

# APPROVED

## Town of Grantham - Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes March 28, 2012

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 4:00pm on Wednesday, March 28, 2012 by Chairman Warren Kimball. The meeting was held in the Grantham Town Building, Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at 300 Route 10 South, Grantham, NH.

Present: Chairman Warren Kimball; Selectman Constance Jones; Selectman Ken Story; Town Administrator Becky Merrow; Administrative Assistant Melissa White; Louise Stark; Conservation Commission Alternate Dave Wood; Michael Whipple; Conservation Commission Member Kristina Burgard; Athletics Director Marsha Goggin; Moderator Victoria Smith; Assistant Moderator Lorie McClory; Supervisors of the Checklist Donna Stamper, Sandy Noordsy and Jane Taylor; Zoning Board Chair Conrad Frey; UVLSRPC Executive Director Christine Walker; Town Clerk/Tax Collector Rita Friedman; Laurie Field

### ADMINISTRATIVE

#### *For Approval/Signature - APPROVED*

- ✓ 2011 Property Tax Liens
- ✓ Building Permits:
  - a. M/L 212-006-000; 124 Miller Pond Road – shed
  - b. M/L 222-036-000; 8 Azure Brae - generator
- ✓ Property Tax Refunds (due to overpayment):
  - a. M/L 225-053-020; 20 Niblick Lane - \$40.95
  - b. M/L 215-061-035; 35 Old Beach Circle – \$32.30
  - c. M/L 222-118-000; 26 Slalom Drive - \$16.76

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- ✓ Chairman Kimball asked if there were any changes regular meeting minutes of March 14, 2012. Administrative Assistant White requested amending the Administrative section to include an abatement for M/L 241-003; Croydon Town Line for \$8.28. A motion was made by Selectman Jones to approve the March 14, 2012 minutes as amended; seconded by Selectman Story. *Unanimously approved.*

### APPEARANCES:

- Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) Executive Director Christine Walker: Ms. Walker discussed the Housing Needs Assessment the Commission recently completed. The major findings were:

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- 48% of the housing units in our region will be headed by those age 65 and older between now and 2030.
- Reduction in population for ages 25 – 34 which are the traditional first-time home buyers.
- Major job growth is in the Hanover and Lebanon area but the housing is distributed throughout our region and what that means for commuting and future patterns for growth in our region.
- Median home prices in 2010 is drastically different throughout the region with the Lyme/Hanover/Lebanon area being \$248,000 with the Claremont area being around \$125,000 and the New London somewhere between \$125,000 - \$248,000.

Walker also informed that over the last couple of years there has been a large initiative state-wide to look at how they can create their regional plan but has lacked the funding. Walker explained the commission was successful in securing a HUD grant to accomplish this and they will be looking for Grantham to participate in the regional plan through a memo of understanding.

Kimball asked if the rising fuel costs will have an impact on housing. Walker said the savings in transportation costs by moving closer to the job center doesn't buy them the equivalent of housing yet.

Selectman Story said he would continue to support the efforts of UVLSRPC and would want Grantham to be involved in anything that starts to develop here.

Selectman Jones asked where they get their funding from. Walker stated they have a budget of about one million dollars with most of it coming from federal sources that are funneled through state agencies. One percent comes from the Office of Energy and Planning, about ten percent (approximately \$100,000) comes from municipal dues. There are also contracts with non-profits. A grant from Healthy New Hampshire was received to look at, possibly the first in the nation "Safe Routes to Play" Program in the City of Lebanon to look at all the different ways children can get from one place to another.

- Resident Louise Stark, Miller Pond Road: Ms. Stark discussed her concerns with Miller Pond Road and the issue of her not receiving any services (mail, emergency services, bus) which stopped on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Stark recalled back in May 2009 a "test spot" of filter fabric was done on the lower end of the road according to the engineer's recommendation and that it made a significant difference to the road. Stark said even though further up the road wasn't passable, that portion wasn't affected at all this spring.

Stark asked what needs to be done for the town to continue the same process for the rest of the road. Stark said she doesn't want the road paved; she just wants a passable road.

Kimball said he will meet with the Highway Department to see what their schedule is to extend the filter fabric.

Stark asked if it's the decision of the Highway Department or if it is the Board's decision. Kimball said that it's the town's decision; that they would formulate how far they would go and how much it would cost and add it as a warrant article for Town Meeting.

Stark asked why this project has not continued since 2009. Kimball said he didn't know why the project hasn't continued.

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Stark recalled a petition that was distributed from another resident of Miller Pond Road that was very fearful it would be paved. Jones said it was on the paving schedule but many residents made it known they did not want the road paved.

Jones said in 2009 the first hill is where the filter fabric was installed and then the ditching was done according to the engineer's recommendations. Jones went on to say that "mud season's 2010 & 2011 wasn't that bad and everyone was happy; that this year is very different where roads that were good before were not so good this year because of the way "Mother Nature had her meltdown". Jones said there has been a lot of material added to the dirt roads this year.

Jones said the Board will talk with the Road Agent and express the concern's Stark has and see if the road can be fixed or portions of it as a way to keep the project moving.

Stark felt that as a taxpayer she has a right to a passable road and emergency services.

Jones would like to see a traffic count on the road because it is so heavily used.

Michael Whipple felt that most taxpayers would want the town to prioritize repairs of the worst roads before resurfacing paved road.

- Resident Michael Whipple, Stocker Pond Road: Mr. Whipple asked if non-conforming lots taken by tax lien had ever been considered for conservation. Conservation member Kristina Burgard stated the commission is reviewing those properties for their conservation values and plan to make recommendations after the review.

Whipple asked about having a crosswalk on Route 10 from the church to the library. Kimball informed the State will only allow crosswalks if there are sidewalks. Whipple asked if a pedestrian sign could be installed. Jones said she would check with the State to see if the pedestrian sign would be allowed.

## CORRESPONDENCE

- Donald Stowell: A letter was received from Donald Stowell requesting the additional penalties calculated on his taxes be waived due to a crossover of communication with receiving his payment and tax lien notices being sent. Merrow said Town Clerk/Tax Collector Friedman supports this request. A motion was made by Selectman Jones to approved waiving the penalty charges; seconded by Selectman Story. ***Unanimously approved.***
- Conservation Commission Town Forest Maintenance Fund: A letter was received from the Conservation Commission requesting \$12,963.34 be withdrawn from the Conservation Fund and put into a newly created PDIP account named "Town Forest Maintenance Fund" and have the Town Treasurer track it.

Conservation Member Kristina Burgard stated that when the Town Forest and Town Forest Maintenance Fund was adopted per the RSA it should be a special fund and not comingled. The Commission is trying to take the last balance of which they are aware of and take it out of the Conservation Fund and put it into its own PDIP account. Burgard said there have also been some forestry revenue this year that totals \$2,177.88 that also need to be moved into the Town Forest Maintenance Fund for a grand total of \$15,141.22.

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Burgard stated the Commission is going to be maintaining their own treasury records to make sure there is a cross checks of the town accounts and requested "view only" access to the commission's bank account. The Selectmen approved this request.

A motion was made by Selectman Story to open a new PDIP bank account named "Town Forest Maintenance Fund" and to transfer \$15,141.22 into this account from the PDIP Conservation Fund account; seconded by Selectman Jones. *Unanimously approved.*

- UVLSRPC: A notice was received from UVLSRPC informing of a public forum of the state of the State's transportation system to be held on April 10, 2012 at 5pm at the Claremont Savings Bank Community Room.
- Rachel Ruppel, UVLSRPC: An email was received from Rachel Ruppel of the UVLSRPC informing of a meeting on March 29, 2012 at 6pm in Canaan to discuss the idea of a Quabbin to Cardigan trail.

## OLD BUSINESS

- 49 Hemlock Lane Clean-up Efforts: No new information.
- Ambulance Study: Merrow informed she, Administrative Assistant White and Fire Chief Fountain met with the Lebanon Fire Chief Chris Christopolous to discuss the possibility of Lebanon providing ambulance service to Grantham. The cost would be \$280 per run with no other special funds or fees associated. Based on last year's runs of 120 the cost be approximately \$38,000.

New London Hospital is looking to charge a \$15 per capita fee. Grantham's population is 2,985 which would make the annual fee \$45,000 not including the other funds: vehicle replacement fund, administrative service oversight fund etc.

Merrow said it appears the payment made this year was for services provided from 2009 – 2010 so if the switch is made two entities would have to be paid in one year.

There is another meeting on April 3, 2012 at 4pm at New London Hospital to review the draft agreement with New London Ambulance.

Merrow said the transparency she has seen from Lebanon makes her lean toward going with them and that the runs times would be about the same with the level of care being as good or better with a paramedic on nearly every run.

- Back-up System for Town Archives Computer: No update.
- Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) – ETAP Program: Merrow said she has received a proposal from ETAP for the vapor barriers. Kimball will contact a couple contractors for a bid.
- Recreation Park Development: Merrow said she has received a tentative date schedule for bidding from TF Moran.

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## NEW BUSINESS

- Conservation Commission Appointments:
  - Lindsey Dixon: A motion was made by Selectman Jones, seconded by Selectman Story to appoint Lindsey Dixon as a member of the Conservation Commission. *Unanimously approved.*
  - Richard Hocker: A motion was made by Selectman Story, seconded by Selectman Jones to appoint Richard Hocker as a member of the Conservation Commission. *Unanimously approved.*
  - David Wood: A motion was made by Selectman Jones, seconded by Selectman Story to appoint David Wood as an alternate member of the Conservation Commission. *Unanimously approved.*
- Perambulation: An email was received from Conservation Chair Richard Hocker informing the perambulation needs to be done this year. Chairman Kimball said the board would like to have the commission do this and that he (Kimball) would be happy to go.
- Veteran's Credit List: Merrow informed she received a request from the American Legion for a list of those receiving the Veteran's credit and stated that she checked with the Town of Hanover and they say it is public information because it is on the warrant.
- Intent to Cut; M/L 211-070-000 - Miller Pond Road: Merrow said she received an Intent to Cut from Karyn Miner & Douglas Eisentraut. The Board approved the Intent to Cut with the condition a \$1,000 irrevocable letter of credit be obtained first. The land owners will be reminded the "letter of credit" does not give them permission to exceed the posted weight limit on the roads.

## DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Athletics Update:
  - Soccer: Over 150 children participated forming one kindergarten team, three 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade teams, two 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade teams, and two 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade teams. Due to the Upper Valley Recreation Association being unorganized with the scheduling and officiating, Director Googins will look to rejoin the Merrimack Valley Soccer League in the fall.
  - Basketball: One kindergarten group, one boys and one girls 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade group, two 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade girls teams, two 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade boys teams, one 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade girls team and one 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade boys team. The "Basketball Officiating Committee" was very helpful and produced plenty of referees for the games.
  - Baseball: Two t-ball teams, three rookie teams, two minor teams and one majors team. Opening day for the major's team will be April 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - Softball: There was not enough interest in softball this year. The three girls at the 12U level were released to play in Lebanon this year and those at the 10U level opted to play minors baseball.

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- Summer Events:
  - Looking to introduce “Frisbee golf” which would be open to all ages.
  - Adult Softball is being organized by David Armstrong.
  - Looking to offer a summer camp and clinics through the New Hampshire Premier Soccer Academy.
- Moderator Victoria Smith: There was discussion regarding ways to improve Town Meeting for next year. Moderator Smith felt:
  - The budget hearing should have the Trustees of the Trust Funds Report as well as a Bob Lewis if possible.
  - The sound system should be fixed. White said she has fixed the wireless microphone problem. This will be tested beforehand to ensure sound quality. Selectman Jones would like to have someone assigned to the microphone so when a voter wants to speak, the person assigned to the microphone can take it to the voter. Town Clerk/Tax Collector Rita Friedman suggested having the person in charge of the microphone stand in the front and when a voter wants to speak, they can walk to the front to receive the microphone. The Selectmen felt this was a good idea.
  - Town Report was difficult to read and a bigger font should be used. If page numbers are left off again it should be returned to the printer.
  - Find a better solution to separate the children from the meeting. Smith suggested utilizing the Parent Teacher Group for babysitting and activities in a separate area.
  - Filling the front seats first and the back area can be adjusted as needed worked well this year.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Rita Friedman felt that having a bifurcated meeting was a good idea but keep it at Town Hall. Smith reminded that a bifurcated meeting would have to be on the ballot at Town Meeting next year.

Assistant Moderator Lorie McClory felt:

- Town meeting should be held at the Grantham Village School gymnasium to create a more community feeling.
- The Library should have more copies of the Town Report; this year they only had about 12 copies.
- The Board of Selectmen should be answering the questions rather than department heads. Selectman Story said the Selectmen are not the experts especially when the questions pertain to equipment.

Chairman Kimball said the board is looking for ways to get more people to attend town meeting. Lorie McClory suggested using the town’s email list or use Survey Monkey survey by email. White said an online poll could possibly be set up through the town’s website.

David Wood asked what information would not be available if town meeting was held in the school. Kimball said several trips are made each year to gather the paperwork and supplies needed. Friedman said the Supervisors of the Checklist have to check the voter registration files when questions arise.

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Zoning Board Chair Conrad Frey would like to find a way to limit the noise of the people in the back and stated he would like to see more information explaining the budget increases/decreases.

Frey also felt, especially with the article on the police cruiser, that people vote emotionally rather than rationally and would like to see a long range capital replacement plan, approximately ten years that shows when and why each car needs to be replaced. Frey said he is willing to work with Police Chief Madore on this.

There was much discussion regarding the balances in the Capital Reserve Funds. Burgard explained the balances in the town report are almost a year old; that if there was a way to report actual balances as of town meeting and encumbrances it would show residents what is actually still available.

David Wood said, as a newcomer, he would like to see the presentation expanded to better understand the numbers.

Smith requested the Board seek more input before the survey is sent out.

➤ Transfer Station – February Report:

Solid Waste - 6 runs; 58.42 tons

Construction Demolition Debris - 4 Runs; 15.41 tons

Glass - 1 load; 7.31 tons - Expense \$168.13

Tires - 2 loads; 7.66 tons - Expense \$880.90

Light Iron - 1 Load; 3.74 tons - Revenue \$823.04

Aluminum - 1 load 1800 lbs plus batteries - Revenue \$844.80

Fibers - Mixed Loose (Paper) - 2 Loads; 7.55 tons

Revenue \$490.75

Expense \$500

Comingle - w/oglass - (Plastic) 2 loads 1.23 tons

Revenue \$0.00

Expense \$21.53

Total Tonnage of Material taken away 101.32 tons

Tickets collected at Transfer Station \$855

Total Revenue from recycling \$2,158.59

Total Expenses from recycling \$1,570.56

Net Expense from recycling \$588.03

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- Trustees of the Trust Funds – 2011 and 2012 Capital Reserve Fund Activity Report: The 2011 and 2012 Capital Reserve Fund Activity Report was reviewed.

## OTHER

David Wood asked if the confusion at Town Meeting regarding the Land Preservation Capital Reserve Fund had been resolved. Merrow said that last year there was a warrant article to put money into that fund which wasn't done until 2012. Merrow explained that when the land was purchased, all transactions go through the general fund and then a request is made to withdraw the money from the Capital Reserve Fund to reimburse the general fund.

Michael Whipple expressed his concern over releasing a list of those receiving the Veteran's Credit and asked:

- What information is on the list?
- Is there a policy on who the list is given to?
- Privacy issues should be addressed.
- Are their guidelines that have been looked at?
- Are the individual's consent obtained before the list is given out?

White explained the credits are listed on the warrant which is public information. Whipple asked if the list can be easily tailored and broken down. White said yes.

Merrow said under RSA 91:A the grand list and any credits or exemptions are public information; that if the list is something that can be readily prepared the town is required to do so.

Whipple felt that the town-owned lots should be offered to abutters first as a way to create more green space. Kimball said, referring to the parcel at 49 Hemlock Lane, the road to that parcel is private; that the town doesn't maintain it.

Whipple asked if the Hastings Lot, off Leavitt Hill Road that was recently purchased and conserved is public property. Kimball said yes. Whipple asked if Leavitt Hill Road will be public or continued to be barred. Kimball said the Board is still working to find out the status of that road. Merrow said that only the Supreme Court can decide the status of a road. Whipple asked if the public can use that road now. Merrow said the issue is if it was discontinued subject to gates and bars or simply just discontinued; that the actual language has not been found. Merrow explained if it was discontinued subject to gates and bars then it still remains a town road with anyone being able to access it. If it was just discontinued then the road is split down the middle and the adjacent property owners own it with no public access.

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## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Selectman Story moved to adjourn, seconded by Chairman Kimball; ***by majority vote, the Board adjourned at 6:10pm.***

The next Selectmen's Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 11, 2012** at 5pm in the Grantham Town Building; Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at 300 Route 10 South, Grantham, NH.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*melissa m. white*

*Melissa M. White  
Administrative Assistant*