

# Groton Village Board of Trustees Meeting

Monday, October 15, 2018

Present: Mayor Neville, Trustees Morey, Conger, Holl and Walpole, Nancy Niswender - Clerk/Treas, Chad Shurtleff - DPW Supv, Ben Nelson-Fire Chief, Mike Andersen - Code Enf, Steve Teeter- Elec Utl. Supv., Lt. Tim Williams, Police OIC, Admin Charles Rankin, Barbara and Barry Siebe, Liz Feigth, Adam Klier, Bud and Sallie Devlen, Bob Walpole, Leon Brockway, Gary Watrous-FNBG, Mike Neville-GFD, Liz Richey, Jason Cortell, Pegi Ficken, Carolann Darling, Andrew Sullivan-Ithaca Times, Jen Dean, Steve Gobel-GFNB.

Mayor Neville opened the meeting at 7:00 pm

Trustee Conger made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2018 board meeting, seconded by Trustee Walpole.

Trustee Conger made a motion to approve the claims presented for review, seconded by Trustee Holl, carried. The above adjustments and claims paid are covered by the following lists of abstracts of audited vouchers:

## **Abstract 1**

GENERAL	\$ 59,192.26	ELECTRIC	\$ 90,468.05
WATER	\$ 4,935.80	JOINT REC	\$ 142.40
SEWER	\$ 21,245.54	BUILDING CAPITAL	\$ 38,250.00

## **Community discussion on the vacant 7-11 building**

Mayor Neville welcomed everyone and encouraged any input or ideas. First National Bank of Groton President Steve Gobel and Sr. Vice President Gary Watrous welcomed any business plans. They mentioned everyone would love to see a new grocery store. They also stated that no one at the village has any control over the property, but would work together with anyone. They noted that this store is not large enough to be a full sized grocery store. We do miss the store, and it would provide some services. If someone wanted to come in and put something in, the Bank and the Village would do what they could to help. If there was more space available, a larger store might be a possibility. A grocery Store would be a good thing, other small towns have similar issues. Stores such as Aldi's and Trader Joe's are looking for specific traffic patterns. We are lucky to have what we do have and if we can't get a grocery store we should promote what we do have.

Liz Richey voiced concerns - with the fire department being on Main St – would a new store create traffic issues with tractor trailers. She also mentioned concerns of tax incentives being offered and if the Village can afford to offer.

Bob Walpole has talked to Benderson (the current owner of the property) – they want to lease the building not sell. He spoke with Modern Market and Clarks in Dryden, and they mentioned they would

consider if it was \$4,000 – \$5,000 per month leases. The lease for this building is currently \$10,000.00 per month.

A question on Village requirements on purchasing, can the village buy locally or are they required to take the lowest cost? Administrator Rankin stated that a formal bid requires the lowest responsible bid. We do try to purchase locally when it is possible as long as we follow our purchasing policy.

Pegi Ficken - DEC newsletter EPA – local food, local place, EPA is a grant process. It might be interesting to look at something like this to be considered for alternative solutions.

Barry Siebe - Is there a redevelopment agency within the Village? These types of agencies can do a market analysis including traffic flow and consumer counts that may be able to find something that would fit the community. Liz Richey mentioned Tompkins County may possibly have something for this type of service.

Mayor Neville mentioned TCAD, which does similar activities.

Carolann Darling – Agrees with the above comments and possibly the Village and Town could work together to create a portfolio to show what is good and positive about Groton and why you should bring your business here. Back to what was said previously, the problem is the owner does not want to sell. She recommended a letter writing campaign to the owners that they are stifling our development and our community.

Mayor Neville mention this is why we have been contacting the owner and will continue to look at solutions.

Bob Walpole mentioned these vacant places are a problem. We have to have a use for them.

### **Franziska Racker Center Presentation**

Ron Jones – Director of Facilities – We are looking to purchase 501 Spring St. Racker is a non-profit organization that cares for people with disabilities. We are looking to build some of our own facilities and move some of our residents from Elm St. They are looking at building a 6-bedroom ranch home with a 2-car garage. He mentioned Rackers is committed in paying to have the sewer brought up to the property.

Further discussion followed.

### **Monthly department reports.**

#### **Electric:**

##### **Supv Teeter reported:**

They have started annual tree trimming. The chipper was successfully repaired and has been being used quite a bit. Spent a few days in Greene and in Skaneateles to help with some projects. Have been working on the Department of Labor inspection items that required some fixes. The staff had hearing test completed.

#### **DPW:**

##### **Supv Shurtleff reported:**

End of summer jobs, closing up the park and winterizing. Still doing some street patching getting the worse spots done. Keeping up with the mowing. Drainage project on Lincoln Ave. October is the month that shop service gets done on the trucks. Health department water supply inspection on Thursday. Mayor Neville inquired about the number of water samples taken each year. Supv Shurtleff said we do 10 samples a year. In 1993 the requirements were determined on what type of house were to be tested. Discussion continued on testing, results and actions taken to ensure good water.

### **Code Enforcement**

#### **Code Officer Anderson reported:**

Fire Safety report was done on the dollar store a number of months ago. Letters were sent on items to be completed. A resident came in and complained that they put their foot through the floor. A letter was sent that the store would be shut down on November 1<sup>st</sup> if the floor was not fixed.

Word is that someone is interested in Plastisol.

The Old Chatham Shepherding Creamery hope to be running by the first of the year and will employ 25-30 people.

37 - roofing permits - \$345,000 26 - building permits \$591,000

Mayor Neville mentioned some concerns about miscellaneous vehicles being worked on in the 7-11 parking lot. The police department will look into it.

### **Groton Fire Department:**

#### **Chief Ben Nelson reported:**

New truck in service. It is working really well. It will be a good asset. They are in contact with a few dealers to sell the old truck and hope to sell by the first of the year.

Fire Week prevention with the elementary school last week.

Tomorrow they will have ladder testing. Hoses were tested this summer.

770 calls YTD, about the same as last year.

### **Police Report**

#### **Lt. Williams reported:**

1376 calls YTD – slightly behind last year. Working on getting the new Tahoe ready and getting the equipment transferred between the vehicles.

One new hire has his 160 hrs FTO training and the other new hire is close to having his done. They should be ready in the next two months to be working on their own.

Fall firearms almost done for the year, just 2 more dates to finish up.

### **Joint Recreation:**

#### **Trustee Conger reported:**

Met on Oct 10<sup>th</sup>

Fall Programs – Cross County,

**Winter Programs:**

Youth Basketball – Girls K-3<sup>rd</sup>, Boys & Girls 3-6 grade which will be run through the Village youth program

Cabin Fever March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Grant application for Winterfest and Summer Concert Series have been done.

Trails Committee - Working on the trails. The one at the park will be worked on first.

November – December meeting at the end of November

**Youth Commission**

Ag Adventures – 12 kids healthy lifestyles. Science Program- Spells, potions and Creepy concoctions

Groton PRYDE – working with the Groton Girls Scouts on Trunk or Treat and cleaning up pond behind the elementary school. Teen Thing- Groton Harvest -Jr High

Youth Employment – Park foundation Grant of \$9,500.

Girls Adventure – Trip to Wolf Mountain

Summer Camp Financials – In the black - \$8,000

Presentation by Laura Grubehein from Cornell – part of the National Science Foundation will be working with Groton STEM research.

**Wastewater Treatment**

Supv Shurtleff mentioned that they are working on the generator. Washing down tanks and cleaning up for the winter. Shipping out solid waste around twice a month. Trustee Walpole asked if this solid waste could be sold. Supv Shurtleff said an analysis was done and it would take a lot of treating and testing which could be expensive.

**Public Comments:**

Jennifer Dean – reported on Trunk or Treat – Last year the Girl Scouts worked with the Fire Department and others and it went really well. Jen and Monica Dykeman are organizing – they currently have 23 confirmed trunks and expect more. The Fire Department, the Police Department will be participating again this year. They hope to get more school groups involved. Jennifer reached out and asked John Brehm (has done some photography) to do photographs and is asking if the village would be willing to help out with the cost of \$100. The Fire Department offered to pay \$50 and the village contribute the other \$50. Motion made by Trustee Holl, seconded by Terry Walpole.

### **Action Items:**

Trustee Conger made a motion to adopt a Resolution designating the Village Office as the one polling place for the Village elections on March 19, 2019. Seconded by: Trustee Holl.

Trustee Walpole made a motion to accept and sign the Park Foundation Grant of \$9,5000 for school year employment, seconded by Trustee Conger.

Trustee Holl made a motion for Olivia Howarth to travel and attend Advanced Accounting School on November 13-16<sup>th</sup> in Watertown, seconded by: Trustee Walpole.

Review of the Sexual Harassment Policy:

A suggestion was made by Trustee Walpole to add Department Head or Supervisor to the list on contacts on the policy and form.

Trustee Walpole made a motion to adopt the new Sexual Harassment Policy for employees with corrections mentioned, seconded by: Trustee Conger.

### **Board Reviews**

Mayor Neville appointed the following to the Police Commissioners:

- Gary Rightmire to fill a vacant 3 yr position which expires 2019.

- Trustee Conger made a motion to adopt a Resolution authorizing Clerk Treasurer Nancy Niswender to sign Tompkins County Personnel forms MSD428A Forms, seconded by, Trustee Morey, carried.

### **Ithaca Times – Andrew Sullivan**

Inquired if there was any more information on the vacant building. The Board summarized the purpose of the meeting and the information covered earlier.

Discussion continued on the Franziska Racker Center letter. Only concerns would be the electric and water/sewer which DPW Supervisor had discussed with them.

The Village finds no problem with the plan. We will prepare a letter.

### **Admin Rankin reported:**

MEUA Accounting Workshop – All office staff attended. Workshop covered a lot of basic accounting and was very beneficial.

Trustee Morey made a motion to executive session at 8:45pm to discuss a contract, Trustee Conger 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Trustee Morey made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:08pm, Trustee Holl 2<sup>nd</sup>.

During executive session 2 add-ons were discussed for the beardsely contact to cover additional cost. As built drawings \$6,600 and Commissioning \$8,800.

Trustee Conger made a motion to accept the additional add on to the contract, seconded by Trustee Walpole.

Trustee Morey made a motion to adjourn to October 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:31 pm.

Nancy Niswender  
Village Clerk-Treasurer