapter 90:	\$
Pentucket Assessment:	\$ 920,855.41
Whittier Assessment:	\$
Capital:	\$
Debt:	\$
Grants:	\$ 11,001.88
Wastewater Haverhill	\$

APPROVE MINUTES:

- Release Executive Session Minutes from August 7, 2020
A motion was moved by Selectman Kastrinelis and seconded by Selectman O'Neil to release the Executive Session Minutes from August 7, 2020. Voted: 5-0-0.
- Release Executive Session Minutes from October 22, 2020.
A motion was moved by Selectman Kastrinelis and seconded by Selectman O'Neil to release the Executive Session Minutes from October 22, 2020. Voted: 5-0-0.

APPOINTMENTS: None.

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE VOTE:

- Town Government Study Committee – Joe D'Amore to present (6:30 PM)
Joe D'Amore was present and addressed the Board. Mr. D'Amore explained the work that has been accomplished. The Town can implement the position of Town Administrator with either a bylaw or a Special Act. The Town Government Study Committee suggests a twostep process; first implementing the position of Town Administrator with a bylaw for a period of time to see how it works out and then make it more permanent with the Special Act. The suggested bylaw will rest upon existing bylaws. Mr. D'Amore reviewed the proposed bylaw. The Committee's charge did not include creating a job description. The recommendation is to have Town Counsel review this proposal. Chair Wood commended the Study Committee for the detailed information that has been produced in a short period of time. Selectman Watson asked about a proposed cost and Mr. D'Amore responded that he is working on this and that the information was not ready for tonight but should be available by Thursday and will be shared with the BOS. Selectman Watson suggested this be delayed a year so that as many voters as possible have the opportunity to vote on this because he felt that voters may still be reluctant to come to Town Meeting due to COVID. Selectman O'Neil asked for a cost benefit analysis to help people relate to the benefit of this. Selectman Kastrinelis liked that this clarifies roles and responsibilities. Selectman Naves asked about the Finance Director responsibilities and whether or not a candidate will have to have the required certifications. Mr. Paicos commended the Study Committee for their work and the balance this proposal allows between the BOS and the Town Administrator and recommended a three-year period of time instead of one year because this will limit the pool of candidates; three years is the norm in the profession. Mr. Paicos again noted the problem with the TA having to also be the CFO, Treasurer, Collector, Procurement Officer, Personnel Director and Finance Director. Finding someone with all of these qualifications will be difficult and there could also be legal issues due to conflict with existing bylaw 2-36A. Mr. Paicos cautioned that this will also be a violation of internal control standards because one person has authority to do all of these duties and he believes the Attorney General will reject this. Mr. Paicos recommended that the Town Meeting Warrant have the bylaw with all references to the Finance Director deleted, if that passes, a Warrant Article to repeal the 2-36A Finance and Budget Bylaw (this will take time for the Legislature to approve this). Mr. Paicos recommended contacting the Attorney General's Office, Town Counsel, and the Town Auditor for their input. Mr. Paicos will contact the Town Auditor, outline the concern, and refer them to Mr. D'Amore who will share this with the Study Committee.
- COVID Discussion – Mr. Paicos noted that the BOH members are doing interviews for the Health Agent at the same time as this meeting and may not be available tonight. Selectman Kastrinelis asked

about opening the Town Hall. Chair Wood asked if anything has not been able to be done with the Town Hall still closed. Mr. Paicos noted that he learned today that accommodations are already being made if someone cannot handle their business any other way and an appointment is being made for the resident to come into the building. Mr. Paicos also noted that uncontrolled access to the building is not recommended due to the risk to employees and Department Heads were opposed to opening the Town Hall when the subject was discussed at a Department Head meeting today. Mr. Paicos did not object to adding appointment information to the website if the Board would like. Selectman Naves did not feel that appointments need to be advertised on the website, residents should call offices. Selectman Watson felt it was well past time to open the offices that are here to serve the public and felt that the town hall being closed is an inconvenience. Selectman O'Neil felt that there does not appear to be problems with how things are going right now but agreed better communication could help and he recommended continuing to reevaluate the situation. Selectman Kastrinelis would like to begin to develop a plan to re-open the town buildings. Mr. Paicos will do a survey of the surrounding communities to see what they are doing now and what they will be doing as far as re-opening.

- Budget Discussion

- Clerk Assistant Position

Town Clerk, Beth Cunniff was present and addressed the BOS. Selectman Naves does not want to hold off on this and would like to see if this could be filled this year. Ms. Cunniff estimated that 10-15 hours a week would be ideal. Mr. Paicos felt the cost would be minimal and the necessity is there. Selectman Kastrinelis noted that if the Town Clerk is out for any length of time, there is no one else that can do the work and Selectman O'Neil agreed and supported this. Selectman Watson wondered if 10-15 hours would be enough and supports this as well. Chair Wood asked how we could fund this and agrees with the need but would rather wait until the final budget numbers are finalized. Mr. Paicos noted there is not a lot to cut in the current budget and talked about the possible necessity to use the stabilization reserve accounts to balance the budget anyways and recommended adding this into that. Mr. Paicos will work with Ms. Cunniff on a wage and hours plan for the BOS to vote on amending the budget at the next meeting.

Town Clerk Cunniff announced open seats for the upcoming Annual Town Election and encouraged interested people to come in by March 11th. Ms. Cunniff asked about a couple of items for the BOS to consider if the Town Meeting will be held outdoors and wanted to know who would be responsible for coordinating everything. Ms. Cunniff asked if the Town Manager proposal requires a ballot vote and Mr. Paicos responded it is a bylaw and thus requires only a town meeting vote.

- Fire Department funding of new positions

Chief Valentine was present and addressed the BOS. He provided an overview of the three budget line items that have are increased; Fire Chief Salary (2%), fuel line due to increased call volume and the rising cost of fuel and finally the call firefighter salary line increased due to the increase in calls as well as an additional certification that was completed. Chief Valentine noted that all but two firefighters have been fully vaccinated. Chair Wood commended the Fire Department for their quick response with a fire near his house recently.

- Board of Health – no one was present.

- Economic Development

Rebecca Oldham joined the meeting via Zoom. The budget is essentially level funded from the prior FY with a couple of exceptions which Ms. Oldham explained; with the creation of the Economic Development Department, the line items have been moved under the new department budget.

- Police Department Reserve officer funds:

Chief Gillen was present and addressed the BOS. Chair Wood asked if the Board had any questions regarding the shifting of budget line items. Chief Gillen explained where things are at with the police reform process and prepared his budget with the changes that will likely be taking

place as a result of the new reforms. Selectman O'Neil asked if the restricted budget would be enough and Chief Gillen responded it will be tight, but he wants to be respectful and do his part. Chief Gillen commended all of his staff for their dedication during the past year during the pandemic and he reported that most of the department has received their second vaccines and noted that the Police Station lobby has been reopened to serve the public.

- Summer Recreation Program Summer schedule (Matthew Castonguay, Director) – No discussion - This has been moved to the next meeting.

- Town Meeting Planning Discussion
 - Votes on the Town Warrant
This will be discussed at the next meeting.
 - Vote to Move the Annual Town Meeting to outside location in May
Chair Wood was concerned with moving the Town Meeting outside but was okay with pushing the date back. Mr. Paicos noted that the ability to move the date back is expiring on March 30th unless the Governor extends that date. The Board will discuss this at the next meeting. Chris from IT submitted a proposal for approximately \$8,000 for mobile equipment for Town Meeting (indoors or outdoors). Because this is under the threshold allowed, Mr. Paicos will approve this purchase in order to get the equipment ordered.
- Approval of Outside Dining for Pub 97
Selectman Naves felt the license should be updated to reflect the Governor's guidance. Selectman Watson suggested the date be changed to a date before April 1st.
A motion was moved by Selectman Naves and seconded by Selectman O'Neil to approve Outside Dining for Pub 97 with an adjustment of adding the Governor's Restrictions Guidelines and updating the dates to reflect the current year. Voted: 5-0-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Position for Conservation Agent
Mr. Paicos explained that he investigated paying for the Conservation Agent position as discussed at the last BOS meeting through fees and he found that the reality is that approximately \$23,000 would not be covered by the Conservation fees beyond this year because there is currently a surplus in that account but once that is used, there will not be enough money to pay for the position in the next year. Mr. Paicos explained the Veasey Revolving Fund and how that could be used, though this fluctuates, and money can only be spent that is currently in the account. There is risk that the fees will not cover this as was discussed at the last meeting.
Mike Dempsey, Conservation Commission joined the meeting via Zoom and commented that it was never the Conservation Commissions intention to ask the town to fund this position.
Selectman Kastrinelis was concerned that this information being presented tonight was not received in advance of the meeting and would like an opportunity to review and consider this.
Selectman O'Neil noted that the revenues would have to increase every year in order to support the position. Chair Wood recommended reviewing the information and discussing this again at the next meeting.

VOTES OF THE BOARD: None

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S TIME:

Mr. Paicos reported:

1. The boiler in this building is failing, this was anticipated. Three companies have come in to look at and they all agreed that it has to be replaced. 2. Asked about Town Counsel expenses related to the Cable TV contract negotiations and was told yes, these invoices were approved. 3. Asked about a town bylaw requiring the Town Accountant to publish the town bylaws in the Annual Town Report once every five years per a town bylaw and it has not been done in eight years and Mr. Paicos offered to draft a warrant article repealing that bylaw. This requirement adds a significant amount of information into the ATR and increases the cost of publishing.

SELECTMEN'S TIME & REPORTS: None.

OTHER ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED AT TIME OF POSTING: None.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Resignation of the Light Commissioner Kermit Cross effective 2/16/21.

BOS members thanked Kermit Cross for his long-time service to the Town of Groveland.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was moved by Selectman Kastrinelis and seconded by Selectman Wood to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 pm. Voted: 5-0-0.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Monday, March 15, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine T. Ingram