

Groveland Board of Selectmen  
Meeting minutes  
April 17, 2018

Present: Chairman Michael Wood, Vice Chair Lisa Dube-Carpenter, Selectman Ed Watson, Selectman Bill Dunn and Selectman Bill O'Neil

Others present: Denise Dembkoski

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM.

**RESIDENT/PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**APPROVE WARRANTS**

*PW # 18-41 \$133,979.59*

Chairman Wood made a motion to approve payroll warrant #18-41 in the amount of \$133,979.59; seconded by Selectmen O'Neil; voted 5-0-0; warrant approved.

*BW # 18-41 \$348,062.78*

Chairman Wood made a motion to approve bill warrant #18-41 in the amount of \$348,062.78; seconded by Selectman O'Neil; voted 5-0-0; warrant approved.

**APPOINTMENTS**

Appointment of Meghan McCabe, of Haverhill to the position of Youth Services Librarian effective May 7, 2018 at a starting rate of \$18.00/hr for 37 hours per week. Subject to a successful CORI

Ms. McCabe was present to answer any questions.

Selectman Watson made a motion to appoint Meghan McCabe to the position of Youth Services Librarian effective May 7, 2018 at a starting rate of \$18.00/hr for 37 hours per week; seconded by Selectman Dunn; motion approved 5-0-0.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE**

**Fire Chief and Fire Department Discussion**

Chairman Wood indicated the Board needs to decide how they want to go about finding a new fire chief. Selectman O'Neil suggested the Board reach out to similar towns to see what the qualifications and salary are for their Fire Chief position.

Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter stated she felt they need to post an interim chief position because it is going to take several months before they are able to hire a permanent Fire Chief. The Board discussed the possibility of hiring someone currently in the fire department that is capable of serving as the interim Fire Chief. Selectman Dunn suggested there may be a retired Fire Chief that could serve as an interim. Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter felt that having a third party for the position would be better than an internal candidate. She further stated that she felt the latest letters from Interim Chief Ruchala were disingenuous when talking about an ambulance and full-time staff. Selectman O'Neil stated that they need to find someone that can consult on what they need for the department. Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter felt they need to have an interim chief to perform the duties of the Fire Chief and have a separate person provide consulting.

Chairman Wood asked Kurt Ruchala, the current interim chief, if he was willing to continue as acting chief. He indicated he would like to end April 30<sup>th</sup> but would stay on until May 30<sup>th</sup>.

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Selectman Dunn stated they needed to get the chief settled before they can begin to discuss changes to the department. Chairman Wood asked Ms. Dembkoski to contact the retired chief that is currently working in Ipswich.

Selectman Watson asked Mr. Ruchala about the letter he provided to the Board and questioned the mileage on some of the cars.

Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter stated that they should have Ms. Dembkoski draft a job description for an interim in the event the current Ipswich chief does not work out so they can post and not have to wait another two weeks.

Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter made a motion that Ms. Dembkoski draft a job description for an interim chief in the event the calls she makes do not have a satisfactory result; seconded by Selectman O'Neil; motion approved 5-0-0.

Joseph D'Amore of the Finance Committee stated there is a proposed a line item in the budget for a consultant. He also stated that there are qualified people in the department that could serve as interim. The Finance Committee was unanimous in supporting a seventeen percent increase to the Fire Department budget. Mr. D'Amore read a letter to the Board from the Finance Committee regarding their concerns about the Fire Department.

Kurt Ruchala clarified that the department did not intend for the ambulance to be implemented immediately and was just a suggestion for the future.

#### Discussion of warrant articles the Board has yet to recommend on

Ms. Dembkoski stated that there are 2 articles (Article 19 and Article 22) that Board has not made a recommendation on. The moderator will ask for a Board of Selectmen recommendation on the floor of Town Meeting. For Article 22, based on discussions with Jeff Pappas, the Finance Board is recommending under the Fire Department to replace the radio system at \$33,000 instead of \$100,000 and for the EMS vehicle they recommend \$65,000 instead of \$85,000.

Ms. Dube-Carpenter felt there is conflicting information about the vehicle. Ms. Dembkoski stated that the ambulance suggestion came out after the Finance Board made their recommendation. Chairman Wood indicated that the question was why they would buy the EMS vehicle if in a few years they were going to buy an ambulance.

Mr. Ruchala stated that squad one is not in good shape and needs to be replaced. The engine can be used as a medical response but the smaller vehicle is less costly.

Chairman Wood asked if they could approve the \$65,000 and then decide later whether to purchase a new vehicle or repurpose another vehicle. Ms. Dube-Carpenter stated the article doesn't say explicitly how it has to be replaced so they could get more information first and then decide which way to go. Selectman Dunn stated that he thought in the past that they determined they couldn't fit all the equipment in the vehicle and most of the calls are EMS. Mr. D'Amore stated that the Finance Board had a healthy debate on this issue and preferred they purchase something new instead of repurposing the chief's vehicle.

Chairman Wood indicated the radio system was reduced because they had made some repairs last year.

Selectman O'Neil stated that squad one was only used 700 miles per year on average so they are deteriorating from non-use. Mr. Ruchala stated that the vehicle goes out approximately 400 times a year.

Selectman Dunn made a motion to recommend the Board accept the Finance Board's recommendation on Article 22 of \$181,685.00; seconded by Selectman Watson; motion approved 5-0-0.

Ms. Dembkoski stated that for the CPC article they could defer to the will of town meeting but they have to take a formal vote to do so.

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Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter made a motion that the Board defer to the will of town meeting on Article 19. There was no second.

Selectman Watson made a motion for unfavorable action on Article 19; seconded by Selectman Dunn; motion approved 4-1-0. Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter voted against.

### **VOTES OF THE BOARD**

#### **Executive Session Minutes from March 5, 2018**

Selectman Watson made a motion to accept the Executive Session minutes of March 5, 2018; seconded by Selectman Dunn; minutes approved 5-0-0.

#### **Minutes from March 5, 2018**

Selectman O'Neil made a motion to approve the minutes of March 5, 2018; seconded by Selectman Watson; minutes approved 5-0-0.

#### **Minutes from March 19, 2018**

Selectman Dunn made a motion to approve the minutes of March 19, 2018; seconded by Selectman Watson; minutes approved 5-0-0.

#### **Executive Session Minutes from March 19, 2018**

Selectman Dunn made a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of March 19, 2018; seconded by Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter; minutes approved 4-0-1. Selectman O'Neil abstained.

#### **Special Meeting Minutes from March 26, 2018**

Selectman O'Neil made a motion to approve the Special Meeting minutes of March 26, 2018; seconded by Selectman Dunn; minutes approved 4-0-1; Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter abstained.

#### **Approval of the Pregnancy and Pregnancy-Related Conditions Policy**

Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter made a motion to approve the Pregnancy and Pregnancy-Related Conditions Policy; seconded by Selectman O'Neil; motion approved 5-0-0.

#### **Approval of Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Subregion 3 (Groveland, Georgetown, Boxford, Merrimac) representative; John Cashell, Town Planner from Georgetown**

Ms. Dembkoski stated they needed someone that would actively participate because Subregion 3 has been underrepresented in the past. She tried to get someone from Groveland but there was no interest. Selectman Watson requested the Board receive copies of the minutes from the meetings. Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter made a motion to approve the proposal of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Subregion 3 representative; seconded by Selectman Dunn; motion approved 5-0-0.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Selectman Dunn stated that Ms. Dembkoski gave him the business zoning plan and he will be working on it and will report back to the Board.

Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter asked about the town manager information. Ms. Dembkoski indicated that she is waiting for Joe Anderson in West Newbury to send her the focus group information.

### **SELECTMEN REPORTS**

Selectman O'Neil stated there was a meeting of the building committee where they were given some preliminary figures on the cost and will share once the cost estimate for doing nothing is done.

Ms. Dembkoski explained that currently they are proposing February 25, 2019 as the date for a Special Town Meeting and March 11, 2019 for the Special Election. Merrimac is concerned with the dates because a large number of their seniors leave for the winter. The second concern is that you cannot postpone an election if the weather is bad. The problem is the meeting and election must happen within 180 from the date of submission so deadline is mid-April. They are exploring the possibility of changing the date of submission.

Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter stated that preliminary interviews for the Superintendent will be happening next week and then they will bring forward names for the school committee to consider.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Minutes from April 2, 2018

Capital Improvement Committee revised recommendation regarding the fire department radio system request

Preliminary list of streets to be paved this year

Attorney General's response to Kathleen Prunier's Open Meeting Law complaint

### **FINANCE DIRECTOR'S TIME**

Ms. Dembkoski read the preliminary street paving list. She remind residents of the following events: A formal presentation on the Senior Center project will be on the following night (April 18), April 25<sup>th</sup> is candidates night, April 28 is the prescription drug take back day, Town Meeting is April 30 at 7:00PM, and the Town Election is May 7<sup>th</sup>. She also stated that news that is posted on the website automatically goes to the Facebook page.

Selectmen O'Neil asked if the state is going to continue with Route 97 project. Ms. Dembkoski indicated that the road commissioner decided to delay the project since he is leaving and felt it best for one person to start and finish the project since it is very large and complicated.

### **SELECTMEN'S TIME**

Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter asked for the minutes of April 2, 2018, to be revised by adding the numbers that they were relying on were from the 2010 census, add that the number stated of 696 that use the council on aging services were not all Groveland residents and also add that when asked about research in Essex County, they said they had not done any polling around that.

In response to Attorney General's response to Kathleen Prunier's Open Meeting Law complaint, Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter commented that the Board should be very cautious about hitting "reply all" on emails. Ms. Dembkoski indicated the violation was because it was a directive from the chair sent to everyone.

Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter made a motion to roll call to enter into Executive Session and not return to Open Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, §21 (a)(2) for the purpose of negotiating collective bargaining; seconded by Selectman O'Neil; Watson-yes; Dunn-yes; Wood-yes; Dube-Carpenter-yes; O'Neil- yes; motion approved 5-0-0.

The next regular meeting will be held on **Monday, April 30, 2018** at 6:30PM at the Bagnall School prior to Town Meeting.

Respectfully submitted by: Laurie Burzlaff, minutes clerk.

\*\*\*\* Unanimously Approved on 5/29/18 \*\*\*\*