



Town of Griswold

28 Main Street
Griswold, CT 06351



**Board of Selectman
Special Meeting
Probate Conference Room
2nd Floor, Town Hall
Tuesday, March 1, 2011
3:30 PM
APPROVED MINUTES**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Meeting was called to order by First Selectman, Philip Anthony at 3:38.

Members Present: Philip Anthony, First Selectman
Steven Mikutel, Second Selectman
Theresa Madonna, Third Selectwoman
1 member of the press

2. Discussion and possible action on selection of short list for RFQ respondents for the Main Street Corridor Streetscape Improvement Project – P. Anthony suggested calling in three companies for interviews and S. Mikutel agreed.

Discussion ensued about a price not being provided. It was explained that now an RFP will be requested from the selected companies and the RFP will list the price. Also, it is not necessary to choose the lowest bid because this is not a commodity, but rather a professional service. S. Mikutel and P. Anthony agreed on the three companies of Fuss & O'Neill, Kent and Frost and AKRF. T. Madonna commented that she agreed with two of the three but would also like to see Catherine Oranchak Landscape Architect based on the specific experience doing streetscape work and the fact that they have their own experienced architects.

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by T. Madonna, to narrow the RFQ process down to four applicants, AKRF, Fuss & O'Neill, Kent and Frost and Catherine Oranchak and invite them to provide an RFP. **Motion carried unanimously.**

A recess was taken at 3:50 PM and the meeting resumed at 4:11 PM. B. Richardson-Crouch, Finance Director and John Wolkowski, Chairman of the Slater Library Board, joined the meeting.

3. Discussion and possible action on 2011/2012 departmental budgets, as time allows, to include presentation from John Wolkowski representing Slater Library (scheduled for 4:15 PM)

Library - J. Wolkowski presented the library budget and pointed out the library receives no revenues other than fines. He commented this year the library mailed out fundraising letters to residents and raised \$5,000. The last three of four years they have taken about \$15,000 out of the endowment. Because the downstairs has been renovated to a children's library it has increased patronage and also the expenses. Most of the money for the library budget comes from Griswold with a small amount coming from Lisbon. J. Wolkowski has asked the town of Lisbon if they could increase their contribution this year. Lisbon usually gives the library \$15,000. S. Mikutel commented the library should also write a letter to the Board of Finance in Lisbon. J. Wolkowski responded to T. Madonna that Lisbon's use of the library is about 28-29% with their \$15,000 contribution last year being around 11% of their costs. He commented the library budget request of \$135,000 is mostly estimates, other than the amount to be spent on books and DVD's etc, and wages have no increase as they did not last year. The library also needs to line the chimney this year which is an approximate cost of \$7,000. They have applied for a grant for this, but there is a lot of competition for grants and no guarantee that they will receive it. Historically, the library presents the budget to the selectman and never asks for a specific amount. Last year, the town gave \$86,000 and we would love to get more, but we would certainly not want to get less. If we get \$86,000 from Griswold, \$15,000 from Lisbon and \$3,000 from the state, it still leaves us short and causes us to utilize funds from the endowment. P. Anthony commented the library is a major asset to the town and the programs are phenomenal. T. Madonna asked if the library has a fundraising plan such as tiered giving. J. Wolkowski commented the Friends of the Library, which is separate does hold fundraising events and does underwrite certain programs and expenses. S. Mikutel commented the library is very well utilized and asked if Wal-Mart gives a contribution. J. Wolkowski commented that Wal-Mart has given in the past but rotates who they donate their money to. He also commented there is a lot of internet use by the public at the library to do job searches. P. Anthony suggested sending a fundraising letter out again this year as well as utilizing the first selectman and the press to make the public aware of all the services the library offers and help to solicit contributions.

Budget - B. Crouch reviewed the governor's budget numbers which were inserted this year. She commented the special education amount is listed as what was given last year, because that really happens after the fact, the amount for new machinery and equipment has gone to zero and reminded that all the numbers provided from the governor have not yet been approved. It was agreed to go with the revenue projections given by the governor at this time, rather than going with a percentage of those figures. B. Crouch commented there is an amount of \$500,000 as a place holder for capital improvements. B. Crouch commented that in fund 308 there is about \$560,000 which is for Bitgood Bridge and the remainder of the contract and we have enough to cover our 20% if the remainder for Bitgood comes in no more than 2.2 million. S. Mikutel commented he wants to make sure we have not only enough

for the current Bitgood Road bridge project but also the other two projects. P. Anthony commented, the state feels we should have enough money with the \$560,000 to cover the current Bitgood Rd. project and the Board of Finance consensus is we can dip into reserved funds if need be for the other projects. S. Mikutel expressed that for the upcoming budget we, the Board of Selectmen, advocate for the \$500,000 for Capital Improvement be used for roads and bridges.

It was discussed taking out one ½ time custodian from the budget. A brief discussion ensued about who would pick up the extra work. T. Madonna commented, based solely on a budget savings issue, she has no issue leaving the money out. It was agreed to take \$10,896 out of line 1801-5101. P. Anthony stressed not to discuss the issue any further because it is a personnel issue. B. Crouch will rework those numbers for line 1801-5101 and figure the new custodian based on entry level pay. T. Madonna commented on reserving some funds in case there is a raise due to negotiations. B. Crouch commented that money generally comes from contingency. S. Mikutel commented that Ryan Aubin is showing a pay raise. T. Madonna commented she had no problem with that because he is not increasing either of his budgets and he needs to be responsible for making his budget work.

T. Madonna asked B. Crouch if she has been talking with H. McCalla about the potentially new insurance with CIGNA. B. Crouch commented there may be an issue because CIGNA does not have a broad array of health providers and the unions have to accept it. T. Madonna commented there could be substantial savings by transferring to CIGNA and the prescription plan with CIGNA is much better than what the employees currently have. P. Anthony commented he met with Dr. Freeman today and he encouraged B. Crouch to talk with H. McCalla and she did. B. Crouch commented when present Anthem with a lower bid they usually match it, so it does indicate a significant savings. B. Crouch commented she has not received any numbers on those savings. B. Crouch commented the Ambulance bundles their insurance plan with ours.

B. Crouch commented the ambulance has given her no breakdown of their request for the budget of \$118,376. She responded to S. Mikutel that they are asking for \$50,000 to get through the current fiscal year, which would make their total amount to get through this fiscal year \$70,000. S. Mikutel commented he is trying to arrive at a reasonable amount for them to operate their full year. T. Madonna commented last year they budgeted a \$50,000 surplus. B. Crouch commented the funds they have are not dedicated or reserved. A restricted account is temporarily designated by their board and can be changed at any time which is different than a truly designated account. The ambulance operated anywhere from \$75,000 to \$120,000 in the surplus for the past seven years. So, the Board of Finance is saying the \$225,000 in that account is not from the \$14,000 they raise in a year but from the surplus the town is providing. The Board of Finance is trying to decide whether the town should be funding the building by giving them enough money to have a surplus or should it just be enough to make them whole because they charge for their services. Board of Finance seems content with paying for the \$36,000 for bundle billing which is a separate line. After reviewing the funds for the current fiscal year the Board of

Finance believes they need about \$49,000 additional to make their operating budget whole for the year. P. Anthony commented he spoke with the gentleman at the bank that handles the ambulance funds and he echoed it is not a restricted or dedicated fund and they can take that money out for any purpose. S. Mikutel commented there has to be some level of trust that they have a building fund and we have not received a letter stating the funds are dedicated. S. Mikutel suggested having the town take over the funds as a building trust fund then that would alleviate that issue. P. Anthony commented the Board of Finance is frustrated at not receiving on a yearly basis, the complete list of their expenses, complete auditing report up to date and/or the actual number in your building fund. S. Mikutel commented we are only making a recommendation for the budget and then passing it to the Board of Finance. It was discussed giving them \$62,000 or \$70,000 which is the operating numbers used for prior years. They then agreed to go with the \$62,000 used for two years ago, which gave them a surplus, but add \$3,000 for inflation. The amount agreed on for line item 2201-5513 was \$65,000. It was also mentioned that the ambulance garage had been invited to attend the Space Needs Committee to look at possibly going into that building, and they have not responded.

S. Mikutel and T. Madonna commented it is not their intention to have the secretary line 3301-5101F as full-time. S. Mikutel commented possibly keeping the part-time secretary of 40% in the assessor's office. It was decided the secretarial position in the assessor's office is only temporary, because what is needed and budgeted at this time for the assessor's office, is a full-time assistant assessor. B. Crouch commented the Board of Finance was inquiring as to a temporary one year full-time assistant assessor and put it in the revaluation fund. T. Madonna and P. Anthony agreed a full-time assessor is needed because of revaluation and also to have a strong second person when the assessor is ill or on vacation to keep the office running appropriately. S. Mikutel commented it was always his intent to not downsize the position of the secretary in the building department and keep it as a full-time position. P. Anthony commented it may be possible to cut the hours down but to leave enough hours to receive benefits, or possibly adding in hours as a floater. T. Madonna pointed out that when we outsourced the health department, we argued we would be saving money by cutting the building secretary hours by 40%. The most important argument right now is to make the part-time assistant assessor to a full-time assistant assessor while we can still show we have a 40% savings from the building/health secretary hours. By leaving the building secretary hours at 60%, she is still eligible for benefits.

Contributions were unanimously agreed as follows:

SEAT - \$3000, TVCCA - \$3000, Slater Library - \$86,000, SE CT Enterprise Region - \$1500, Women's Center Southeastern - \$1500, Local Veteran's Council - \$2500, Transfer to Ashland Park - \$1750 (suppose to be for the maintenance of the park only), Legion Baseball - \$1200, Youth Football - \$1000, LL Baseball \$1000, LL Soccer - \$1000, LL Football - \$1000, Sexual Assault Crisis Center - \$200. It was unanimously agreed to leave the library contribution at \$86,000.

T. Madonna asked about the amount for the Day Kimball Nursing Services. S. Mikutel commented it is contractual. B. Crouch commented it is a one year contract.

S. Mikutel would like to see a two year contract with the opportunity to cancel. B. Crouch commented last fiscal year they did not request the whole \$15000 and have not yet this year. It was agreed to stay with the \$15000 for the Day Kimball Nursing. T. Madonna commented the \$10000 for Griswold Nursing will retire that debt.

S. Mikutel mentioned he would like the \$500,000 for Capital Expenditures to go specifically under 8501-5710V – General Road Projects to be renamed General Road and Bridge Projects. B. Crouch suggested putting all the money on that line, notifying the Board of Finance, and then moving the money and then move the money when we have an idea how much money is needed for whatever bridge is going to move forward.

B. Crouch commented she will redo the numbers, put it together with the updated grand list just received, and then use the fund balance to balance the proposed budget, then let the Board of Finance review it.

S. Mikutel and P. Anthony commented that the general fund budget is about 2% less and it was also less in the previous year, other than debt services, which was not part of the current board.

4. **Adjournment – MOTION:** Motion was made by T. Madonna, seconded by S. Mikutel, to adjourn the meeting at 5:53 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Submitted on Behalf of the Board of Selectmen,

*Lisa M. Wood,
Executive Assistant*