



Town of Griswold

28 Main Street
Griswold, CT 06351
Board of Selectman

Regular Meeting

Downstairs Meeting Room

Tuesday, November 9, 2010

6:30 pm

APPROVED MINUTES



1. **Call to Order:** P. Anthony called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM

Members Present: Philip Anthony, First Selectman

Steve Mikutel, Second Selectman, Theresa Madonna (arrived @ 6:37 PM), Third Selectwoman

Also Present:

Lisa Wood, Executive Assistant

Ryan Aubin, Recreation Director

Peter Zvingilas, Zoning Enforcement Officer

Todd Babbitt, Superintendent of Public Works

9 interested citizens

2. **Approval of Minutes**

- a. **October 26, 2010 Regular Meeting Minutes**

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by T. Madonna, to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 26, 2010 with the correction to the first paragraph on page five to indicate that a representative from the Board of Finance was invited to participate in a future workshop on possible contract with the ambulance, specifically as an observer. **Motion carried unanimously.**

3. **Correspondence: Sent/Received**

- a. **Griswold Soccer Club – rehabilitation of field in front of Town Garage on Route 138** – P. Anthony gave brief description of letter from Ed Conn, President Griswold Soccer Club, in support of rehabilitating the field in front of the Town Garage. In order for the Griswold Recreational Committee to apply for a grant for funding the project, they are seeking a 10 year commitment, from the town to use the land. R. Aubin commented the field has been used by many youth sports in town, not just soccer. He also commented that he cannot be sure where the town needs will be in ten years from now. T. Babbitt commented, the clubs are allowed to use the field at anytime, with the exception of the hours when the transfer station is open. The town does maintain the property, but the clubs are allowed to line the field, etc... for their uses. There is also the property on the side of the town garage building. It was mentioned by several that the Sheldon Road recreational facility

will be up and running within the next year, and perhaps we should look at what is offered over there and also discuss the issue with the Space Needs Committee. It was agreed to present the letter to the Space Needs Committee to give them an opportunity to comment on it.

- b. **MOTION:** Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by T. Madonna, to add to the agenda under any other business a letter from Mr. Sylvestre. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. New Business

- a. **Discussion and possible action on proposed Town Sidewalk Ordinance** – T. Babbitt commented that with the new developments being allowed by Planning & Zoning, they are requiring sidewalks. With that being said, we are getting more sidewalks in town and we need to address that. A copy of the Borough Sidewalk Ordinance has been supplied as a guide. P. Anthony commented that with the sidewalks being required as part of new developments, it would be beneficial to the town to address the maintenance of the sidewalks and would like to see it done before Christmas. S. Mikutel has no problem with a sidewalk ordinance but feels the road superintendent should be the one to enforce it since he is out on the roads and knows the conditions. S. Mikutel commented he has no problem with residents cleaning the sidewalk, but is concerned over the part of maintaining it. P. Anthony suggested the selectmen review the ordinance and make any changes to it they would like to see, and bring it to next meeting for further discussion. T. Madonna inquired about the omission of the section regarding obstruction from trees and branches and it was noted it was not purposely left out and could be added in.

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by T. Madonna, to table the discussion and possible action on a Town Sidewalk Ordinance until the next regular Board of Selectmen meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. **Executive Session for the purpose of hiring a part-time Assistant Assessor** – S. Mikutel made a motion, seconded by T. Madonna, to table action on this item. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. Old Business

- a. **Discussion and possible action on acceptance of proposed 2011 meeting dates – tabled from 10/26/10 meeting** - There were no conflicts with holidays found and the start time was discussed and decided to stay at 6:30 PM.

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to accept the 2011 meeting dates as proposed by the Board Secretary and to have a start time of 6:30 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. **Continuation of discussion and possible action on the need for a contract with American Legion Community Ambulance Inc. d/b/a Griswold Ambulance** – tabled from 10/26/10 – Information provided to selectmen was reviewed. CCM

found no other towns with contracts with their ambulance service. T. Madonna commented the average paid to a volunteer company, from the information provided, came to \$40,000. S. Mikutel commented that our service is paid so it is not a fair comparison. P. Anthony commented the like thing is that there were no contracts found and it was also noted that Plainfield had no contract for their paid service. Mr. Czmyr commented Plainfield is only staffed for first shift and is volunteered for second and third shift. P. Anthony suggested contacting CCM again for amounts funded by towns for paid ambulance services and clarification on whether or not they have contracts. S. Mikutel confirmed his support and would favor some kind of contract, with reasonable cost, with the local ambulance to smooth out the budget process. P. Anthony noted his support for Griswold Ambulance, but would like all the information before making an informed decision. T. Madonna asked Griswold Ambulance to have their attorney obtain the Attorney General's opinion 83-108, which is not available electronically, and would like that along with more information before making a decision.

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by T. Madonna, to table further discussion and possible action on the need for a contract with American Legion Ambulance Inc. until next meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

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

- a. **MOTION:** S. Mikutel made a motion, seconded by P. Anthony, to bring the item of publishing a bulletin for the recruitment of a Blight Hearing Officer onto the agenda. **Motion carried unanimously.**

S. Mikutel mentioned the bulletin should require applicants be familiar with the Blight Ordinance and selection to be done by the First Selectman. T. Madonna encouraged letter of interest with a resume be sent. It was suggested a letter with qualifications be sent instead.

MOTION: S. Mikutel made a motion, seconded by T. Madonna, to approve the publishing of a bulletin for the recruitment of a Blight Hearing Officer with applicants providing a letter of interest with qualifications to be sent to the First Selectman. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. **Letter from Mr. Sylvestre to the Board of Selectmen concerning the Blight Ordinance** - P. Anthony commented there was a hold up in providing an appeal form for the Blight Ordinance. There was a disagreement on the amount which should be charged for an appeal. It was agreed between the Town and Town Attorney that the fee for processing should be set at \$25. That form is now available and we can proceed.

Mr. Sylvestre was invited to share his comments. He stated the Hearing Officer being sought for the Blight Ordinance should also be used for Junk Yard Ordinance also. The Town Pump is not secure, as it has been stated. You can get in very easily from the side on the ground level and there is hazardous material in there. There is a lot of nonsense going around about that building coming down and we

need to protect people from being hurt in there. Nothing has happened on the junk yards and blighted buildings that information has been provided on. Perhaps we need to have a committee to identify all these areas and figure out how we can get somebody to enforce the regulations.

T. Madonna asked if he reported the issues that were in the black notebook handed to the selectmen when the Blight Ordinance was passed, to the ZEO. Mr. Sylvestre commented he handed it to the Zoning Commission and he had mentioned it to the ZEO prior to that. P. Anthony asked Mr. Sylvestre if he had mentioned the issues he is addressing in his letter to the ZEO. Mr. Sylvestre commented he has given him a copy of the letter and has also sent him several e-mail correspondences. S. Mikutel noted that the Blight Enforcement Officer may enforce the Ordinance without a written complaint.

- c. **MOTION:** S. Mikutel made a motion, seconded by T. Madonna, to bring onto the agenda for discussion, under any other business, discussion of legal services with respect to the enforcement issues of the Blight Ordinance and Junk Yard Ordinance. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MOTION: S. Mikutel made a motion, seconded by T. Madonna, to add to the agenda of the scheduled Special Meeting on November 17th a discussion with our town counsel to provide clarity on how best to proceed with enforcement of our existing Blight Ordinance and Junk Yard Ordinance. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Peter Zvingilas, ZEO, commented that when people are non-responsive to the enforcement letters being sent, he contacts the town attorney, with the approval of the First Selectman, and enforcement action is taken. In reference to the Blight Ordinance the form given to me today and we will get that out for the East Main St. property, the Pleasant View property across from the school and the Town pump. The Town pump is scheduled to start coming down next week and the time frame for that is around the 1st of December. We are following the procedure that has been outlined and using the attorney when we need to. We are also enforcing the Junk Yard Ordinance by having the sheriff serve notice. We are addressing the Aubin property issue and if there is a disagreement with me the issue should be taken to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

7. Public Forum

Norm Higgins – Commented the bulletin for the Hearing Officer should be listed as volunteer. The Blight Ordinance has only been around a little while and is a machine that is just starting to get working.

Ransom Young – Heard a rumor there may be a stipend available for maintaining the cemetery. P. Anthony confirmed it was a rumor and urged Mr. Ransom to put a formal request for a possible stipend in to the Board of Selectmen. He questioned the cost of sidewalks if having to be put in by property owner.

Norm Sylvestre – Mr. Sylvestre mentioned considering sight lines when working on the Sidewalk Ordinance. Mr. Sylvestre wanted a status report on the Aubin property. Mr. Zvingilas commented he forwarded the last interpretation from the attorney. Mr. Sylvestre commented the attorney is saying the site is okay for a junk yard. That may be so, but the junk yard is not licensed and that is a misdemeanor. That site has not been approved for a junk yard. Action needs to be taken on closing that junk yard. There are materials other than cars out there which are considered part of a junk yard.

Joe Foye – Asked if the sidewalk ordinance was going to say if there is no sidewalk there then there doesn't need to be one. P. Anthony commented it will pertain to only existing sidewalks or new developments. Mr. Foye asked if the people who are behind the sidewalk required to shovel it if it borders vacant land. P. Anthony noted that issue will have to be addressed as part of the ordinance.

Norm Higgins – Commented in the city of New London they have a requirement for the sight line that tree limbs, flags and signs have to be at least eight feet above the sidewalk.

Brian Ayers – Asked T. Madonna for clarification on the information she is asking Atty. Bloom to obtain. T. Madonna commented it is an opinion from the Attorney General and is number 83-108.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: S. Mikutel made a motion, seconded by T. Madonna, to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Lisa M. Wood,
Recording Secretary*