

TOWN OF GROTON
SELECT BOARD MEETING
September 8, 2015

In Attendance: Christina Goodwin, Robert Ferriere, John Rescigno, and Sara Smith
(Administrative Assistant)

Audience Members Present

Christina called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

MINUTE APPROVAL

Christina motioned to approve the minutes of September 1, 2015 as written, John 2nd, so voted.

OLD BUSINESS:

Certificate of Final Completion from D.A. White Excavating, LLC

D.A. White Excavating, LLC submitted the updated certification of final completion to the Town for the Select Board to review and sign which states that the work is guaranteed 18 months. Sara will send this to D.A. White and will release the check. **John motioned to sign the certification of final completion, Bob 2nd, so voted.**

NEW BUSINESS:

Christina welcomed Senator Forrester

Senator Forrester thanked us for having her explaining that she likes to give updates on what she has been up to and then answer any questions we might have.

In her updates, she mentioned that Governor Maggie Hassan vetoed the \$11.3 billion budget passed by the New Hampshire Legislature, saying it is unbalanced, makes false promises about what it funds and gives unpaid-for tax giveaways to big corporations, but she will sign the short-term plan. A key point of contention was business tax cuts. Republicans say they are necessary to attract businesses and stimulate the economy. The cuts are expected to lower state revenue by \$21 million in the next budget and potentially more in future budgets, depending on economic growth. Senator Forrester explained that Governor Hassan said the tax breaks come at the expense of priorities such as higher education, health care, public safety and transportation. Governor Hassan also stated the long-term impact of these unpaid-for corporate tax cuts will create a more than a \$90 million hole in future budgets. Senator Forrester explained they have never looked out that far, they always look at the two year budget.

Senator Forrester explained she is also the chair of Senate Finance Committee and her prime reason is to represent the communities. She put together informal work groups and they met with the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) and the Department of Transportation

(DOT) and all agencies they thought would affect towns and cities. The DRA said they will work with each town individual Town to go over the worst case and the best case scenarios for the tax rate setting and how it might be affected by the budget concerns. She said when setting the tax rate she recommends being forgiving to be safe. She wanted us to know they are paying attention in Concord and Cities and Towns are a main concern.

Betty Smolinsky said she hasn't heard a lot about money for education. Senator Forrester mentioned that the Town of Dover was considering filing a lawsuit with regard to the way the education grants are calculated. In reaction to this implied suite, the calculations were changed for the cap, which was set at 140% of enrollment numbers, to 160%. She gave Groton's numbers and mentioned that Groton is losing some in stabilization. The stabilization grant was \$204,912.00 but with the calculation change it is getting lowered to \$196,716.00.

Lou asked how the legislation is trying to address education at all levels. She explained it was funded at \$12 million more than in the 2014-2015 budget, but not as much as they asked for.

Slim made a statement that he was in Plymouth getting spring water and there were some students there from Holderness. They informed him of a new swimming pool the University has. He stated that it is not right that this is how his tax dollars are being spent.

Ron mentioned that he works for the Highway Department and he doesn't understand why we used to plow and do winter maintenance on the State's section of North Groton Road, but now we aren't going to anymore. The Senator was not clear about what he was talking about. Christina explained and updated the audience that NHDOT did respond regarding our inquiry into the decision to maintain our section of road. They said there is nothing wrong with the way we have been doing the roads but they cannot justify paying the prices for equipment, sand or salt due to budgetary constraints. They have chosen to fund the maintenance themselves. Christina read the email the Town received from Dennis Ford at NHDOT. Senator asked if we would like her to look into this. Christina said that it couldn't hurt. We are concerned because we are on a mountain and the temperature is always at least 7-10 degrees colder up here and most of the time it is snowing up here before it is snowing anywhere else.

Slim mentioned that previously there were sensors in the road up here, but those have been removed. He explained that these were being put in to monitor the temperature up here on the top of the road. Slim explained that we have never received any results of these sensors and it would be nice if the Town could have more information regarding this. Senator Forrester will look into this as well.

Lou Lieto- Conservation Commission concern

Lou inquired on the process for moving ahead with the installation of a gate at the Town Pond. Christina explained that the Board has been in touch with Glen to get the specs. Lou wanted to know if the Select Board would have to handle the bid process and would prefer that they do or assist as they Commission feels that they lack the experience. The Conservation Commission will review the specs. The Board agreed that they would work with the Commission during this process.

Second, in the past the Town of Groton has had an agreement with the Town of Dorchester. Last year during the winter, River Road was a disaster along with issues of damage to mailboxes and signs. Tonight Lou's wife, Marilyn, was walking their dog and the Dorchester truck went through

at 50mph and came back at same speed. She had to jump off to the side or she felt she would have been wiped out. Christina recommended that Lou also talk to the Police Chief about this.

Christina asked the other Board members about scheduling a meeting with the Dorchester Select Board and both Town's Road Agents regarding the concerns that the Town has. Sara will reach out to Dorchester and will pull the Dorchester agreement and send this to the Select Board.

SELECT BOARD ITEMS:

Bixby- Junkyard License renewal application

The Town has now received both background checks for Steven and Charles Bixby for their Junkyard License Renewal. There are no concerns on the background checks, therefore Sara will create the license and have the Select Board come in to sign. **Bob motioned to approve the Bixby junkyard license renewal application with the Board signing once it is ready, Christina 2nd, so voted.**

Letter from Select Board granting permission to remove old culvert pipes

Sara drafted a letter which states that the Select Board approves the Road Agent, Glen Hansen, to remove the old/damaged culvert pipes from the Town Garage for his own personal use. The letter also states that the Road Agent assumes responsibility and liability for any use of the old/damaged culverts. Glen needs to sign this and then Sara will give him a copy and put original on file. **John motioned to sign the letter granting permission to remove old culvert pipes to Glen Hanson, Bob 2nd, so voted.**

North Groton Road culvert

Christina explained that when they began work on the culvert located on North Groton Road there was a 7 foot catch basin that needed replacing, thus causing a delay in the actual process. The catch basin should be in tomorrow but now weather will delay the project until Monday and Tuesday of next week. New notices and postings will be done.

Old Home Day Meeting

Christina would like to schedule an Old Home Day meeting. The members that were present agreed to Wednesday September 23rd at 5:00pm to close out Old Home Day and figure out what the next event will be and when. They will also discuss changing the committee to be other events besides just Old Home Day.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

Gate for Town Pond

Elizabeth Jespersen mentioned that when the gate goes up it needs to be ADA compliant. John mentioned that it is. Elizabeth mentioned that the bridge itself is not ADA compliant so that the gate being ADA compliant doesn't matter. Christina mentioned that Elizabeth should bring these concerns to the Conservation Commission. She said the access is too steep, the width is not compliant and the railings are not compliant. John said he will talk to the Conservation Commission regarding this. John mentioned the gate is being added so that no one can drive back there and dump in the pond or possibly drown in the pond. John explained that the gate does allow a 44 inch opening for wheelchair access.

Handicap ramp

Otto mentioned that the ramp and the stairs on the entrance to the Town House are in bad shape. John volunteered to fix this. He will price the wood and will let the Select Board members know of the price.

Driveway

Glen needs to put ledge pack in near the end of the handicap ramp, by the mailbox and at the entrance to the Town house. These areas have worn away due to use and rain. Sara will meet with Glen regarding this.

River Road culvert pipes

The Police Chief mentioned that the culvert pipes on River Road are getting worse and worse and that Glen stated that this will be done once North Groton Road project and culvert is complete. The Board will discuss with Glen at next week's Work Session.

Highway Department Assistant

Bubba Ellis submitted his resignation to the Highway Department today. His last day is October 2nd. The Board agreed to advertise for a replacement, which Sara will put together a posting.

Oil

Slim mentioned that he was told yesterday by an oil delivery man that the #2 fuel is going away and it will be replaced with off road fuel because it has less sulfur and is better for the environment. Sara will look into this and begin the process for the Town's fuel bids.

Work session on Sunday

The Select Board explained that there is a Work Session on Sunday at 1:30pm at a resident's house to inspect the property.

Check for computer virus

Sara will cut a check for \$800 to Dave Switaj tomorrow and give to EJ once complete. **Christina motioned to have Sara cut the check tomorrow and have Bob come in to sign it, John 2nd, so voted.**

Having no other business to conduct, John motioned to adjourn at 8:25pm, Bob 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant