

Grand Isle Select Board
Minutes of the Meeting
October 18th, 2021 at Grand Isle Town Office and via Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Members Present: Jeff Parizo – Chair; AnnaMarie DeMars – Vice-Chair; Adam White; Ron Bushway; Eric Godin

Community Members Present: Denise Abbott-Douglass; Colleen Bushway; Jean Prouty; Esther Blow; Mitchel Richardson; Emily Clark; Mary Parizo; Lucille Campbell; Mike Donoghue; Josie Leavitt; Bill Hall; Tonya Poutry; Joe Longo; Melissa Boutin; Bianca Adams; Jennifer Morway; John Lafayette

Board Members to Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed:

Ron – Water Bill for Old Fire Dept and Town Garage – New Business

II. GUESTS

Mike and Nancy Stroz: It is determined that neither Mike nor Nancy are present. Item is tabled.

III. GUEST OPEN COMMENT

Denise Abbott Douglas says she has had another person drive off the road and end up in property. Denise points out that this has been a recurring problem, with multiple vehicles going off the road at that spot over the last several years. Jeff asks which direction the traffic is coming from. Denise says that all of the incidents were vehicles traveling north on East Shore South. There is further discussion about the problem with vehicles speeding on town roads. Jeff asks AnnaMarie Demars, the liaison with the Sheriff's department if she will talk with sheriff Ray Allen about the possibility of increasing patrols on the back roads.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 4TH (OCTOBER 3RD MEETING TYPO)

Jeff Parizo asks for a motion to approve the minutes. Adam White points out that the minutes that were warned were listed as the 'August 4th Minutes', when the minutes in question are for the 'October 3rd minutes' and suggests tabling the issue until the next meeting so it can be correctly warned. The Board agrees to take it up at the next meeting on October 25th.

V. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT/BUILDINGS/FACILITIES MANAGER UPDATE

Ron Bushway says that all the sand has been moved from the old garage to the new salt shed, with the exception of one large pile for town residents to use over the winter. Ron goes on to say that the John Deere loader is back and operational. Ron says that the Kaboda tractor is having some issues with the tires and needed to be serviced. Ron says that the work is under warranty, but the town was still charged \$500 to tow the tractor to the service station. Ron says that due to the fact it's under warranty and it

was the service provider's request to have it brought to their dealership, he has asked for the \$500 towing fee to be waived. Ron says that keys have been put in all of the Knox boxes in town facilities with the exception of the fire station, and asks Adam White if he will coordinate to get the keys into the Knox box at the fire department. Adam agrees. Ron says that he had contacted Howard DeMars to start cleaning and tuning up the furnaces in town facilities and said that the Annex has already been completed, leaving the town office and the library left to do. Ron says that the Grand Isle Volunteer Fire Department will be touring the new town garage on Wednesday night to familiarize themselves with the building.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Josie Leavitt – DRB Nomination: Adam White says that the DRB had approved Josie's letter of interest in September. Eric Godin says that the item was added to the agenda at the request of the DRB clerk. Adam asks if the length of the term was provided. Eric says that it was not. Joe Longo says that the position of alternate is a one-year term, and the position would begin immediately, but would have to be re-appointed December 31st or January 1st. ***Adam White moves to appoint Josie Leavitt to the DRB as an alternate member, with a term expiring the end of 2021. AnnaMarie DeMars seconds. No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

BCBS Premiums: Jeff Parizo says that this year the rates on the health plans have gone down. Jeff says that for the platinum plan, the single monthly premium payment is \$882.05 per month, and points out that this is about a \$100 savings over last years premiums. AnnaMarie asks if the premiums went down, if that means the deductibles will go down as well. Eric Godin says that it is highly unlikely that the deductibles are going to be lowered. Adam White asks if the town had ever looked at what other towns were doing. Eric says that during his last term, comparisons had been made with other towns, and Grand Isle was very generous with it's benefits. Jeff points out that the only other insurance provider in the area is MVP.

Rec Committee Request: Nobody from the Recreation Committee is present to speak on the issue. Adam White says that regarding the previous discussion regarding incidents at Donaldson Park, the chair of the recreation committee has stated that cameras and lights have been installed in the park, and there is a request in progress for more lighting to be installed. Quotes are being requested for gates with automatic timers for the park entrance. Adam says that the recreation committee will be coming to the Select Board with a request for a large sum of money for new playground equipment, getting the trail paved, making more space for basketball/pickleball/tennis, as well as clearing out all the brush on Donaldson Rd. Adam says that the recreation committee is seeking a grant, but is still expecting to ask the Select Board for \$75,000 towards the project. Jeff asks if the cameras at the park are recording. Adam says that the camera feed goes straight to the Sheriff's Department.

ARPA Webinar Information: Jeff Parizo says that there will be a webinar on Wednesday

from 6:00 – 7:15pm called 'ARPA 2.0' for local government officials being put on by Northwest Regional Planning Commission. The webinar will cover potential projects to use ARPA funds towards, ARPA process, and the potential of ARPA to change the community. Municipalities have until December 31st, 2024, and until December 31st, 2026 to spend it. Jeff says that he thinks it would be a good idea for members of the Select Board and the Planning Commission to attend to learn more about ARPA. Jeff says that he has provided the meeting information to Planning as well

Ballot Items Process: Adam White says he wanted to discuss the ballot item process in regards to the amended process due to COVID, where ballot items could be requested with a letter, rather than the standard process of needing a petition. Jeff opens a sealed a request for a ballot item from Grand Isle Rescue in the amount of \$73,000 for fiscal year 2022 and 2023. Jeff says there is another request for \$500 from the Island Center for Arts and Recreation for the 2022 events season. Adam says he thinks this is the fireworks. AnnaMarie asks if anyone could just send in a letter requesting a line item. Eric Godin says he believes requests would be received and the Select Board would decide which items would go on the ballot. Jeff asks if this decision needs to be made tonight. Adam says that it needs to be decided upon soon. It is agreed by the Board to take the issue up at the next regular meeting on November 1st.

Jennifer Morway – Planning Commission Recommendation for Empty Seat: Emily Clark says that the Planning Commission voted at the last meeting to have Jennifer Morway fill the seat vacated by Jeff Parizo. The term lasts until the end of 2022. ***Ron Bushway moves to appoint Jennifer Morway to the vacant seat on the planning commission ending December 31st, 2022. Adam White seconds. No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Transfer Station CD: Town Treasurer Melissa Boutin says the Transfer Station has a CD that started out with \$10,000 in it, and says that if there has been any excess money over expenditures, that extra money was put into the CD account. Melissa says that when the autocar had to be replaced, Brad and the Transfer Station contributed funds as well as trading in the old autocar. Melissa says there was a balance left over of \$60,070, that was going to be repaid over 2 years. Melissa says that the CD was inadvertently renewed by Peoples Bank, and that she had reached out to them over the error, as there had been no Select Board approval of renewing the CD. Melissa says that Peoples Bank acknowledged the error, and said they would take care of any transfers needed to rectify the situation with no penalties or fees. Melissa asks the Select Board if they would authorize the transfer out of the CD of \$30,035 to pay back the general fund operating checking account for the second payment. Melissa says the CD currently has \$57,521 in it. Jeff agrees that this should be done, and notes that the truck is now completely paid off. Adam points out that this is just the town repaying itself. ***Adam White moves for Melissa Boutin, Town Treasurer from the transfer station CD to move \$30,035 to the general fund, and then move \$7,969.51 from the general fund to the transfer station CD for the excess the transfer station made in the previous fiscal year.***

Ron Bushway seconds. No further Discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.

Water Bills for Old Fire Department and Garage: Ron Bushway says that he noticed that the town was still being charged for the water bills at the two unoccupied buildings. Ron says that he had called Warren Steadman with the water commission and had the water shut off. Melissa Boutin clarifies that there is no water usage at either building, and that the connection fee at the new garage was waived, as well as put in the water line for free, and the town was still paying the debt service fee. Melissa says that the item is still an allocation that is available for use. Melissa says the town is only being billed for the debt service and no water use. Adam asks that if the town were to put in a new building, no new connection fee would be needed. Melissa agrees. Ron says that he thinks the Select Board needs to provide a termination letter to disconnect the old buildings. Melissa says that more information should be gathered before the decision is made. Melissa says she thought the arrangement was for the town to continue paying debt service and have the connection fee for the new garage waived. Adam White asks Ron to reach out to Warren Steadman to clarify what is being paid and what needs to be done. Ron agrees. The Board agrees to take this issue up at the November 1st meeting.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Judge Grearson – Letter Re: Courthouse: Jeff Parizo reads a letter from Judge Grearson. The letter indicates that the judiciary is moving forward with a plan to have security at the courthouse Monday through Thursday from 8:00am to 4:30pm. This plan will take effect Monday, October 18th, and will remain in place until another solution can be found. The letter indicates that the judiciary is investigating the suggestions provided by the community members at the county wide meeting. Denise Abbott Douglas points out that the letter doesn't address the issue of the air quality, as the judiciary brought up at the county wide meeting. Jeff says that he knows that the side judges had New England Air up at the courthouse to evaluate the issue.

6 Sloop Rd Update: Adam White asks if there have been any updates, saying that as of September 1st, the settlement agreement took effect. Adam says that he feels the bar the town has set for progress is nonexistent and the property looks worse than it did when the complaints initially came in. Adam asks if anything is happening with this, and says that the fine was \$2,500 for the initial violation. Jeff Parizo says that ZAO Scott Brown has filed the notice of violation, but thinks the appeals period is still ongoing. Jeff says that Scott and the town attorney are working on the issue, moving forward. Jeff says that the state only has one enforcement officer for the entire state. Ron says that he has spoken to the homeowner several times. Adam White points out that the \$2,500 fine is per occurrence, and there have been multiple offenses. Adam says at this point the amount could be as high as \$10,000. Jeff says that he will email the ZAO for an update for the November 1st meeting.

Opioid Settlement: Eric Godin says that he has to recuse himself from this discussion as

his employer is one of the companies paying the settlement to the state of Vermont. Jeff Parizo states that the state of Vermont has joined into a settlement being paid by several drug distributors in relation to the ongoing opioid epidemic. Jeff says that to be eligible to receive any funds, there is paperwork that has to be done and asks Adam White if he would take on the project of submitting for funds from the settlement. Adam agrees, noting that Grand Isle has been affected by the opioid epidemic. **Jeff Parizo moves to apply for the opioid settlement funds that have been set up and to have Adam White execute any documents necessary to complete the application. AnnaMarie DeMars seconds.** Denis Abbott-Douglas points out how expensive Narcan is and how bad the opioid epidemic has been on the residents of the town. **Jeff calls the vote, which passes with four ayes, with Eric Godin abstaining.**

VLCT Insurance for Buildings and Contents: Melissa Boutin says that in response to some of the questions asked about the insurance at the last Select Board Meeting. Melissa says that the insurance company feels that the amount of insurance on the contents of the town Garage is sufficient. Melissa says that she has spoken with Brad Sheridan about taking a video inventory of the contents for insurance purposes. Melissa says that the Library would be assessed at actual cost if the building burned. Melissa says that all the contents of the fire department are covered under a policy that is held by the Grand Isle Volunteer Fire Department. Eric Godin asks what it would cost to increase the amount of insurance on the contents of the garage. Melissa answers the rate would be 0.338 per thousand dollars of coverage. Melissa says that the transfer station had \$25,000 in coverage for contents, and it was felt this was sufficient.

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVE WARRANTS

Eric Godin moves to have Jeff Parizo sign this weeks warrants. Ron Bushway seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

AnnaMarie Demars moves to adjourn the meeting at 7:05pm. Adam White seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote which passes unanimously.