



TOWN OF GRAFTON
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
February 16, 2016
Municipal Center, Conference Room A
7:00 p.m.

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CALL TO ORDER

A regular Board of Selectmen meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM. Present: Craig Dauphinais, Bruce Spinney, Dennis Flynn, Doug Willardson and Laura St.John-Dupuis
Absent: Jennifer Thomas, Brook Padgett and Tim McInerney.

Announcement

Mr. Dauphinais stated that the agenda item for One Grafton Common, including the Boulevard. This topic will not be discussed tonight and the item will be continued.

Representative David Muradian- Budget Update

Representative Muradian addressed the Board stating that the budget was released January 27th and will provide some information.

Representative Muradian also thanked all of the members of the Select Board and the residents of Grafton for their generosity for the coat drive in December, over 500 coats were brought in and disbursed to local schools and the DCF office in Whitinsville.

Representative Muradian provided some specifics for Grafton under the Governor's budget proposal.

- Chapter 70 will come in at \$10,714,830 an increase of \$80,135.
- Unrestricted Government Aid (UGA) comes in a \$1,503,368 an increase of \$61,980.
- Chapter 90 is forthcoming. The Governor put forth a proposal asking for \$200M subject to legislature and appropriation.

Rep. Muradian stated that he had asked for town specific requests from Town Administrators in his district that he will advocate for.

Looking at Grafton, Mr. Muradian is requesting quite a bit that deals with schools.

- Millbury Street Elementary School - side walk repair.
- Grafton Middle School -refrigerator compressor
- North Street Elementary -School sidewalk repairs.
- Rep. Muradian stated that a sizeable deposit to go into to State Stabilization fund over \$200M
- An increase in unrestricted local aid by 4.3%
- Seeking to authorize \$50M for the small bridge repair program. This will be for bridges that span 10 – 20 feet
- \$72M increase to chapter 70
- \$18.6M quality Kindergarten, tuition free all day
- \$5.6m development of next generation MCAS
- \$938M for funding to DCF, built upon from FY13 a 26% increase

Moving forward past the budget there is a municipal modernization bill, to help cut through red tape, allowing municipalities to work on their pressing items.

Mr. Dauphinais asked about the Chapter 70 funding. An \$80,000 increase is less than 1% for Grafton. Does Rep. Muradian think that number is going to stay there? Rep. Muradian stated it is difficult to say, because they need to see the House and Senate version. Typically, there tends to be modest increases in the house and senate version.

Mr. Flynn stated he is quite concerned about the Governor putting emphasis on Charter Schools at the expense of public education. Mr. Flynn asked what Rep. Muradian feels about this. Mr. Flynn further stated that he feels that money for Charter Schools should come out of other places instead of Chapter 70 monies. Rep. Muradian stated that he is a supporter of charter schools under the right circumstances and has concerns if we are taking money from public schools.

Scanlon Audit- Tom Scanlon

Mr. Willardson introduced Mr. Tom Scanlon of Scanlon and Associates. Mr. Scanlon addressed the Board and introduced audit manager Mr. Jeff Gendron. Mr. Scanlon provided the following information and answer questions. Mr. Scanlon stated there are three reports.

- The audit went very well as it has the last 2 years and received an unmodified opinion which is the best opinion you can get. Financial reporting is in excellent shape allowing a better bond rating in the market.
- The Town reserves are in real good shape. \$2.4M free cash: This comes from approx. \$1M from the year before of unused free cash .Generated \$252K on local receipts. Motor Vehicle excise and other receipts are right on target. \$515K in turn back. from appropriations, \$275K sales tax foreclosure, a one-time event.

Mr. Willardson stated that a lot of free cash gets turned back from unused salaries such as vacant positions. Mr. Spinney asked if turn back, \$400k is positions we decided not

to full. Mr. Willardson stated they were vacant for about two months while we were looking for the positions to be filled. Mr. Scanlon stated when using free cash for operations you are rolling the dice.

Mr. Spinney the total picture is that \$1M we are rolling at the end of the year a comfortable number. Mr. Scanlon stated that he encourages leaving it in free cash or putting it in stabilization. Mr. Scanlon stated Stabilization has \$3.3M and does not include road stabilization \$1.5M. Mr. Spinney is there a certain point we shouldn't be allocating that amount of money. Mr. Scanlon stated it is sound financial practice to invest into the Town's infrastructure. Mr. Spinney asked if we ask the town to set aside money for more infrastructures does that change anything. Mr. Scanlon this is very sound practice and is glad that the Town voted an override; it did a lot for the Town.

OPEB: statement and net position which recognizes your liabilities.

OPEB obligations are \$16.8M the Town adopted an OPEB trust. Mr. Scanlon encourages putting more in there. OPEB is a very down the road thinking it's not short term. The Town made a promise to pay for the future cost of retiree's Health insurance. Any retiree that retires will be paid out of the trust. Mr. Dauphinais asked if that was just health insurance. Mr. Scanlon stated yes.

Mr. Scanlon stated that the goal is that in 2032 retirement will be funded and that piece will drop off in retirement assessment. Mr. Willardson stated we currently fund in the operating budget every year.

Mr. Spinney asked if there are savings vehicles for OPEB. Mr. Scanlon said no. Certain things let you be more aggressive in your investments. There has to be away for funds to come from the tax rate.

Mr. Spinney stated that it's going to hurt when we get there. Mr. Scanlon, more people are looking at the benefit side of it as the Town made the promise of 50% of retiree's health insurance. Mr. Willardson stated we have talked to state delegation perhaps creating some sort of mechanism like the Worcester retirement system. They are allowed to invest in slightly more effective ways. We are trying to get a means to do that with OPEB. Other communities take what is left over from health insurance appropriation and put it into the OPEB trust at the end of the year. We budget 5% for our premium increase and any overages we can put into OPEB.

Mr. Dauphinais stated that the pension liability is \$17M; Mr. Willardson stated that Worcester retirement charges us a liability; they gave us an assessment and that increased 8%.

Mr. Spinney if we find a vehicle that allows us to invest a little better than our normal stabilization account, does that count towards our bond rating. Mr. Scanlon you will get a better discount rate that will lower all of these numbers. Mr. Spinney asked how much wiggle room we have with the money we currently have setting aside. Mr. Scanlon it will

count towards your reserves and there is a formula. You will get credit for it and it will be reflected in the bond rating.

Mr. Scanlon stated that the number one asset is property taxes that are the main revenue source. Grafton's collection rate is 98.4% amount committed divided by amount collected is very strong and stated that we have done very well over the last 2 years and are pretty sound in that department.

Mr. Flynn stated that our number one asset is people. We need to be market competitive. It is important we attract and hold onto the best that is out there. Mr. Scanlon agreed. Mr. Flynn we want to maintain good people and provide good benefits to retain good people.

Mr. Scanlon commented regarding the management letter and recommends the Town established a Finance Director Position and that there are grants out there. A Finance Director position would be a benefit to Grafton. Mr. Scanlon encourages the Town to seriously look at this.

Mr. Dauphinais asked Mr. Scanlon if this would this be a shared position with the Town of Grafton and School Department. Mr. Scanlon stated that the Town could look at it. He has stated that he has seen it work and not work. Mr. Flynn stated the school does not have a finance director. Mr. Flynn stated that Mr. Scanlon is talking about a six figure position. Mr. Scanlon stated yes and the Town would have to feel out how a shared position would work. He feels that one person and point of contact would be beneficial and that he wasn't thinking of merging school when writing the management letter. If there are any more questions, feel free to contact Mr. Scanlon

Mr. Dauphinais asked if other towns are growing human resources. Mr. Scanlon stated that human resource positions are coming around. Longmeadow restructured everything and it worked well.

Mr. Scanlon stated as part of the budget the town builds indirect costs into the sewer fund, the retirement assessment piece is not part of that and feels the Town should look at that retirement assessment as a true cost of the sewer enterprise. Mr. Willardson stated that we did increase for FY17 budget based on Scanlon's recommendation.

Bank reconciliations, had some older items that had not been dealt with since audit field work. The Town is very well managed and takes care of things.

Mr. Scanlon stated the Town of Grafton has sound financial reporting and the employees do what they say they are doing and the Town should be proud.

Mr. Dauphinais thanked Jessica Gomez for all of her hard work.

One Grafton Common Update (Including Boulevard) – Andy Deschenes

This item was passed over

Pole Petition – Discovery Drive

Mr. Spinney read the legal notice. Mr. Spinney made a motion to open the public hearing, Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Matt Eustis, 20 Columbia Street, North Attleboro of National Grid was introduced to the Board. Mr. Willardson stated that this pole installation request is because Tufts is putting in a solar field. They need this pole to hold the equipment.

Mr. Spinney made a motion to close the public hearing, Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Spinney made a motion to approve the pole petition for Discovery Drive. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Appointment of Nina Whiting -Council on Aging

Mr. Spinney made a motion to appoint Nina Whiting to the Council on Aging Board. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Vote to Approve Grafton Grill – Liquor License

Mr. Spinney read the public hearing notice. Mr. Spinney made a motion to approve the Liquor License for Grafton Grill. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Spinney made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Spinney made a motion to grant a Liquor License and a Common Victualler License to the Grafton Grill. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Dauphinais stated addressed Mr. & Mrs. Belfiore stating that Grafton takes serving minor seriously and that the Town runs sting operations and that the Board does not want to see Mr. & Mrs. Belfiore back here under those circumstances.

Vote to Approve Grafton Inn – Transfer of Liquor License & Pledge of Stock

Mr. Spinney read the public hearing notice for the Grafton Inn

Mr. Spinney made a motion to open the public hearing. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Attorney Henry Lane, representing the Grafton Inn addressed the Board stating that this request is to transfer to an LLC and to pledge the Liquor License to the bank.

Mr. Flynn made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Spinney seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Spinney made a motion to approve the Grafton Inn Transfer of Liquor License and Pledge of Stock. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Vote to Sign Scanlon Contract

Mr. Spinney made a motion to sign the Scanlon contract for a three year term. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

Vote to Sign – Cable Oversight Committee - Memorandum of Understanding

Mr. Spinney made a motion to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Cable Oversight Committee in the amount \$1,200 for a period of 10 years. Mr. Dauphinais seconded. Mr. Flynn stated that he would like to change the contract to 3 years and not for 10 years. Mr. Spinney withdrew his motion.

Mr. Dauphinais made a motion to sign the Memorandum of Understanding and to lock the Cable Oversight Committee for 5 years with an escalator of 2.5% each year after the first 5 years. Mr. Spinney seconded. All were in favor.

Vote to Sign Fin & Feather Sports Contract for Winter and Spring Session

Mr. Spinney made a motion to sign the Fin & Feather Sports Contract. Mr. Flynn seconded all were in favor. 2nd Mr. Flynn all were in favor

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Mr. Flynn stated that the DPW Building Meeting is tomorrow.

TA REPORTS

Town meeting approved for an architect for the Library, in the process of putting together an RFP.

CORRESPONDENCE

Jim Gallagher – Traffic Concerns

Mr. Dauphinais introduced Mr. Gallagher, stating that he asked to be on the agenda to talk about traffic concerns.

Mr. Gallagher provided the Board will some information regarding the reason for his request to speak to the Board and thanked the Board for providing him with time.

Mr. Gallagher stated that he is here to talk about the proposed Medical Marijuana Dispensary facility in his neighborhood.

Mr. Gallagher stated he is concerned about traffic and makes two request of the Town.

1. Review the proposed site as a suitable location; it cannot be located in a radius of 500ft where children congregate. Mr. Gallagher stated that he has discovered 5 other locations that would be within 500ft. and suspect this has not been vetted at the time of choosing this location.
2. Requests an independent traffic study to be done to deal with the proposed facility.

Mr. Gallagher stated there are 3 dispensaries in Worcester County and his argument is the traffic. There can be creation of an additional lane on 122, a traffic light, signage restricting parking impediments that block the line of vision from Hollywood Drive, the painting of crosswalks and curbs. There are pre existing issues; an increase of drivers to and from will exacerbate an already difficult situation. A traffic study needs to be done. This is a nonprofit organization and the town will not receive compensation. This needs to be address now.

Mr. Flynn stated he felt this was very well done and the one thing he didn't hit on was a new location. Mr. Flynn stated that we were told this was going to go through a vetting process.

Mr. Gallagher stated that the town was looking at information about the process and how the residents could be involved.

Mr. Gallagher also asked if the Board was aware that a Medical Marijuana facility cannot be placed in a location where children gather within 500ft. Mr. Gallagher stated that he did not know about the requirements until he looked further into the law. He is concerned that we have people flooding into Grafton because they need to be here. The facility should be located in a place that suits the needs of the patient and the community.

Mr. Spinney stated traffic is something that we are looking at going into that part of town. There was a traffic study done when Cumberland Farms was going in there. What we can do about it he is not exactly sure. We can at least commission a study. We can ask for signalization and spend a little chapter 90 money and go to Graves Engineering, petition the state to put in a turning lane?

Mr. Spinney stated Cumberland farms did do a traffic study and stated that there are different classifications, for different types of properties and those are all figured in. We need to review the entirety of that traffic study.

Mr. Flynn stated the Town would have to re-do that whole road. At whose cost is this? Mr. Spinney responding by stating the proposed location is on a State Road.

Mr. Gallagher stated that we can put up signs on Hollywood Drive and paint curbs so nobody parks there. The Town will need to genuinely look at parking as is at a premium, as we were told from the presentation that parking would be 1 for 1 employee to patient.

Mr. Dauphinais stated that he shares Mr. Gallagher's concerns about the parking and had spoken to the Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator about Hollywood drive. He feels the parking will be problem. People may try to park on Hollywood and this should be addressed.

Mr. Spinney stated if the business that goes into this location is a Medical Marijuana facility or not, if a restaurant wants to go there, you can't deny them. Mr. Spinney stated that all of these things have a set order. We still have a concern about what goes into that location. If we are being proactive, we have to hire engineers. The traffic problem is always going to be there whether people are getting medical marijuana or not. As it stands now that site is buildable we just can't make it go away.

Mr. Gallagher requests the following items be looked into by the Town.

1. Should a permit have been given to proceed with construction without going to the planning board and a notice to the abutters?
2. Check to see if the people involved in the obtaining the license from the state investigated the license process for a Medical Marijuana dispensary and looked for places where children congregate using the Town's GIS.

Mr. Dauphinais stated that we can get to the state and ask them what is going on. We will make sure the state understands what is going on in that neighborhood. We will ask about the traffic. Parking is going to be a huge issue they are going to have to figure out what they are going to do.

Mr. Gallagher asked if the Building Department could issue a notice to proceed without any involvement by Town Boards. Mr. Spinney stated it depends on the classification.

Mr. Dauphinais stated that the zoning officer makes the zoning determinations to see what is allowed in what zone.

Mr. Gallagher stated that his concerns have been given to the Board and his bottom line is that the operation does not belong there. It's not just an opinion, after the research he

did. And from his educated background, it occurs to him this is something that someone missed, Not the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Dauphinais stated that the Board follows the rules of the town and that the Board has discretion.

Mr. Willardson stated he will put together a memo providing information on the following:

- Address the Town's permitting process
- Address children congregating within 500ft, see if the state has looked into those issues.
- Ask if the Medical Marijuana Facility is willing to relocate
- Parking on site
- Traffic in the who general area
- Active List of individual establishments that will be classified as the congregation of children within 500 feet.

Mr. Flynn made a motion to approve Mr. Willardson's memo and for this item be on the agenda for next meeting and to discuss. Mr. Spinney seconded. All were in favor.

2017 Budget

Mr. Willardson distributed the Budget Books. The budget is going up \$2M, \$1.6M is going to the School Depart.

CPC Update

Next fiscal year there will be applications for some grants for the beach. Charcoal grills, and a canopy and enclosing showers.

Mr. Dauphinais stated that the DCR is giving out significant money for parks. Per Representative Muradian, we should start applying.

Mr. Willardson stated that the way DCR distributes their money is through park grants, we are not eligible unless we have an open space and recreation plan. That was done in 2007 and needs to be updated. We tried to do in house, but could not get anything else done. This will give us priorities and to apply for park grants. Mr. Dauphinais asked what the time frame to do something like this is. Mr. Willardson stated, within 6 weeks because most of the work is done from 2007

Existing playgrounds, Ferry Street. We are looking for potential ways to make more usable.

Stone Arch Bridge not being requested by the Town but the Fire Association,.

Trails, long term to put together a plan to connect all of those, but probably will not be a request on this fiscal cycle.

Façade Improvement Program; is still being discussed

Crosby landfill: Make better use of it. A dog park that is a potential future project.
Schedule Joint Meeting with Planning Board - Dates: March 8th or March 14th

Mr. Willardson stated that the joint meeting will be to discuss marijuana, 40R and articles for the May Town Meeting.

The Board agreed that March 8th would be a date for the joint meeting.

1. MEETING MINUTES

2/2/2016

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MGL Chapter 30A, Sec. 21(3)

Litigation Update

Litigation Strategy

Union Negotiations

Land Negotiation

Non Union Negotiations

Strategy for Negotiations

Minutes

ADJOURN

At 9:22 PM, Mr. Spinney made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Flynn seconded. All were in favor.

For more information, this and other meetings can be viewed on Grafton Television.
www.Graftontv.org



Chairman

5/24/2016
Date



Laura St. John-Dupuis, Recording Secretary