



Town of Griswold
Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
October 25, 2016
6:30 PM
Griswold Town Hall
Downstairs Meeting Room
28 Main St, Jewett City, CT 06351



MINUTES

- 1. Call to Order/Roll** – Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Kevin Skulczyck, First Selectman

Members Present: Kevin Skulczyck, First Selectman
Steve Merchant Sr., Second Selectman
Martin McKinney Jr., Third Selectman

Others Present: Lisa M. Wood, Executive Assistant
Mario Tristany, Town Planner
Thomas Giard, EDC Chairman
Brian Kent, Kent & Frost
Todd Babbitt, Road Superintendent
Tina Falck-Babbitt, Senior Center Director
21 interested citizens
1 member of the press

- 2. Pledge of Allegiance** – Pledge was cited.

- 3. Approval of Minutes**

- a. October 11, 2016 – Special Meeting Minutes**

MOTION: Motion was made by M. McKinney, seconded by S. Merchant to approve the October 11, 2016 special meeting minutes. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- 4. Correspondence**

- a. Resignation of Laurie Sorder from the Ordinance Committee**

MOTION: Motion was made by M. McKinney, seconded by S. Merchant, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Laurie Sorder. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. Letter of commendation from EDC to the Public Works crew** – T. Giard, EDC Chair, commented on the great work and cooperation of the Public Works crew in their assistance with getting the lights up on Main Street.

5. New Business

- a. Discussion and possible action on tax refunds as presented by Leona Sharkey, Tax Collector**

MOTION: Motion was made by M. McKinney, seconded by S. Merchant, to approve the eight tax refunds for a total of \$547.70 as presented by the tax collector. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. Presentation of Red Ribbon Week Proclamation presented to Young Marines** – K. Skulczyck introduced Joe Couture, Unit Commander and Staff Sargent Barstow of the Natchaug River Young Marines and complimented their service to the community and efforts, along with Griswold Pride, against drugs. A Red Ribbon Week proclamation was presented and J. Couture gave a brief summary of the program.

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Merchant, seconded by M. McKinney, to move item 7, Any Other Business to this point on the agenda. **Motion carried unanimously.**

7. Any Other Business that may properly come before the Board

MOTION: Motion was made by M. McKinney, seconded by S. Merchant, to bring onto the agenda for discussion and possible action, the setting of meeting dates to address the issue of the proposed new Sr. Center. **Motion carried unanimously.**

T. Babbitt, Sr. Center Building Committee Chairman, spoke briefly and wanted to know if a date for the town meeting to discuss funding for the new Sr. Center had been decided and when we would move forward with a referendum if approved at town meeting. K. Skulczyck commented as everyone is aware the date for the town meeting had to be pushed back because due to the presidential election, printing and timing requirements, it would not be able to be done before the November 8th election. He also commented he has spoken with the Town Clerk and the Registrars and should have a date from them within the next day or two. T. Falck-Babbitt also mentioned they are having an open house at the Sr. Center tomorrow and invited everyone to visit and see the center and what they do.

5. New Business (continued)

- c. Discussion and possible action on permission to form an ad hoc committee to study invasive weed problem at the local ponds** – T. Giard spoke about the weed problem that continues to be an issue at the ponds. There have been several individuals who have come forward expressing their interest to research the problem and possible solutions.

MOTION: Motion was made by M. McKinney, seconded by S. Merchant, to form an ad-hoc committee to study the invasive weeds. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- d. Discussion and possible action on moving forward with plans for the proposed Heritage River Park on School Street** – T. Giard spoke about the plans to convert the School street property into a park which would provide extra downtown and overflow parking, a green area, a handicap accessible fishing dock and playground and a connection to the Heritage River Walk. B. Kent explained the plan in more detail. The proposed plan showed the park and a possible foot bridge connection. Other pedestrian connection possibilities were discussed. It was made clear by the BOS that the desire was to not spend any tax money in funding the project. The options of the Open Space fund as well as grants and ADA grants were discussed. S. Merchant asked about drainage and price to do the simple work. B. Kent noted the first stepping stone would be about \$900,000 and a total project cost of approximately \$1.8 million. M. McKinney expressed his concern that the plan does not show the actual connection to the Heritage River Walk which was the original approved concept. A foot bridge would be likely too costly to build and no access has been secured to pass over other properties. It was agreed that they would come back and represent the project as a full conceptual plan and information form adjacent property owners for possible pedestrian passage.
- e. Discussion and possible action on appointment of Alan Geer as an alternate to the Recreation Commission for a one year term of 10/25/2016 to 10/24/2017**

MOTION: Motion was made by M. McKinney, seconded by S. Merchant, to appoint Alan Geer as an alternate member of the Recreation Commission for a one year term of 10/25/2016 to 10/24/2017. **Motion carried unanimously.**

6. Old Business -None

7. Any Other Business that may properly come before the Board (continued)

MOTION: Motion was made by K. Skulczyck, seconded by M. McKinney, to bring onto the agenda for discussion and possible action, the issue of the tire swing out at Glasgo Pond. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Courtland Kinnie, IWWCC Chair, expressed his concern about the dangers and past injuries that have occurred due to people swinging from the banking into the river. He noted the potential liability of the town and would like to see if trees that provide access over the pond could be removed. K. Skulczyck noted he did have a discussion with DEEP about this issue and there will be a meeting at the site to discuss the possibility of taking down some trees.

8. Public Forum

Todd Babbitt - Cook Hill Rd. – Noted the DEEP may have plans that will have an effect on the amount of water in the river near the proposed park discussed earlier.

Ransom Young – Rixtown Rd. – Noted spraying for invasive weeds and the inability to go onto private land. The government has no funding to study how to control the weeds.

Betty Knox – Alvina Ave. – Noted as a child, the pond used to be drawn down every winter to the point you could walk across the pond and there was never a problem with the weeds until the state put the boat launch in. Three feed drawdown is good for those that like on the pond but does nothing for the middle.

Dave Vieaux – Leha Ave. – Asked for an update on the gun range. K. Skulczyck responded there was a meeting with the State Attorney General last week. There was a sense of agreement of violation of the statutes. The Attorney General would not render an opinion but would talk with the state administration. There is an upcoming meeting with the Governor's office. The hope is it is cancelled as a result of a decision to not move forward. It was requested if a decision is made, that it be announced.

Rich Grabowski – Tyler Terrace – Inquired to the status of a grant application that would aid not only the Sr. Center but the housing project as well and would like to get it moved forward as soon as possible. K. Skulczyck noted there is still a few points that need to be discussed with the progression of the town's grant status.

Thomas Gaudreau – Bitgood Rd. – Noted his concern of the Sewer department taking in fracking waste. He noted Windham has passed an ordinance to prevent this. He provided information to the BOS. The BOS stated the sewer department is owned by the Borough and the BOS cannot control what they do there, but the BOS is willing to look into research to discuss at a future meeting.

James Barnie – Hopeville Rd. – Noted if the town passed an ordinance for no fracking materials to be allowed into the town, wouldn't the Borough have to follow as well? K. Skulczyck noted he would have to research to get some answers to that.

Steve Douglas – Bitgood Rd. – Asked K. Skulczyck directly about information going around about the June 7th meeting. K. Skulczyck noted he received a phone call from Commissioner Currey prior to that meeting where it was noted the Commissioners would not receive questions from the audience that night and he also mentioned he did inform residents to text questions to him. S. Douglas also noted that it is offensive to see people checking their phones. K. Skulczyck noted he agrees, and also stated there was an emergency notification sent out which is why several phones in the room were ringing or buzzing.

Ransom Young – Rixtown Rd. – Noted it may be difficult to get rid of trees at Glasgo pond if a tree spans two different properties. Would also like to see money and public works time spent on road projects.

Renee Bergeron – Breakneck Hill Rd. – Asked for confirmation of whether or not the gun range has been before the State Properties Review Board as acquired. K. Skulczyck confirmed it has not and that information was shared with the State Attorney General.

Courtland Kinnie – Glasgo Rd. – According to an email from Dan Byron the debris has been removed from the bottom of Glasgo pond. Was the town notified of this as part of the agreement? K. Skulczyck commented he was not notified. C. Kinnie noted anything removed is supposed to be recorded.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Merchant, seconded by M. McKinney, to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

**Lisa M. Wood,
Executive Assistant**