

**GRAND ISLE SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**Monday, February 15, 2021 via ZOOM**

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** : Diane Cota, Chair calls the meeting to order at 6:00PM

**Board Members Present:** Diane Cota - Chair, Jeff Parizo - Vice Chair, AnnaMarie DeMars, Adam White and Rachael Griggs

**Community Members Present:** Joe Longo-Lister, Ron Bushway-Road Commissioner & BFM, Todd Boutin-G.I. Fire Chief, Melissa Boutin-Town Clerk & Town Treasurer, Karen Allen-G.I. Library Chair and Brian Allen, Bill Stone, Elaine Chasse-Learning Adventure, Amy Thompson-GICSD & CIUUSD, Sarah Kenney, Shayla Zammuto and Jenn Severance-Lets Grow Kids, Franz Rosenberger, Shawn Mercy, Tonya Poutry and Mike Donoghue-The Islander, Ron Smith-Town Auditor and Michael Inners

**Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed: Old Business:** Updated COVID in Town Office and Fire Department, Appropriations-Fire Department; **New Business:** My post on FPF; Update on furnace old fire station red-tagged; **New Business:** Agenda information on FPF; Update on ballots and town report; Ron Smith, President of R.H.R. Smith Auditing Co. for discussion.

II. **GUESTS: Elaine Chasse-Learning Adventure and Members of Lets Grow Kids:** Elaine Chasse said there is a huge problem with childcare in VT. Two years ago she had a five-year plan to hopefully transition her program into someone else's hands. With the changes in maintaining child care in VT she is sad to say she is forced to close in June of this year. She joined Let's Grow Kids five years back because the issues in childcare continue to grow. Elaine said she feels it's very important Grand Isle have a really quality childcare program. She is here to help in any way she can. Turned over to Let's Grow Kids.

Sarah Kenney, Chief Policy Officer of Let's Grow Kids and said they are all devastated with Elaine's closure. She is doing amazing work with kids. She turned over to Jenn Severance, Community and Program Report Specialists with Let's Grow Kids. She works directly with childcare programs across VT but primarily in the Franklin/Grand Isle area. Has a Make Way for Kids program which offers grants in the program as well as provide technical assistance and we know this is a big problem in Vermont.

Jeff asked if Elaine is involved with the Pre-K program. She said these children can attend Pre-K in any part of the state. Diane said she spoke with Mike Inners who said we have to have a Pre-K program. Amy Thompson said she is not able to speak about this yet. Jeff asked if there is a GICSD meeting scheduled so Selectboard members and Elaine could attend. Amy said she believes a public Zoom meeting is set for Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Everyone is thanked for attending.

**Franz Rosenberger-permit requests for laying pipes and wires:** Ron Bushway said he has read the letter from the Rosenberger's, stating they are willing to work with the Town. He said we aren't asking Franz to do the work over again. When we are ready to pave the road or replace the culvert we will work with him.

Diane Cota makes a motion to attach Ron's (Bushway) letter to Franz (Rosenberger with conditions) to the application and Franz' response letter to the application with Brads (Sheridan, Road Foreman) signature and Selectboards signatures also. AnnaMarie DeMars seconds the motion. After brief discussion all vote in favor and the motion passes.

**III. Highway Department Update: Discuss lack of snow removal at the fire station:**

There is an MOU with the fire department that the town will clear the parking lot and in front of the fire station bays. After the last big storm the highway department hadn't plowed until after the fire chief had plowed it in the afternoon. It was agreed the fire trucks need get out and the firefighters need to get into the parking lot. Chief Boutin said the fire station can't be dead last and hope they can just sweep through clearing in front of the bay doors and parking lot so the fire fighters can get the trucks out quickly. Ron and Todd will get together to work this out.

**Highway Department Update continued:** Ron said they have been working on the equipment. Put the chains on the John Deere bucket loader as we need it to pull trucks out of the ditch if needed.

**Buildings Facilities Manager Update:** Ron said they are having mice problems at the Library and have caught four mice so far. Elaine Chasse has reported some bad smells coming from the basement, stairs and bathroom. He doesn't know what it is.

Ron asked Adam if the Knox Boxes are purchased. Adam said they are in and there is one for the new garage as well. Adam will reach out to Ron to discuss where the boxes are located and which buildings they will go to so Ron Can coordinate installation of the boxes.

Rachael asked if the phone line is installed in the new garage. Jeff said there were no pull lines put into the conduit. They plan to come after the storm and the phone company will install the phone hopefully sometime next week. Jeff said the fire marshal has signed off with conditions and they are ready to move in by the end of next week when the conditions are done.

Rachael asked if the boiler at the old fire station has been red-tagged as it has a hole in it. Ron said the furnace has been shut off and red-tagged.

**IV. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES: February 1, 2021** Jeff Parizo motions to approve the February 1, 2021 minutes. Adam White seconds the motion. No further discussion. All vote in favor and the motion passes.

**V. NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Change Order Proposals for the new town garage: Proposal #12 from Millbrook Building and Remodeling, Inc.:** Diane said change order proposal #12 for Millbrook has been pulled out by Jeff and wanted it noted we are not doing it. **Proposal #5 from Bernie Gage P&H:** Diane said this is not for Bernie Gage and is to be deleted.
- **Requests proper Invoice from Bernie Gage P&H for installation of tubing under new garage apron:** Diane asked about a proper invoice and Melissa said she does need a proper invoice as the one we received first was an email. Jeff said he sent it to all Selectboard members. Some members didn't receive it so Jeff will resend it to everyone.
- **Town Garage Budget Update:** Jeff and Melissa have been working on the garage budget. Jeff said has sent the last pay requests along with his spread sheet to everyone. Diane said we need to include all expenses for the Town Garage listed including \$6,800 for the concrete apron. Jeff said this came out of the highway department surplus fund balance and shouldn't be counted toward the cost of the building. He said by adding it in it is skewing the cost of the building. Melissa said this is not true, it is still part of the cost of the building and needs to be included in the total cost, it just got paid out of the highway fund.

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Diane said we won't be getting any funds from the Annex and we had agreed at a previous meeting we are not going to put be putting \$10,000 on the ballot for the salt shed in this election. In the future if we need money for the salt shed we can add it back onto the ballot. Jeff said this is \$10,000 we are not asking the votes to be paying for. Rachael said we are also not getting \$10,000 from the voters this year.

Melissa said the \$1,100,000 and the \$100,000 has already been spent so her assumption is anything else is coming out of the highway fund balance to be paid for anymore expenses for this project. Jeff said no, that we need to start using the \$400,000 from the (town) general reserve fund as we had always said we were going to pull \$100,000 from the highway reserve and \$400,000 from general fund. Diane said she thought it was \$300,000 we agreed to. Jeff said no, it's \$400,000. Jeff said he was hoping to be down to \$750,000 for the final balance of the bond. Melissa said the general fund balance is approximately \$800,000 and included in that amount are all the CD's that have been set aside for other items. Over \$400,000 is set aside for the salt shed, capital equipment for the highway, town wide appraisals and preservation of records. Adam asked what the unrestricted amount is. Melissa said it is three hundred thousand and something as of last year. Jeff said it's unfortunate because he has talked about this building not costing us anything, it should be net zero. Now finding out this isn't going to happen. Rachael reminded the Board of all the change orders. Jeff said that is unfortunate. If we pay down the \$400,000 and the \$100,000 the bond amount should be around \$750,000.

Jeff Parizo motions we draw another \$100,000 out of the highway surplus fund and bringing that fund down to \$107,000 and taking \$300,000 out of the town's unrestricted fund bringing that fund down to \$70,000 for a total of \$400,000 to offset the bond payment of the new town garage. Adam said it takes the total coming out of surplus funds to \$500,000. Discussions continued and Adam said on May 21 a motion was made to take \$100,000 out of the highway fund to bring the bond down to \$1,100,000 to meet the contract price. Adam white seconds the motion. No further discussion. All vote in favor and the motion passes.

Adam asked Jeff what role Wiemann and Lamphere took in budgeting? Jeff said to be politically correct he would say they fell through the cracks. We kept asking for budgets and didn't like what we were getting so he took it on himself. It is too late to ask for money back? Jeff said he thinks it's too late for that now.

- **Sign resolution for signature cards:** Sue Moquin's name to be on the resolution signature cards.

Jeff Parizo motions to approve Diane (Cota) to sign the signature cards for Sue Moquin. AnnaMarie DeMars seconds the motion. No further discussion. All vote in favor and the motion passes.

- **Review and approve renewal of garage loan documents:** Melissa said this is the documentation that needs to be signed by the Board Chair to renew the bond anticipation note for the garage another 6 months so that the project is finished and we can figure out what financial resource we want to use as far as if that's going to be the VT Municipal Bond Bank, they have a spring pool and a winter pool.

Jeff Parizo motions to allow Diane (Cota) the Board Chair to sign the Bond Anticipation Note. Adam White seconds the motion. No further discussion. All vote in favor and the motion passes.

- **Audit information:** Melissa said she has heard speculations about missing funds or having a forensic audit and thought it best to bring Ron Smith, auditor to the meeting. Ron said he is independent of the town and audits the books every year. Melissa provides the information and the auditor verify the accuracy of these funds. If there is any sign of fraud they would

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- notify the Selectboard and the State. Ron Smith said they have not found any discrepancies in Grand Isle.

Melissa said when there is an audit she lays all the papers on the table and Ron picks and chooses what he wants to look at. Ron said when it comes to other funds it all gets looked at, verified and follows town appropriations to be sure they are transferred into the proper account.

He said Melissa does a great job and he has never found anything. There is no reason for a forensic audit in Grand Isle's case.

- **COVID update in Town Office and Fire Department:** Jeff said he heard there were four or five members at the fire department possibly with COVID, and wasn't sure if it was infection, or if actual quarantined because they came in contact with someone infected. Adam said there were a couple issues but all negative tests and they are at full manpower. Fire department members have had their first COVID vaccine shot. Jeff thinks it's good to have this at least once a month on the agenda so we know where we stand with our employees. Melissa said there is nothing at the town office and we are back to by appointments only.
- **Update on ballots and town report:** Melissa Boutin reported all 1621 town ballots have been assembled. Labeling envelopes, stuffing and sealing and brought to the post office. They will be delivered in the mail tomorrow with information included on how to vote. They are working on the town reports and will be available on the website first thing and hopefully have enough hard copies printed and ready within the 10-day timeline.
- **Appropriations for Fire Department:** Jeff said he couldn't find where we voted to include the appropriations for the fire department budgets this year or last year. This will be discussed again at the special meeting on February 24, 2021.
- **Surveillance cameras at new town garage:** Diane said she would like to have surveillance cameras on the salt shed and new town garage. Ron said they are going to put gates at the entrance also.
- **February 27, 2021 Informational Meeting/Town Meeting discussion:** Moved to a special meeting on February 24, 2021 @ 6:00PM via Zoom. Rachael is going to listen to a VLCT information meeting and will report at the special meeting.

Adam White motions to temporarily increase our Zoom capabilities for our town information meeting session for an amount we need it to be. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo seconds the motion. All vote in favor and the motion passes.

- **Diane's post on FPF:** Jeff said Diane and Rachael called a former selectboard member and disparaged him. Both Diane and Rachael said they don't recall calling anyone and disparaging Jeff.

## VI. OLD BUSINESS:

- **Donation of Money Policy update:** Diane read the donation of money policy.

Adam White motions to approve the policy of Donations to Town of Grand Isle policy that is presented to the Selectboard during this February 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. Rachael Griggs seconds the motion. After brief discussion the Board votes. Rachael Griggs votes yes, Adam White votes yes and Diane Cota votes yes. Jeff Parizo votes no and AnnaMarie DeMars votes no. The motion passes.

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**No Storing of Personal Belongings:** \*Please note that was not on the budget and a motion will be made at the Feb. 24 SB meeting.

Diane noted she changed the wording on the policy to store items on town property. Policy reads: No one including employees will be allowed to store personal belongings in town buildings or on town property. Jeff Parizo seconds the motion. No further discussion. All vote in favor and the motion passes.

**VII. REVIEW AND SIGN WARRANTS:** Jeff Parizo motions to allow the Selectboard Chair to sign the warrants via email. AnnaMarie DeMars seconds the motion. No further discussion. All vote in favor and the motion passes.

**VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Personnel Discussion – Canceled**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT:** AnnaMarie DeMars motions to adjourn at 8:11PM. Jeff Parizo seconds the motion. No further discussion. All vote in favor and the motion passes.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachael Griggs  
Rachael Griggs, Selectboard Clerk

Date: February 24, 2021

Diane Cota  
Diane Cota, Selectboard Chair

Date: February 28, 2021

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