



Town of Griswold

Board of Selectmen

Regular Meeting

August 26, 2014

6:30 PM

Griswold Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room
28 Main St, Jewett City, CT 06351



UNAPPROVED 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 Mikutel, Second Selectman
Philip Anthony, Third Selectman

Others Present: Lisa M. Wood, Executive Assistant
Todd Babbitt, Road Superintendent
Rich Grabowski, Revenue Collector
1 member of the press
5 other interested citizens

2. **Approval of Minutes**

- a. **August 12, 2014 – Regular Meeting Minutes** – S. Mikutel noted that to section 4b, regarding appointment to commissions, he would like added to the last sentence the wording “unless they are not known to the selectmen”.

MOTION: Motion was made by P. Anthony, seconded by S. Mikutel, to approve the minutes of August 12, 2014 regular meeting minutes with the correction noted above. **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 P. Anthony, seconded by S. Mikutel, to approve the tax refunds as present by Tax Collector, Rich Grabowski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. **Executive Session – Discussion and update by Howard Russ, appraiser, on property located at 226 East Main St.**

MOTION: Motion was made by P. Anthony, seconded by S. Mikutel, to go into executive session to specifically the appraisal for the property at 226 East Main Street and to invite in Mr. Russ with the Board members. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to come out of executive session at 6:55 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- c. **Discussion and possible action on setting a town meeting date for the proposed FY 2014/2015 budget, as requested by the Board of Finance**

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to set a town meeting date for the proposed 2014/2015 budget for 6 PM, Monday September 8, at the Griswold Middle School Cafeteria. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. Old Business

- a. **Discussion and possible action on appointment of Catherine Szafran to serve as an alternate member of the Recreation Commission for a term of 8/27/2014 – 8/26/2015 – no action was taken**

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

- a. **MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to bring onto the agenda the issue of hiring a temporary person for the Assessor's office. **Motion carried unanimously.**

K. Skulczyck noted the person who had been hired as the Assistant Assessor, resigned last week. He commented we are able to visit the other applicants that were interviewed but as Steve mentioned we need someone in there now. S. Mikutel commented he does not like the situation the way it is and does not want to go through another interview process.

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, that the Board of Selectmen authorize the First Selectman to hire a temporary person to help out in the Assessor's office until a permanent replacement can be made.

S. Mikutel affirmed for P. Anthony that this would only be a temporary position or call back for hire.

Motion on the floor carried unanimously.

- b. **MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to bring onto the agenda the issue of paving Old Bethel Road and allow the Road Superintendent to make a presentation. **Motion carried unanimously.**

T. Babbitt mentioned the paving for Old Bethel Road should be done within the next three weeks and it will be a Saturday pave with a Thursday and Friday prep due to the school bus traffic. T. Babbitt commented for P. Anthony, the entrance for Sheldon Road from Rt. 138 should be started within the next couple of weeks. There is FEMA money that is being used for drainage issues on that road. T. Babbitt commented the plans for paving include Old Bethel, Bitgood Road between the two bridges, Sheldon Rd., Mary St. and section of Russell St. and Brown Ave. T. Babbitt also noted the drainage issue with the first Edmond Road bridge project has just been signed off by the state and should be completed by the end of September.

T. Babbitt reviewed the bridge report which included the bridge on Norman Road. The state recommended repairs or replace. The repairs have to last ten years for reimbursement and upon initial review with McFarland Johnson, it is not likely the repairs would hold up. The recommendation is to submit the paperwork for federal funding of the Norman Road Bridge. The time schedule and costs were briefly discussed as well as the general condition of the bridge and the repair process. The overall cost is 2.1 millions and the town cost would be 20%. This would need to be figured into capital improvement. Carol Road Bridge has a dam under it which is privately owned and makes the paperwork difficult and the cost significantly higher. We cannot abandon the bridge but the town has the option to remove the bridge at a cost of approximately \$900,000 rather than 3.2 to replace. There are only two houses on that road which can be accessed by going down one road into Voluntown. No one would be land locked and the emergency personnel noted it would not hinder the response time. K. Skulczyck asked about plowing that one area next to house and plowing. T. Babbitt noted Voluntown plows it anyway and the town would install a cul-de-sac there for turnaround. P. Anthony commented in his opinion it is the best and most feasible way to go. T. Babbitt noted his intention is to have the BOS approve going forward with the paperwork.

MOTION: Motion was made by P. Anthony, seconded by S. Mikutel, to remove Carol Bridge with the numbers presented 20% town share of cost 80% state and federal share, and to have the Norman Road bridge taken care of as presented by T. Babbitt federal aid request of \$1,684,000 and to authorize the First Selectman to sign said agreements. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- c. **MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to bring onto the agenda the request by Ryan Aubin, Recreation Director, on the hiring of staff. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to authorize the Recreation Director, Ryan Aubin, to hire the Griswold Youth Center Staff person as described in the job description given to us by him.

P. Anthony asked if the Board was going to be involved with the hiring. S. Mikutel commented the Board does not usually get involved in the hiring of the seasonal employees.

Motion on the floor carried unanimously.

7. Public Forum

Alan Geer – A. Geer, Borough Warden, noted progress regarding blighted properties at 38-44 Mechanic Street – grass overgrowth, 12 Phillips St. – town will be going to remove the brush and trash as stated in a letter sent by Al Gosselin to the property owner. He also noted they are moving forward with enforcement for 2 Mechanic Street, to be done by October 31st and property at Lenox and Faust Street, asbestos has been removed and next step is demolition. K. Skulczyck noted there has been much progress and wishes Mr. Sylvestre were present and will make the minutes available for him. P. Anthony asked about the property with the appliances. A. Geer commented the warrant for the owner's arrest has not been signed yet. P. Anthony noted safety concern regarding the doors being secured. A. Geer noted that is part of the issue as well as some of the stuff is stored on another property. K. Skulczyck noted absentee landlords are becoming major issues. The certified letters go out for the blight issues and no response is received. Perhaps we need to work together with the Borough for some stronger provisions for the Blight ordinance regarding absentee landlords. S. Mikutel asked about getting the warrant signed. K. Skulczyck noted Lt. Thomas will be keeping him updated as to the status of the warrant. P. Anthony noted although he is reluctant to having public works go onto private property, this is a safety issue and maybe it should be considered. K. Skulczyck noted the refrigerators, today when he went by were not accessible. He also noted we are proceeding with direction from the town attorney. S. Mikutel asked if the Borough Blight Ordinance has a provision for fines for non-compliance and if not it should be put in.

Ransom Young – R. Young noted it was good the land was transferred to the Housing Authority, but was concerned with the width of the property. He also noted the state has not been maintaining the growth of the grass and brush along Old Bethel Road. The state noted they do not have time to mow but have sprayed. K. Skulczyck noted he will put a call in to the state. R. Young also noted the condition of Rixtown Road.

Norm Higgins – N. Higgins commented it was enjoyable listening to the report about the bridges and the improvement on blight issues around town. He also noted the good work done by the public works department in cleaning up Pleasant View, which is a main artery for people passing through to Plainfield. He noted the progress in town by people coming together.

Rich Grabowski – R. Grabowski recommended that going forward with any replacement in the Assessor's office that the person have working knowledge of an Assessor's office. Literally, in weeks, we will be without an Assessor. S. Mikutel noted it has been known of the problem and went to the Board of Finance requesting a full-time assistant and it has been cut to part-time, several times. The Board of Finance has to own the problem they created. R. Grabowski noted the solution will possibly be a joint meeting of the Board of Finance and

the Board of Selectmen. The importance of a viable Assessor's office has to be realized. There is a revaluation coming in 2015 and the town needs to resolve this issue. S. Mikutel noted this BOS has been on record several times for the need of a full-time assistant. K. Skulczyck appreciated the concern of R. Grabowski. P. Anthony noted we are all in agreement.

James Barnie – J. Barnie supported the position the Board of Selectmen has presented. He noted he has spoke previously about the assistant assessor problem with Phil over the past two years. It has been going on for some time.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

**Lisa M. Wood,
Executive Assistant**