

**TOWN OF GROTON
SELECT BOARD MEETING
April 12, 2011
7:00 PM**

In Attendance: Miles Sinclair, Kyle Andrews, Christina McClay, Pamela Hamel (Administrative Assistant)

Audience members present

Miles called the meeting to order at 7:12pm.

Time was set aside at the beginning of this meeting to hear any property owners who wished to speak to the Board regarding their liability to be taxed. Hearing no comments, the Board meeting continued.

Minute Approval

Miles made a motion to accept the minutes of April 5 as written, Christina 2nd, so voted.

Updates

GrotonWind, LLC

The Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) held their deliberative sessions regarding the Groton Wind Project on last Thursday, Friday and Monday. The SEC found that the project presented no unreasonable adverse effects as listed in State Statute. They will be issuing Groton Wind LLC a permit by April 26. The order will include a requirement that the company conduct post construction bird and bat studies for three years. Groton Wind will be reviewing the project and requirements for the studies.

Old Business

Northern Pass

The Board reviewed the letters to our state representatives regarding the Northern Pass survey results. **Christina motioned to sign the Northern Pass letters, Kyle 2nd, so voted.** Miles announced that in response to public comment, Northern Pass has decided to forgo the previously proposed alternative route and attempt to use existing rights of way as much as possible. Five route segments of the alternative route have been taken off the table including the portion that would have gone through Groton. In addition, they have extended the public comment period an additional 60 days. Laurel Brown of Public Service of New Hampshire has been assigned to the project team as a community liaison. She can be contacted at 603-634-2331.

Street Lights

Christina located the six Town street lights. Two are located at the former Town Offices/Library and Town Garage, one is at the corner of North Groton Road and Sculptured Rocks Road, one is at the Spectacle Pond boat landing, one is across from the Town House and one is at the top of Halls Brook Road. She noted that there is no light at the park. Should they decide to put a flag pole there a street light could be used at that location as the flag must be lit if flown at night. The Board is not prepared to discuss this issue at this time. They would like Pam to contact Ken Martell to let him know that the Town is responsible for the light at Spectacle Pond and they believe a light should remain there. Initially Mr. Martell had inquired who was responsible for that light.

Amended Timber Tax Warrant for Upper Birch Holdings

The Administrative Assistant had made an error on a previous timber tax worksheet for Upper Birch Holdings resulting in an increase in the amount of tax due. **Kyle made a motion to sign the amended Timber Tax Warrant, Miles 2nd, so voted.**

State Fire Marshal's Request

Miles motioned to sign the letter to the State Fire Marshal, Christina 2nd, so voted.

Building Permit Request

The Fields presented the Board with a letter from Judy Hilliard granting them permission to build the addition to their mobile home. They also had a copy of the project plans for the Board. Mr. Fields said they plan to change the existing bedrooms into a living area and build larger bedrooms in the addition. He said there would not be an increased load on the current septic system, which the Department of Environmental Services (DES) said was in compliance in 2009. The Board had contacted Dick de Seve from DES. In an email Mr. de Seve stated that the property owner would have to submit plans for a new septic system as they were adding additional living space. The Board discussed the confusion over adding additional living space but no additional load to the system than is currently there. **Miles motioned to contact DES for clarification of their position in light of these facts, and upon receipt of that information to either approve or deny the permit at that time, Christina 2nd, so voted.**

New Business

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan must be updated and submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for approval. The plan expires in November 2012. However, since the approval time can take up to one year, it is recommended that the updating process begin this year. Last week the Board met with June Garneau to discuss the update. Ms. Garneau was a part of the North Country Council (NCC) team that worked on the current plan. She has now gone out on her own. The Board was impressed with her presentation and commitment to do an annual follow-up on the mitigation strategies. The fee for this is included in the update. NCC also submitted a contract for the Board's review. They do not offer the annual follow-up. FEMA provides a set amount in the form of a matching grant for this update. The Town's portion is supplied by 'in kind' services thus no money is to be raised regardless of who does the plan. **Christina made a motion to contract with June Garneau for the Hazard Mitigation Plan update, Kyle 2nd, so voted.**

Coolidge Woods Road

James Cross, who owns property on Coolidge Woods Road, contacted the Town's attorney claiming that the Board did not present the attorney with all the necessary information previously and that the Town did work on the bridge. The Board said that to best of their knowledge the Town has not done any work on that bridge. Coolidge Woods Road is class VI. They do not want the Town's attorney to take any action on this matter. If Mr. Cross wishes to discuss this he can contact the Board.

Primex Request to Supply Insurance Quote

Miles motioned to take no action on this request at this time, Kyle 2nd, so voted. The Board will look for a quote for next year's budget season.

Possible Building Permit Violation for Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

On their inventory, property owner MIT reported the addition of an 8' x 22' lean-to. The Town has no record of issuing a building permit for the project. **Kyle motioned to sign the letter to MIT regarding the possible building permit violation, Christina 2nd, so voted.**

Timber Tax Warrants

Miles made a motion to sign the Timber Tax Warrant for Green Acre Woodlands, Map 1 Lots 29 & 31, Christina 2nd, so voted.

Christina motioned to sign the Timber Tax Warrant for Green Acre Woodlands, Map 9, Lots 2, 8, & 10, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

2010 MS-5 Financial Report

After reviewing the MS-5 submitted by the Town's accountant, Mason and Rich, **Kyle motioned to sign the 2010 MS-5, Christina 2nd, so voted.**

2010 MS-60-Report of Locally Elected Auditor

Upon review of the MS-60 (local audit), the Board noticed that the auditor's had neglected to answer a few of the questions. Lou Lieto reviewed those questions along with his notes. He reported that he and Bill Jolly had inadvertently neglected to put the answers on the form as his notes showed that each had been discussed and they had come to a conclusion. He will contact Mr. Jolly to confirm and complete the document.

Brown Abatement Request

Due to the court decision regarding Victoria's Mountain Way, the Browns are requesting that the 4 lots they own on that road be reduced in value to \$5 as they are claiming that these lots are now 'land-locked'. The Board does not know if the court decision means that the Browns no longer have access. As such they had referred this matter to the Town's attorney who has offered to draft a letter of response to the Browns. **Miles made a motion to have the attorney draft a letter for the Board's review, Christina 2nd, so voted.**

Federal Surplus Property Agreement Form

In order for the Town to have access to surplus property (including desks, tables, filing cabinets, etc.) they must renew the current agreement as well as indicate who is authorized to pick up items. **Christina made a motion to sign the Surplus Property Agreement and include the Board, the Road Agent and the Administrative Assistant as authorized buyers, Kyle 2nd, so voted.**

Committee Updates

Pam Yinger announced that the Groton Historical Society is hosting a Roast Pork dinner on Saturday night beginning at 6:00pm. Cost is \$10 per plate. Entertainment will be supplied by Minnie Pearl and her granddaughter.

Miles made a motion to go into non public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (b) at 8:34pm, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

Miles motioned to return to public session at 9:08pm, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

Police Chief

Chief Pivrotto would like to hire two officers by June. He feels a full-time certified officer should start at \$15 an hour, and a part-time certified officer at \$13 an hour. He does not know who makes this decision, the Chief or the Board. Miles said that by statute the Board sets the pay but they certainly want the Chief's input.

Miles contacted the Department of Labor (DOL) regarding pay for an officer involved in the Special Operations Unit (SOU). If an officer who is being paid an hourly rate is required to go then he cannot be paid a stipend. He must get an hourly rate. If he is volunteering to attend, then he can be paid a stipend. Joe would like to have an officer from Groton attend the SOU but it would be on a voluntary basis. The stipend would help to offset mileage etc. Joe said he is an SOU man and he feels the SOU needs to become more visible to local communities. Kyle suggested that the stipend be broken down and paid as monthly installments so the officer would only be paid if he is consistently attending the SOU training. Joe is currently considering Officer EJ Thompson for this. Miles said he does not think the Town should be sending anyone to the SOU but he wants to support Joe in his efforts to build the Department. He would like Joe to prioritize whatever plans he has and if he feels that this is toward the top of his list he would support it. Joe said that initially (last year) he had written a letter to the Board stating that he did not want EJ to attend the SOU. At the time, he did not know how the two former chiefs had left this. He also did not know what authority he had as he was Interim Chief. If he did anything, he wanted to do it right, to start from scratch. Finally, he was aware of the upcoming vote to abolish

the Department so he did not want to move forward with anything. He has done some investigation into the SOU and supports it. He will look at his budget and prioritize. He is not sure how much money he can devote to this. He was thinking perhaps \$200. Kyle and Christina commented that that amount probably will not cover the gas.

The Board then reviewed the proposed parking ordinance with Joe. This ordinance will be discussed at a public hearing on May 3.

Miles made a motion to sign the Form B, Christina 2nd, so voted. This form informs Police Standards and Training that Chief Pivrotto is no longer just the Interim Chief and has been promoted to Police Chief. Joe stressed the need to have good communication between the Board and the Department. He feels that this did not take place in the past and he wants to change that.

The Board scheduled a work session for 5:30pm on Tuesday, April 19.

Kyle made a motion to adjourn at 9:36pm, Miles 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pamela Hamel
Administrative Assistant