

Groveland Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting Minutes
April 4, 2017

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

Absent: None

Others Present: Denise Dembkoski (Finance Director)

Recorder: Melanie Rich

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

FY18 Budget:

Departmental Budgets – Finance has included the 2% increase for union and non-union personnel. Zoning has a revolving fund; their money should be going into it and expenses paid from it. Finance felt they did not need additional money in their expensive line and supports \$4K rather than \$5K. Administrative costs should be covered in the application fee (the revolving fund); the ZBA Chairman could not explain the increase; there was no documentation. Selectman Watson asked why the cost for Repairs & Maintenance for Municipal was increased \$2K; Ms. Dembkoski said money is being spent consistently; the fire panel cost \$18K to replace, there are constant plumbing problems, painting, etc.; you can't plan for it. Selectman O'Neil asked about the Fire Dept. \$2,500 Training Expense; Ms. Dembkoski said that is to bring an instructor in. Firefighters Salary is training. Academy Training and Drill Wages have been combined. Selectman Watson said if they don't anticipate anyone going to the academy training, the cost should be decreased by \$7,500. Drill Wages can be used if someone needs to go to the academy. Ms. Kastrineli said the money is there so in the event someone new comes in, the Chief won't have to come back for more; she would not recommend taking the money away for another year. Regarding the Reserve Fund transfer, she doesn't want that to happen again; it wasn't an appropriate use for it. The Chair said the transfer was because the truck didn't pass the inspection. Ms. Kastrineli's friendly recommendation is to move money from the Communications line item to Maintenance. Chair Dunn will contact the Chief. Ms. Dembkoski said the budget has to be voted on tonight and Finance votes on it tomorrow. If something comes up, it can be changed on meeting floor as long as we stay in a balanced budget. Public Works Road Machinery Expense was increase by \$6K for repairs on the existing truck and putting a new truck off for another year. Education-Essex Tech will provide the figure in October after current enrollment. Selectman O'Neil asked if Ms. Dembkoski verified that the figures are proportionally correct; she has not recalculated them. Ms. Kastrineli said the formula is very complex; it is available on the state website. Selectman MacDonald said we should ask Greg Labrecque to make sure that the regional agreement and the input is validated to the output; get a verifiable report on how they arrived at the figure. Dr. Mulqueen, Greg Labrecque and the School Committee will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss it. Veterans' Agent Salary is down dramatically because Veterans have left the district. Library increased Staff Wages and Part-Time Wages to bring the part-time workers up to minimum wage. Selectman O'Neil asked where we stand with the struggle we have with the trust funds. Ms. Dembkoski brought management reports from the auditors and they specifically identified the Library trust funds as not being in the custody of the treasurer. She has not heard from anybody from the Library. Chair Dunn was told by one of the trustees that they contacted an attorney and the attorney supposedly found in their favor and they were going to send a letter, but one was never received. Unclassified-the \$85K for the OPEB fund was put back in the budget. The Planner position was discussed. Selectman MacDonald feels if they will be an aid to the Planning Board, it is not worth \$35K; who will the person serve; there is no job description. Chair Dunn is hoping to have the position pay for itself with grants that would be brought in. Ms. Dembkoski does have sample job descriptions if the town supports the position. Selectman Watson disagreed with the Chair and said the BOS should tell the Planner what to do.

Article 5 Budget – Page 1: The board recommends the current Finance Board Recommends. Page 2: Public Safety – Selectman MacDonald objects to automatic pay raises, not because he has any problem with the service but because a 3-year renewal contract with automatic pay raises is very rigid and restrictive and thinks the people should vote the raises annually. Ms. Dembkoski said Town Meeting cannot set salaries; they can put it in the budget, but the board sets the salary. Town Planner position: MacDonald opposed; Watson for; Dunn for; Wood for; O’Neil for. Fire Department – Chair Dunn wanted to recommend to the Chief to move the Communications line item if he needed it, but Ms. Dembkoski said he cannot do that; only Town Meeting can move line item to line item. The Public Relations person was discussed. Ms. Dembkoski said now that three departments (Police/Fire/Water & Sewer) are using the same person, she would like to see him come in and negotiate a town-wide deal for so many press releases per year. Chair Dunn feels there should be parameters. He will be asked to attend a meeting. Having no other issues with the budget, Selectman Watson Made a motion to support the grand total on Pages 1, 2, 3 & 4 under the Finance Board Recommends of \$16,329,088; Selectman Wood made a friendly amendment to refer to it as Article 5 Pages 1, 2, 3 & 4; Selectman Watson accepted the friendly amendment; Selectman O’Neil seconded; roll call vote: O’Neil yes; Wood yes; Dunn yes; Watson yes; MacDonald yes. Page 3 – The board recommends the current Finance Board Recommends. Page 4 – The board recommends the current Finance Board Recommends.

Articles 1 & 2 are Chapter 90.

Article 3 is \$900 we provide for Veterans of Foreign War for their utility costs at Veasey.

Article 4 is the Light Department’s payment in lieu of taxes.

Selectman O’Neil made a motion accept Articles 1, 2, 3 & 4 as written; Selectman Wood seconded; roll call vote: MacDonald yes; Watson yes; Dunn yes; Wood yes; O’Neil yes.

Article 6 is the Water Department.

Article 7 is the Sewer Department. Selectman Watson questioned part-time help. Ms. Dembkoski said it will be used for office coverage for temporary help when needed. The Chair said we have the same superintendent for both Water & Sewer, is it a 4% raise? Ms. Dembkoski said no, Water pays 70% of expenses; Sewer pays 30%. Salaries are split 70/30.

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Articles 6 & 7 as written; Selectman O’Neil seconded; roll call vote: O’Neil yes; Wood yes; Dunn yes; Watson yes; MacDonald yes.

Article 8 is to solidify the salaries as identified in the budget.

Article 9 is to take \$190K from the Overlay Surplus Account to help balance the budget.

Selectman Watson made a motion to accept Articles 8 & 9 as written; Selectman Wood seconded. Discussion: Selectman asked what was left in the Overlay Account, what is coming out. Ms. Dembkoski said everything up through FY15 for real estate taxes and tax title is coming out; FY16 is going into tax title. There is approximately \$300K±. We don’t need to keep money in for the prior years. Roll call vote: MacDonald yes; Watson yes; Dunn yes; Wood yes; O’Neil yes.

Article 10 is using free cash to fund the operating budget (OPEB).

Selectman Watson made a motion to accept Article 10 as written; Selectman Wood seconded. Discussion: Selectman O’Neil asked when we will get to a point of funding the budget without free cash. Ms. Dembkoski said when you get budget requests and school appropriations less than Prop 2.5. The liabilities are crippling communities. Voted 5-0-0.

Article 11 is to put \$175K into the Stabilization Fund – placed on hold.

Article 12 is to transfer \$75K to the Capital Stabilization Fund Account.

Article 13 is to transfer \$65K for the MS4 Stormwater Permit.

Article 14 is to pay towards the completion of Governor's Road.

Article 15 is for renovations to the new 32 School Street facility.

Article 16 is for the Main Street/Gardner Street project for contingencies.

Article 17 is for renovations to the new 32 School Street facility.

Article 18 is in the event they have a shortfall in the Sewer Budget.

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Articles 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 & 18 as written; Selectman Watson seconded. Discussion: Selectman O'Neil asked if Article 13 would be required under the present administration. Ms. Dembkoski said it takes effect July 1st and we have to be prepared to fund it. Selectman MacDonald asked if we could hold off contracting; she said we can appropriate it and see what is required in July. Voted 5-0-0.

Article 19 is the Capital Article. Kathy Kastrinelis made a recommendation that if the board chooses not to put something forward, she would like to have it removed and not show it was supported by Capital; Ms. Dembkoski's position is to show it has been requested. Chair Dunn discussed the letter from the Fire Chief asking to take the portable radios off and put the squad truck on; he can live without the radios, but the truck is more important. Finance didn't support the truck. The Chief asked the board to reconsider it. Because the budget is already balanced, the Chair suggested a fall Town Meeting. Selectman Watson said we need a list of all the equipment, the age, mileage and condition in order to do proper planning; Chair Dunn agreed and said we should ask Capital for it when they replace them. Selectman Watson made a motion that the Finance Director provides the equipment list for the next meeting; we want each department with the age, model, mileage and condition of the vehicles; Selectman O'Neil seconded; voted 5-0-0. Selectman MacDonald was in agreement with the Finance Board that we should strike out the squad one truck and replace \$450K if we are not going to recommend it. Chair Dunn is not comfortable with the portable radios; he thought we were only doing the truck radios. Ms. Dembkoski forwarded to the board a response from the Chief explaining why there are portable radios. They need UHF and VHF in both vehicles. Selectman MacDonald would like a clarification of "truck radios". Items 4 & 5 will be removed from the Article.

Article 20 is statutory language we are required to have. When we borrow money, the buyer of our bonds gives us premium to cover the cost of the fees to issue those bonds. In every Article that is authorized, it needs to specifically say this. It was given by Bond Counsel who said it has to be done to be in compliance.

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Articles 19 & 20 as written; Selectman MacDonald seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Article 21 is required language to enter into a lease/purchase agreement for the front end loader.

Article 22 is to change the Finance Board from 9 members to 7 members.

Selectman Watson made a motion to accept Articles 21 & 22 as written; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Article 23 is the Municipal Modernization Act changes to Revolving Funds effective FY19.

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Article 23 as written; Selectman O’Neil seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Article 24 is Veasey – \$90,000 Revolving

Article 25 is Pines Boat Ramp – \$15,000 Revolving

Article 26 is ZBA - \$10,000 – Revolving

Article 27 is Bagnall Summer Program - \$180,000 Revolving

Article 28 is Council on Aging - \$10,000 Revolving

Article 29 is the Fire Department CPR Class – \$6,000Revolving

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Articles 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29 as written; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Articles 30-35 are Community Preservation Articles. The Finance Board has chosen to support Articles 30-34; they are holding off on Article 35 waiting for additional information on the Veto itself rather than the room.

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Articles 30-35 as written; Selectman Watson seconded. Discussion: Selectman MacDonald on Article 30, \$60,500; he is not convinced the lilies will not grow back. He would like more information. Mr. Dempsey said this Article covers weed removal, planning (hiring a company to come up with a plan for the pond that will address long-term solutions on problems with the pond), and water quality and measurements in order to address some of the long-term plans for the pond. Leaving the weeds is killing the pond; the oxygen level is going down. Town Counsel brought up that CPA funds for non-CPA purchased land could not be used, but there is an exception if you are preserving a water body, such as Johnson’s Pond, by doing things like weed removal, you can use CPA funds. He asked the board to support it in its current state. Selectman MacDonald said unless the pond is 5’ or deeper you will continue to have the problem. Mr. Dempsey said if the water level is raised and we remove what is there, it should solve the problem.

Selectman O’Neil made a motion to accept Article 30 as written; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 3-2-0.

Article 31 – Selectman O’Neil made a motion to accept Article 31 as written; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Article 32 – Selectman O’Neil made a motion to accept Article 32 as written; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Article 33 – Selectman O’Neil made a motion to accept Article 33 as written; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Article 34 – Selectman O’Neil made a motion to accept Article 34 as written; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 4-1-0.

Article 35 is the Veto Article – Selectman Watson made a motion to accept Article 35 as written; Selectman Wood seconded. Discussion: Selectman MacDonald asked if it was a feasible number. Ms. Dembkoski said this would put a plan together to finish the room and bring it up to what was originally proposed and the next phase would be looking to restore the actual Veto. The Finance Board feels the priority is the Veto itself and would like a plan to see what the cost is to refurbish it to see if it was worth refurbishing the room. Voted 5-0-0.

Article 36 standard Article to appropriate money in the CPA funds to specific categories.

Article 37 is to take \$13,000 from the Conservation Fees Account for the Salary Part-Time line.

Article 38 is to take \$2,000 from the Conservation Fees Account for operating costs.

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Articles 36, 37 & 38 as written; Selectman Watson seconded. Discussion: Selectman MacDonald asked what is the part-time salary in Article 37. Ms. Dembkoski said it is for the part-time Conservation Agent. They will raise the fees to cover the cost. Voted 5-0-0.

Articles 39 & 40 – Ms. Dembkoski said the language has changed to make it legal per Town Counsel; the content has not changed.

Article 41 is the Zoning Bylaw. Town Counsel has cleared it with the Attorney General's Office that although we don't have to print the Zoning Bylaw in its entirety in the Warrant, we do have to have hard copies available at Town Meeting. Placement of the Article will be after Article 19. Selectman Wood made a motion to move the Zoning Bylaw Article 41 to Article 19; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Articles 39, 40 & 41 as written; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 5-0-0.

A hold was put on Article 11 to put \$175,000 of free cash into Stabilization. Selectman O'Neil made a motion to accept Article 11 as written; Selectman Wood seconded; voted 5-0-0.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT:

Article 1 is to sell the parcel of the former Highway garage (894 Rear) Salem Street.

Article 2 is to transfer \$30,000 from free cash to the Bagnall School Building Improvements Account for areas of security and safety.

Article 3 is to transfer \$15,000 from free cash to the Snow & Ice Removal Account.

Article 4 is the transfers previously discussed. Selectman MacDonald asked for clarification on Article 2 as to what we are at liberty to give details on regarding security improvements at the Bagnall School. Ms. Dembkoski said it is safe to say we are putting cameras in the back of the school.

Selectman Wood made a motion to accept Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles 1, 2, 3 & 4 as written; Selectman Watson seconded; voted 5-0-0.

Selectman Wood made a motion to adjourn; Selectman O'Neil seconded; voted 5-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

*** Approved on May 2, 2017 with a vote of 4-0-1, with Selectwoman Dube-Carpenter abstaining ***

