

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

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

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

RESIDENT/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Joe D’Amore, 9 Cherry Tree Lane, addressed the Board to talk about the proposed school. First, he presented a list of exemptions available to all eligible tax payers. Next, he presented a document that was prepared by the LEAP committee. This group prepared a Statement of Interest (SOI) to send to the State petitioning for money to help build a new school. Mr. D’Amore declared that since the state has said yes, there is now an eligibility window of opportunity that has opened for the Town. Lastly, he left a schematic report, this is the table of contacts which depicts what has been planned for the new school. Mr. D’Amore encouraged people to pay attention to the details and asked the BOS to consider sponsoring an informational session, to be held by the Superintendent.

APPROVE WARRANTS:

PW # 19-31 \$ 155,376.55

A motion was moved by Selectman O’Neil and seconded by Selectman Wood to approve PW #19-31. Voted 3-0-0.

BW # 19-31 \$ 1,023,043.03

A motion was moved by Selectman O’Neil and seconded by Selectman Wood to approve BW #19-31. Voted 3-0-0.

19-31 Bills Warrant Breakdown:

Town:	\$ 53,140.14
W/S:	\$ 15,151.05
Payroll Withholding:	\$ 32,660.89
Health Insurance:	\$
Light Bills:	\$ 99,066.23
Grants & Revolving:	\$ 22,885.16
Chapter 90:	\$ 5,166.90
Pentucket Assessment:	\$ 794,972.66
Whittier Assessment:	\$
Capital:	\$

APPOINTMENTS:

Appointment of Beth Rose of ~~21 Elm Park~~, 792 Salem Street to the Cable TV Advisory Board through June 30, 2019.

Ms. Rose was present and addressed the Board. Her address was incorrect, so she provided the correct one.

Selectman Wood asked about her background with technology. Ms. Rose answered that her technology background is not great, however she previously served as a member of the Cable Advisory Board and feels she is

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more informed with the contract side. Selectman Wood emphasized the fact that we need to revamp our delivery of cable access. Chair O'Neil asked if she had extensive contract negotiation experience to which Ms. Rose replied she is an attorney and has some 30 years of experience and has handled negotiations during that time.

A motion was moved by Selectman Dunn and seconded by Selectman Wood to appoint Beth Rose, 792 Salem Street to the Cable TV Advisory Board through June 30, 2019. Voted 3-0-0.

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE VOTE:

- Rebecca Oldham, Town Planner to seek the Board's support on a preparedness grant opportunity. Ms. Oldham was present and addressed the Board. She is asking for the Board's support for a grant under the Ex. Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, for a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant which allows the town money to participate in a Community Resilience Building workshop where they would assess the vulnerability to natural and climate change related hazards and develop strategies and priority actions in order to build community resilience. Based upon Groveland's proximity to the Merrimack River they are considered at high risk of impacts from flooding. Once the workshop is completed the Town of Groveland will be designated an MVP community which will allow MVP action grants monies to build and prepare for the climate change related hazards. Ms. Oldham brought a letter of support for the Board to sign tonight. It should take 3-4 weeks to be notified.

A motion was moved by Selectman Wood and seconded by Selectman Dunn to authorize Chair O'Neil to sign the letter of support for the preparedness grant opportunity. Voted 3-0-0.

Chair O'Neil signed the letter.

- Shawn Murray, from MRI Consulting to present the final report on the fire department. Mr. Murray was present and addressed the Board and gave an overview of the report. MRI contracted with the town to complete a comprehensive review of the fire services in the Town. The result of the 29-page report is that it can be used as a road map for the future. There is a long list of recommendations that will not be expected to be addressed overnight, this will take planning. MRI talked with department staff, they looked at response information, budgets, practices and policies, equipment, hours of the Fire Chief, the organizational structure of the department, recruitment and retention and identified concerns from the community. Much of the research was done face to face. Looking at the response aspect, between the period of July 1, 2013 until June 30, 2017 the department averaged 572 calls a year. The EMS calls have been increasing each year, while the fire calls remain relatively steady. The operational budget was found to be like other fire departments similar in size that MRI has studied and there were no immediate concerns, there did not appear to be any overspending. Recruitment and retention have been challenging in many communities. MRI did a review of performance standards for the EMS licensing with the state and for the most part Groveland is meeting the requirements. Apparatus and equipment are in a good place. The fleet average is 14.4 years old. All in all, based on the analysis and current operations of the Groveland Fire Department there are 4 areas that are priority and should be addressed; 1. Hiring of a Fire Chief; 2. Staffing model change; 3. Facility needs assessment; 4. A comprehensive apparatus and major equipment capital plan for the next 15-20 years. MRI suggests that the Fire Department work closely with the BOS to develop a stronger relationship.

Board discussion/questions:

- Chair O'Neil: Groveland has a Strong Chief, and does he need BOS consent to rebrand his department? Mr. Murray responded that this is the interesting part of the Strong Chief, and his research has shown that it becomes confused what is the definition of a Strong Chief, he has control of personnel and equipment however, the law that gives them that control is there so there are no political issues during an emergency. This Board presents a budget for approval, they govern the daily operations and the Town should research what does that Strong Chief means. Chair O'Neil asked Mr. Murray in his opinion which one works best for Towns similar in size to Groveland, a Strong Chief or a Weak Chief? Mr. Murray responded neither it is the leadership of the Chief that sits with the Board and collaborates with them to let goals of the Fire Department be known and come to an agreement as to how the department is run. It should be a team effort. Chair O'Neil asked if MRI really feels that Groveland needs a full-time Chief. Mr. Murray

responded yes, they need more leadership and oversight. Chair O'Neil also asked about the suggestion of bringing back a 20-hour administrative position. Mr. Murray feels they need someone to keep up with paperwork, requests, updating policies, tracking of time, etc. This person will provide checks and balances and give the Chief time to do the work he needs to do. Chair O'Neil asked about the recommendation that there be a Third-Party group for the Fire Chief Search and Mr. Murray stated this was to ensure that it is a fair process. Finally, Chair O'Neil talked about MRI not recommending the town get into the Ambulance Service. Mr. Murray responded the Town would have buy one if not two ambulances to provide transports and any and all equipment associated with that and the town does not have the level of services to support this.

- Selectman Dunn: We know we need a Chief and feels the report circles back to that. Any recommendations for an appropriate salary for this person? Mr. Murray responded, it should be full time and that salary should be developed by the Board and use it as a negotiating tool. MRI did not provide any specific number but could provide some advice. Selectman Dunn asked if it is better to hire outside the town. Mr. Murray responded that it is more related to qualified experience and a demonstrated ability to lead.
- Selectman Wood: Asked about Recommendation 28 which recommends seeking formal approval to change the name of the Groveland Fire Department. Mr. Murray responded that MRI research shows there was a change to the name, however, there was no formal request to make the change and no formal adoption by the Select Board. This will avoid confusion.

Chair O'Neil asked about making this document available on the Website.

A motion was moved by Selectman Dunn and seconded by Selectman Wood to make this document available on the website in order to make it as public as possible. Voted 3-0-0.

- Cable TV Advisory Board to provide update on cable contract
Tracy Gilford, Chair of the Cable TV Advisory Board was present and addressed the BOS. He announced that at a recent meeting they did vote to go with online streaming service. Mr. Gilford referred to the franchise renewal time line that is before this Board tonight. One question Mr. Gilford had was if Town Counsel will represent the Town or would the Cable Board have to find someone. Ms. Dembkoski advised that Bill Huard the Towns' main legal representative is one of three specialized in the state to be able to negotiate cable contracts.
Chair O'Neil stated that the BOS got this timeline right before the start of this meeting and did not have time to review and would appreciate having items in advance so that the BOS could have time to review the materials.
Mr. Gilford asked the Board to have Town Counsel at the next meeting if possible, to meet with the BOS and the Cable Advisory Board. Chair O'Neil wondered why the BOS had to be in attendance and Mr. Guilford responded that the BOS input is very valuable. Ms. Dembkoski is not sure that Town Counsel is specialized in the timelines. Mr. Gilford asked the Board to have Ms. Dembkoski forward the timeline to the Attorney so he could review and offer any input. Ms. Dembkoski suggested inviting the Town Attorney to a Cable Advisory Board meeting and someone from the BOS could attend if necessary. Selectman Dunn further suggested that any questions could be sent to the Attorney along with the timeline. Mr. Gilford will provide Ms. Dembkoski with some dates so she can reach out to the Town Attorney so that he can attend a future Cable Advisory Board meeting.
Chair O'Neil asked about unclaimed funds with the State and what it is from. Mr. Gilford responded he believes this is prior to the two towns separating and cable access was run by the Groveland Georgetown Public Access Co. and the two Towns decided not to fund the organization and Groveland's contract came up and they negotiated substantially more money than what was being received by Georgetown. Groveland then voted to de-fund the public access co-op because Georgetown was not going to match the money. Half the money should be Groveland's and the other half would be Georgetown. Chair O'Neil asked for verification on this and Mr. Gilford will verify and let Ms. Dembkoski know so she can fill out the forms and send into the state to request the money. Chair O'Neil asked about monies that come back to the Town through the cable access subscriptions. He would like Town Counsel to provide clarification on the language on Article 1, Section 1.1 Definitions, paragraph P Gross Annual Revenues Defined. Is this on just

cable or all three, phone, cable and internet. Ms. Dembkoski checked her email to see what the breakdown is; she found that the statement for July – September 2018 statement shows that money received is broken down and clearly based on cable related service only. Ms. Dembkoski will get a legal interpretation.

- Review Pentucket Regional School District Regional Agreement and discussion of proposed changes Ms. Dembkoski addressed this: she gave the board a proposal in the packet and then gave them another one tonight because she found out that West Newbury is still making changes. She reviewed the changes. The Board decided to table this in case anything changes again.

A motion was moved by Selectman Wood and seconded by Selectman Dunn to table the review of the Pentucket Regional School District Regional Agreement. Voted 3-0-0.

- Review of the proposed Pines sign advertising costs
Selectman Dunn submitted a revised pricing after the last meeting and would like to get the go-ahead to take the next step.
Ms. Dembkoski reviewed the recommendation; Year one will include the cost of the sign plus year one rent and in the second year the cost of the rent increased by \$50.00 and then it would stay at that price every year until or unless a new sign is needed.

A motion was moved by Selectman Wood and seconded by Selectman Dunn to approve the proposed Pines sign advertising matrix. Voted 3-0-0.

The next step will be to develop a form for businesses to fill out and start distributing. Chair O’Neil reiterated that he wants to make sure the signs are appropriate by the Towns Standards. Something will be added to the form to reflect the Towns Code of Conduct.

VOTES OF THE BOARD:

- Minutes from January 7, 2019

A motion was moved by Chair O’Neil and seconded by Selectman Dunn to approve the minutes from January 7, 2019. Voted 3-0-0.

SELECTMEN’S TIME & REPORTS:

- **Selectman Wood:**
 1. At his request, met last week with Selectman Dunn, Ms. Dembkoski, Senator Tarr, Representative Mirra and representatives from MASS DEP to talk about Valley Screw Building on Washington Street to discuss concerns with the condition of the Building, some remnants in the building and status of the clean-up of the building and some options for moving forward with the building. Taking steps now to contact the owner and see what the options will present from there.
 2. He met with Dr. B and the facilities director to review what people are concerned with at the schools so he could get a first-hand account of what is going on. He reviewed his research and urged others to also do their own research so they can get the facts. He briefly explained what a yes/no vote would mean and the difference in choosing a renovation vs. new build.
- **Selectman Dunn:**
 1. Has a meeting with the rowing people on February 6th.
 2. Asked Chair O’Neil to add the MRI Consulting report on a future agenda.
 3. Discuss and possibly get a vote on the Pines well proposal from a previous meeting. The BOS discussed and felt permits may be necessary to draw water. The BOS liked the tremendous cost savings the town will have by going with this proposal. The BOS discussed the current money that is available and that there is \$125,000 remaining.
Mike Dempsey, Community Preservation Committee addressed the Board; the CPC is meeting this Thursday and on the agenda is to review all proposals including this one. It is possible the CPC could resolve this on Thursday and asked the BOS to have Selectman Dunn address this at the next BOS meeting. Mr. Dempsey will let Ms. Dembkoski know if the CPC votes on this in order to determine placement on the next BOS agenda.

- **Chair O'Neil:**

1. Attended the New School Building Project meeting which was televised and recorded, he encouraged everyone to watch the meeting. This is also be replayed three times a day. The information is instrumental in understanding what is going to happen with tax dollars. The meeting is two hours long.
2. Congratulated and thanked the DPW for keeping the roads clear and in great shape again.

OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OTHER ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED AT TIME OF POSTING: None

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S TIME: None

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Minutes from January 24, 2019 Special Meeting
- Minutes from January 22, 2019
- Comcast Form 500 for 2018 showing complaints on customer video service-related issues.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was moved by Selectman Wood and seconded by Selectman Dunn to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 pm. Voted 3-0-0.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be **Tuesday**, February 19, 2019 at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine T. Ingram

*** Approved on March 4, 2019 by a vote of 3-0-1 with Selectman Watson abstaining ***