

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 4, 2019
Groveland Town Hall
183 Main St, Groveland, MA 01834

ATTENDANCE: Chair Bill O'Neil and Selectmen Bill Dunn, Ed Watson and Michael Wood
ALSO PRESENT: Finance Director, Denise Dembkoski

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm

RESIDENT/PUBLIC COMMENTS: none

APPROVE WARRANTS:

PW # 19-35 \$ 152,481.07

A motion was moved by Selectman O'Neil and seconded by Selectman Wood to approve BW #19-35.
Voted 4-0-0.

BW # 19-34 \$1,414.74

A motion was moved by Selectman O'Neil and seconded by Selectman Wood to approve BW #19-34.
Voted 4-0-0.

BW # 19-35 \$ 1,150,818.00

A motion was moved by Selectman O'Neil and seconded by Selectman Wood to approve PW #19-35.
Voted 4-0-0.

19-35 Bills Warrant Breakdown:

Town:	\$ 60,900.24
Water/Sewer:	\$ 9,574.95
Payroll Withholding:	\$ 46,768.44
Health Insurance:	\$
Light Bills:	\$ 207,864.95
Grants & Revolving:	\$ 30,736.76
Chapter 90:	\$
Pentucket Assessment:	\$ 794,972.66
Whittier Assessment:	\$
Capital:	\$

INTRODUCTION:

Introduction of Renny Carroll, new Highway Superintendent effective March 18, 2019. Mr. Carroll was present and addressed the Board. The Board welcomed Mr. Carroll to the Town of Groveland.

APPOINTMENTS:

Appointment of Kyle Elardo, 22 Mill St, Groveland, to the position of Reserve Dispatch/Lockup Keeper effective March 4, 2019 through June 30, 2019.

A motion was moved by Selectman Watson and seconded by Selectman Dunn to appoint Kyle Elardo, 22 Mill St, Groveland, to the position of Reserve Dispatch/Lockup Keeper effective March 4, 2019 through June 30, 2019. Voted 4-0-0.

Appointment of Jennifer Connor Mills, 12 Merrimack River Road, Groveland, to the Zoning Board of Appeals effective March 4, 2019 through June 30, 2019.

A motion was moved by Selectman Wood and seconded by Selectman Dunn to appoint Jennifer Connor Mills, 12 Merrimack River Road, Groveland, to the Zoning Board of Appeals effective March 4, 2019 through June 30, 2019. Voted 4-0-0.

Appointment of Elm Square Committee Members effective March 4, 2019 through June 30, 2019:

Mike Dempsey, 33 Uptack Road
Bette Gorski, 182 Washington Street
Greg Stark, 1 Off Kings Way
Jack Bevelacqua, 662 Salem Street

Brian Connell, Business Owner – Norwood Insurance, 293 Main Street

Lee Yang, Business Owner – 299-301 Main Street

Joanna Davis, Business Owner – Jon Val Hair Salon, 10 Elm Park

A motion was moved by Selectman Watson and seconded by Selectman Wood to appoint Mike Dempsey, 33 Uptack Road, Bette Gorski, 182 Washington Street, Greg Stark, 1 Off Kings Way, Jack Bevelacqua, 662 Salem Street, Brian Connell, Business Owner – Norwood Insurance, 293 Main Street, Lee Yang, Business Owner – 299-301 Main Street, Joanna Davis, Business Owner – Jon Val Hair Salon, 10 Elm Park to the Elm Square Committee effective March 4, 2019 through June 30, 2019. Voted 4-0-0.

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE VOTE:

- Discussion of Section VII “Benefits, Leaves, and Eligibility” of the draft Personnel Procedures Manual: Ms. Dembkoski passed along two employee questions.

Discussion:

Debbie Webster, Assessors Office addressed the Board and commented on the changes to the sick leave buy back and asked about the transition to PTO and she feels that all current employees should have the choice of staying on the current policy or going with the new policy. She encouraged the Board to compare what the current benefits are vs. the proposed benefits.

Lynn Stanton, COA Director; she was on the Personnel Advisory Board and worked on this document. She talked about the benefits of PTO – this offers employees flexibility.

Selectman Watson asked Ms. Webster to list the benefits that the current employees feel they are going to lose. He expressed concern about what would happen to an office if an employee is out sick for a long period of time. Selectman Watson asked Lynn Stanton advantages to the tax payers related to this document. Ms. Stanton replied that that was not their task to look at that. Selectman Watson asked Ms. Stanton why the Advisory Board started at 5 years for employees to choose which policy and not make it for all current employees. Ms. Stanton replied it was arbitrary; those folks that were here 5 years and less, they thought it would be more appealing because they would have more earned time. Selectman Wood asked if the Town offers supplemental long – term disability insurance. Ms. Dembkoski responded yes, they offer both short and long-term. Selectman Dunn wants to make sure that benefits are not taken away from the current employees. Chair O’Neal felt the Board needs to compare the two policies; the goal has not been to save money but rather give the Town the most talented employees. The Board discussed PTO and wondered if they could have two choices. Ms. Dembkoski stated that administratively it would be difficult to track but yes it can be done. Currently employees accrue time off in the prior year and they are available July 1st. The Board discussed putting language in to limit the amount of time someone could take at one time if they go to PTO. Selectman Dunn wanted to know if existing employees would be losing anything by staying with the current policy; he was informed that they would not lose anything. The Board will review what they have heard, and Chair O’Neal would like to look at numbers and data to better understand the consequences of what they are doing.

- Fire Chief sample job descriptions and discussion of hours and salary

Ms. Dembkoski requested samples from towns under 10,000 people. The Board reviewed the samples and brought up points that they liked from each one. The Board discussed setting hours and salary. Selectman Dunn felt that they should not list hours – rather “here is the salary and do whatever it takes to get the job done.” Ms. Dembkoski put a salary of \$70,000 in the budget as a placeholder; in order to balance the budget, she is recommending cuts all over, if the Board goes higher, she will have to make further cuts. Chair O’Neal asked if that included benefits and Ms. Dembkoski responded no, however, she did increase the health insurance and retirement line. The person chosen will also perform the administrative duties. Selectman Dunn suggested advertising the salary at \$65,000 - \$68,000. Selectman Watson felt that the Town will be a training ground and they will move on for more money. Selectman Wood felt \$69,000 - \$70,000 would be in line with other communities and keep us within the current budget. The BOS will each make recommendations and forward to Ms. Dembkoski who will summarize everything. The Board will advertise \$65,000 – \$70,000.

A motion was moved by Selectman Dunn and seconded by Selectman Wood that the BOS will go through the job descriptions and send over to Ms. Dembkoski and go with \$65,000 - \$70,000 for the dollar amount toward a Fire Chief. Voted 4-0-0.

- Quarry Apartments at Sewell Street – Selectmen concerns on initial plans

Chair O’Neil reported that the project has taken a different turn. Ms. Dembkoski started the discussion; as a result of the applicant filing directly through the Department of Housing the Town now has the opportunity to provide comments for their review, it will help the state and the Zoning Board when they go through their comprehensive permit process to have the comments documented. She has heard from police, conservation, water/sewer, planning board and board of health are meeting tomorrow night to discuss. Concerns have come in to Counsel, who will consolidate and provide a concise response for the application. There is a site visit tomorrow at 10:00 am for boards, committees and departments and a response is due to the State next week. This is on here for the BOS response and comments on the application because the site visit does not have to be posted as a public meeting so Board members can attend, they just cannot discuss outside of a posted meeting. The Board reviewed the map. The BOS and the Police have concerns about traffic, security and safety. The Town will ask for traffic studies. Selectman Watson asked about trash pickup and Ms. Dembkoski responded that she feels the apartments will be responsible for their own. There were concerns over private/public ways that will have to be addressed. Chair O’Neil inquired about resources like water and electricity; Ms. Dembkoski responded that she has information and water can be run; there is a proposal to have water treatment plants and plan to talk to water and sewer regarding sewer. Tom Cusick, Water and Sewer Department Superintendent addressed the Board and talked about state mandates and feels Groveland is in good shape and thinks they will be okay although there are some challenges. Parking will be need to be addressed. Chair O’Neil asked about specialized fire equipment; Interim Chief York addressed the BOS and talked about concerns with the increase in calls and the height of the building; the current ladder truck will not be sufficient. The Fire Department will need more detail in order to make complete recommendations, however, will provide what they can with the present plans. Selectman Watson asked about fire hydrants; Chief York responded that they will have to discuss this. Selectman Dunn worried about the potential increase in fire services. Selectman Watson asked about underground or above ground electricity; the plans are not clear. Selectmen Dunn, Watson and O’Neil plan to be at the site visit tomorrow. Any other concerns will be sent to Ms. Dembkoski.
- Town Survey Results

The BOS discussed some of the highlights; This was sent out with the February Tax Bills and the Town received 442 surveys. The Senior Center did not receive a lot of support. 65% were in favor of a Town Manager. There was a lot of support for electronic voting at Town Meeting, a filtration plant, playgrounds, open space and recreation fields. There was a recommendation for a Community Garden at Strawberry Fields. Selectman Watson asked about the cost of leasing electronic devices for the upcoming Town Meeting. Ms. Dembkoski had a quote for leasing the devices for one meeting in the amount of \$8,300 for 100 devices for 1 day and \$11,780 for 200 devices and two days; the BOS was not in support of funding this. Counsel said this will require a By-Law and Ms. Dembkoski has prepared an article for the upcoming meeting. The Board will move forward with an article and go from there. The By-Law would not require electronic voting. The majority of the BOS felt the comments were valuable. The BOS liked the idea of focusing on providing some costs associated with some of the supported areas, recommendations and suggestions and start to provide the information to residents to decide what they would like to support.
- FY20 Merit Increase Request for Facilities Coordinator, Steve McPherson

Ms. Dembkoski provided the reasoning for this request and that she is requesting a two-year increase. Mr. McPherson is saving the Town money and going above and beyond, and his rate should be more equitable for the job he is doing. Selectman Watson is against this and feels this is sending the wrong message, he is doing a good job and deserves it, but other employees are also doing a good job and may deserve it as well, and this may be setting a bad precedent. Ms. Dembkoski stated the Department Heads support this. Selectman Dunn was in favor of increasing his pay by one-year. Selectman Wood agreed with Selectman Dunn and supported the one-year increase.

A motion was moved by Selectman Wood and seconded by Selectman Dunn to approve the first-year pay increase for Steve McPherson. Voted 3-1-0 Selectman Watson voted against.
- FY20 Budget discussion

Ms. Dembkoski reviewed the proposed budget sheets and her recommendations on how to use the Free Cash. She is still waiting for some of the numbers to plug into the budget and will update the BOS as soon

as she has more information. The BOS spent time discussing the cost of waste collection and the rising cost of recycling.

VOTES OF THE BOARD:

- Close the 2019 Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrant
A motion was moved by Selectman Watson and seconded by Selectman Wood to close the 2019 Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Voted 4-0-0.
- Minutes from February 4, 2019
A motion was moved by Selectman Wood and seconded by Selectman Dunn to approve the minutes from February 4, 2019. Voted 3-0-1. Selectman Watson abstained.

SELECTMEN'S TIME & REPORTS:

- **Selectman Wood:** Meeting on March 12th for the School Project meeting.
- **Selectman Dunn:** none
- **Selectman Watson:** none
- **Chair O'Neil:** thanked the Highway Department for the great job on the road and the Police Department for keeping the town safe.

OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OTHER ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED AT TIME OF POSTING: None

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S TIME: Trash is delayed one day for the remainder of this week. Ms. Dembkoski will be out on medical leave beginning Thursday. The Tax Collector office will be opening at 10:00 am on Mondays until further notice.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Minutes from February 19, 2019
- Minutes from February 26, 2019
- Letter to 4 Abbott Circle regarding unregistered vehicles

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was moved by Selectman Wood and seconded by Selectman Dunn to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 pm. Voted 3-0-0.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Monday, March 18, 2019 at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine T. Ingram

*** Unanimously Approved on April 16, 2019 ***