

**Town of Groton
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2010
7:00pm**

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

Audience Members Present

Miles called the meeting to order at 7:11pm and read the appointments and announcements. He reminded residents that dog licenses expire on April 30. After 30 days, under State statute, the Board of Selectmen would sign a warrant authorizing the Animal Control Officer (ACO) to issue civil forfeiture letters to those who have not registered their dogs giving them the option to pay a \$25 penalty at the Town Hall and register their dog, or have the option to take the case to court. Between April 30 and May 30, Miles as the ACO, will be making calls to those who have not registered their dogs giving them a heads up. After that he will be looking for the Board of Selectmen to sign this warrant.

Miles made a motion to approve the April 6 minutes as written, Christina 2nd, so voted.

Old Business:

Pam clarified the FairPoint long distance plan with the Board. In order to get the 5.4 cents a minute, the Town would need to sign a one year contract. In order to get 4.8 cents a minute the Town would need to sign a three year contract. The Board feels that a three year contract is too long. **Kyle made a motion to accept and sign the one year contract, Miles 2nd, so voted.**

Pam spoke with Peter Demarco from T-Mobile concerning his building permit request. The 3 mini refrigerator size cabinets are base transmitter stations which provide power to the antennas. These cabinets would be inside a 10x20 prefab equipment shelter which sits on a slab. The slab and building would be located within the current compound. The email received from the Zoning Board (ZBA) last week does not address the equipment shelter. **Miles made a motion to table their action on the building permit and forward this additional information to the ZBA and await their response, Kyle 2nd, so voted.**

The Board would like to set up a meeting with Dave Yetman to discuss the arrangements to do some work which is commensurate with the issue caused last year when the Town was clearing the right of way along Province Road. At a meeting the prior Board had with Mr. Yetman a few months ago, they had agreed to take a look at what he was proposing once the snow had melted. The Board would like Pam to try to set up a work session with Mr. Yetman for Tuesday, April 20 at 6pm.

Before returning the vacuum Miles stopped by Sears to try out vacuums in stock. They were all pretty much the same as the current vacuum purchased. There was an Electrolux that was a little better but it cost about \$390. Kyle would like the Board to choose a spending cap and ask Judy Demers to shop around looking for something within that amount. **Christina made a motion to have Judy do some research, staying under \$300, Kyle 2nd, so voted.**

Miles made a motion to delete Jessica Hobart's name from the Meredith Village Savings Bank signature cards and sign the cards, Christina 2nd, so voted. Jessica Hobart has resigned as Treasurer effective last Wednesday (April 7). The Deputy, Elizabeth Christiansen has agreed to serve in an interim capacity while the Board locates a replacement. The Board is requesting that anyone who is interested in this position submit a letter of intent to fill the vacancy until the next election. The only thing the Board is prepared to say at this point is that some circumstances are being looked into, and when they have more information available that is

appropriate for release to the public they will make them aware. They did meet in an emergency non public session last Wednesday and accept her resignation. They would also like to make the public aware that the circumstances that are being looked into came to the attention of the Board almost two weeks ago. They had looked to have a work session on the Sunday immediately following but the meeting was only posted in one location. Therefore, they were not willing to continue with the meeting as it was not correctly posted. However, they do want the people to know that they have diligently responded to the situation.

Pam contacted Amerigas concerning the bill the Town received last week. Amerigas had billed the Town in error, therefore no money is owed.

The Board had asked the Town's Attorney to represent their interests in the Hobart Bankruptcy case. Mitchell Municipal has subcontracted another attorney to do the work and has submitted a letter of engagement for the Board's signature. **Miles made a motion to table the letter of engagement concerning the bankruptcy filing until all Board members review it, Christina 2nd, so voted.**

The Cease and Desist Order sent to Bill Robertie and Robert Sewall does not forbid all operations on the property. It does forbid any activities which result in any new boats being brought onto the property. Kyle will bring this case up at the next Planning Board meeting in an attempt to clarify what Mr. Robertie's intentions are in finishing the requirements previously given by the Planning Board.

The Board discussed the different value amount they have received for Chief White's duty weapon. Retail values range from \$375-\$425. Trade in values range from \$250-\$300. Kyle and Christina both voiced that \$300 would be a fair price. **Miles made a motion to let Chief White know that if he wants to purchase the weapon the Town will sell it for \$300, Christina 2nd, so voted.**

New Business

Kyle made a motion to sign the Timber Tax Warrant for Buddy Lane, Christina 2nd, so voted. The tax amount is \$377.11.

The Board read a letter from a concerned citizen, Brenda Merryman. Miles reported that not everything mentioned in the letter is accurate, it is her perception. Ms. Merryman addressed 4 points:

1. She feels the Road Agent has not been doing his job as the roads are a mess and the crews haven't been seen working. The Board explained that because they were dealing with a potential cash flow problem they had asked Department Heads to only spend the money that needed to be spent and hold off on whatever could be held off on. That was not intended to defer needed maintenance. They do not know if Glen misinterpreted that. They now agree that normal operations should resume. **Miles made a motion to draft a memo to Department Heads letting them know that the Board is comfortable that there are sufficient funds to pay for normal operations and if there is something that can wait to be purchased or performed it still may be best to do that, Kyle 2nd, so voted.**
2. Ms. Merryman asserted that information about the number of hours employees who receive medical benefits had worked was requested by former Selectman Mike Brogna and not provided. The Board feels there is a misunderstanding with this as well. If they are now asking how many hours an employee has worked this is public information and available.
3. Ms. Merryman would like to know why the Administrative Assistant is racking up a lot of comp time as it costs the Town additional money and most issues can be dealt with at Selectmen's meetings or other appropriate times. Mike Brogna had advocated that this position be salaried, and wanted to increase her responsibilities at the same level of pay. The Board had decided to leave the position as it is now and revisit it if necessary. Comp time does not cost the Town more money. It actually saves the Town money as Pam accrues time off instead of overtime pay. The Board has been trying to keep her comp

time under control. It is not being accrued needlessly, and there are some things that have to be addressed outside of normal hours.

4. Ms. Merryman asked why it takes 2, 3 and sometimes 4 weeks before minutes are posted on the web. Pam responded by saying that minutes are never posted until they are approved which is always at least a week out. They are usually posted by the Friday following approval, although there have been times when they are not posted that quickly. Miles said that State statute requires that the minutes be available within 5 business days. However, it does not require that they be posted on the web. This is a courtesy.

The Board would like Pam to draft a letter of response to Ms. Merryman for next week.

The Board took a brief recess in order for the Administrative Assistant to assist the Deputy Treasurer.

Miles reconvened the meeting at 8:29pm.

Miles made a motion to sign the building permit and release of liability for Gordon Coursey, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

Vickie Kimball, Chairperson of the Groton Recreation Committee (GRC), asked the Board to approve an \$1,165 expenditure from the Groton Recreation Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a set of tip and roll bleachers for the park. The ball field is currently being used by a little league group as well as families and the GRC is in agreement that these bleachers will be a great addition to the park. She assured the Board that they would be securely anchored to the ground. Currently, the Capital Reserve Fund has over \$1,900 in it. **Kyle made a motion to approve the GRC's request for bleachers, Miles 2nd, so voted.**

Miles made a motion to approve the building permit for Girourd, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

Miles made a motion to sign the Professional Service Agreement with the Junkyard Dog, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

Miles made a motion to sign the MS-5 committal letter, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

Last year Bill Jolly had submitted a letter to the Board of Selectmen giving them notice that he did not want any Town official of any sort on his property without prior written permission. The Town's Assessor visited the property this week. Afterward, in a phone conversation, Mr. Jolly let Miles know that he is 'vigilant' about his privacy and before anyone comes onto his property he wants a phone call. The Assessor had not seen the No Trespassing sign just as the Animal Control Officer had not seen it last year. Mr. Jolly's sign is not conspicuous. The Assessing Company's policy is to try to make contact at the door on property that is posted. If they are unable, they will not take any measurements nor leave a card. To try to make special arrangements to contact all those property owners who post their land would increase costs. However, if the Board requests that they contact certain property owners first they will do that. There is another property owner in town who has also insisted on being contacted before anyone comes onto the property. Pam has put this note on the property owner's tax card and she can add a similar note to Mr. Jolly's card. Miles would like to provide a copy of Mr. Jolly's letter to the Police Department, Road Agent, Health Officer and any other Town official to let them know of Mr. Jolly's wishes that he be contacted first. **Miles made a motion to contact Avitar and make them aware of the 2 property owners that they need to establish contact with before going on the property, Kyle 2nd, so voted.**

Miles read a letter of resignation from Deputy Town Clerk Rachelle Hamel. **Miles made a motion to accept the letter of resignation and thank her for her service for the Town, Christina 2nd, so voted.** Miles asked

Pam to touch base with Laura Hauser to determine if she wants the position filled. If so, they would look to follow the same hiring procedures.

The Board received a letter regarding whether or not the Town wishes to intervene as a party in the Groton Wind LLC application for Site and Facility docket. **Miles made a motion to refer the letter to the Town's Attorney to clarify this issue, Kyle 2nd, so voted.**

Pam Yinger reminded the audience of the Groton Historical Society benefit dinner and program on Saturday evening.

Lewis Albert wanted to know why the details concerning last year's paving work were not reported in the Town's Annual Report. Normally this information is not listed in the Report but is available at the Selectmen's Office. GMI is the company that did the paving work.

Miles made a motion to adjourn at 9:35pm, Kyle 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Hamel
Administrative Assistant