**MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING**

**Monday 6:00 PM, January 19, 2021**

**Attendance of Selectboard by Electronic Devices**

**Meeting being held electronically pursuant to 1 VSA 312, including The Legislature’s H.861 (2020) “Temporary Suspension of Designated Physical Meeting Location Requirements.”**

**Public, wishing to attend the meeting may use the link posted on the Agenda for that meeting.**

**Present at the hearings and meeting were:** Chair Joe Pollio, Stan Mack, Cathy Siano-Goodwin, and John Gregory. There is one vacancy on the Selectboard.

**Others present:** Fred Duplessis of Sullivan Powers the Town outside Accountants/Auditors, Charles Bonin, Hardy and Nancy Merrill, Mike Field, Wendy Martin, Suzanne Welch, Kim Record Clerk-Treasurer, Danny Taylor Highway Foreman, and Bill Kearns Town Administrator.

FACT 8 TV

Open the meeting: the chair opened the regular meeting of the Selectboard at 6:01 PM.

1. Adopt Agenda. Stan Mack moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Second John Gregory. Motion passed 4-0.
2. Approve Minutes of January 4th and 14th, 2021. January 4th: There were two corrections offered each by Stan Mack and Cathy Siano-Goodwin, and as amended Stan Mack moved, John Gregory second to adopt the minutes. Motion passed 4-0. Jan 14th: Stan Mack offered three corrections to the minutes/. Cathy Siano-Goodwin moved to adopt the minutes as corrected, second Stan Mack, motion passed 4-0.
3. Audit Report form Sullivan Powers – Fred Duplessis: The Chair called on Fed Duplessis of Sullivan Powers to present the audit report for the years 2019-2020. Fred Duplessis stated that the audit had been done in compliance with generally accepted accounting standards ad government standards, as well as all the requirements of the State. Overall, the audit for the Town is clean. The audit for the library and trustee accounts, however, carry investments at cash value, not the value at which they were acquired, because this reflects their true value. On Page 6 the General Fund balance is up $150,000 over last year and the footnote explains how that surplus is assigned. The unassigned surplus was $163,000 last year and is now $189,000. The Town looks to this unassigned money to keep the Town running between the end of the fiscal year until the first taxes are paid in August. In addition, this unassigned money can be used for other purposes, including emergency needs and to match grants awarded to the Town. On page 9 it is noted that receipts were $68,000 over budget and on page 14 the Town spent $78,000 less than budget, resulting in an increased fund balance of $146,000. He then went through pages 17 through 35 and pointed out the information carried on those pages. He then noted there were no negative findings, as the Town management has improved oversight on Accounts in the past few years and are doing more in the future, i.e., having a member of the Selectboard, in addition to auditors’ monthly review, doing a quarterly review of the books. John Gregory will be doing this. The recommendation for this year is to do a fraud risk assessment, which the staff is aware of, and this assessment can be done by staff with advice from Sullivan Powers. This can be done after Town Meeting. Fred concluded his remarks by saying that staff did a great job on management and during the audit, which went well because of them. Joe Pollio thanked Kim Record and staff and the Selectboard for their efforts. Kim Record asked about the assignment of the % money from the Walker Bridge repurchase agreements and whether this should be done each year or have the Town voters vote once and for all to approve an Article assigning this % money. Fred Duplessis said either way. It was mutually agreed that the Town should add an article to this effect at Town Meeting 2022. The Board thanked Kim Record and the town staff and thanked Fred for his report.
4. Warrants. Were presented. They had been reviewed by each of the Selectboard members prior to the meeting.
5. Highway. Danny Taylor reported on Highway:
   * The crew is dealing with storms as they come along.
   * The new light dump truck replacement should have the long-awaited body delivered and assembly beginning on it on Friday.
   * Spending time on equipment maintenance from wear and tear from storm clearing.
   * Salt use this year is way down…good.
   * There was a person who was to talk with Danny re: a source of gravel, but that has not materialized. Danny will try to contact that person again. The source at Eastman Sand & Gravel is dwindling and will not be available for long.
   * Joe Pollio asked about the sanding of a private drive for an emergency. Danny Taylor stated it is usual. Keene mutual aid is contacted by EMS re ice or other road or access issue, Keene mutual aid call State Police, who call Town crew, which then responds to the emergency and does the work necessary to give EMS access. The offer for reimbursement is nice, but we never expect or accept reimbursement. It is what we do for all taxpayers. A Thank You is sufficient. The Selectboard agreed.
   * The crashed pick-up is at Jasmine for repairs. The truck went out of control on very slippery roads during the Christmas storm and hit an apple tree just off Middletown Road. Truck suffered $16,000 in needed repairs. There were no injuries.
   * The Selectboard thanked Danny Taylor and the crew for clear roads.
6. Clerk/Treasurer: Kim Record stated the items below are all the business she has.
7. Election of Town Officers – Deadline Jan 25th for place on ballot. Listers and Auditor positions up for vote have persons running. Of the Three position on Selectboard open for election, one has a candidate, the other two do not. Persons wishing to stand for election for Selectboard, Lister, or Auditor have until end of the business day on Monday Jan 25th to sign the consent to have their name on the ballot and file with Kim Record the Clerk.
8. Approve Articles for Town Meeting. The Articles to be voted on at Town Meeting were presented to the Selectboard for acceptance, approval and signing by the Selectboard. The members reviewed the Articles. Motion by Stan Mack to accept the Articles for Town Meeting as presented and acknowledge that Selectboard must sign them. Motion passed 4-0. Articles are on the table in SB office for signature.
9. Ballot - mailing ballots approval. The legislature passed the legislation to allow the mailing of ballots to registered voters, as was done in the General Election and the Governor signed the law. To permit this in Grafton, the Selectboard must adopt a motion so stating. After discussion, including from the Clerk who stated the system worked very well in November, including less conflict and contact than usual, and that there is state money for the ballots and postage, Stan Mack moved, John Gregory second to follow the same procedure for mailing ballots to registered Grafton voters as was done in November. Discussion – voting will be in the Brick Meeting House on March 2 from 9 AM to 7PM and vote counters will be needed. When called the motion passed 4-0.
10. Selectboard Vacancy. The vacancy was acknowledged as well as the need to post Notice of the Vacancy on the Selectboard. Bill Kearns had prepared a Notice with two alternatives, the latter being that the position would be filled by election at the Town Meeting. The Notice was presented to the meeting And the Board asked to approve it and have the Chair sign. Stan Mack moved, John Gregory second to approve and publish the Notice of Vacancy on the Selectboard as it was presented. Motion passed 4-0. Motion by John Gregory, second Stan Mack to authorize the Chair to sign the notice. Motion passed 4-0.
11. Other Business
    * Streetlights: Joe Pollio has written a letter of thanks and appreciation of the work of others, and apology for the reaction and a reminder that there is a necessity to confer with the Town and follow protocols when changing anything to do with Town property. Joe asked the Selectboard to review, edit, and comment on the letter before it is sent. It will be sent to them.
    * Comments on the Articles. Hardy Merrill stated he will confer with Jack Bryar and together write a comment on the school article for publication in the Grafton News.
    * Village Park. Al Sands stated he would work on the Village Park under a volunteer agreement and build the sign for the entry and the kiosk. He has the materials for the sign but would need the materials for the kiosk which he will look to the Town to supply. In addition, he would work with Rick White, again both having signed a volunteer agreement, to clear the park of hazard trees. Joe Pollio thanked Al Sands for the Selectboard and accepted his offer.
12. Public Comment - none
13. Date of Next Selectboard Meeting: February 1, 2021 @ 6 PM (Microsoft Teams)
14. Adjourn. By mutual consent, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

William G. Kearns, Town Administrator