



# Town of Griswold

Board of Selectmen

Regular Meeting

July 9, 2013

6:30 PM

Downstairs Meeting Room, Town Hall  
28 Main Street, Jewett City



## APPROVED MINUTES

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call** – Meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM by Philip E. Anthony, First Selectman

**Members Present:** Philip E. Anthony, First Selectman  
Steve Mikutel, Second Selectman

**Members Absent:** Donald Hill, Third Selectman

**Others Present:** Lisa M. Wood, Executive Assistant  
53 interested citizens (approx.)

2. **Approval of Minutes**

- a. **June 11, 2013 - Regular Meeting Minutes**
- b. **June 18, 2013 – Special Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to accept the June 11, 2013 regular meeting minutes and the June 18, 2013 special meeting minutes as submitted. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- c. **June 20, 2013 – Special Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION** – Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to table approval of the June 20, 2013 special meeting minutes as he was not able to attend that meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

3. **Correspondence - None**

4. **New Business**

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

**MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to approve the tax refund as submitted by the Tax Collector. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. Discussion and possible action on appointment of Jill Drobiak to the Recreation Commission** – It was noted all information concerning the term to be filled was not available.

**MOTION:** Motion was made by P. Anthony, seconded by S. Mikutel, to table action on the appointment of Jill Drobiak to the Recreation Commission. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## 5. Old Business

- a. Discussion and possible action on response by Assessor regarding inquiry to incorrect assessments throughout town, tabled from the 5/28/13 BOS meeting** – It was noted that D. Hill was not present and he has been the primary one who is addressing this issue.

**MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to table action on the Assessor's response to the 5/28/2013 inquiry. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## 6. Any Other Business that may properly come before the Board

**MOTION:** Motion was made by P. Anthony, seconded by S. Mikutel, to address the request submitted by Dennis Cole to bring onto the agenda the topic of Griswold Ambulance . **Motion carried unanimously.**

P. Anthony commented that at the last special meeting regarding discussion with the Griswold Ambulance it was decided to set another special meeting date. He also noted any potential action on this subject, as mentioned before, requires a full board. Bill Czmyr, President of Griswold Ambulance noted he was in support of another meeting when both parties could have their full boards present.

**MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to set a special meeting date for Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM for continued discussion with Griswold Ambulance and an alternate date of July 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## 7. Public Forum

**Dennis Cole** - D. Cole wanted to know about the current status of contract talk between the Town and Griswold Ambulance. P. Anthony commented there is nothing concrete. During budget season the BOS did suggest \$65,000 for Griswold Ambulance which was decreased by the Board of Finance. D. Cole noted the target date for closure of the ambulance is August 1<sup>st</sup> and wanted to know if the next meeting date would result in an answer. P. Anthony commented they are aware of the potential August 1<sup>st</sup> closure date and noted there would be an answer. D. Cole wanted to know if there is a contingency plan in place. P. Anthony commented there is a plan but would not discuss it in detail as they are working in good faith with Griswold Ambulance and the State. D. Cole wanted to know if there were

any unanswered questions by the ambulance. P. Anthony commented D. Hill is not here to speak for himself, and he did have questions for the ambulance and the ambulance did have two auditors here to answer questions. D. Cole asked if it was a fair statement to say there are not unanswered questions. S. Mikutel commented that is premature to say. S. Mikutel wanted to point out that over the past two to three years the BOS recommended approximately over \$70,000 for the ambulance.

**Thomas Bruner** – T. Bruner asked for clarification if the BOF does not agree with what the BOS decides, than it doesn't happen. P. Anthony commented that the fiscal budget has been passed. It is rare, other than with an emergency where there would be a request to the taxpayers for additional money. S. Mikutel noted it is different with contractual negotiations rather than regular budget deliberations.

**Norm Higgins** – N. Higgins stated he supports the Griswold Ambulance as also the BOS does and acknowledged the BO would be as fair minded as possible regarding the negotiations. N. Higgins noted the public works department has picked up broken limbs from the tree on Pleasant View on town property. However, the tree needs to be trimmed.

**Donna Fenter** – D. Fenter commented her husband had a heart attack on July 4<sup>th</sup> and feels the ambulance is an important issue to all not just some as to an earlier comment that was made. P. Anthony noted the previous comment was misunderstood. It is an important issue to all of us. She also noted she has a special needs son in the local school and does a lot in the community and the ambulance service has always responded promptly. Backus Hospital commented that if she had to do CPR while someone came from Norwich, her husband would not have made it. She also noted the last meeting with the ambulance that was public and that some of the recording of the meeting was missing. She wanted to know if the minutes were approved and public. It was noted they are not approved at this time, but are available in the town clerk's office if they are not posted on the website. D. Fenter inquired to the next step if the issue is not resolved and there is no service. P. Anthony noted they are holding meetings with Griswold ambulance in good faith. There is a contingency plan in place and there will be no lapse in coverage.

**Norm Sylvestre** – N. Sylvestre noted the blighted buildings and the lack of enforcement. He also noted that the Lisbon bridge is not good and would like someone to contact the state. Grass is also growing too long and is inhibiting sight lines. P. Anthony asked Mr. Sylvestre for the previously requested updated list of blighted buildings.

**Betty Knox** – B. Knox addressed Ms. Fenter's comment about part of the recording of the last meeting missing. B. Knox noted it was during that part of the meeting what could and could not be done regarding the ambulance. P. Anthony noted the bulk of the meeting is on the tape, however the secretary was out and what was not on the recording was transcribed from his notes of the meeting.

**Tara Hurt** – T. Hurt wanted to know if the next meeting could be scheduled a little later than 5 PM. P. Anthony commented that there would be no public forum at the meeting and would most likely end up in executive session. P. Anthony and S. Mikutel noted that they may be reached at home or by town cell.

**Melissa Wooten** – M. Wooten commented she would like to see the BOS make the negotiations a top priority so the public knows what to expect.

**Kevin Skulczyck** – K. Skulczyck noted the proposed contract has been on the table for five years as confirmed by B. Czmyr, and K. Skulczyck wanted to know why the issue has not been resolved. P. Anthony repeated that each year the BOS puts in a request for a good dollar amount for the ambulance that gets cut down by the BOF for a year. P. Anthony noted it is the Board as a whole that chooses to agree to a contract or not. It is not his individual choice. K. Skulczyck commented we have a volunteer fire department and no services, which the town needs. P. Anthony noted the BOS has always been in support of Griswold ambulance and the dollar amount needed. K. Skulczyck noted there has not been a full board to approve a contract. P. Anthony noted again, there needs to be a full BOS to make the decision, he has been present for all meetings.

**Patrice Spicer** - P. Spicer noted her physical conditions and her personal need for the ambulance service which she supports. She then noted that there was only one handicap parking spot in the front of the town hall and she had to park over at the Senior Center. The parking spots have also been an issue when voting is going on. P. Spicer also commented on the sight line leaving Spring Road, heading north. There is a Pine Tree there that is on state property, overgrown grass and a telephone pole that is making the sight line hazardous. P. Anthony commented the grass can be taken care of by the town, but he will need to contact the state about the tree. P. Anthony also commented there are always two handicap parking spots and during voting there are usually two or three more designated handicap parking spaces.

**Joel Francoeur** – J. Francoeur commented he went to see if he could get put on the agenda for the Economic Development Commission to see if they could provide any financial help for some procedures he needs to complete to apply for a Brownfield's Grant to clean up his property. Mario Tristany, Town Planner, commented there was no money. P. Anthony suggested he speak to the chairman of the Economic Development Commission as he is the one who usually sets the agenda. J. Francoeur also noted the sight line issue pulling out of Spring Road that P. Spicer previously mentioned.

**Ken Houman** – K. Houman noted he is a bit confused with what good is it if the BOS negotiates a contract and then the BOF turns it down anyways. S. Mikutel commented it is his opinion that there is a good chance that if the BOS negotiates a contract the BOF has to honor it. K. Houman asked if the BOF has a vote on this if there is a public forum and would it be published. S. Mikutel confirmed there would be and it would be published.

**Mark Czmyr** – M. Czmyr wanted to know why the contract issue has taken so long. S. Mikutel commented it was his hope that the BOF would be in support of the money presented by the BOS. M. Czmyr commented if Griswold ambulance closes and another ambulance company services the area, the BOS will need to sign a contract with them.

**Ed Burke** – E. Burke noted that a contract has been proposed for five years and the BOS has supported the money for the ambulance in the budget. If the BOF is obligated to follow through on any contract signed by the BOS then the BOS should sign the contract.

**Norm Higgins** – N. Higgins wanted to know if it is possible for the BOS to put a motion (referendum) into play to get a vote that over rules the BOF.

**Melissa Laparre** – M. Laparre wanted to know, if the money has to be spent for the service anyway, would we give that money to a business from another town. P. Anthony commented at the BOF meetings it is usually a matter of financials as to how the money is spent which leads to their conclusion as to how much money to fund to the ambulance. M. Laparre asked if the BOF has an idea what we will owe to another company should a contingency plan take over. P. Anthony commented they do not have the amount as we are still working in good faith with Griswold Ambulance.

**Melissa Wooten** - M. Wooten commented she is aware the BOS has been advised not to talk about the contingency plan, however, the residents don't want to wonder what is going to happen and are concerned and suggested the plan be a little more transparent. P. Anthony commented they are working in good faith with Griswold Ambulance, but whatever happens, there will be no lapse in coverage.

**Lora Rainier** – L. Rainier expressed her anger concerning the lack of a contract for the ambulance for five years.

**Laurie Sorder** – L. Sorder urged everybody from the BOS as well as the ambulance to look at all the options and make a comparison. People may be assuming if we go with another ambulance company the response time would be longer, or the cost may be more, that may or may not be true.

**Ransom Young** – R. Young noted the size of the gaps in Rixtown and Richardson Young roads. R. Young also commented that the outcome from an ambulance call may be a result of the ambulance service or the patient, but the issue we are concerned about is the funding.

**Betty Knox** – B. Knox commented that Griswold Ambulance has not once, since 1941 had a complaint filed against them by this town and average response time if 5.5 minutes. She also noted she feels the funding is not being supplied due to a personality conflict.

**Thomas Bruner** – T. Bruner wanted to know when the BOS overrides what the BOF is allowing for funding. S. Mikutel commented that it is his understanding that if the BOS negotiates a contract the BOF has to fund it.

## **8. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Lisa M. Wood,  
Executive Assistant**